

# Discover

Arnside & Silverdale  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## Beetham Heritage

Follow this walk through fields and woods and take a step back into Medieval England.

This 5m/8km walk is mainly on footpaths, with some stiles. Please take extra care on the limestone pavement.



1.The walk starts from the car park at Heron Corn Mill. There has been a corn mill on this site since medieval times. Today the mill is leased by a trust and is open to the public. A second mill across the river was converted to papermaking in the 18th century and paper has been made here ever since. A donation is requested for parking at Heron Corn Mill and very occasionally when special events are held the car park may not be available. Please telephone 015395 64271 in advance to check.

2.Follow the lane between the wall and the hedge from the corner of the car park and turn left at the road towards the village of Beetham. The village church is well worth a visit. There has been a church on this site since Norman times and the lower part of the tower dates from the 12th century.

3.Turn right past the Wheatsheaf Hotel, first left into Stanley Street and then take the footpath off to the right signposted to Hale, going behind the houses into the field beyond.

4.Follow the footpath diagonally across the field. The large granite boulder in the middle of the field was transported in the ice from the Shap fells during the Ice Age and deposited here. There are many similar boulders, known as erratics, throughout the area. Look out for the ruins of the fortified farmhouse at Beetham Hall which date from the 14th century and take a moment to admire the views across to Farleton Knott and Barbon Fell beyond. Continue along this path, through two squeeze stiles and in the corner of the next field take the track on your right leading into the wood. The wall on your right as you walk up the hill dates from medieval times and enclosed the Beetham Hall Deer Park.

5.Pass through the squeeze stile and carefully follow the waymarked route to Slackhead. There are lots of paths so it is important to keep your eyes open for the little arrows guiding you through the wood and across an area of limestone pavement. Take extra care on the limestone in wet conditions as it can become very slippery. The deep fissures or grykes in the rock were formed thousands of years ago as water dissolved the limestone. Today they provide moist and shaded conditions ideal for Hart's Tongue and Polypody ferns and for the roots of trees such as Yew, Rowan, Ash and Hazel.

6.Carry on through the wood and on reaching the road, turn right towards Slackhead, passing a road on your left signposted to Silverdale and Arnside, and carrying straight on until you reach a narrow track on your left signposted to Fairy Steps. (You may take a short-cut here back to Beetham by continuing along the road) The footpath climbs quite steeply over Whinscar through the wood to Fairy Steps on the old Coffin Route. Until Victorian times the people of Arnside had no church of their own and they had to carry their dead along this path for burial in the churchyard at Beetham.

7.Go down the Fairy Steps or take the alternative permissive route round the cliff to the south rejoining the path at the bottom of the cliff. Follow the path signposted to Beetham Fell. A hundred years ago this was open grassland, but since grazing stopped, the trees and shrubs have gradually colonised the area. Butterfly Conservation has recently carried out some management work to open up the grassland again, providing habitat for some of our rarest butterflies such as the Duke of Burgundy.

8.Where the footpaths cross by a cairn (a small mound of stones) take the track straight ahead and follow this through the woods to the road. Go over the stile and turn right onto Cockshot Lane and after 100yds take the footpath on the left into the woods, signposted to Storth. This footpath bends to the right and takes you over a stile and out onto the lane to Haverbrack. Turn left onto the lane, cross the road and through



the squeeze stile into the field beyond. Walk down to the gate at the bottom of the field, cross the driveway and go through the gate into the Deer Park. Follow the footpath into the centre of the park from where the house at Dallam Tower may be seen. This privately owned house is a Grade 1 listed building, designed by Webster of Kendal in the early 19th century, built around an earlier 17th century building.

9.Retrace your steps to the cairn and follow the footpath to Beetham past the line of lime trees and up towards the trees on the top of the hill. The arched barn to your left was built in the 18th century to provide shelter for the deer herd. Take a moment to look back and savour the spectacular panoramic view of the Lakeland Fells. Cross over the hah, a characteristic feature of parkland which was designed to keep stock in or out without restricting the view of the countryside beyond, and go through the kissing gate. Continue down the hill through the avenue of trees to the squeeze stile and back to the car park to complete the walk.

For all our walks, we recommend you wear sturdy shoes and suitable clothing and also take a copy of Ordnance Survey map OL7



## Your day out in Beetham

The historic village of Beetham is at the centre of an ancient parish embracing Hale, Sandside, Storth, Carr Bank, Whasset and Farleton. Lying within the Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is a village of limestone cottages and cobbled forecourts. At its heart is St Michael and All Angels' Church which has a 12<sup>th</sup> century tower and a fine 15<sup>th</sup> century perpendicular nave. A stained glass window depicts Charles I flanked by St Oswald and St Alban.

Opposite the church, the Old Post Office is now a shop and popular tea room and next door you will find the historic Wheatsheaf Inn.

Heron Corn Mill, on the banks of the River Bela, dates from around 1740. It is a working watermill and hosts a variety of community and visitor activities. There is also a lively programme of drama, music, art and film at the Heron Theatre, an 18<sup>th</sup> century listed building which was originally the old Grammar School.

South of the village is the magnificent medieval Beetham Hall. Although this is private property, it can be seen clearly from the road and from a public footpath that runs behind the property.

The popular 'Limestone Link' walking route from Arnside to Kirkby Lonsdale passes through the parish and there are numerous other public footpaths to enjoy, including one crossing the Deer Park and the public footpath from the village to Beetham Fell and the Fairy Steps. This flight of natural stone steps squeezed between two sheer rock faces is so named because, according to legend, if you climb the steps without touching the sides, the fairies will grant your wish!

On the side of the road towards Slackhead, look out for a small shrine dedicated to St Lioba.

Just across the A6 is Beetham Nurseries: a garden centre and popular cafe.



### The Countryside Code

#### *Respect Protect Enjoy*

##### **Respect other people**

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

##### **Protect the natural environment**

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

##### **Enjoy the outdoors**

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

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ARNSIDE &  
SILVERDALE  
One of the  
AONB Family

Arnside & Silverdale AONB is recognised for its distinctive landscape and extraordinary diversity of habitats, and of plants, birds and butterflies. Well-maintained and signposted footpaths lead you through stunning limestone hills and pavements, ancient woodlands, wetlands, intimate orchards and meadows, and an impressive coast-line. Panoramic views, amazing wildlife and an intriguing history lie waiting to be discovered

For more information on the area, or other walks in the series, please visit [www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk](http://www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk) or contact the AONB office at:  
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Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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