

Walks from Running Hare



Bowness-on-Windermere is one of the most popular and bustling towns in the Lake District. It's ideal for visiting the lake, also being the starting point for boat trips to the Western and Northern shores. There's a great variety of shops, including independent galleries, and a range of delis, bars and restaurants for meals, drinks and afternoon tea.

For a faster, functional walk to Bowness, head down Lake Road, the main road linking Windermere and Bowness. You'll go past rows of shops to Bowness Promenade in about 15-20 minutes. This is the more picturesque walk, through fields and woods initially to the quieter lake shore where the ferry crosses to Far Sawrey on the western side, and then to the bustling Promenade at Bowness Bay where you can enjoy the liveliness of Bowness town, finishing in more peaceful natural surroundings again on the way home.

This circular walk from Running Hare takes around 2 hours at an easy pace; being around 5 miles/8km. Stop for longer to enjoy food, drink or shopping in Bowness. Check out our guide to foraging to find some tasty pickings on this walk.

The first part of the walk is the same as the Brantfell/Post Knott walk. All steps below.

1. Turn right outside Running Hare, taking a left up the hill into Park Road by the corner shop. At the sign for Windermere Park (a lovely housing estate), carry straight on.
2. As the road bends to the right, take the path on the left signposted *Public footpath Bowness ½ a mile* {We sponsored this signpost in memory of our parents, the <3 is a pre-emoji style heart}. Walk along this track with the woods to your left and houses to the right. Keep straight on, ignoring the little tracks on the left then the track on the right and climb through the gap in the stone wall signposted *Public Footpath*. Continue along the path with the fields to the left, and go through the wooden kissing gate.
3. Reaching the larger track, turn left and follow the path left going through a small gate into a field, with the house, *Helm Farm Cottage*, on your right. Follow the less distinct path on the right through the hummocky field, heading for the kissing gate in the wall.
4. Follow the tarmac road to the left briefly, then cross the adjoining road, to enter the field following the grassy path through the large gap in the wall. You can see the summit of Brant Fell up ahead - but that's another walk.
5. Go through the kissing gate and keep to the grassy path ahead. Pass a house on the right, ignoring the gate to your right, and go through another gate on the left side of the field, and follow the stony track on the right (this is the Dales Way) between the two dry stone walls, passing *Brantfell Barn* on your left.
6. Go straight across the track and through the gate to take the path on the right going slightly downhill. Pass under some beautiful old oak trees whose branches spread across the path. You'll soon see Lake Windermere ahead. Go through the kissing gate. (The track to the left takes you up to *Post Knott*, then *Brantfell*). Head straight on for Bowness-on-Windermere below. {about 2km, 30 min}
7. Go down the steep stony track past the Dales Way slate bench and out through the metal gate onto Brantfell Road to walk along some pavements for a short while.
8. Ignore the Fairfield dead end on left. The centre of Bowness is down ahead of you, and we'll return there on the way back. For now, take a left at the *Arts Bar* up to go up Kendal Road, walking past several guesthouses. Then turn right into Back Belsfield Road where you walk past the Belsfield hotel on your right, and follow it round till you reach the junction with the main road.
9. Cross straight over this busier main road (A592) into Glebe gardens/Lake Gardens (a housing cul-de-sac). Part way down on the right there's a very narrow path between two big hedges, like a secret passageway in a Harry Potter story. As you emerge walk up and over the little grass hill with the cemetery to your left. You can see Windermere Marina ahead on the right which you'll visit further on. Exit the metal gate at the bottom left corner.

Don't miss the secret passage between the hedges



10. Turn left into Rectory Road so you're now walking past the cemetery on your left. Cross Glebe Road to walk straight ahead on the stone track signposted *Ambleside via ferry*. The lake is ahead on your right. You'll come to a right turn as the path descends slightly. If you don't want to see the lake shore at *Bowness Nab* where the ferry crosses to Far Sawrey on the western side of the lake, you can turn right and go straight to (12). {About 4km, 1 hour}.

11. Otherwise, carry on ahead ignoring the right turn that you will return to as a left turn. Follow the ferry signs up the hill, past Dan's snack shack on the right, and turn right into the B5285, walking along the pavement to the ferry dock quay. To the left of the shelter in there's a short gravelly path to walk along to get to the small shoreline; there's some benches to sit on but it's more a space to enjoy the view than to have a picnic or paddle (which you can further on at #12). Enjoy the amazing views north, south and across the Lake to the western shore. You should be able to see the two cables that pull the ferry across, maybe even the ferry. The ferry takes cars, bikes and foot passengers. More information about this 15 minute ferry ride is at <https://www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk/cruises-fares/bowness-to-ferry-house-cross-lakes-shuttle> Retrace your steps back to the path past *Dan's Shack*, picking up the previous track and taking a left towards the lake.

12. Follow the path, enjoying views across the shore at Cockshot point where you can see a domed building on Belle Island that was the only inhabited island on Windermere. You can choose to explore closer to the shoreline, or have a picnic on the grass here.

13. Leave via the metal gate and walk on along the pavement by the road. Instead of carrying on along this pavement, you can get to the quay-side by the lake through a gap in the shops between *Marina Reception* and *Aquatic Marine Superstore*. Turn right along the walkway behind the shops. Enjoy views of the fells ahead to the north. There's some places to eat and drink here, more by the upcoming Promenade, and even more in the centre of Bowness, so no rush to make a choice yet.

14. Re-join the roadside pavement to walk to the popular promenade of Bowness Bay. That's *Glebe Park* on the right, with the large rusted metal tree shelter sculpture on the right. You can find out about activities in the park by googling Glebe Park. A variety of cruises are on offer from Bowness Bay. Find out more here <https://www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk/> or pick up leaflets when you're there.

15. Leaving the lake and promenade behind you, walk up the hill into Bowness town on the main road, Lake Road, passing St Martins church on your left. Cross over the road at the roundabout, ignoring Rayrigg Road to the left, to head up the steep hill. There's lots of interesting shops to explore here of the edible, wearable and collectible variety so you may want to detour for a mooch about. When you're ready, head up Lake Road, walking on the left side. You'll see the *Beatrix Potter World Attraction* down to the left.

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