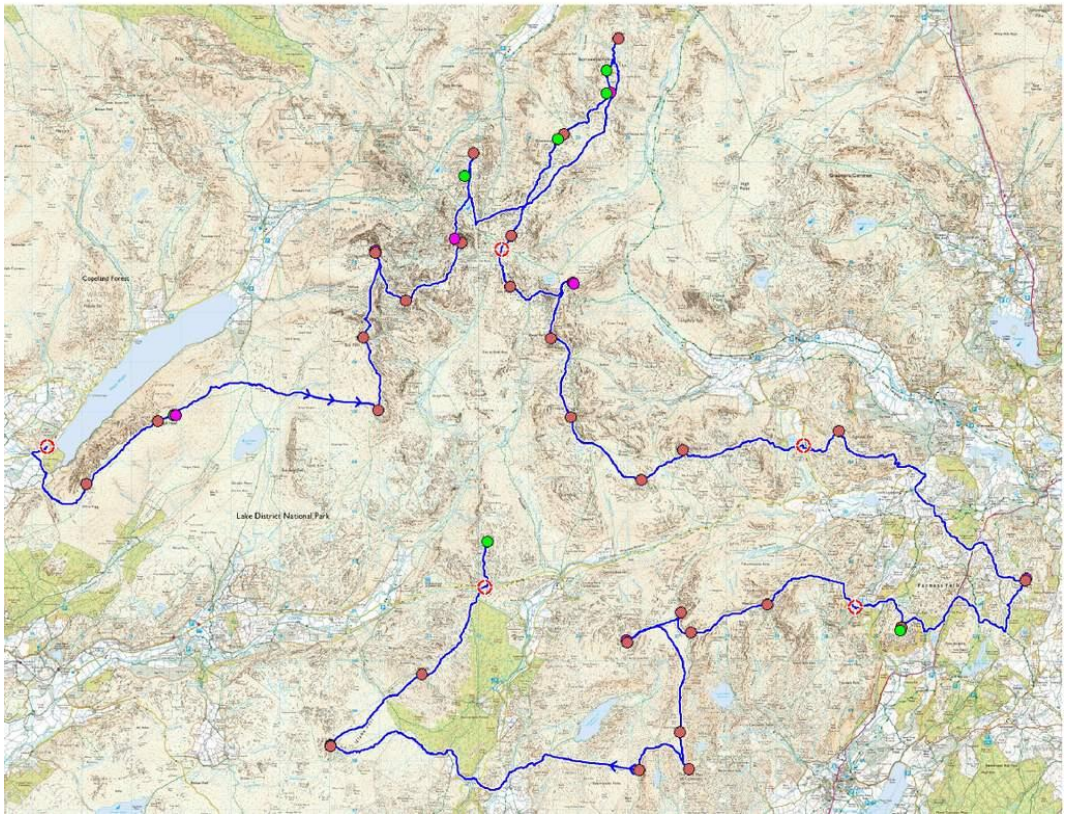
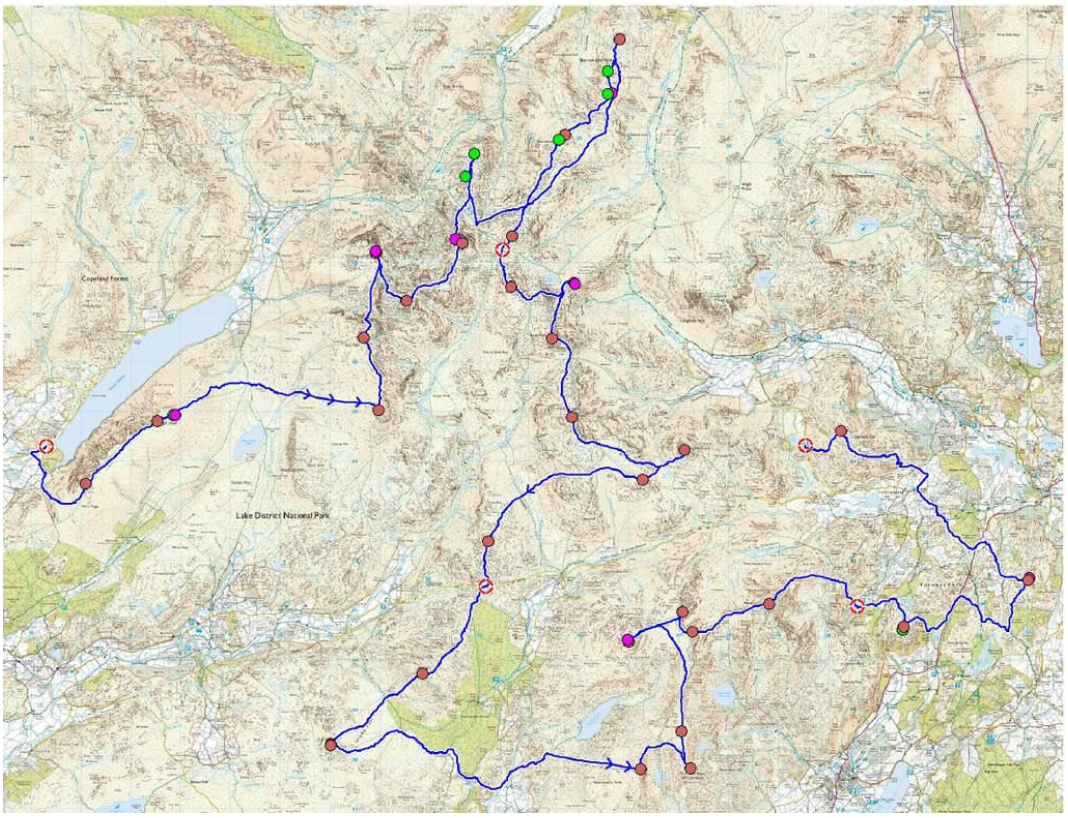
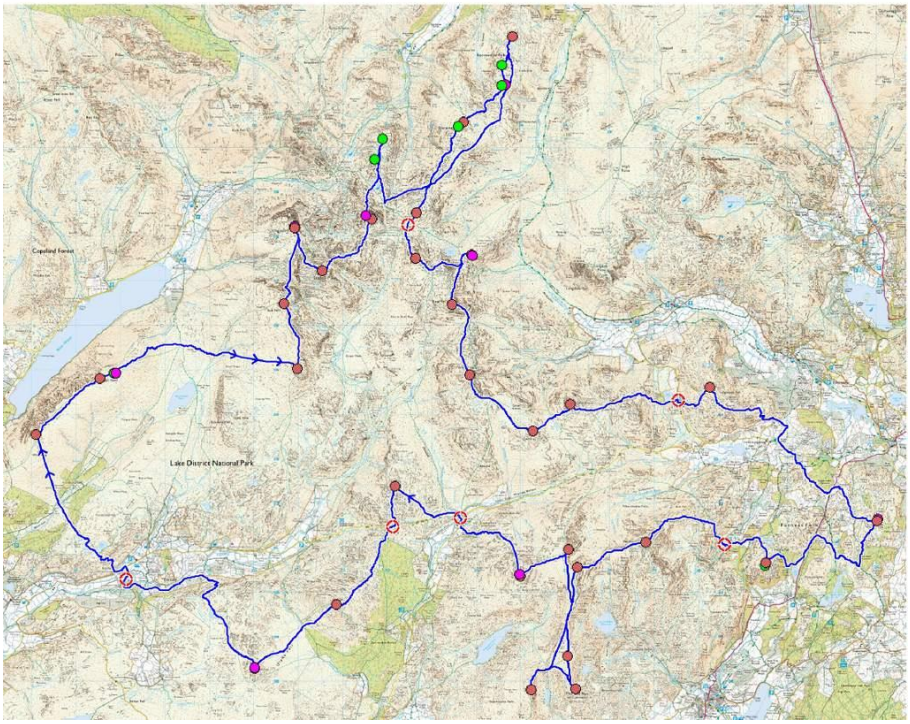
4. Southern Fells

Type	Direction	Distance / km	Ascent / m	Descent / m	Time / h:mm
Linear	Low Wood, Wasdale -> Hardknott Pass	84	6363	6040	16:30
Linear	Low Wood, Wasdale -> Blea Tarn, Langdale	84	6427	6297	16:45
Circular		89	6543	6543	17:22

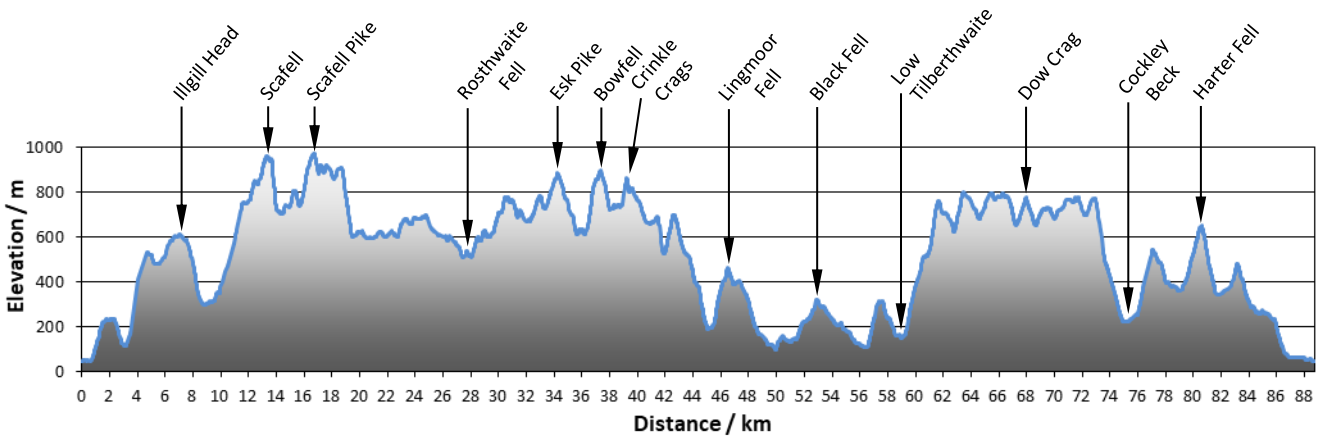






The region covered by the Southern Fells contains many of the hills that many people would consider to be in the heart of the Lake District and pushes a surprisingly long way north towards Derwent Water. The Scafells, the triplet of Esk Pike, Bowfell and Crinkle Crags and the Coniston fells are all included. Fortunately, Wainwright arbitrarily halted at Green Crag rather than continuing to Black Combe! The second linear route in the table above is the same as Steve Birkenshaw's route but with Seathwaite Fell and the ridge to Rosthwaite Fell added on. A drawback is it's a very long way to return to the starting point. The first linear route is shorter and the end point is closer to the start; so close you might as well do the circular route! Wainwright didn't locate his summit of either Seathwaite Fell or Rosthwaite Fell at their highest points. For Seathwaite Fell he stated, 'the pyramid at the north end is generally regarded as the summit of the fell although obviously it isn't.' It is clear where the highest point of Seathwaite Fell is located (about 500m SSW) but the matter is not quite so clear with Rosthwaite Fell. Some consider Rosthwaite Cam to be the summit, but Wainwright stated that Rosthwaite Cam was the 'finest (although not the highest)'. He doesn't name which he thought was the highest, but Dovenest Top is a higher tor to the south and is the only other one that Wainwright labelled on his map. I visited both Rosthwaite Cam and Dovenest Top. To omit them, after Bessyboot, follow the Borrowdale Fell Race trod southwards for 2km before cutting up to Glaramara.

I started in Eskdale and went clockwise because I wanted to do the rockier and highest peaks first and leave the gentler Coniston Fells to nearer the end. I descended from Green Crag directly across Foxbield Moss, which was a watery hell. I've changed the route to follow a path but it is longer.



Elevation profile of the Southern Fells circular route.