

ABOUT THE BECKS

Conserving
Coniston &
Crake



3 RAMBLES AROUND THE TORVER
AND LOWICK AREA WITH BECKS,
TARNS AND SOME OF THE FINEST
VIEWS IN THE LAKE DISTRICT.

ABOUT THE BECKS

THE WALKS

The Lake District is a walker's paradise with many well-known routes, fells and tarns. This booklet aims to take the walker along some lesser known paths and by becks, and whilst no mountains are climbed the views you'll see on these walks are some of the finest.

The routes cross agricultural land and open commons, using quiet lanes and footpaths. We hope the walks will deepen your appreciation and understanding of freshwater environments and aquatic wildlife in becks or rivers, tarns or lakes.

LENGTH AND DURATION

The walks vary from 3.5 to 5.5 miles (5.6- 8.8km) of easy to moderate terrain. The walking times are based on walking at a steady pace, with a couple of brief stops and are ideal for a half-day with lunch or an afternoon tea to follow as a reward. The route descriptions are a general guide so please take a map.

RECOMMENDED MAPS:

OS Explorer OL6, English Lakes South West
OS Landranger 96

IT'S THE LAKE DISTRICT!

Dress appropriately for the weather which can suddenly change so be prepared. Some of the routes can be very wet at times so sturdy boots or comfortable wellies are recommended.



Greenholme Beck

FOLLOW THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

Respect other people

- Consider the local community & others enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates & property as you find them and follow paths

Protect the Natural Environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take all your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the Outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs

LIVESTOCK

Cows can be curious creatures, so you may find yourselves being followed on paths that cross agricultural land. They are wary of dogs and if with young, the cows will be very protective. So please be sensible and keep dogs under close control.

THE BECKS

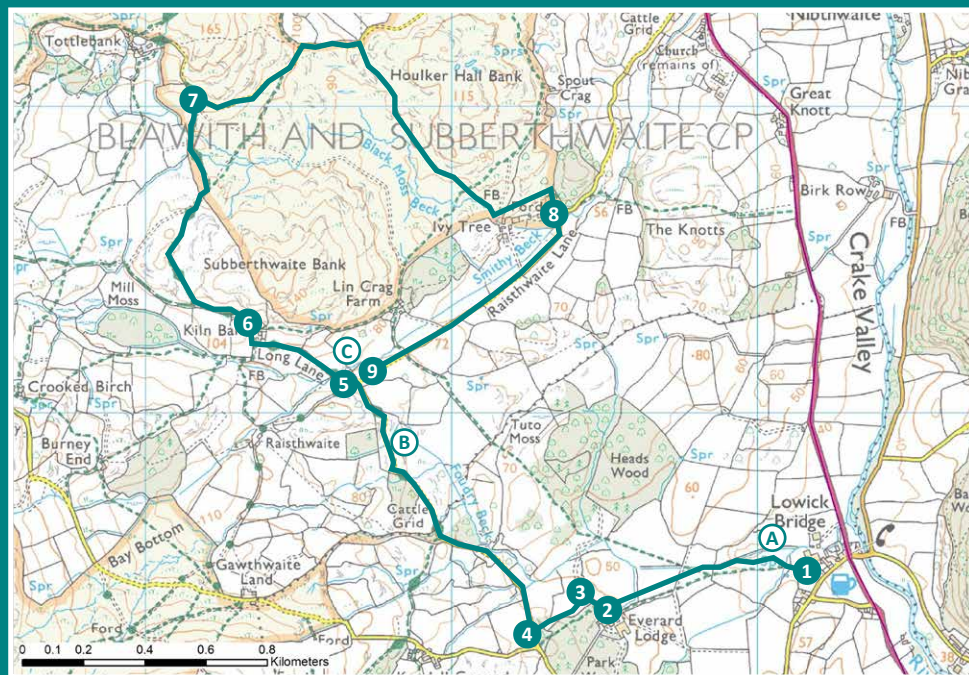
Beck is a northern word for stream and there are becks galore across the Lake District, feeding the lakes, tarns and main rivers. The becks featured - Torver, Smithy, Langholme, Foudry and Greenholme- are a key part of the landscape and a vital habitat for freshwater species from small invertebrates and salmon to herons and otters. Used by man over centuries, the becks and lake face many challenges from climate change to pollution. The Coniston and Crake Catchment Partnership, formed in 2009, and South Cumbria Rivers Trust is working together to address the challenges with practical conservation and community engagement through the National Lottery Heritage Fund project - *Conserving Coniston & Crake*.



Overlooking Torver Beck

WALK 1

LOWLAND BECKS, LOWICK BRIDGE



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An easy to moderate walk along paths and quiet lanes, mostly through farmland. The bracken can be high in summer partly obscuring way markers and stiles from a distance. The route also follows a short section of the Cumbria Way.

Parking:
Roadside parking just past the Red Lion pub, off A5086.

Grid ref:
SD292864

What3Words:
plenty.campus.
dazzling

Start/finish:
Walk begins at the fingerpost signed Everard Lodge ¼ mile.

Distance:
5.5 miles
(8.8km)

Time:
2.5- 3 hours.

1 Go over the stile and follow the path crossing over the new footbridge and Langholme Beck. Walk across the field then over a stone stile in the hedge.

Cross the next field, go through the gate and along the track to the barns at Everard Lodge Farm.

2 Look to your right for a small marker on the corner, follow the track right passing the small sheds then after 10m is a stile on the left in the stone wall.

3 Go over the stile into the wood which in Spring is alive with birdsong and bluebells. Pass through a tall gate and follow the markers between the trees, through another deer gate quickly followed by a stile. Bear left, passing by a fabulous beech tree on the right then out onto the lane.

4 Turn right and walk up the lane, the Cumbria Way joins it further on. Continue over the cattle grid, the lane rising gently to the next junction.

POINT OF INTEREST

Scan the skies and you may see a Red kite. Grizedale Forest, on the east side of Coniston Water was a site for the Red kite re-introduction programme. These large birds of prey are easily identified by their forked tail.

5 Crossing Smithy Beck head straight up Long Lane to Kiln Bank where the path bears right after the large barn. The small slate CW sign indicates you're following the Cumbria Way

6 Go through the gate ignoring the next sign to the right then go through the next gate and bear left. Stay on this path round Subberthwaite Bank keeping right at the marker. Eventually you'll reach a gate and stile.

POINT OF INTEREST

A



The project has worked with the local farmers here to protect Langholme and Foudry becks, to improve conditions for salmon and trout. Fencing prevents livestock ingress bank erosion. It creates a protective buffer strip, enhancing in-river and bankside habitats for a wide range of wildlife. Solar powered drinking troughs have been installed to provide water for livestock. Volunteers have also cleaned the gravels, removing some of the sediments that smother eggs and reduce oxygen flow to the young fish.



View from
Subberthwaite Bank

POINT OF INTEREST



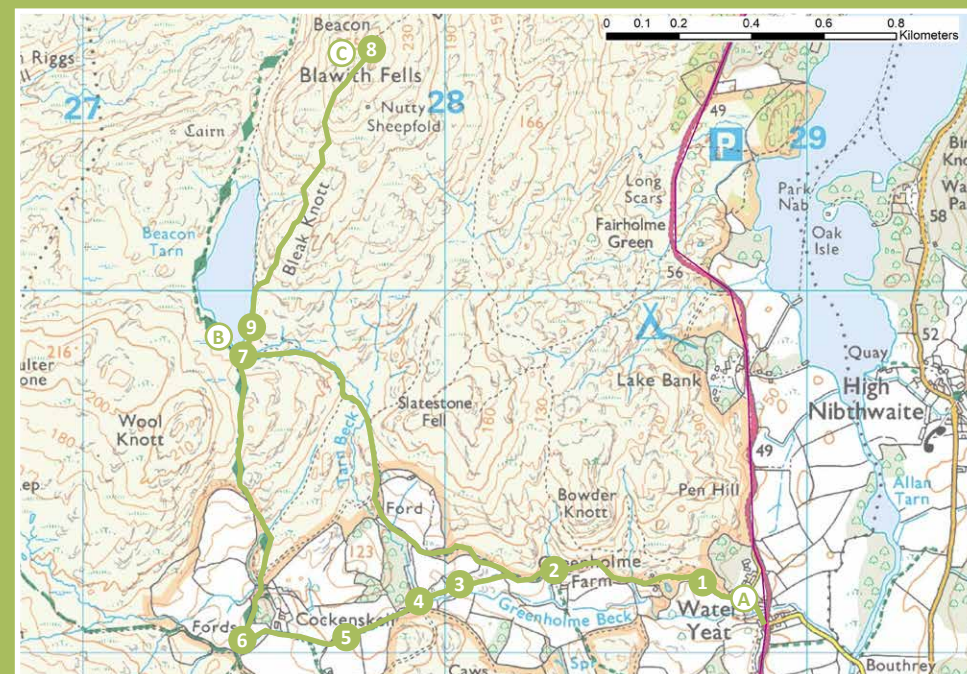
Hardy Volunteers planting
trees, March 2020

Smithy Beck is one of the most populated salmon streams in the catchment and great care has been taken to ensure it remains this way. Fencing has been installed along parts of the beck to create buffer strips and reduce erosion. A number of native trees planted by volunteers help stabilise banking and improve biodiversity both in-river and along the riparian zone.

Go through the gate bearing left along the track until you reach the single-track lane, which is where you leave the Cumbria Way.

- 7** Turn right then right again after 500m, following the path signposted to Ivy Tree. Eventually, when nearer the farm look ahead for a stile that takes you over a wall. The yellow discs lead you past a couple of small pools to a wall surrounding the woods. Follow the wall right and through a single gate, the path narrows between the wall and fence as you head down to Raisethwaite Lane.
- 8** Turn right and walk down the lane passing through three gates until you reach the junction with Long Lane and the entrance to Kiln Bank
- 9** Turn left, reversing the first section of the route. Walk along the lane looking out for the stile on the left. Go over the stile, back past the big beech tree then through the deer gates and woods to Everard Lodge farm. Cross the fields, the footbridge and you are soon back to the stile and where the walk began.

WALK 2 GREENHOLME BECK & BEACON TARN



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A moderate walk onto Blawith Fell and to the Beacon, giving amazing views across Coniston Water and beyond. The walk can be wet in places.

Parking:

In Water Yeat by the village hall or on grass layby just past the cattle grid up the track from the village.

Grid ref:

SD288891

What3Words:

skippers.payback.
quilting

Start/finish:

By the village hall, Water Yeat. Interestingly the village hall is called Blawith and Nibthwaite Village Hall even though it is situated in neither hamlet.

Distance:

3.5 miles (5.6km)

Time:

2-2.5 hours.



POINT OF INTEREST

A

Just past the village hall you should see two stone relief sculptures in the stone wall on your left, which were installed as part of the Conserving Coniston & Crag project. Look over the wall and you will see Greenholme Beck.

Atlantic salmon are in decline, even lost from some becks; barriers to migration is just one reason for this. In the past the beck was altered, and a weir added to supply a mill. Over time degradation of the weir left salmon struggling to migrate to and from spawning grounds further up the beck. Working closely with the landowner the project addressed this.

A meandering channel was dug out in 2019 bypassing the weir and putting the beck back along its original route enabling fish to reach their spawning grounds. Trees were planted to further improve habitat and biodiversity.

In 2020 fish surveys found young salmon in the upper beck.



© Aerial Artwork. Aerial photo showing old and new sections of Greenholme Beck

- 1 Walk up the single-track road to Greenholme Farm. At the farm a finger post points you up the hill, with the wall on your left.
- 2 Continue for 100m, ignoring the grassy path to your right, looking for a stone stile on the left, just before a wooden gate. Go over the stile and follow the faint grassy path diagonally towards gorse bushes with Greenholme Beck on your left.
- 3 After 100m you will pass by on the left, the remains of a small mill, its leat and the water wheel housing hole. The mill produced pill boxes for a short time from the 1850s to 1870. The path rises and you soon reach the beck crossing point.
- 4 Cross the beck and go through the gate. You have a choice of paths depending on ground conditions.
 - The public footpath takes you across the wet, boggy section, heading through the bracken and rush to walk closer to the wall to your right.
 - Alternatively, follow the avoiding wet ground sign and head up the slope for 30m. Turn right and follow the path above the boggy section, marked by rushes.
 These two paths meet by the stone wall.
- 5 Follow the path as it climbs through the bracken, with the wall on your right, the views gradually start to open ahead and behind you. Continue along the path until you reach the track to Cockenshell House.
- 6 At Cockenshell turn left, then right just before the finger post. You are now on part of the Cumbria Way. Continue on the path, keeping closer to the wall and go through the first of three gates. Head between the two walls then pass through the second gate. The path dips down, crossing over Greenholme Beck and through the third gate. Keep left, following the Cumbria Way markers up to Beacon Tarn.



Crossing Greenholme Beck

POINT OF INTEREST

B

Beacon Tarn, picturesque with great views of the Old Man of Coniston, is a lovely spot for wild swimming. It's relatively shallow and provides a welcome relief on a hot summer's day.



POINT OF INTEREST

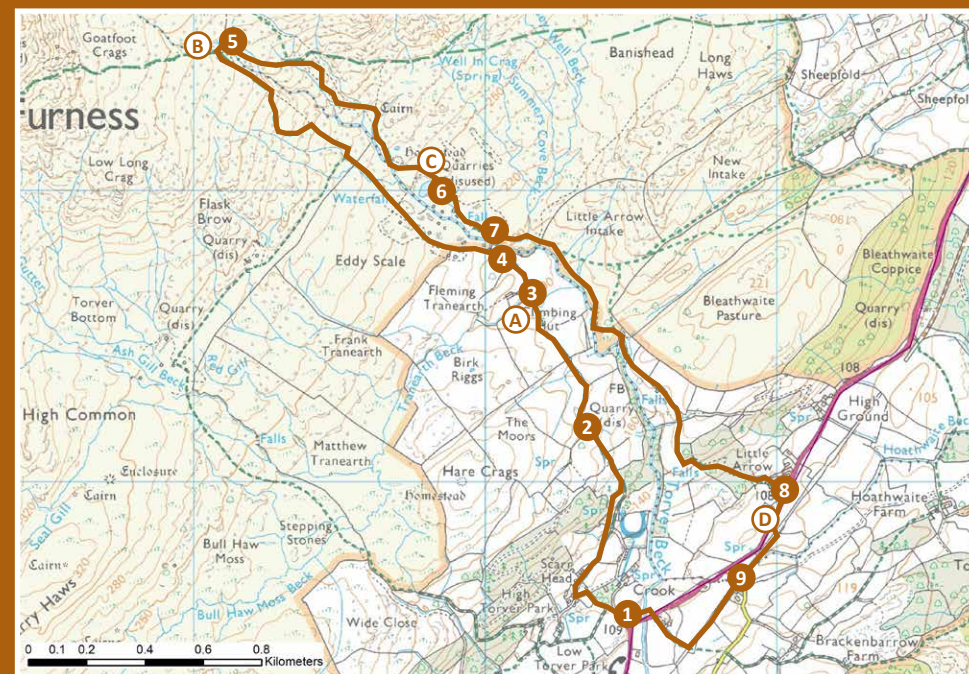
C

Beacon Summit. The views from here are far reaching with the whole length of Coniston Water below. Helvellyn is north-eastwards, to the east in the far distance are the Pennines. To the south is Morecambe Bay with Black Combe to the southwest. The Coniston range dominates the northwest view.

- 7 Cross the beck and follow the path to the right of the tarn, going steeply up the hill to reach the summit of the Beacon.
- 8 There are a few vague paths you could follow from here across the common but it's easier to retrace your route back to the tarn.
- 9 Take the path to the left, following the small beck, it can be very wet in places and after 500m you'll cross a footbridge. Continue down the fell, the path narrows and eventually you'll reach two walls. Carry on heading downhill, keeping left where the path divides.
- 10 Continue to follow the path downhill, through the bracken until you eventually reach the track that takes you back to the start.



WALK 3 TORVER'S TRANEARTH



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A moderate walk that takes you to the foot of the Old Man of Coniston, gaining 950ft in elevation (290m). The views are amazing.

Parking:
Crook Corner, north of Torver Village A593. There is also a small layby further up the road on right.

Start/finish:
Crook Corner

Distance:
4.5 miles
(7.2kms)

Time:
2.5- 3 hours

Grid ref:
SD284945

What3Words:
pulsing.reach.
routes

POINT OF INTEREST

A



Torver Beck & The Old Man

The climbing hut is a former farm so not quite what you'd expect.

The project has worked with the National Trust here to provide some protection to the beck, to reduce bank erosion and livestock incursion. The fencing creates buffer strips, allowing a wider range of species to flourish whilst trees have also been planted to further enhance the area. The buffer strips are surveyed by volunteers to record the species and changes.

- 1 Head up the lane, there are plenty of signs directing you towards Tranearth. The lane gradually becomes a stony track as you pass through two gates, climbing steadily up hill.
- 2 Just after the barn on the left, fork right, following the bridleway until you reach the climbing hut.
- 3 Cross the small beck keeping the hut to your left, follow the path and you soon reach the quite sophisticated sheep pen and wash against the backdrop of spoil heaps.

You can shorten the walk at this point by crossing the beck and following the path down the side of the beck.

Torver Beck is one of the longest in the catchment at 5 miles (8.05kms) Starting in the Coniston and Torver fells it winds its way down to the lake shore at Sunny Bank.

- 4 Go through the gate on the left and follow this lesser used path, passing between a wall and a waste slate heap. Keep a look out for directional arrows at ground level as you walk between the clumps of rush. On your right you'll see a disused quarry. The path takes you over smaller tributaries with far reaching views of Dow Crag and the Old Man of Coniston ahead of you. You may also see walkers on the other side of the beck, following Walna Scar Road from Coniston. Continue up the path until you reach an old packhorse bridge.



Crossing over Torver Bridge



View from Torver Bridge

- 5 Walk over the bridge and follow Walna Scar Road for about 300m, crossing two small tributaries. Just after the second one take the grassy path on your right through the bracken, winding downhill alongside the beck passing Banishead Quarry until you reach the sheep pen.
- 6 Ignore the bridge and sign for Torver and continue straight ahead, over a small footbridge, keeping Torver Beck on your right. You will pass a series of water gates, known as hecks in Cumbria. The timber for the two newest ones were brought on site by a horse logger.



Banishead Quarry

POINT OF INTEREST

B

At Torver Bridge the path meets the Walna Scar Road, part of the former packhorse route between Furness Abbey and Coniston. The views are magnificent from the splendid stone bridge spanning Torver Beck.

You may choose to extend the walk from here to reach Dow Crag, Goats Water and the Old Man of Coniston but an OS map will be needed.

POINT OF INTEREST

C

Banishead Quarry. The story is that the waterfall was created in the 1950s by local schoolboys who decided to remove the rocks separating the beck from the quarry edge!



Water Hecks

POINT OF INTEREST

D

This was the Foxfield to Coniston line, opened in 1859 by the Furness Railway Company. The final freight train ran in 1962. Its main purpose was the transport of slate and copper ore mined in Coniston and to improve the tourist trade in the area.

- 7 The path rises briefly before dipping again, bringing you to a gate in the wall. Bear right following the way marker. Continue along the grassy path, passing an old barn on your right and go through more gates. Keep walking downhill and you soon reach a collection of cottages and the main road (A593).
- 8 Cross the road carefully, turn right and follow the footpath for 100m. Turn through the gate, then keep left at next finger post, following the old railway line.
- 9 Pass under the bridge and keep walking until you reach the next finger post. Follow the path on the right across the fields where you meet the A593 again. You only have few metres to walk along the road back to your car, either left to Crook corner or right to the layby.

ABOUT THE CATCHMENT

The Coniston and Crake Catchment covers an area of 35 sq. miles and has a mosaic of habitats from agricultural fields and woodland to bracken-covered fells and upland flushes.

Coniston Water is about 5 miles long, half a mile wide and reaches a depth of 56m. The River Crake flows for just under 4 miles from the southern end of the lake until it reaches the Leven Estuary and Morecambe Bay at Greenodd. Numerous becks feed the lake, including Church, School, Yewdale and Torver, whilst Smithy, Foudry, Greenholme and Langholme flow into the Crake.

Key species include Atlantic salmon, brown and sea trout, Arctic charr and the critically endangered European eel. Dippers and grey wagtails can sometimes be seen catching the riverflies and freshwater invertebrates which underpin the food chain of the becks. Pipistrelles and Daubenton's bats also rely on the riverflies, as do the small fish which feed the kingfishers. Otters are also spotted along the River Crake and in the margins of the lake.

Good water quality is key for the health of the becks, lake and wildlife. It is however, affected by sediment, nutrient and heavy metal inputs from agriculture, private sewage systems and past mining works. Barriers to migration affect fish spawning, whilst sedimentation reduces the success of egg and fry developments. Sewage and nutrient pollution impacts on invertebrates and fish.

The aim of the Conserving Coniston & Crake project is to address these issues through a wide range of practical conservation work and engagement with landowners, communities and visitors.

LOCAL INFORMATION & REFRESHMENTS

The Information Centre at Coniston is a great place for local knowledge, guides books and maps that will take you around Tarn Hows or to the top of the Old Man of Coniston.

For refreshments there are pubs in Torver, Lowick Bridge and Spark Bridge. There is a fabulous bakery with café as well as a chippy in Greenodd.

Head into Coniston for a wider range of cafes and pubs, and on the east side of the lake is the Swallows and Amazons tearoom and the Terrace at Brantwood.

Conserving Coniston & Crake, a three-year National Lottery Heritage Funded project, with the aim of improving water quality, habitat and biodiversity in the Coniston and River Crake catchment area through practical conservation work and community engagement.

The project, initiated by the Coniston and Crake Catchment Partnership, is managed by South Cumbria Rivers Trust and supported by The National Trust and the Lake District National Park Authority. 2017- 2020.



@ConistonCrake

Website: www.ccc.scrtr.co.uk

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Cover printed on water resistant paper.

Design & Print by Fullpoint
015394 47100
www.fullpointdesign.com

South Cumbria Rivers Trust is a registered charity whose purpose is to protect, conserve and rehabilitate the aquatic environments of South Cumbria.



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Registered Charity Number: 1114682.



Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

**HERITAGE
FUND**



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