**Bassenthwaite**

What you need to know

- A larger and less crowded lake that is a National Nature Reserve
- A good size to explore in a day - 4km long by 1.5km wide
- Few other canoes and no motor boats
- Magnificent scenery - of course!
- Easy and uncrowded launch site
- Free parking

**Special Points**

- A special permit is needed
- There is intrusive traffic noise from the busy A66 which is close to the western shore
- Wind tends to blast down the lake with no islands or other shelter
- The sailing club uses the north end for racing
- East shore is all private
- Wildlife sanctuary zones at the south end of the lake and in Borrowes Bay

**Access and Permits**

Bassenthwaite is owned by the Lake District National Park. They want to control use and access, so you need a permit to paddle on it. In 2009 the daily charges were £4.50 a boat, £5.50 for an educational group, half price for OAPs, unemployed and disabled, and free for under 16’s.

**Motor Boats**

- Most angling shops
- For an ‘educational group’, half price for OAP’s, unemployed and disabled, and free for under 16’s.

**Access and Permits**

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These are easily purchased from:
- The Pheasant Inn near Peel Wyke
- Keswick Marina
- Information Centre, Moot Hall, Keswick
- National Park Blencathra Centre, Threlkeld
- Most angling shops
- A few other hotels and guest houses

**Books**

- An Atlas of the English Lakes, John Wilson
- Keswick - £16.95

**Websites**

- [www.lakedistrict.gov.uk](http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk)
- Keswick Tourist information
- [www.lake-district-visitor.co.uk](http://www.lake-district-visitor.co.uk)
- Keswick Tourist information
- [www.rainchasers.com](http://www.rainchasers.com)

**Printed by Ferguson of Keswick.**

**by John Holden.**

**Sincere thanks to the Environment Agency 0800 807060 (24 hour hotline)**

**Keswick Information Centre 017687 72645**

**Phone Numbers**

In Emergency - Dial 999 and ask for Countrywide.

**Keswick Information Centre 017687 72645**

**Environment Agency 0800 807060 (24 hour hotline)**

**National Park Centre 01767 79633**

**Thirlmere**

What you need to know

- This appears to be a wild lake but is actually a reservoir
- It deserves to be more popular with canoeists
- A nice size to explore in a day - 6km long by 1km wide
- Magnificent scenery – like being in the Canadian Rockies!
- Several interesting bays and islands
- Lleaving is allowed in most places
- Easy launching and parking
- No permits needed
- No motor boats and very few other boats

**Special Points**

- This is a reservoir so levels vary - best avoided after a long period of drought because there will be a wide expanse of muddy beach
- A deep lake and the water is cold
- Wind tends to funnel down the lake
- No other boats around to rescue you
- Pay and display parking
- Please don’t land on the islands which are bird reserves
- No swimming please as this is drinking water for Manchester

**Parking and Access**

Thirlmere and adjacent land is operated by United Utilities as a reservoir for Manchester. Armathwaite car park is on the west side of the lake at GR306172 - it offers convenient parking and launching and has toilets and explanatory notice boards.

**Upper Derwent**

The upper Derwent is a very beautiful river however it rarely has sufficient water in the summer months. It requires several hours of heavy rain to bring it up and it then drops again in a few hours. There is no access agreement but canoeing is tolerated, so enjoy this river provided there is sufficient water to paddle reasonably.

**Section 1**

 être can be paddled from the Youth hostel to Grange. A long stretch of 3.5km of Grade 2 through the middle Derwent. Canoeing is ‘assumed risk sports’ where you have to take responsibility for your own decisions and errors. Any mention of lakes and rivers in this leaflet does not give you a right to paddle.

**Safety**

- On the Lakes the wind is the main hazard - take note of it’s direction and strength
- Wear a buoyancy aid
- Lakes are deep and the cold even in summer
- Less than 3 there should never be

**Respnsible Paddling**

- Don’t scrape down the rivers especially during the main fishing spawning months of November to January
- Try to avoid landing in reed beds or wetland areas
- Please, no camping or fires on the islands
- Follow the Country and Canoes’ codes

**Suggested Canoe Trail**

The obvious journey on Bassenthwaite is a circumnavigation of the lake – missing out the two Wildlife Sanctuary Zones. We suggest that you exit off Peel Wyke and follow the western shore down to Blackstock Point which is an ideal place for a rest and perhaps a picnic. Then head across the lake towards Mira Houses and then follow and explore the north shore but stay out of Borrowes Bay Wildlife Zone.

**Peel Wyke **

Turn off the A66, signed to the Pheasant Inn and follow the signs to the access boat ramp where you get a permit to paddle the middle Derwent. If you follow the river to the east you will find the Threlkeld Bridge on the opposite side of the Derwentwater and return via Grange.

**St Bee’s Church**

This beautiful little church dates back to the 9th century It is dedicated to St Bee’s, a 7th century Irish princess who fled her native land to avoid an unwelcome marriage. She landed on the Cumbrian coast at St Bee’s, where a priory was later founded in her name and legend says that she settled here, living on the shores of Bassenthwaite Lake and was buried on the site of the church. There is sadly no public access to the church from the lake shore.

**Hursthole Point **

A large battery with a clear view to the north. Access and loading is possible only by boat through a gate at the north end of the layby with a 100m walk to the lake shore. Very pleasant National Park access land and ideal for picnics!

**Blackstock Point **

A large battery with free parking however limited to 2 hours. Access and loading is possible through a gate and by boat. There is a road to the lake shore which is National Park access land. N.b. it may be possible to load or unload your boats in the gateway.

**Derwentwater**

Derwentwater acts as a natural reservoir for the river holding in level quite well and is normally paddlable all year. However if the river is exceptionally low then we suggest that you do not persevere below the suspensionfootbridge in Portinscale (exit river right before the footbridge).

From the months of November and December there is a voluntary access restriction and you are asked not to paddle this section when the water is below the marker located under the footbridge at Portinscale. Please check this if you are planning a trip in these months – a ‘White line’ can just be seen, when leaning over the right hand side of the bridge when looking downstream.

You have the choice of taking out at Low Stock Bridge or continuing to Armboth car park, for which you will need a permit – see Bassenthwaite Lake Notes. Be aware that this commitment is to a very weighed and exposed crossing of the lake. Note well and heed the guidelines for passing through the Wildlife Zone.

There are one or two slightly difficult sections in these months – a reservoir so the river is passable. A voluntary access agreement in place. Please do not paddle this river outside this agreement. Full details at [www.cumbriacanoeists.org.uk](http://www.cumbriacanoeists.org.uk).

**Lower Derwent**

This is also a beautiful, and more mature section of the river. It is regarded as especially important and valuable for fishing so there is an access agreement in place. Please do not paddle this river outside this agreement.

**River Greta**

From Threlkeld Bridge GR 315247 to Keswick. Blem of Grade 3 water. Again there is rarely sufficient water in summer months. This is a popular, classic, padding trip for experienced paddlers. It is a serious piece of water and should not be attempted without previous experience.

Paddling is only possible when there is plenty of water in the river. At Threlkeld bridge on the middle river there is a white marker - if the water is 6 inch’s below this marker then the river is just passable. A voluntary access agreement allows for 365 days a year paddling however for the two months of November and December paddling is only allowed when the river is at or above this mark.

Please see the guidebook ‘White Water Lake District’ for detailed river information.

**Lake User’s Guides**

The Lake District National Park publish free leaflets for most of the lakes. These are more informative on things like footpaths and wildlife and complement this more specialist guide.

**Derwentwater**

Bassenthwaite, Thirlmere and catchment rivers

A map and guide to the lakes and rivers of one of England's most beautiful areas - for canoes, kayaks and sit on tops.
Derwentwater - what you need to know

**Special Points**
- Easy launching and parking
- Clear water and good access
- Magnificent mountain scenery
- Good choice of friendly canoe hire companies
- Easy launching and parking
- No permits needed
- Speed limit of 10 m.p.h and only a few motor boats

**Environment Agency**
- Just a friendly size to explore in a day - 5km long by 1.5km wide
- Lots of beautiful bays and islands
- Magnificent mountain scenery
- Good choice of friendly canoe hire companies
- Easy launching and parking
- Clear water
- No permits needed
- Speed limit of 10 m.p.h and only a few motor boats

**Recommended Canoe Trails**
There are lots to explore on Derwentwater and many possible trips. Try to plan these so that you stay out of the launch tracks and where you have to cross these, try to do so at right angles.

1. One of the best trips is a circular one from Kettlewell car park.
   - It takes about 30 minutes to paddle north following the shore to the split rock sculpture - the National Trust Centennial Stone.
   - From here head across the lake to St Herbert’s Island which will take you perhaps another 30 minutes. Large and small kids will love exploring this wonderful island which has a real Swallows and Amazons feel to it and is a great place for a picnic.

2. The other popular trip from Kettlewell is to cross these, try to do so at right angles.
   - Keep well out of the launch tracks and where you have to cross these, try to do so at right angles.
   - To Watendlath - the National Trust Centennial Stone.
   - It takes about 30 minutes to paddle north following the shore to the split rock sculpture. This is a great place to explore the lake further.

Next head back across the lake towards Barrow House Yth Hostel and then north along the shore back to Kettlewell - about 45 minutes.

**Camping and Caravan Club site ***
Easy launching from pre-booked site. Safe, shallow bay. Tel: 017687 72922. www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk

**Keswick Lakeside **
Free road-side parking. A busy road to unload in and cross, then a difficult 1km climb down to the lakeshore. Ropes recommended - expedition boaters will love this challenge!

**Barrow House Yth Hostel **
A National Trust ‘pay and display’ site (free for members) that provides good parking and easy access to a quiet bay. This car park only takes about 30 vehicles so soon fills up on fine summer days.

**Grange Craggs **
Small car park for 8 cars 50m walk across road and down the bank.

**Grange Bridge ***
Parking for 6 cars by the church. Easy access 15m down a grass bank.

**Grange **
For paddling the Upper Derwent. Please see notes on reverse.

**Centennial Stone **
The split rock sculpture is the work of Peter Randall-Page and celebrates one hundred years of the National Trust.