

Whinlatter Forest

This is England's only mountain forest and is accessed via the village of Braithwaite close to Keswick. Planting started after the first World War to combat the timber shortage. Whinlatter Forest has had considerable investment in order to turn it into a recreational resource with many way marked woodland paths. The Visitor Centre is the ideal place to start a visit. The shop sells a guide to the forest, showing the fourteen miles of road suitable for walkers and cyclists, as well as many other paths for walkers. There is also a permanent orienteering course. Walks range from short trails suitable for wheelchairs and buggies to way-marked routes to Grisedale Pike, Lord's Seat and Barf and Seat Howe Viewpoint. There are some spectacular views across the fells and forests of Northern Lakeland. For children there is a forest playground, and junior trails that start and end at the visitor centre.

Ennerdale Forest

The Ennerdale valley, around Ennerdale Lake, contains one of the largest forests in Cumbria. Ennerdale is rarely busy, and is an excellent retreat from the main tourist attractions. There are more than 20 miles of forest road, and many other paths open to the public in the Ennerdale valley, including one around the lake. Most walks, including one round the lake start at Bowness Knott car park, at the end of the road from Ennerdale Village

Dodd Wood

Dodd Wood is leased from the Mirehouse Estate, and is on the East shore of Bassenthwaite Lake. Now managed by the Forestry Commission, the forest was created by Thomas Storey of Mirehouse in 1790. Some of the magnificent old trees can still be seen surrounding the car park. The car park is the starting point for several way-marked walks through the forest. These range from short strolls to a walk to the summit of Dodd, from where you are rewarded with spectacular views over Bassenthwaite and Derwentwater. From here you can see 40 major peaks, the Solway Firth and the magnificent mountains of Galloway in a view covering some 500 square miles. The summit walk is 3 miles long. Allow 2 to 2 and a half hours including time to stop and admire the view.

Thirlmere

On the western side of the lake there are car parks and walking trails. United Utilities have established the woodland around Thirlmere as a special red squirrel refuge. This is an ideal place for visitors to see red squirrels and learn about their conservation. A squirrel hide is located within the forest at the Swirls Car Park. The Swirls Trail has way marking to the squirrel hide.

Bassenthwaite Lake from Barf

