

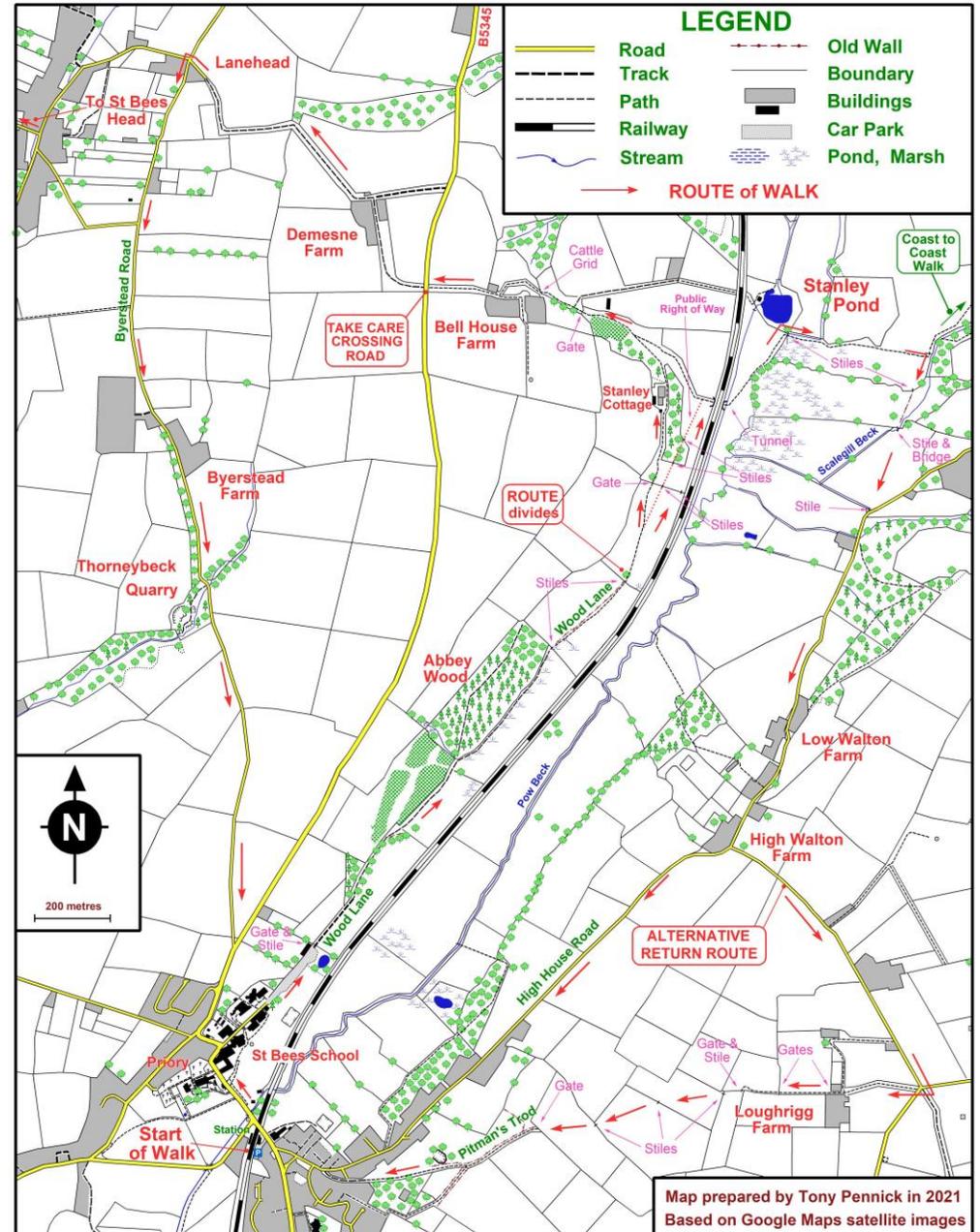
CIRCULAR St. Bees 7 WALK

A Walk up Wood Lane to Stanley Pond and
 Back via High House Road 2.0 hours : 3.6 miles
 Back via the Byerstead Road 2.5 hours : 4.1 miles
 or via Sandwith/St. Bees Head (needs Map from Walk 3)



The Railway circa 1850

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Map prepared by Tony Pennick in 2021
 Based on Google Maps satellite images

St. Bees Circular Walk 7 Wood Lane and Stanley Pond

St. Bees Circular Walk 7 : Wood Lane & Stanley Pond

This walk follows the St. Bees valley and joins the “Coast to Coast Walk” near Stanley Pond. The options for the return route are :-

- 1) **Via High Walton and High House Road (or via Loughrigg and Pitman’s Trod).**
(Time : approx. 2 hours ; Distance 5.8 km : 3.6 miles) (Time : approx. 2.5 hours ; Distance 7.0 km : 4.4 miles)
- 2) **Via Bell House Farm, Demesne Farm and the Byerstead Road.**
(Time : approx. 2.5 hours ; Distance 6.5 km : 4.1 miles)
- 3) **Via Sandwith or St. Bees Head (This requires the map from Circular Walk 3).**

Some of the paths can be muddy after wet weather and suitable footwear is advisable.

The walk starts from the Station car park in the centre of the village. From the car park, cross the Railway and walk towards St. Bees Priory.

If time permits, the interior of the Church, some parts of which date from the 12th century, is well worth a visit. There are descriptive pamphlets and postcards available inside.

At the Lych gate cross the road by the original entrance to St. Bees School.

The principle buildings form three sides of a quadrangle facing the church. The northern wing was built in 1588 and the other two wings date from the 19th century. The school owes its existence to Edmund Grindal, Archbishop of York (1570-75) and Canterbury (1575-83). He remembered his birthplace and in his will provided for a free Grammar School for St. Bees.

Walk around the first part of the double bend until a road into the School campus is reached on the right by the post box. Follow this road to its end.

On the left is the Whitelaw Building, the management centre, opened by Prince Charles in 1993 - named after the Conservative politician, William Whitelaw, a past Chairman of Governors.

Go through the kissing gate onto Wood Lane, which previously was a major route along the valley towards Whitehaven. Follow the lane below the large patch of gorse (a mass of yellow in spring) until the far end of Abbey Wood is reached. This can be muddy after wet weather. Cross a double stile over a hedge bank (which is the boundary between two farms).

In the field beyond, the route divides and those intending to return via Options (2) or (3) should take the grassy track up the hill to the left.

(1) Return via High Walton and High House Road (or Loughrigg and Pitman’s Trod)

Although the official Public Right of Way crosses into the Stanley Cottage woodland, the popular route continues along the valley floor, crossing one stile before a tunnel under the railway is reached at the far end of the field. This is the junction with the “Coast to Coast” walk. Go under the railway, cross Pow Beck and follow the path left across a field to a stile at the corner by Stanley Pond.

The pond was created following mining subsidence on 1st March 1792 when the workings of the nearby Scalegill colliery suddenly collapsed, sending up a torrent of water and creating a large funnel-like aperture, 60 - 70m in diameter. The colliery was almost worked out and luckily no one was in there at the time. Today it is difficult to see the pond owing to the banks of reeds and now it is a haven for wild ducks and the occasional heron.



Past the stile, continue the walk along the field boundary (avoiding the wetter patches) until a step stile is reached in the corner.

Here the “Coast to Coast” walk goes left towards the village of Moor Row.

This walk turns to the right. Go along the boundary, over step stiles in the fence and across the field on a raised bank until a ladder stile is reached - hidden behind trees.

Do not try to cross Scalegill Beck to the obvious gate in the field boundary - it is very muddy.

Once over the stile, cross the beck on the foot-bridge and go directly across the field to the corner to meet the Linethwaite road at a bend. Turn to the right and follow the road up the hill to the junction by High Walton Farm.

Looking back there is a view of Stanley Pond and, in front, fine views of St. Bees and the Head.

For the alternative return via Loughrigg and Pitman’s Trod (Part of Walk 5), turn left up the hill and follow the route as indicated on the map. The views improve as you get higher.

Continue along High House Road which descends into St. Bees past a number of fine old houses. When Cross Hill is reached, walk down Finkle Street, passing the Village Hall (which was the former Liberal Club). By the Albert Hotel, cross over Main Street and return to the Station car park.

2) Return via Bell House Farm, Demesne Farm and the Byerstead Road.

Follow the grassy track diagonally up the hill past Stanley Cottage from where you can look down on Stanley Pond and then through Bell House Farm to the main road. Take care crossing it and follow the track ahead a short distance to Demesne Farm.

Demesne is the medieval name for the home farm, which originally belonged to the Priory, but following its dissolution in the 1539 passed to the Crown. In 1599 it was sold to Thomas Wyberg, a local gentleman, but by 1686 it had passed into the Lowther family (Lord Lonsdale), where it remained until the middle of the 20th century.

Turn left past the farmhouse and follow the zigzag lane to Lanehead (the site of a former smithy) and the Byerstead Road. Turn left (south) and follow the road past Byerstead Farm and in and out of the dip by the side of Thorneybeck Quarry. Continue along this road until it meets the main St. Bees to Whitehaven road.

From the rise before the descent into the village, there are fine views of the meandering Pow Beck in the valley, the School, the Priory and over the railway, the southern part of St. Bees.

Keep on the grass verge and follow the main road towards the village. From Abbey Farm, retrace steps around the zigzag bends keeping to the left (school) side of the road. Cross the road by the Lych gate and make your way back to the Station Car Park.

3) Return via Sandwith or St. Bees Head. (Requires Map from Walk 3)

Those wanting a longer walk should proceed into Sandwith Village from Lanehead and then either return via Rottington or take the private road towards the Lighthouse to make the circuit of the Head, or via Hannamoore Lane to Fleswick Bay and then over Tomlin back to St. Bees.

To find out more about St Bees, you may like to visit the Village Web Site on www.stbees.org.uk

Tony Pennick and Bob Mayow

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