

Around Skiddaw

Route grade	Medium	Distance	31 miles
Time	6 hours	OS Landranger 90, OS outdoor Leisure 4 & 5	
Total ascent	6 climbs of 60 & 90m	Map ref	269239

Brief Introduction:

This route is a complete circumnavigation of Skiddaw and Blencathra, utilising the signed cycle way from Keswick to Mungrisdale built by Sustrans in 1999 and now part of the Sea to Sea. The route then runs through Mosedale, past Carrock Fell to meet the Reivers Route at Heskett Newmarket. This signed route returns you over Caldbeck Common to Bassenthwaite village, where you will leave the route to head back to Keswick.

Full Description:

1. Start - Depart Keswick from behind the swimming pool and cycle along the disused railway track to the A66 viaduct. Here you will climb almost to road level before descending on steep steps back to river level, after which you enjoy a lovely ride to Threlkeld village. Be careful on the steps - they can be slippery after wet weather and there are several gates to negotiate too.
2. Follow the main road through Threlkeld village, turning off left to follow the C2C signs through woodland which leads you to the C2C cycle track to Mungrisdale. Follow this and there is a good refreshment stop at The Mill Inn.
3. Now you leave the C2C and head off through Mosedale, where Carrock Fell rises steeply to your left - on the very top are the remains of the largest hillfort in Cumbria (pre-Roman). Continue on to Heskett Newmarket. If you arrive during 'opening hours', call in at The Old Crown, famous for its home brewed, award winning beers, named after local fells - Skiddaw and Blencathra, the mountains you are cycling around - to name but two.
4. Head up through the village towards the Post Office and turn left. You now follow signs for the Reivers Route which will take you over Caldbeck Common. There is an off road option and short cut just after Branthwaite as far as Longlands. A steep descent past Overwater and through Orthwaite brings you to a junction where you will turn right for Bassenthwaite and another watering hole at The Sun Inn.
5. Heading for Scarness, cross the A591 and follow the road down towards the Lake, turning left at the bottom and returning towards the main road again. A slight detour from this path will bring you to St Bega's Church, where Tennyson composed the lines in Morte d'Arthur where the sword Excalibur is cast into the lake. Nearer to the main road is Mirehouse, dating from the 17th Century and open to the public. Turning right at the main road, you can use tracks through the woods on your left or the path next to the main road for two miles, then turn left towards Millbeck and through Applethwaite to the A66 roundabout.
6. Dismount here to cross straight over and head for Keswick on the A591 for 500 yards, turning left after the garage. This lane will return you to the start behind the swimming pool.



