



Ullswater Highlights

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Ullswater from Pooley Bridge lakeside

1. Introduction

A public transport adventure around beautiful Ullswater lake which includes magnificent scenery and visits some wonderful villages and attractions along the way.

Itinerary summary

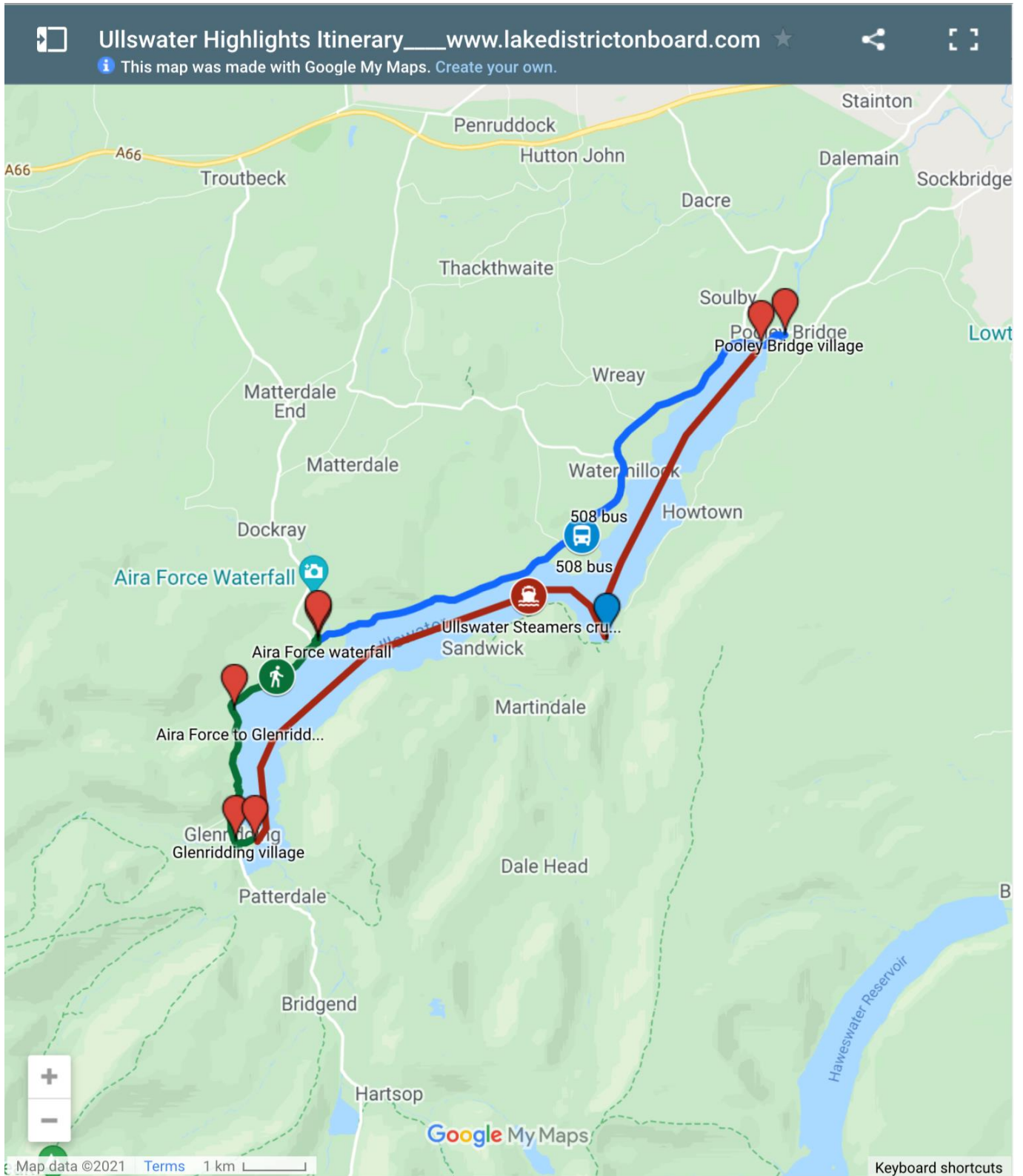
Starting at the popular village of Pooley Bridge, you can explore the village before taking an open top bus along the shores of Ullswater lake to Aira Force waterfall. After visiting the waterfall, a relatively easy walk along the attractive lakeshore takes you to the head of the lake at Glenridding village. Explore the village and nearby lakeshore before taking a fabulous Ullswater Steamers cruise back to Pooley Bridge.

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. It can also be done at any time of year although the frequency of services is less over the winter.

The suggested start is Pooley Bridge, 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. Pooley Bridge village.



Pooley Bridge village

Pooley Bridge is a busy tourist village located at the northern end of Ullswater lake. There are a few shops, pubs and cafes although there isn't much else to see in the village itself. The area is popular with campers and caravaners who come from the many nearby sites. There are some good walks in the area but the main attraction are the [Ullswater Steamers](#) which can be caught from the nearby pier. Regular boats travel up the magnificent lake with various stops along the way. The historic road bridge over the River Eamont was famously destroyed in December 2015 by storm Desmond, the new bridge was opened in 2020. Public toilets in the village.

A short [walk](#) from the village centre leads to the shores of Ullswater lake at the outflow of the River Eamont. There are lovely views up the lake and you can hire a boat at [Lakeland Boat Hire](#). The footpath also continues along the eastern lake shore where there are some attractive shingle beaches and some popular holiday parks.

Buses stop in the village centre and at the Ullswater Steamers pier which is approx 0.3 miles from the village centre.



Pooley Bridge lakeside

Travelling:



Travel from Pooley Bridge to Aira Force waterfall on board an open top bus. Leaving Pooley Bridge village, cross the River Eamont on the new road bridge, then pass the Ullswater Steamers pier to follow the lakeshore for a short distance before climbing slightly away from the lake. Views of the lake, surrounding hills and mountains are fabulous throughout. The road eventually descends back to the lakeshore and follows the tree-lined shore until reaching Aira Force.

Route	Pooley Bridge village to Aira Force waterfall
Transport	508 bus
Start	Pooley Bridge village, CA10 2NN. ///short.truckload.winters
End	Aira Force waterfall. ///guru.benched.demanding
Duration	14 minutes
Frequency	Daily. Enclosed 508 bus is every 2 hours from Easter to November. In the same period, at weekends, school holidays and bank holidays, there are additional open top 508 buses inbetween the enclosed ones. In winter there are a few enclosed 508 buses every day.

Notes – the top deck of the open top bus provides the best experience of the surrounding scenery, but if you are happy to look out of a window then the enclosed 508 bus provides a more frequent service.

Stop 2. Aira Force waterfall.



Aira Force waterfall

Aira Force is probably the most famous waterfall in the Lake District and at 65ft high, one of the tallest. From the car park there are various **trails** leading up through attractive woodland to the waterfall viewing areas and beyond. The views from the bridges at the top and bottom of the main waterfall are impressive, especially after heavy rain. The main waterfall walk is about 1 mile return with some steep and uneven sections. It is also well known for red squirrels and you might see one in the woods if you are lucky.

Back across the road, you can walk down to the nearby lakeshore and shingle beach with fabulous views up the lake.

Ullswater is the second biggest lake in the Lake District and one of the most scenic, especially towards the southern end where it is surrounded by high mountains. The lake drains into the River Eamont at the northern end which eventually joins the River Eden heading towards Carlisle. The adjacent pier is served by **Ullswater Steamers** and you can take a boat to Glenridding at the southern end of the lake from here.

If you are feeling fit, longer walks head through Gowbarrow Park and to the top of Gowbarrow Fell, a popular peak with superb views across the lake. There is a tea room, picnic tables and toilet facilities around the car park. Free entry to waterfalls.

Buses stop near the car park entrance on the A592. The boat pier is also near the car park.

Travelling:



A fabulous and relatively easy walk along the shores of Ullswater lake from Aira Force to Glenridding village. The first leg is to Glencoyne bay. The well-made footpath is slightly inland of the road which follows the lakeshore and passes through wonderful scenery with lake and mountain views before reaching Glencoyne bay.

Route	Aira Force waterfall to Glencoyne bay.
Transport	Walking
Start	Aira Force waterfall ///kinks.overlaid.ocean
End	Glencoyne bay ///purse.subtitle.scooped
Duration	Walk is around 1.2 mile in length. Around 30 minutes walk.

Notes – To avoid the walk there are 2 alternatives;

- The Aira Force shuttle boat to Glenridding from the nearby pier, [///husband.elated.alike](#). Frequency is hourly every day from Easter to end of October.
- The 508 bus from Aira Force to Glencoyne bay and Glenridding village. Use the same bus stop where you left the bus, [///guru.benched.demanding](#). Frequency is daily. Enclosed 508 bus is every 2 hours from Easter to November. In the same period, at weekends, school holidays and bank holidays, there are additional open top 508 buses inbetween the enclosed ones. In winter there are a few enclosed 508 buses every day.

Stop 3. Glencoyne bay.



Daffodils at Glencoyne

Glencoyne bay provides a scenic lakeshore area with narrow shingle beaches next to the road and wonderful views across the lake. You can follow the good footpath in either direction adjacent to the road if you want to explore nearby shoreline. Behind the car park, the wonderful Glencoyne valley heads inland from the lake and you can explore it on foot on the [Glencoyne Farm trail](#). There are no facilities on site. Buses stop at Glencoyne car park.

This area around Glencoyne bay is well known for its fabulous golden daffodils in the spring and it is these which, on a visit in 1802, inspired the local poet William Wordsworth to write

the famous poem 'Daffodils'. Although the initial inspiration possibly came from his sister Dorothy who had noted the spectacle in her journal and it was a few years later when William penned the poem, first published 1807.

Many people will recognise the first verse;

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

Travelling:



From Glencoyne bay car park, continue along the footpath which follows the road towards Glenridding village. The footpath soon crosses the road and winds through a wooded section along the lakeshore with small shingle bays and great views across the lake. There are plenty of places where you can sit and relax by the water. There is a small section where there is no footpath and you need to follow the road past a layby parking area but it soon joins another footpath through lakeshore woodland. The footpath eventually joins a roadside pavement and enters the village of Glenridding.



Ullswater lake

Route	Glencoyne bay to Glenridding village
Transport	Walking
Start	Glencoyne bay ///purse.subtitle.scooped
End	Glenridding village ///target.than.contracting
Duration	Walk is around 1.3 miles in length. Around 40 minutes walk.

Notes – To avoid the walk you can catch the 508 bus from Glencoyne bay to Glenridding village. Bus stop at Glencoyne car park [///annual.bandwagon.remotes](#). Frequency is daily. Enclosed 508 bus is every 2 hours from Easter to November. In the same period, at weekends, school holidays and bank holidays, there are additional open top 508 buses inbetween the enclosed ones. In winter there are a few enclosed 508 buses every day.

Stop 3. Glenridding village.



Glenridding village

Glenridding is a small village in a fabulous setting between Ullswater lake and the high mountains behind. It is a popular tourist centre nowadays with some wonderful lake and mountain walks, but historically the village grew up as an important centre for lead mining.

The village has some attractive grassy areas with picnic tables and benches adjacent to Glenridding Beck. There are a few small gift shops, tea rooms and bars around the village, including [The Inn on the Lake](#) with great views over the lake.

The old Greenside lead mine is in the hills above Glenridding, about a mile upstream if you follow Glenridding Beck. The village boomed as the mine produced vast amounts of lead and silver from around 1825 till its closure in 1961. There are significant remnants of the workings still visible with big spoil heaps across the mountain side and some of the old processing and smelting buildings, one of which is now Helvellyn Youth Hostel. Much of the mine area is now designated as a scheduled ancient monument although the stability of the spoil heaps has been an ongoing concern.

A short walk from the village leads to the shores of Ullswater lake. This is a picturesque parkland area with a large expanse of open grass, shingle beaches and benches next to the lake. The impressive scenery makes this a wonderful setting and it is well worth taking a boat trip on the lake to fully appreciate the beauty of the area. [Ullswater Steamers](#) operate from the adjacent pier, with a reduced service out of season, and they call at Aira Force, Howtown and Pooley Bridge down the lake. There is a small cafe and toilet facilities inside the Steamers building. Across the grass from the pier, adjacent to the lake and the main road, is [St Patrick's Boat Landing](#) where you can hire boats and there is a small cafe.



Glenridding lakeside

Buses stop in the village centre where there is a Tourist Information Centre and toilet facilities.

Travelling:



Take a fabulous Ullswater Steamers cruise from Glenridding lakeside to Pooley Bridge pier. You can really appreciate the mountainous surroundings at the southern end of the lake from out on the water and the best views might be behind you as you cruise down the lake. Pass Aira Force again on the left and soon you round Hallin Fell on the right to call at Howtown pier. Not a lot to see at Howtown apart from scenery, most embark or disembark here when doing a cruise combined with lakeshore walk to Glenridding or Pooley Bridge. From Howtown the surrounding hills become smaller but still very attractive before reaching Pooley Bridge pier at the foot of the lake. A 5 minute walk takes you back into Pooley Bridge village and the start point.



Ullswater Steamer

Route	Glenridding pier to Pooley Bridge pier
Transport	Ullswater Steamers cruise
Start	Glenridding pier, CA11 0US. ///bend.potato.soonest
End	Pooley Bridge pier, CA11 0LL. ///comet.admit.differ
Duration	60 minutes
Frequency	Daily, several per day in summer, 2 per day in winter.
Transport features	Light refreshments, toilets

Notes – You can also catch the 508 bus from Glenridding village to Pooley Bridge village. Frequency is daily. Enclosed 508 bus is every 2 hours from Easter to November. In the same period, at weekends, school holidays and bank holidays, there are additional open top 508 buses inbetween the enclosed ones. In winter there are a few enclosed 508 buses every day.

4. Example schedule

Summer 2024

Location	Transport	Example times
Pooley Bridge village depart	508 bus	10:20
Aira Force arrive	508 bus	10:34
Aira Force depart	Walking	~12:30
Glencoyne arrive	Walking	~13:00
Glencoyne depart	Walking	~13:50
Glenridding village arrive	Walking	~14:30
Glenridding village depart	Ullswater Steamer Cruise	16:35
Pooley Bridge village arrive	Ullswater Steamer Cruise	17:35

Winter 2023/24

Location	Transport	Example times
Pooley Bridge village depart	508 bus	09:20
Aira Force arrive	508 bus	09:34
Aira Force depart	Walking	~11:00
Glencoyne arrive	Walking	~11:30
Glencoyne depart	Walking	~11:50
Glenridding village arrive	Walking	~12:30
Glenridding village depart	Ullswater Steamer Cruise	13:40
Pooley Bridge village arrive	Ullswater Steamer Cruise	14:40

5. Ticket information

Summer 2024

Cheapest ticket is a single trip bus fare which is currently fixed at £2, plus a one way boat cruise which is £15 for adults and £10 for children.

6. Timetables & Connections

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

Pooley Bridge

508 bus between Penrith and Pooley Bridge.

Glenridding

508 bus between Windermere town, Bowness on Windermere, Kirkstone Pass and Glenridding. Only runs from Easter to November.

509 bus runs along Ullswater from Keswick and Penrith every Saturday, Sunday and bank holiday between Easter and November. A few buses each day.

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