



Keswick & Borrowdale

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Itinerary map
3. Itinerary description
4. Example schedule
5. Ticket information
6. Timetables & Connections



78 bus Seatoller

1. Introduction

A public transport adventure from Keswick through the beautiful Borrowdale valley which includes magnificent scenery throughout and visits some wonderful villages and attractions along the way.

Itinerary summary

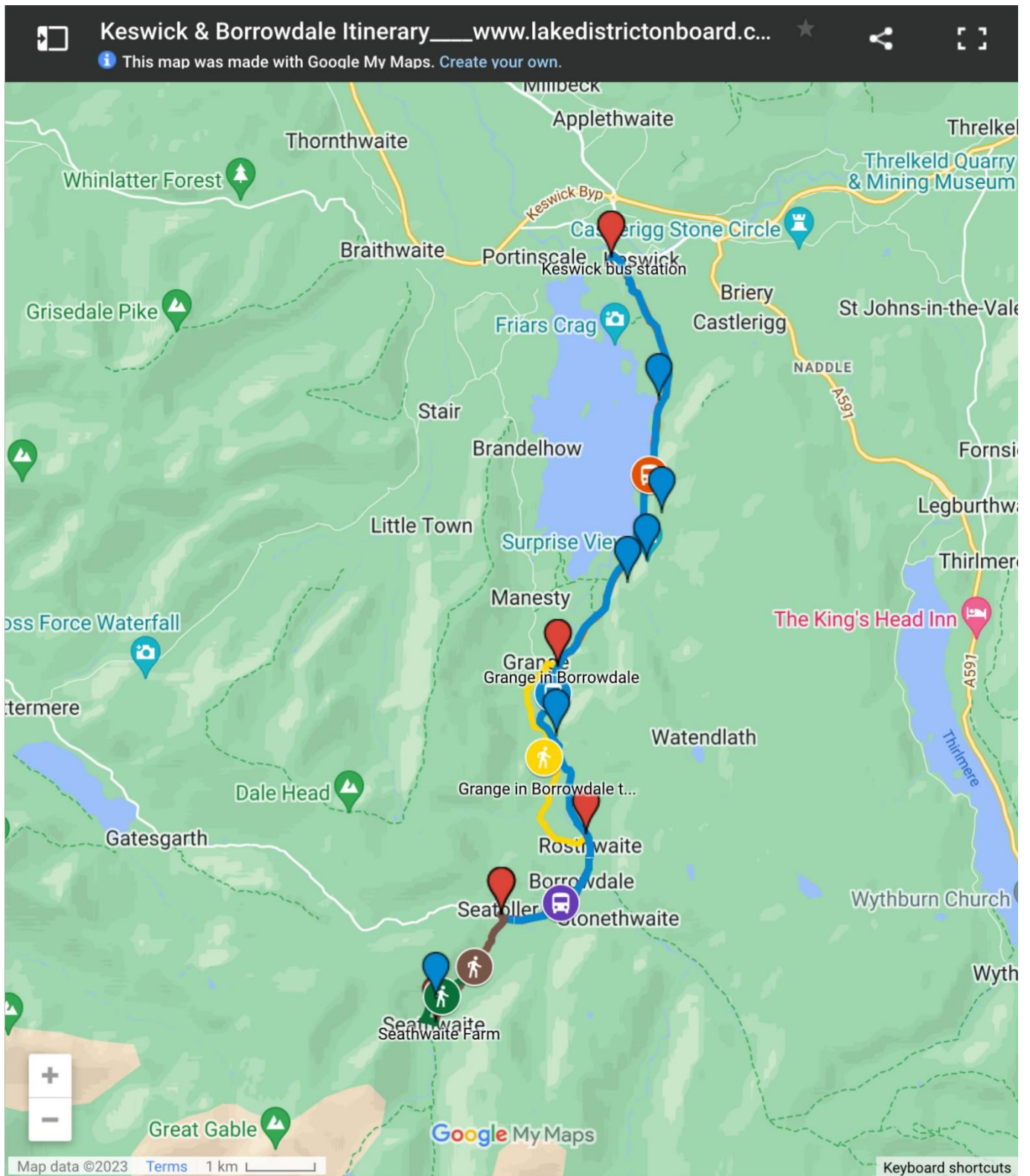
Starting at Keswick, you can explore the popular town and its various attractions before taking the wonderful open top 78 bus which heads into Borrowdale alongside Derwent Water. Alight at Grange in Borrowdale village for an easy walk along the crystal-clear River Derwent to Rosthwaite village through the 'Jaws of Borrowdale', allowing a real flavour of this spectacular valley. From Rosthwaite you can rejoin the 78 bus which continues through the magnificent Borrowdale valley to its terminus at Seatoller. Then you can take an easy walk to nearby Seathwaite valley with its spectacular scenery and interesting history. The walk returns to Seatoller where you catch the bus back down the valley, returning to Keswick.

This itinerary suggests a few of the best attractions to visit and lists others that you might want to include. It can easily be done in a day, allowing some time to explore attractions at each stop. An example schedule is included along with current prices. The itinerary can be done all year round.

The suggested start is Keswick, but of course it can be started anywhere along the route or done in a different order. A route map is included below, an interactive version is available via the website [here](#).

Bus, boat and train stop locations are given in [What3words](#) format, an easy and precise way to navigate if you download the app.

2. Itinerary map



An interactive map is available on the website [here](#).

3. Itinerary description

Stop 1. Keswick town.



Keswick town centre

Keswick is a popular and pretty tourist town nestled between Derwent Water and Skiddaw mountain. It has long been the main hub for the northern Lake District and boomed when the railway line from Penrith and west Cumbria was completed in 1864, bringing Victorian tourists to Keswick station. You can still see the station today in the northern town but the railway line was closed in 1972. The old railway line is now a popular cycle and walking path alongside the River Greta towards Threlkeld to the east.

There are plenty of attractions for visitors including the [Pencil Museum](#) which tells the interesting history of pencil making in the town and the opening of the UK's first pencil factory here in 1832. Pencil manufacture moved to nearby Workington in 2008 but the museum remains and you can also see one of the largest colour pencils in the world at almost 26 feet long! Other interesting attractions in the town include [Keswick Museum](#) and [The Puzzling Place](#). There are abundant shops, outdoor specialists, cafes, pubs and restaurants around the town as well as some lovely parks. In the town centre is the pedestrianised market place where you might find the market in full swing. In the centre of that is the prominent old Moot Hall which now houses the Tourist Information Centre. Over the River Greta from the town centre, you will find the attractive Fitz Park with its vast open grassy areas next to the river where you can escape the crowds.

A 10 minute walk from the town centre is the lakeside area on Derwent Water which is always popular and you can explore the lake either by boat or the fabulous 10 mile [footpath](#) which circuits the lake. The [Keswick Launch](#) cruise is a wonderful way to take in the lake and its surroundings. There are regular boats (less in winter) which stop here and at several beauty spots around the lake. It is definitely worth walking the short distance to [Friar's Crag](#) which offers beautiful views up the lake. Crow Park, opposite Lakeside car park, has a lovely open setting next to the lake where you can watch the boats come and go, again with great views. Between Crow Park and the town centre is Hope Park which has delightful landscaped grounds and miniature golf. There is a cafe, toilet facilities and the popular [Theatre by the Lake](#) which has its own facilities.



Derwent Water from Friar's Crag

All buses stop at the main bus station in the town centre.

Travelling:



Take the open top 78 bus from Keswick to Grange in Borrowdale village. Arguably the most scenic bus route in the country! As you head out of Keswick you get some wonderful views ahead up the Borrowdale valley towards the high mountains beyond. Then pass through ancient Atlantic Oak woodland at Great Wood, the last remaining fragments of Temperate Rainforest which once covered much of the west coast of Britain. Nearby is picturesque [Calfclose Bay](#). The road travels alongside beautiful Derwent Water with great views inbetween the trees, across the water towards Cat Bells mountain. You could alight at Ashness Gate and walk up to the famous [Ashness Bridge, Surprise View and Watendlath](#). Or further on is the [Lodore Falls](#) Hotel with the impressive waterfall behind. Otherwise, not too far beyond the end of the lake is Grange in Borrowdale village. The bus stop is on the B5289 valley road adjacent to the historic double arched bridge over the River Derwent which leads to the village.



Derwent Water from Surprise View

Otherwise, not too far beyond the end of the lake is Grange in Borrowdale village. The bus stop is on the B5289 valley road adjacent to the historic double arched bridge over the River Derwent which leads to the village.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Route | Keswick to Grange in Borrowdale village |
| Transport | 78 open top bus (open top conditions permitting) |
| Start | Keswick bus station, Keswick, CA12 5EA. ///verify.prowl.florists |
| End | On B5289 at Grange bridge junction. ///stamp.senders.reapply |
| Duration | 17 minutes |
| Frequency | Daily, every 30 minutes Easter to November. Every 60 minutes in winter. |
| Transport features | Open top (conditions permitting) |

Notes – Open top 78 bus allows you to fully appreciate the scenery but you can also catch a 77A bus from Keswick to Grange which travels along the western side of Derwent Water. Seasonal service, daily from Easter to November, every hour in the mornings and every 2 hours in the afternoons.

Stop 2. Grange in Borrowdale village.



Grange in Borrowdale

Grange in Borrowdale is a small attractive village in a fabulous setting in the Borrowdale valley. It is worth a wonder through the timeless village with its pretty slate and whitewashed old houses. There is a cafe in the centre of the village and [Holy Trinity Church](#) which dates from 1861 and has some interesting 'dog-tooth' ceiling decoration. Next to the bridge is the Methodist Church which dates from 1893 and now houses '[The Borrowdale Story](#)' display, telling the interesting history of the valley. There are public toilets by the river.

Wherever you are in the village, the surrounding views are wonderful. Behind the village is a wall of mountains which includes Maiden Moor and High Spy. Back across the river are the wooded craggy slopes of Grange Fell. Looking up the river you can see the pointy peak of Castle Crag where the valley suddenly becomes very narrow and is known as the 'Jaws of Borrowdale' with the valley opening up again further upstream. The river itself is normally shallow and crystal clear here with plenty of exposed shingle where you can picnic and paddle whilst enjoying the surroundings.

Signs of human activity in the area date back over 6000 years to the Neolithic period when stone axes were made high up on the fells. Signs of Iron Age activity include a fort on the summit of nearby Castle Crag where Roman remains have also been found. In medieval times, around the 10th century, Scandinavian settlers came to the valley and started to clear the densely wooded wilderness for settlements and agriculture. Many of the place names you see today came from them. From the 13th to the 16th century, the valley was largely owned and farmed by Furness Abbey in southern Cumbria and this is where the monks built their outlying farm or 'grange', hence the name of the village.

Buses stop on the B5289, across the bridge from the village.

Travelling:



A fabulous easy walk alongside the picturesque River Derwent from Grange in Borrowdale village through the 'Jaws of Borrowdale' to Rosthwaite village. Take the minor tree lined lane alongside the cafe and after 0.3 miles take the rough track on the left towards Castle Crag. Pass a campsite and the track soon descends to a big bend in the river where there is a fork in the path. You can go right and ascend Castle Crag with its fabulous views of Borrowdale and Derwent Water. Or the easier option is to go left and follow the river which is mesmerizingly clear as it meanders through woodland down the valley. The valley here is very narrow and known as the 'Jaws of Borrowdale', being much wider upstream and downstream. The path along the river rises and falls a little before emerging from the trees revealing the wonderful upper Borrowdale valley, completely surrounded by mountains. It's not far to New Bridge, an old packhorse bridge which you cross, then follow the river again for a short distance before heading away from the river to nearby Rosthwaite village.



River Derwent, Borrowdale

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Route | Grange in Borrowdale village to Rosthwaite village |
| Transport | Walking |
| Start | Grange in Borrowdale village centre. ///deed.stupidly.blocking |
| End | Rosthwaite village. ///soggy.behaving.whoever |
| Duration | Walk is around 2.5 miles in length, around 1.5 hours. |

Notes – Alternatively, to avoid the walk, you can continue to Rosthwaite village and beyond on the 78 or the seasonal 77A bus.

Stop 3. Rosthwaite village.



Rosthwaite from Castle Crag

Rosthwaite is a small attractive village in the heart of the Borrowdale valley, surrounded by high mountains. Apart from quaint old cottages, there isn't a lot to see in the village itself but there are some good places to get refreshments, including the [Flock-in tea room](#), the [Royal Oak Hotel](#) and the [Scafell Hotel](#).

If we go back over a thousand years, the valley was a very inhospitable place, covered in dense woodland and boggy ground but in the 10th century Scandinavian settlers came

here looking for summer grazing for their cattle. Many other Lake District valleys proved an easier prospect and had been settled at that point, but these hard folks of the north were not put off and started to create clearings, or thwaites, in the woods for settlements. Nowadays there are many place names with 'thwaite' in them, especially around here, for example Rosthwaite! All starting out as clearings and then settlements from this Scandinavian era. The Norse legacy is very evident in many local place names such as Fell (mountain), Beck (stream), Tarn (small lake) and even the name Borrowdale is Norse derivation from the Iron Age fort on Castle Crag.

There are public toilets at the National Trust car park. Buses stop on the main B5289 valley road at the northern end of the village.

Travelling:



Take the open top 78 bus from Rosthwaite village to Seatoller village, passing through the magnificent Borrowdale valley. Beyond Rosthwaite on the left is the impressive Stonethwaite valley with its small village and the original valley church, dating from 1687. Beyond Stonethwaite, the spectacular scenery continues to impress as the mountains get closer and it's not long before the bus reaches its terminus at Seatoller. Alight here for the next walking section to Seathwaite Farm, or stay on the bus to return back down the valley.



| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Route | Rosthwaite village to Seatoller village |
| Transport | 78 open top bus (open top conditions permitting) |
| Start | Rosthwaite village on B5289. ///boater.regretted.rinse |
| End | Seatoller car park, Borrowdale, CA12 5XN. ///farmer.converged.sitting |
| Duration | 5 minutes |
| Frequency | Daily, every 30 minutes Easter to November. Every 60 minutes in winter. |
| Transport features | Open top (conditions permitting) |

Notes – Open top 78 bus allows you to fully appreciate the scenery but you can also catch a 77A bus from Rosthwaite to Seatoller. Seasonal service, daily from Easter to November, every hour in the mornings and every 2 hours in the afternoons. 77A continues to Buttermere from Seatoller.

Stop 4. Seatoller village.



Seatoller village

Seatoller village marks the end of the Borrowdale valley before the road climbs steeply up the Honister Pass. There's not much to see in the village itself apart from a few cottages that were built as homes for miners working at nearby Honister slate mine. However, the surrounding mountain scenery is magnificent and very popular with walkers.

Buses stop at the entrance to Seatoller car park which is the terminus for the 78 bus. There are public toilets near the bus stop.

Travelling:



An easy walk into nearby Seathwaite valley which explores its fabulous scenery and history. From Seatoller bus stop, head a short distance back down the road to take the minor Seathwaite road on the right. The narrow and normally quiet road follows the valley floor through woodland before opening up with excellent views of surrounding mountains in this deep and narrow valley. Approx 0.7 miles from the road junction, the road crosses the upper River Derwent which can be totally dry at times, or very wet! Just before the bridge, take the footpath on the right which follows the river and after a few minutes meets the ancient 'Borrowdale Yews' in a fenced area on the right. These evergreen trees are believed to be over 1500 years old and the original 4 were made famous by the local poet William Wordsworth who celebrated them in his 1826 poem, Yew Trees, as "those fraternal Four of Borrowdale, Joined in one solemn and capacious grove". Unfortunately, the 4 became 3 during a storm in 1866 and the others have lost various limbs over the years but the massive twisting trunks and branches are still an impressive sight.



Borrowdale Yew, Seathwaite valley



Seathwaite valley

Just beyond the Yew trees, high up on the right, are spoil heaps from an old graphite mine that operated here from the 16th century. The rare quality graphite became very valuable for a time before being used to make pencils in Keswick, where pencil making flourished during the 19th century. The [Keswick Pencil Museum](#) tells you more about it. The mine was closed in the late 19th century as the graphite became too hard to find and therefore unviable.

Just beyond the mine workings, Sourmilk Gill waterfall tumbles down the steep slopes towards Seathwaite Farm and is impressive after rain. Where the Gill meets the river, the path crosses the river on a bridge and heads a short distance to Seathwaite Farm which is the end of the road. There's not much here apart from a seasonal campsite, and it is apparently is the wettest inhabited place in England with over 3 metres of rain annually! An adjacent raingauge shows [live rainfall data](#) online.

From Seathwaite Farm, follow the minor road back to Seatoller, enjoying the wonderful scenery as you go. There will normally be plenty of parked cars along the roadside as this valley is a popular starting point for many epic mountain walks, including Scafell Pike which at 978m is the highest mountain in England.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Route | Seatoller village to Seathwaite Farm and return |
| Transport | Walking |
| Start | Seatoller car park, Borrowdale, CA12 5XN. ///farmer.converged.sitting |
| End | Seathwaite Farm, CA12 5XJ. ///pairings.embodied.starlight |
| Duration | Walk is around 1.3 miles each way, 2.6 miles in total. Around 1.5 hours in total. |

Notes – Alternatively, to avoid the walk, you can simply catch the 78 or the seasonal 77 bus from Seatoller back down the Borrowdale valley.

Stop 5. Seatoller village.

Return to Seatoller village to catch a bus back down Borrowdale.

Travelling:



Take the bus from Seatoller village back down the Borrowdale valley to Keswick. You get a different perspective of the magnificent scenery in the opposite direction, including better views of the pointed peak of Castle Crag. There's plenty of opportunity to alight at one of the many attractions previously mentioned down the valley and also the wonderful [Bowder Stone](#) in the 'Jaws of Borrowdale'. Beyond Grange in Borrowdale you can see the mighty Skiddaw mountain in the distance and there's some good views over Derwent Water before you arrive back in Keswick for a well earned drink.



Bowder Stone

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Route | Seatoller village to Keswick |
| Transport | 78 open top bus (open top conditions permitting) |
| Start | Seatoller car park, Borrowdale, CA12 5XN. ///farmer.converged.sitting |
| End | Keswick bus station, Keswick, CA12 5EA. ///verifying.prowl.florists |
| Duration | 28 minutes |
| Frequency | Daily, every 30 minutes Easter to November. Every 60 minutes in winter. |
| Transport features | Open top (conditions permitting) |

Notes – Open top 78 bus allows you to fully appreciate the scenery but you can also catch a 77 bus from Seatoller to Keswick. Seasonal service, daily from Easter to November, every 2 hours.

4. Example schedule

Summer 2024

| Location | Transport | Example times |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Keswick depart | 78 bus | 10:40 |
| Grange in Borrowdale arrive | 78 bus | 10:57 |
| Grange in Borrowdale depart | Walking | 11:30 |
| Rosthwaite arrive | Walking | 13:00 |
| Rosthwaite depart | 78 bus | 13:43 |
| Seatoller arrive | 78 bus | 13:48 |
| Seatoller depart | Walking | 13:48 |
| Seathwaite Farm arrive | Walking | 14:30 |
| Seathwaite Farm depart | Walking | 14:30 |
| Seatoller arrive | Walking | 15:15 |
| Seatoller depart | 78 bus | 15:20 |
| Keswick arrive | 78 bus | 15:48 |

Winter 2023/24

| Location | Transport | Example times |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Keswick depart | 78 bus | 09:50 |
| Grange in Borrowdale arrive | 78 bus | 10:07 |
| Grange in Borrowdale depart | Walking | 10:30 |
| Rosthwaite arrive | Walking | 12:00 |
| Rosthwaite depart | 78 bus | 13:13 |
| Seatoller arrive | 78 bus | 13:18 |
| Seatoller depart | Walking | 13:18 |
| Seathwaite Farm arrive | Walking | 14:15 |
| Seathwaite Farm depart | Walking | 14:15 |
| Seatoller arrive | Walking | 15:15 |
| Seatoller depart | 78 bus | 15:20 |
| Keswick arrive | 78 bus | 15:48 |

5. Ticket information

Summer 2024

Stagecoach bus

Bus fare currently £2 per person per bus trip. This itinerary would be 3 bus trips per person, £6.

6. Timetables & Connections

- a. Timetables for transport used in itinerary; [Stagecoach buses](#)
- b. Public transport connections to itinerary route;

Keswick

Numerous bus connections. Further details of these connections [here](#),