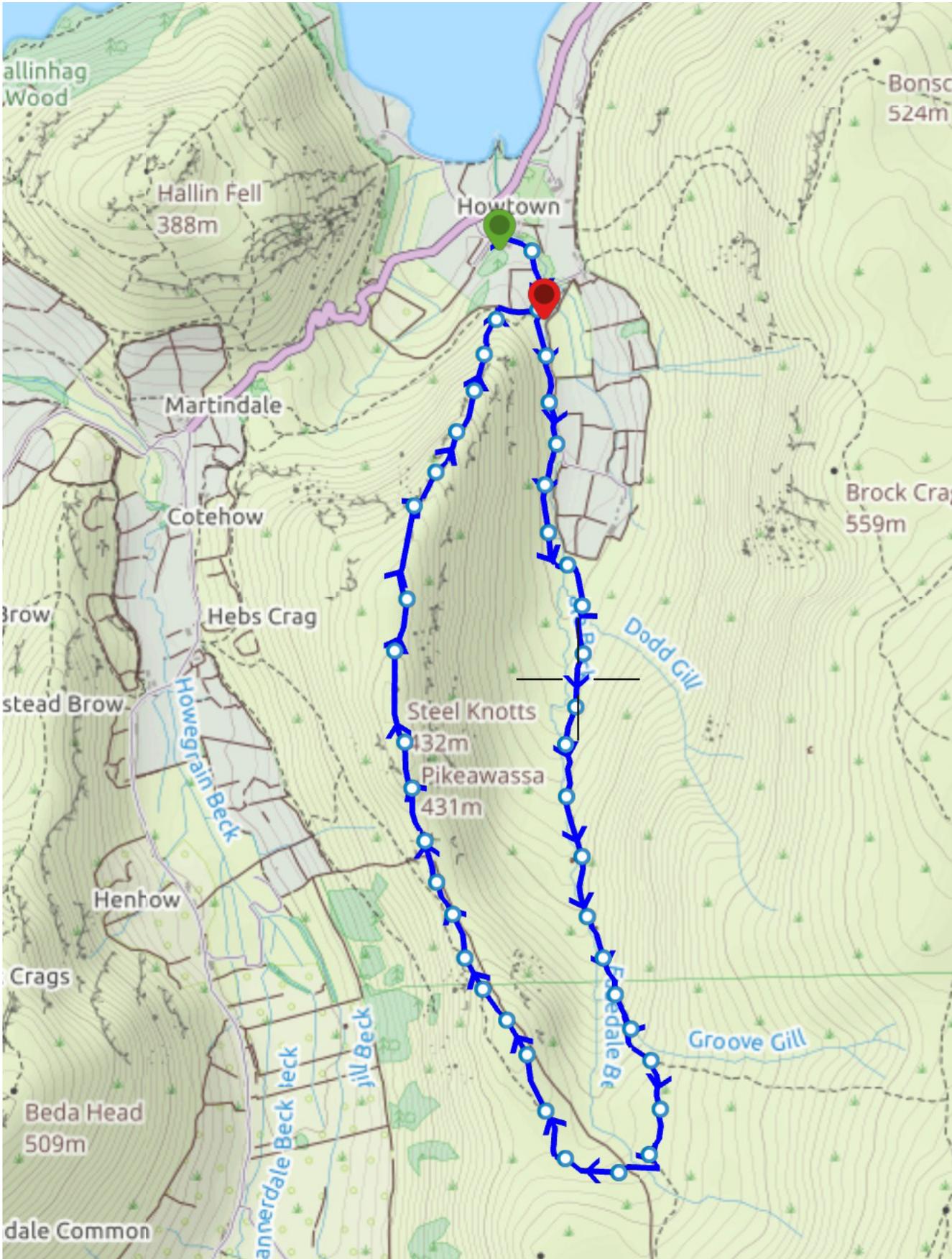


A circular walk heading up the Fusedale Valley over Pikawassa, onto Steel Knotts & down over Steel End.

Length: Not quite 4 miles
Ascent: 1213 feet



Walks with Tobin

'Having told my 18 year old son we were going walking I believe his expectation lay somewhere between walking through Penrith or a brief trip to the lake and back. However after collecting our packed lunch from the Hotel, reserving a tearoom sausage roll for our return and packing numerous layers to account for the changeable weather, the realisation dawned that this was not going to be the brief stroll he had imagined.

Setting off from the Hotel with the tearoom on the right, walk up the road with Fusedale Beck alongside. Over the cattle grid keep going straight – there is a wooden signpost to point you on your way - and walk along towards Cote Farm, follow the footpath over the stone bridge and skirt round the bottom of the fell with Cote Farm on the Left. Then, Bearing left, cross the wooden bridge and turn right. The path continues sloping upwards with the beck on the right. At the top (or what you we thought was the top) are the slate ruins of an old shepherds hut with a wooden seat in front. The perfect place to stop for well deserved refreshment.

Once back on the trail, continue upwards and over the top of the fell where – depending on the time of year you will see swathes of cotton grass making the fellside appear more like the prairie than the Lake District. Again there are further ruins (sheepfold) sitting just above the beck which you cross to get back on the path and make your way up the summit of Steel Knotts and the rock tor of Pikewassa.

Be warned that the ascent up to Pikawassa was one which saw us having a number of rests along the way, but we certainly weren't in any hurry so as we were overtaken by runners and serious fellwalkers alike, we just took another breath and enjoyed the view.

After reaching the summit and taking the obligatory photo standing on Pikewassa (Describe by Wainright as “the sharpest summit in Lakeland as Pikeawassa is so acute that only very agile walkers will be able to stand upon it”) we headed straight along the path which was fairly overgrown in places and made our way to Steel End.

A note to the wise – I had intended to leave Pikawassa, carry on over to St Peter's Church and make our descent back to the Hotel and Walkers Bar via Martindale Hause. Tobin on the other hand decided we should carry straight on. Although the views looking down onto Howtown and the head of the Lake are spectacular, there is a sheer drop in places and the paths can be uneven and steep. In fact, I went down on my behind in certain places, much to Tobin's disgust as he descended with the grace of a gazelle!.

We finished where we started, as they say – at the cattlegrid with the wooden signpost and made our way back to the Walker's Bar for a well deserved cold beer. As we collected our sausage rolls we explained to Diane in the tearoom where we had been, she declared ' that's not far, just over 3 miles.' –We were sure we had done about 8!

From start to finish we had taken 3.5 hours to traverse 3.8 miles, not the fastest of walks but we enjoyed every minute and as we sat in the Hotel gardens with a beer in one hand and a sausage roll in the other declared ourselves to be thoroughly satisfied with our afternoon!

5th July 2019