

• Distance 4km/2¼ miles • Time 2½hrs • Type Lake and island swimhike

**1** NAVIGATION LEVEL 1 **3** FITNESS LEVEL 3



## Plan your walk



**WHERE:** Circular swimhike from Keswick to Lord's Island and Rampsholme Island, near Keswick.

**START/END:** Theatre by the Lake, Lakeside, near Keswick (NY264228).

**TERRAIN:** Derwent Water presents all the hazards of open-water swimming. Not recommended in poor visibility or if swimming into a headwind. When not swimming in summer, you will require a full wetsuit. Mainland sections have excellent paths throughout; islands are pathless woodland with occasional undergrowth.

**MAPS:** OS Explorer OL4; Landranger 89, 90

**GETTING THERE:** Keswick is served by National Express coaches from all over the UK (© 0871 781 8181, www.nationalexpress.com).

**EATING & DRINKING:** A café at the Theatre by the Lake is open 10am–6.30 pm (© 017687 74411; www.theatrebythelake.co.uk).

**SLEEPING:** There are hundreds of catered and self-catering



The walking sections are a mix of woodland and fields with two notable viewpoints en route, including the rugged Friar's Crag. There's also an interesting piece of public art to discover. However, much of this route involves not walking but swimming between two of Derwent Water's islands, offering spectacular views down the centre of the lake to the surrounding fells. The smaller Rampsholme Island looks wonderful as you approach it, but is somewhat less appealing when you actually get there. As with any swimhike, it is essential to have some form of a waterproofed swimsac to carry your clothes. This can be self-assembled using a roll top drybag inside a rucksack. The rucksack should have both a chest strap, a waist strap and side pockets. Place small inflatables, such as a child's armband, in the sidepockets. Before entering the water, place your shoes and clothes in the drybag and strap the outer rucksack beneath your shoulders.

**1. START** From Theatre by the Lake (NY264228) head South to Friar's Crag (NY263222). There is a bench here and a memorial commemorating the fact that John Ruskin visited the viewpoint when he was a small child.

**2.** Descend to the rocky platform beneath the crag, and swim for the northwest side of Lord's Island (NY264220). Slip through a gap in the bushy trees that fringe the shore and explore the island. At first, the ground is stony, with broken glass, so wear shoes. Then comes a mess of fallen trees, and among them the ruins of the manor house (NY265218). Herons' eggs lie broken at the bottom of the trees, and there are patches of wild garlic. Head for the southern end of the island, where the trees become more open. Descend a steep 5ft bank and squeeze through small trees to the rocky beach on the southern shore.

**3.** Swim south to Rampsholme Island (NY263214). The island's dark trees make a distinctive bell shape. Land

## Continued...

options in and around Keswick. Visit [www.keswick.org](http://www.keswick.org).  
**VISITOR INFORMATION:** Tourist Information, Moot Hall, Market Sq, Keswick (© 01768 772645).  
**GUIDEBOOKS:** *Swimhiking in the Lake District and North East England* by Peter Hayes (£9.99, Gilbert Knowle Publishers, ISBN 978 09 5588 150 3).  
**LOCAL RAMBLERS AREA/ GROUPS:** Lake District Ramblers (© 01539 723705; [www.ralakedistrict.talktalk.net](http://www.ralakedistrict.talktalk.net)).

on the steep-sided pebble spit (NY263214) at the northeast corner of Rampsholme. If you visit the main part of the island, prepare to be disappointed: there are beautiful tall oaks and pines, but the ground is thick with bird droppings.

**4.** From Rampsholme spit, swim to the copse (NY267215) at the northwest point of Calf Close Bay. The copse is on raised ground and looks rather like another island. Land on the stony beach beneath the copse; keep to the south of the fence. Follow the beach east into the bay. Just beyond the copse and at the edge of the beach is a large sculpted rock (NY268215), split in half to reveal a pattern like some giant fossilised egg. Double back up to the copse, and take the field path north to Stable Hills (NY 267218). Continue north to the gateway L and join the swamp path through the Ings (NY269220), with its tall grass and tangled trees.

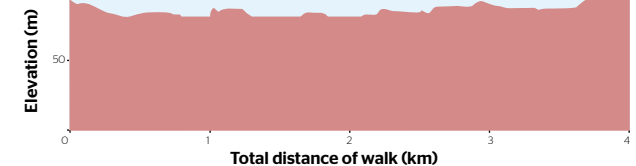
**5.** Exit the Ings at Strandshag Bay (NY266222). Turn sharp R over the field to the southeast corner of Cockshot Wood (NY266225). Follow the path north along the eastern boundary of the wood to emerge in the large Lakeside car park. The car park adjoins the Theatre by the Lake.

Route devised by Peter Hayes



Map not to scale.  
Representation of  
OS Explorer  
MAP OL4, 1:25,000  
[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)

### Steepness of walk



Route and gradient profile created using Anquet Maps v06.  
Download more maps from [www.Anquet.co.uk](http://www.Anquet.co.uk)