

If you would like to explore the Westmorland Dales area on horseback contact Stonetrail Riding Centre near Ravenstonedale who offer day trails and riding holidays.

www.stonetrailridingcentre.com

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Smardale and Crosby Garrett Fells Ride

An exhilarating circular ride



Crosby Garrett Ride.indd 1 02/12/2021 12:20

Smardale and Crosby Garrett Fells Ride:

An exhilarating circular ride across the open fells of Smardale and Crosby Garrett linked by some pleasant stretches on quiet country roads and byways.

Getting there: the start is on the north side of the A685 near Newbiggin on Lune, about 5 miles from junction 38 of the M6.

Parking: there is plenty of space to park on the roadside verge near the start. This is well drained but may not be suitable for large vehicles in periods of wet weather. **Please do not park on the hardstanding areas opposite farm entrances.**

Distance: 12 miles/19 km

Terrain: a mix of tracks, open fell and quiet roads. Some wet areas on the fells but these can be avoided.

Map: OS 1:25,000 Explorer OL19 Howgill Fells & Upper Eden Valley

Start: Make your way to the wide driveway opposite the entrance to Ashley Bank. (NY701057) (Three Words ///sagging.symphonic.cyclones)

1. Take the right-hand bridleway signed for Smardale Fell. Follow this track which skirts below Brownber and ignore bridleways on the right and left, continuing to follow signs to Smardale Fell.
2. Cross the old railway line and pass through a gate across the track where it narrows between two stone walls and climbs uphill.
3. Turn left on the lane passing Friar Bottom Farmhouse and then turn immediately right onto the bridleway signed for Smardale Fell. Follow this, keeping the wall on your right when the route opens out.

Cross Smardale Bridge taking care on the approach as the stone slabs may be slippery in wet weather.

Smardale Bridge is a single span packhorse bridge across the Scandal Beck built in the late 18th century.

4. Follow the track bearing left uphill from the bridge signed for Kirkby Stephen. Keep the wall on your left when the track reaches the open fell. There are fabulous views of Smardale Gill and viaduct to your left.



Smardale Bridge - David Evans

5. Pass through a gate and follow the broad grass track ahead which bends to the left below a fence and takes you out onto Smardale Fell.
6. Follow the track across the fell keeping the wall to your left. Where the wall turns sharply to the left take the track straight ahead to the shoulder of the hill signed for Kirkby Stephen. Keep on this track and you will see another wall come in from the left use this as a guide as you head downhill to the road.

Turn left on the road crossing the Settle Carlisle railway and turn right at the junction towards Waitby.

The Settle to Carlisle railway is one of the most scenic in the country, travelling through remote areas of the Yorkshire Dales and crossing the famous Ribblehead viaduct. Fortunately, a vigorous campaign in the late 1980s saved it from closure.

7. As you go into Waitby bear left at the first junction and then almost immediately right into the village. Pass Waitby Farm on your right and then take a track on your left, you will soon see a Public Byway sign to Waitby Crossings.
8. Turn right after the track crosses an old railway line and then keep to the enclosed path.
9. **If there has been heavy rain horse riders should take the alternative route below to avoid crossing the ford. There is a footbridge for walkers and cyclists**. At the road turn left and then take the second road on the right signed for Crosby Garrett. Cross the ford and turn left at the next junction.
10. Follow the road into Crosby Garrett passing St. Andrew's Church on your right. Drop down the hill and cross a small ford and then turn right on the road. Follow this road under the Settle Carlisle railway until you reach a T-junction where you turn left.
11. Follow the road past a right-hand turn for Stockber and approximately 350m beyond this look for track on your left with a Public Way signpost.

Follow this stony track uphill passing a reservoir until you eventually reach a metal gate out onto Crosby Garrett Fell.

It was close to here that the remarkable bronze Crosby Garrett Roman cavalry helmet was found in 2010. Dating from the late 2nd or early 3rd century it has been hailed as one of the great masterpieces of Roman metalwork.

12. Follow the grass track across the fell keeping the wall and fence on your right and ignoring bridleways joining from the left. There are wonderful views of the Howgills in front as you cross the watershed.



Heather in Smardale - Stonetrail Riding Centre

13. As you drop downhill you go through a gate in an electric fence and keep straight on the grass track until it forks shortly afterwards, where you take the right-hand track.
14. The track is faint in places but continue down and it will bring you to a corner of the high fell wall where there are some handling pens, turn right here.

There are a lot of tracks crossing the fell in this area and it is easy to get confused. Keep heading downhill towards the Howgills and the fell wall. You will reach a broad grassy track just above the wall, turn right onto this.

15. Follow the track through a gate then carry on keeping another wall on your left and ignore bridleways that cross it.
16. Turn left when you reach the road and follow it back to your vehicle.

Alternative route in wet weather when the ford may be high.

9. At the road turn left and then take the first road on your right signed for Soulby just after Stripes Farm. Bear left at the next junction.
10. Cross the old stone bridge into Soulby and then take the road on your left opposite the telephone box. Follow this road for about 2 miles ignoring side roads on the left and right.
11. Shortly after crossing the Settle Carlisle railway again you pass a right hand turning for Stockber. Re-join the route description at point 11.

Whilst on your ride remember to:

- Respect the land - Remember much of the land is privately owned. Respect the life and work of people who live and work here.
- Respect the community - Remember to keep to rights of way, especially through fields and meadows.
- Leave no trace. Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints. Take all your litter home.