

Mountain Biking with Polartec Coniston route: Coniston Water

Coniston used to have its own railway line with a terminus station in the village just up from the Sun Hotel. It was connected to the Furness Railway at Foxfield but sadly it was abandoned in 1958. The track bed has since then been unused (apart from a section near Torver which carries a new road). Recently though, some sections of track bed on the approach to Coniston have been converted into a cycle path. The sections of cyclepath are a little disjointed but nevertheless can be utilized to make a pleasant mountain bike ride which explores the low fells and woodland on the western side of Coniston Water.

The cycle path can easily be linked to a series of permissive routes through Waterpark and alongside the shores of Coniston Water. All the cycling is very easy and this route is perfectly suited to beginners and those looking for a gentle ride. However care should be taken particularly with very young cyclists on the outward sections along the A593. These are narrow in places and unfortunately traffic can move quite quickly along these sections.

Grade: Strenuousness 2, Navigation 2, Technicality 2

Start/Finish: Coniston (SD308969)

Distance: 5.4 miles (8.7km)

Time: 1 - 2 hours

Height gain: 110m

Terrain: lanes, valley roads, old railway track bed, access tracks bed and lake side tracks.

Maps: OS Landranger 96 & 97, OS Explorer OL 6, Harvey's Superwalker (1:25 000) Lakeland South, British Mountain Maps Lake District (1:40 000).

1. From the Lake Road car park, near the steamer pier, head back towards Coniston Village to the T-junction with the A593. Turn left and follow the A593 for 1.25km to the bridge over the old railway track bed at Park Gate. Turn left off the road and take the cycle path South past the caravan/camp site to rejoin the A593 after 1km. Head South again on the A593, for 300m, to pick up the next section of cycle path on the left, just opposite the houses at High Ground. Follow this section of the cycle path to join a minor road at an old railway bridge.
2. Turn left over the bridge then turn left again to follow the access track North East to Hoathwaite Farm. Ignore the entrance to the farm, instead continue North East past it and head along the pleasant track towards Coniston Water. Near the lake shore ignore the path and track on the right instead skirt left and head North near the side of the lake and follow the access track through the camp site to Coniston Hall.
3. At Coniston Hall follow the access track North for 100m to pick-up the cycle path on the right. Follow the cycle path North, North West then North East for about 1km to join Lake Road. Turn right onto Lake Road and follow it back to the start at the lake side car park.

Map

