

# THE ASKHAM TRAILS



## INTRODUCTION

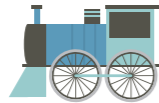
Welcome to Askham, 'the place of ash trees,' a charming and picturesque village nestled between Lakeland fells to the west and the Pennines to the east. Steeped in historic gems and natural beauty it's a great place to begin exploring Eden.

The west side of the village is set amidst a landscape rich in myths and legends, prehistoric settlements, and ancient burial mounds. Meander east to where the village meets the River Lowther and you are surrounded

by the elegant estate grounds of Lowther Castle, the home of the Earl of Lonsdale.

So stay a while, and explore the fascinating heritage and the great outdoors. The ideas in this trail guide are all accessible without a car so that you can get closer to nature and get away from it all. For accommodation and more ideas pop into the Tourist Information Centre in Penrith (tel 01768 867466) or visit [www.golakes.co.uk](http://www.golakes.co.uk)

## GETTING AROUND



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Penrith is on the main West Coast railway line with connections to Carlisle, Oxenholme, Kendal, Manchester and London. For timetables and fares, visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

There are regular bus services from Penrith town centre into the surrounding area. The 106 bus from Penrith to Kendal calls at nearby stops at Clifton, the Lowther Estate Office and Hackthorpe daily. For more info visit [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)



## CYCLING

Electric bikes can be hired from the Electric Cycle Centre in Penrith. For more information visit [www.electriccyclecentrepenrith.co.uk](http://www.electriccyclecentrepenrith.co.uk) or call 01768 864775.



## FELLS AND FABLES



Take a wander up onto the fells from Askham and you'll find prehistoric stone circles, Roman roads, wild-looking fell ponies, secretive red grouse and fantastic views over Ullswater and the Helvellyn mountain range.

High Street, the Roman road connecting the forts at Brocavum (Brougham) and Galava (Ambleside), runs along Askham Fell. The low valleys would have been wooded and marshy, and so the preferred route was over the top of these gentle slopes.

Moor Divock at 300 metres above sea level, forms part of Askham Fell, looking down over Ullswater.

Dotted around the moor are many Bronze Age cairns and burial mounds, the most conspicuous being White Raise and The Cockpit, near the junction of the brideways over the moor. Got the little ones with you? Download "The Marsh Kelpie of Askham Fell" walk from [www.taletails.co.uk](http://www.taletails.co.uk) for a family walk based around a fun story and a hand drawn map for kids.

If you prefer to travel on four hooves there are some excellent trekking opportunities over this part of the fells. Try Park Foot Trekking Centre, Rookin House Equestrian Centre, or Sockbridge Pony Trekking Centre for equestrian days out around Askham.

## CYCLING



This corner of Eden offers fantastic off-road mountain biking for all abilities. The criss-cross of brideway routes over Moor Divock and Askham Fell is perfect for spending a day in the saddle. Families can take a short ride out onto the fell from Askham and head back down to Helton, completing the loop back to Askham along the quiet lane linking the two villages. Visit [www.golakes.co.uk/bybike](http://www.golakes.co.uk/bybike) and download "Family Routes: Askham Fell" for a detailed route and map.

Adventurous mountain bikers should take the classic figure of eight route over Askham Fell, down to Ullswater, and back over the moor to Askham (14.6 miles, 23.5km). Cycle out of Askham village to The Cockpit, continue straight ahead on a long descent to Howtown. From Howtown follow the road alongside Ullswater to Pooley Bridge.

There are pubs and cafés here when you need to re-fuel. From Pooley Bridge head east to Roehead. Follow the brideway to Moor Divock and continue to a fell road. Cross the road, follow the brideway to another road, then turn left on the road to Helton and Askam. Visit [www.golakes.co.uk/bybike](http://www.golakes.co.uk/bybike) and download "The Eden Valley: Biking Around Ullswater" for a detailed route and map.

For a fantastic and varied road ride on quiet lanes, follow the road south to Bampton and Haweswater Reservoir (look out for the golden eagle!) Take in the quiet valley of Swindale if you have time. Return north via Bampton Grange and the hamlets of Whale and Knipe. For more cycling ideas see [www.nurtureeden.org](http://www.nurtureeden.org) or download the app 'Cycle More Eden'.

## LOWTHER CASTLE AND GARDENS



The Lowther family have long been associated with this area, originally occupying an old hall in the heart of Lowther village. In 1682 Lowther Castle was erected, surrounded by extensive parkland. Then, just 40 years on, it was destroyed by fire.

Replaced in 1811, the new castle was a monument to Gothic extravagance, with a host of towers, turrets, pinnacles, battlements and fortified gateways. Exquisite formal gardens, laid out with avenues of beech trees, glittering lakes and far-reaching vistas across the valley befitted the grandeur perfectly.

The castle remained the home of the Lowther family until 1936 when the lead was stripped from its roof and it was left to ruin. The sandstone remains of the magnificent castle and 130 acres

of undiscovered gardens, hidden from public view for over 70 years, are currently the focus of one of the largest restoration projects in Europe.

## THE YELLOW EARL

Hugh Cecil Lowther (1857-1944) was the fifth earl and one of the family's more flamboyant characters nicknamed the Yellow Earl because of his love for the colour. He owned a fleet of yellow cars and as president of the Automobile Association he allowed the Association to use the colour on their badges and signs that you still see today!

Hugh entertained on a lavish scale and was an enthusiastic participant in hunting, horse-racing and yachting. He was also a keen patron of boxing and founded the Lonsdale Belt Trophy, first fought for in 1909.

## PENRITH



Penrith is a bustling sandstone market town with a great selection of traditional shops and arcades. The heritage here is fascinating, look out for hogback gravestones and hill top beacons. A great local vantage point is Beacon Hill. This 2km stroll winds up hill on sandstone trails through peaceful forest plantations to the monument at the top. The views towards the Eden Valley and the Lake District fells are magnificent.

Be sure to check out the local food offers in Penrith too with Cranston's Cumbrian Food Hall, The Toffee Shop, Brunswick Deli, and the J & J Graham Food Emporium.

For more ideas, download the "Penrith Food Trail" from [www.nurtureeden.org/our-trails](http://www.nurtureeden.org/our-trails)



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## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



## ABOUT NURTURE EDEN

We have made a set of trails to inspire more people to explore the hidden gems of Eden. You can also access great ideas for days out and travel information at [www.nurtureeden.org](http://www.nurtureeden.org) and on our mobile apps 'Explore More Eden' and 'Cycle More Eden'. Have fun exploring!

Nurture Eden aims to help Eden become a leading destination for sustainable tourism, growing local tourism businesses, whilst also protecting the environment.

This project is supported by the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) for which Defra is the Managing Authority, part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.



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[nurtureeden.org](http://nurtureeden.org)



# THE ASKHAM TRAILS

Spend a while exploring this charming village, discover Eden on two wheels, or hop on a bus to henges and halls. Use this map to start your own car-free adventure!

## THE ASKHAM AMBLE

Call in to **Stuart Broadhurst's Pottery Studio (1)** on the main street for an inspiring look at beautiful pieces by local artists' and sculptors', including Stuart's own practical and beautiful pots. Call 07738 237420 for opening times.

During summer months, take a dip in Askham's **Heated Outdoor Pool (2)**. Take a picnic and relax in the wooded grounds after a swim. Call 07989 389566.

When it's time for lunch the two pubs in the village, **The Queen's Head (3)** and **Punchbowl Inn (4)**, offer a good selection of fresh and seasonal home cooked food, or call in at the **Village Stores (5)** for supplies.

East of the village you'll find **Askham Hall (6)**, a 14th century pele tower. Pele towers like Askham Hall are seen throughout Eden and their sturdy ramparts hint at their use as lookout towers for marauding Scots in the 15th century. Today you can visit the beautiful gardens and get close to rare breed pigs, goats, shorthorn cattle and ducks! Relax in front of a log-burning stove or enjoy the sunshine in the secluded garden at the Kitchen Garden Café. The gardens and café are open every day, 10am to 5pm in summer, and Friday to Sunday 11am to 4pm during the winter. To stay the night or dine in the restaurant call 01931 712350 to book.

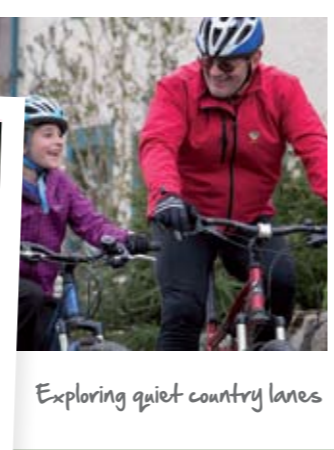
Cross the River Lowther and stroll through Lowther Park towards Lowther village. Take the first right into the village and follow the road to reach **Lowther Castle and Gardens (7)**. When the castle was abandoned over 70 years ago, nature moved in. Now red squirrels scamper through the beech trees, badgers raise their young among the ruins, and herons nest in the tall conifer plantation. The restored castle, courtyard café and impressive gardens are open to the public daily.



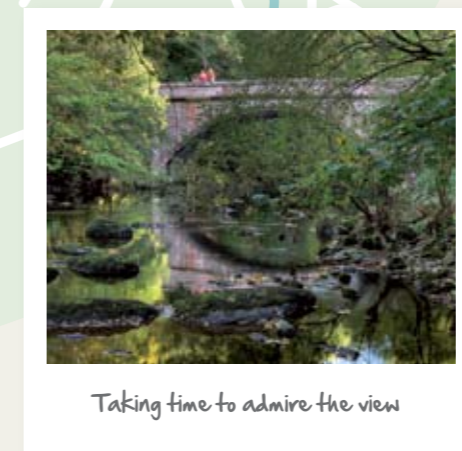
Making new friends at Lakeland Bird of Prey Centre



Strolling around Lowther Castle and Gardens



Exploring quiet country lanes



Taking time to admire the view



The Penrith and District Red Squirrel Group is a group of local volunteers that run a conservation initiative to protect and maintain the existing population of red squirrels. To help protect our furry friends and support local conservation in the Eden Valley, please donate £2 to Nurture Eden's projects by texting EDEN21 £2 to 70070.

Just east of here on the road leading to the A6 is the **Lakeland Bird of Prey Centre (8)**, located in the grounds of a walled garden and surrounded by unspoilt parkland. You can see over 150 birds of prey including falcons, hawks, eagles, buzzards and owls. Watch the birds flying in the stunning surroundings in daily demonstrations from 2pm until 4pm (weather permitting, call 01931 712746 to check). In the cosy Walled Garden Café you'll find delicious homemade cream teas and a fantastic craft and gift shop.

Continue to the A6 to find **Lowther Castle Inn & Court Room Restaurant (9)**, a traditional coaching inn serving bar meals. Experience the great surroundings of the Court Room Restaurant, a former Magistrates Court Room until 1963. Call 01931 712339.

## BEYOND ASKHAM BY BIKE

Continue east from Lowther Castle and join the A6 briefly, before taking the right immediately after crossing over the M6. Just past the iron bridge is **Abbott Lodge Dairy Farm (10)**, pop in for a taste of very local ice-cream. They make 16 flavours of ice-cream on site using milk from their gorgeous Jersey cows.

**The George and Dragon (11)** is situated in the village of Clifton, slightly further north along the A6. They serve fantastic food made using produce grown at Askham Hall (about 2 miles away!) and they are open everyday for lunch and dinner. Call 01768 865381 to book a table. Clifton marks the site of the last battle to take place on English soil in 1745. The Rebel Oak, (where the rebel army of Bonnie Prince Charlie was defeated and driven out of England), is right behind the pub - ask inside for directions.

Continue along the A6 by bike to **Eamont Bridge (12)** and visit Brougham Hall, Brougham Castle and Maybergh Henge. You can also get there by foot or bus, follow the Explore Eamont Trail on the 'Explore More Eden' app or on [www.nurtureeden.org](http://www.nurtureeden.org)

## KEY

- +++++ Railway Line
- Motorway
- River
- 'A' Road
- - - Footpath/ Cycle Route
- 'B' Road