

Walks from Running Hare



Post Knott / Brantfell



The walk to Post Knott and Brantfell is a pleasant two hours, just under 6km (about 3.5 miles), rewarding you with splendid views of Lake Windermere and the surrounding fells for not too much climbing effort though there are a couple of steep-ish bits. The views are quite different from those at Orrest Head, looking towards the south of Lake Windermere. As usual, wear decent footwear and bear in mind weather changes. For a slightly longer walk, grab the *School Knott* walk and tag it on from point (19).

I'm always struck by the wide variety of trees on this walk; most easily identifiable when in leaf but still of interest over winter too. You might like to see how many you can identify. The Woodland Trust has a free tree identification app.

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. Ignore the tracks on the left. I love a nosey into back gardens. Ignore the track on the right and climb through the gap in the stone wall. 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 near the wall through the hummocky field, heading for the kissing gate in the wall.
4. Follow the tarmac road to the left briefly, then cross another tarmac road, to enter the field following the grassy path through the gap in the wall. You can see the summit of Brant Fell up ahead, but you're not climbing up there just yet.
5. Go through another kissing gate and keep to the grassy path ahead.

Go through another gate on the left side of the field (ignore a gate on the right), 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. Go through the kissing gate and take the track to the left which is signposted *Public footpath Post Knott*. There's Lake Windermere in front of you and that's Bowness-on-Windermere below. Victorians used to come up here by horse and cart so it's a nice wide track. No, you don't need a cart, you'll be fine; you undoubtedly have better footwear ;-)

7. Carry on uphill through these beautiful woods, where you can see trees holding on to the rocks by their roots. Spot the stone benches built into the wall. Follow the path to the left as it ascends in an inward spiral. Ignore the gate to your right for now, and reach the top of the viewpoint to your left, marked with a slate bench. This is not Post Knott itself, but it offers a good view of the northern part of the lake, especially in winter when the trees are not in leaf.

8. Go back down to that wooden gate. At the fork in the path, go right for Post Knott (it's not marked) where there is a little wooden bench. The view is partly obscured by the trees and shrubs; the island in Lake Windermere is Belle Isle.

9. Continue over the top of the hillock to join the main path, leaving the lake on your right, through the next kissing gate and up to the top of Brant Fell. There's no trig point marking the summit, but you will see two stone gate posts (no gate) which are pretty much the top.

Enjoy the breathtaking 360° panoramic views. You get a real sense of how long the lake is: 18km/11 miles. Straight ahead you can see Bowness Marina, to its left on the horizon is Morecambe Bay. Windermere village is behind you, and what fantastic mountains beyond! Aren't the rocky outcrops amazing? Check out the photos at the end to find out a little about the building that used to be on top of Brantfell.

10. To leave Brantfell, stand between the gateposts facing the lake, then turn right towards the group of white houses on the other side of the valley below at Matson Ground. Head down in that direction initially bearing slightly left. There's not much of a path to discern here, but the way is marked by a series of small cairns (human-made small stacks of stones).

Keep heading down towards the white buildings ahead and you'll soon see a pine tree plantation enclosed by wire fencing.

11. Go through the gate into plantation and follow the curvy walk through the pine trees.

12. Go through the kissing gate leaving the plantation and turn right on the track. This leads to a stone stile in the wall. Climb over and take the left track to the road, turning left onto the road for just a few steps before re-entering the fields through a kissing gate on the left, signed Public Footpath. You're going back on yourself in U shape.

13. Once in the field, bear left up the hill where there will soon be a wall to follow on your left. You can now see that row of white house on your right, at *Matson Ground*. Go through the wooden gate in the stone wall ahead.

14. Follow the grass path slightly to the left of the little clump of trees and fields. Carry on through the grassland heading towards the stile in the corner of the field, using the series of raised planks to walk across this often boggy land.

15. Go through the metal gate and take the path to the right. Go through the small wooden kissing gate and follow the rocky path going through the gap in the drystone wall. You are now partly retracing your earlier steps.

16. Cross the tarmac road and go on a small stretch of the metal-ed road curving left, and head straight through the gate in the wall ahead on the right. Walk through the field with the wall on your left and head for the next kissing gate. The housing on your left is *Helm Farm Cottage* from earlier at point (3).

17. Bear slightly right to follow the stone track up ahead and continue straight on into the woods, the way you came originally. Go through the kissing gate and keep on this track (not the narrower walled track which leads to a dead end road, Hilltop Road).

Carry straight on, going over the stone stile/gap in wall. Turn right to pass the houses and fields. A few steps after you've re-entered the woods, you come to a fork. Left is the way you came earlier. Turn sharp right instead and follow the curved track up the hill.

18. Ignore the gate on the right. Go through the wooden kissing gate, with houses to your left and a steep bank on the right. When the wall ends, continue going uphill through the field where you will come to a metal kissing gate leading to a tarmac road. Cross over Lickbarrow Road where looking slightly to the right you'll see another stile in the wall with a signpost to Old Droomer. Climb over and into this field.

Potential cow alert diversion There are cows in the next field that very occasionally wander into this field. If you don't like that (and I'm someone who has turned back because a cow moo-ed at me. How do I know if it's a friendly hello or a warning to get out of her field?!), then you can walk left down Lickbarrow Road instead. →

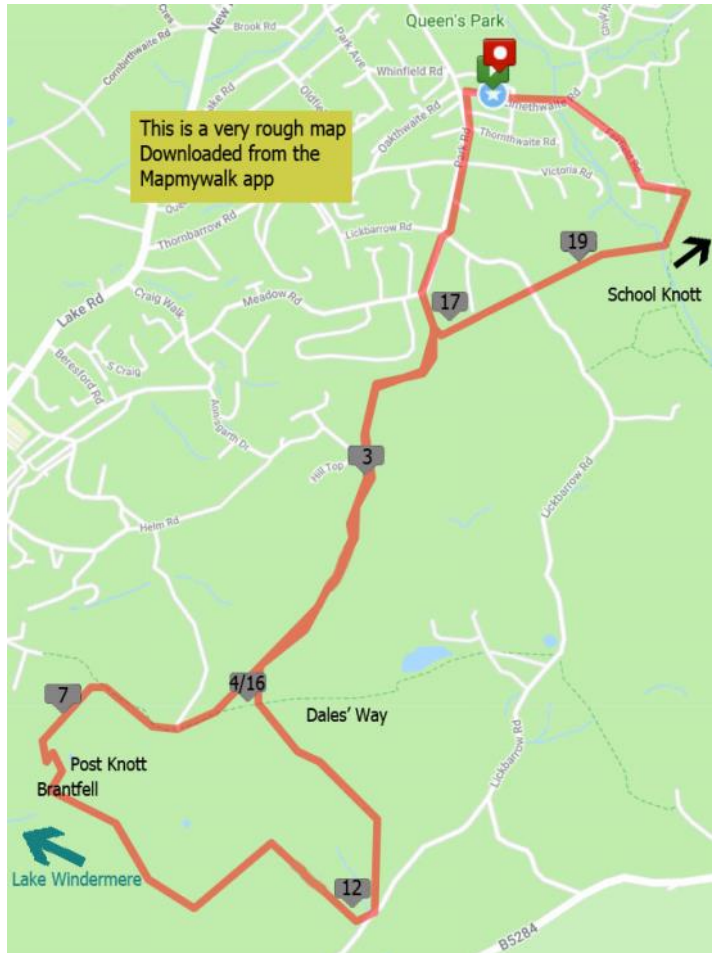
At the junction turn right down Park Road where you will come to the corner shop and turn right into Limethwaite Road. This is also a quicker way back by a few minutes. My friends who tested this walk for us were doubled up laughing about the cows, but it's good to cover all eventualities

19. If you're undaunted by cows that probably aren't there anyway, enter the field with the wall to your right, ignoring the big red gate on the left. Head for and climb over the little wooden stile and cross the stream, then walk up the stone steps and turn left onto the road.

{If you want a longer walk, you can link this to the School Knott walk, turning right instead of left into High Lickbarrow woods}.

Walk past Old Droomer cottage, with its gardens on the left. In springtime there are beautiful flowering azaleas and rhododendrons.

20. Go through the tall gates. You'll see a sign to School Knott on the right, but ignore it and turn immediately left where you will go through another tall narrow gate to emerge at the end of Victoria Road North. Walk down and turn right into Fairfield Road, then take a left into Limethwaite Road.



A few photos from this walk



Cairns marking the Brantfell descent



View of Brantfell on the way to Post Knott



Bowness before the climb to Post Knott



Moody rainbow sky



Now and Then
Summerhouse razed to the ground



Main: Early photograph of the summerhouse
Inset: View towards Brantfell from Matson Ground.

Very early on the icy morning of Monday 5 January 1959 flames lit the sky above Brantfell when an ancient summerhouse caught fire. People called the Fire Service



A walker we met on Brantfell told us about the early 20 century building on Brantfell. It was built by the Matson family to help a child with tuberculosis to recover with sunlight and fresh air, pre-antibiotics. It was also used by Girl Guides. Unfortunately it burnt down in 1959.