

Conistone Dib

Character

Lower Gorge – This mini gorge is a fine place to climb easier and mid-grade sport routes. First mentioned in old YMC guides where some aid climbs were regarded as unsatisfactory, it has, until recently, remained unexplored. There are currently three developed walls a short way into the gorge. Glue-in bolts, that are hard to spot, have been used throughout. The different character of the walls makes for a lot of variety. Shade and sunlight are possible though the former is usually later in the day. It can be breezy through the narrow part of the gorge. A good option in hot weather.



Upper Crag - Over many years attempts have been made to establish this as a climbing venue. A traditional approach had been tried but the main wall proved somewhat hard and unprotected for such a very small crag, plus the landings are poor, so the climbs were never satisfactory and the lines remained unloved or unclimbed. On the less steep right side, a trad approach yielded around half a dozen route/problems and, more recently, a couple of top-rope bolts appeared as the ground above is devoid of belays. Landings there are better. Recently, shorter crags have proven to work with a sport approach and this may well work here too although their brevity makes them hard to grade. The rock is extremely good and the routes pack a punch. The approach and location are fine and, for those who don't mind their routes being short or going just for the bouldering, a day here is one well-spent. Sunny for most of the day and dries incredibly quickly. Can be in condition all year round.

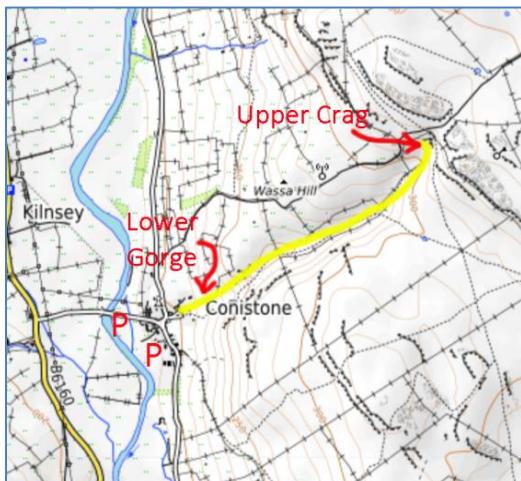
Note: Upper Crag Belay and Lower-offs



At the Upper Crag the routes can top-out but there are no natural belays. Lower-offs and/or top ropes can be made using bolts located either on top of the crag or in the cleft that separates much of the crag from the hillside. Hang a couple of long slings off a bolt. It is possible to back each one up by connecting it to another. A couple more long slings, or a short length of rope, are therefore useful. For the climbs a few clips and a short rope suffice.

Parking (see map) @opentopomap

Park considerately either in the hamlet of Conistone opposite the old Methodist Hall (now a bunk house), or by the bridge on the road towards Kilnsey.



Approach (see map)

From the village green go through the gate and up to the narrow **Lower Gorge** (7 mins). Above here it opens out then narrows again. Take the left branch up into the Dib and access the **Upper Crag** through a gate (20 mins).

Walkers

Conistone Dib is a popular walking route. Whilst the climbs present no danger to walkers, please make people aware if there is someone above as they seem to usually have their eyes fixed firmly on the ground. The climbs generally start out of the way of the route taken by walkers but a dislodged hold could fall. Folk are generally interested and happy to wait for an ascent to be completed before passing by.

Lower Gorge

It is also known as Gurgling Trough. Dry for most of the time, it has been known to flow with water (hence the drainage system by the village). Above the climbing it narrows further and is a very easy scramble loved by children.

Left Side

Rudyard Walls

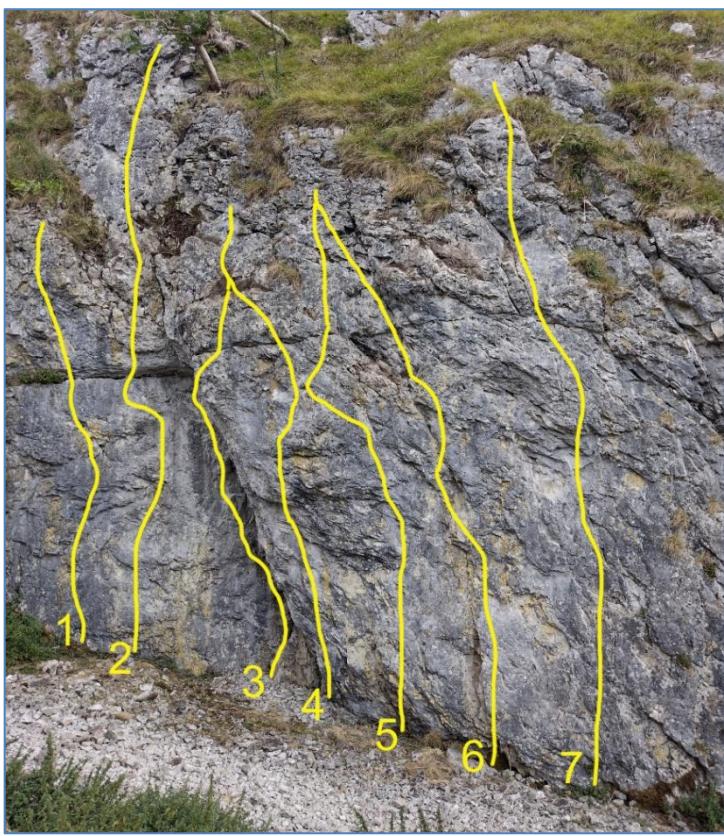
The first sector is on the right (true left side) and is obvious as one approaches the narrowing, being composed of a steep white wall and another grey wall to the left of a steep groove. There is a very nice base camp on the grassy slope on the other side of the gorge.

0/ King of the Swingers 19m 6b+ (not on the topo) *

A fun traverse. Climb *Mowgli* to the break and then follow it, rounding *Kipling Groove*, and following the break across to *Akela*. Easier climbing leads over to *Man Cub* and finish up this.

1/ Mowgli 10m 6b+ *

The leftmost route on this sector has a nice, technical lower wall to the break. A few steep moves on good holds then lead to the lower-off.



2/ King Louie 15m 6b+ *

A bouldery start leads to a flake and then some crimp moves to gain the break. Monkey up the jugs to pass the bulge and access the steady wall and lower-off. **2a/ Baloo Variation**
6a+ Use the *Kipling Groove* start and join *King Louie* at the break.

3/ Kipling Groove 10m 6c *

The groove and hanging arête. The obvious groove leads, fairly easily to the break. Staying low, reach around from a side-hold for a very good slot. Swing round and then use the thin flake to gain the brown slab staying right of some doubtful looking blocks.

4/ Wolf Brother 10m 7b/+ *

The steep wall, starting by the arête and climbing to a square undercut/side-pull (with a SDS this was an old boulder problem). Some very thin moves lead to the good jugs on *Bare Necessities*. From there finish leftwards onto the brown slab and shared lower-off. Hard to grade as it is very thin but relatively short.

5/ Bare Necessities 10m 7a+ **

Nice wall climbing. The footholds are small and hard to spot so it is likely to be easiest when these are chalked. Climb direct to a RH side-pull in a V recess. Reach left for more side-pulls that can be used to gain holds on the left slanting ramp and then good jugs.

A rightward escape is possible lower down but would spoil the fun and is definitely against the law of the jungle.

6/ Akela 10m 6b+ *

The leftward trending crack-line and layaways to a niche then easy ground to a lower-off. Once an old aid route though the escape must have been most unpleasant.

7/ Man Cub 12m 6a+ *

Good holds lead to the bulge where a couple of steep moves lead past it to easier ground. More steady climbing leads to a lower-off at the grassy ledge.

An easy line would be possible on the right but needs cleaning.

Right Side

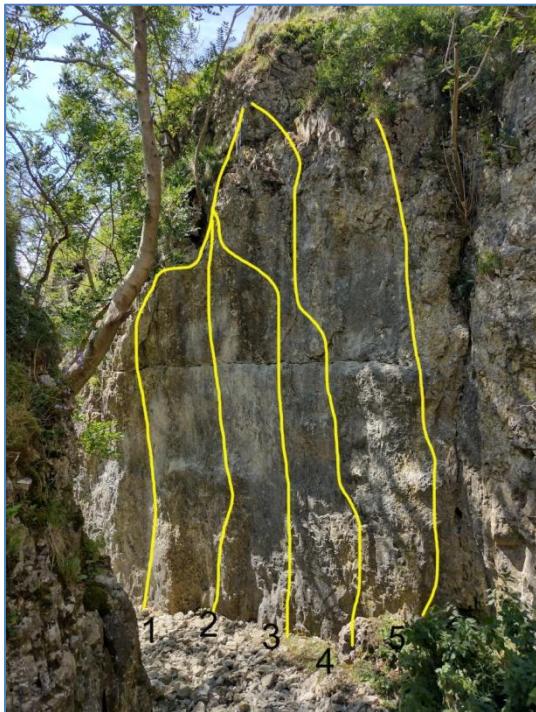
Elements Wall

A short way up the gorge a smooth wall will be seen on the left. Some bouldering, including a good traverse, has been done on the wall and these have been cleaned from time to time. 'Up' problems finished at the break but the sport climbs go higher.

Helium Font 6a *

The aforementioned traverse. Start at the jug on the left and stay close to the ground before finishing at the big block.

Routes 1 to 4 use a shared lower-off.



0/ Folk Song Army 15m 6b+ (not on topo) *

A traverse making good use of the available rock. Climb *That's Mathematics* to the break and then follow it to finish up *Be Prepared*.

1/ That's Mathematics 11m 6b+ *

Work out the wall to reach the break. An undercut flake is used to gain good holds above. Swing right and finish as for *The Elements*.

2/ The Elements 10m 7a **

The thin wall has a long move to the break and another above it to reach good holds and then a flake. The lower-off is just above.

3/ Silent E 10m 6c

Climb the wall past a thin edge to very good side-holds. From the break reach up to the flake on *First Dibs* and its big jug. A monster reach left, clipping a bolt on *The Elements*, gain its finishing holds. An easier finish is up *First Dibs*.

4/ First Dibs 11m 6a+ *

Climb to the break after which an undercut and flake lead to finishing holds and then the lower-off.

5/ Be Prepared 9m 6a+

Follow the pocketed crack to stand on the break. A couple of neat moves on the left lead to a lower-off.

Pocket Wall

Just to the right.

1/ Dob 10m 6a

The left rib of the white wall - no bridging.

2/ Dyb 10m 6c -7a *

Climb the wall by using the arête and pockets to a step left at the break. Follow *Dob* to the lower-off. The easier version uses the arête all the way – the better version pulls onto the wall.

3/ Promise 10m 6b *

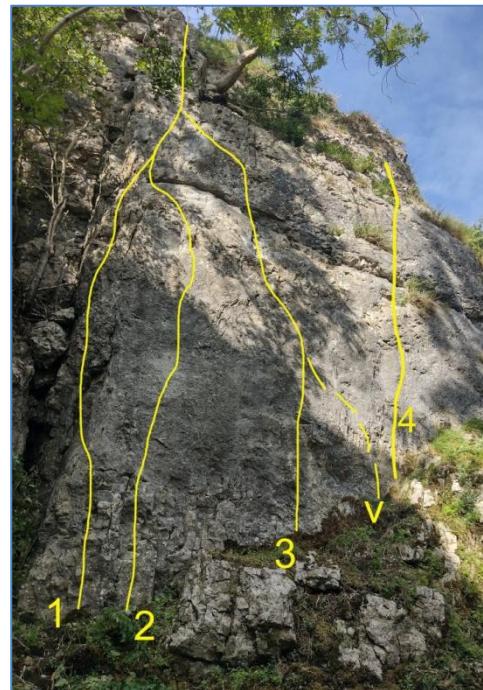
Climb the wall past the first bolt to gain good holds. Step up to another good hold before stepping back left to the finish of the previous routes.

3a/ Variation / Do Our Best 10m 6a

An easier start is possible to the right.

4/ Sixer and Second 9m 5a *

Pleasant climbing and a good warm-up. Scramble up to the ledge then follow very good, incut holds up the wall to a lower-off.



Upper Crag

There is a boulder problem over to the left: **The View** font 4+ Climb the shield using the cracks on either side and surmount the top block to finish.

White Wall

The wall left of a square corner. The corner is V Diff. There are two lines of bolts and three climbs.

1/ Paranoid 8m 6a

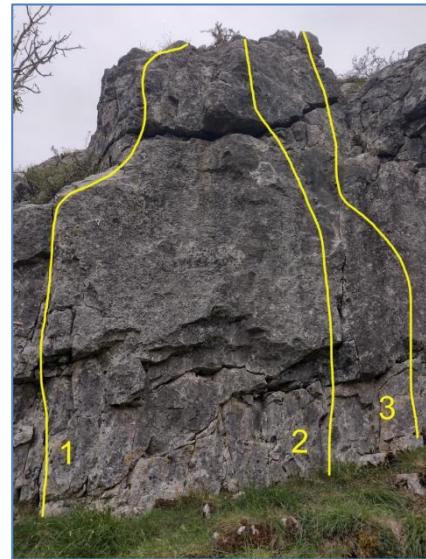
The arête/groove.

2/ Prince of Darkness 8m 6b *

Pull up to a RH finger jam and use it to gain the break. Ace holds on the left lead upwards.

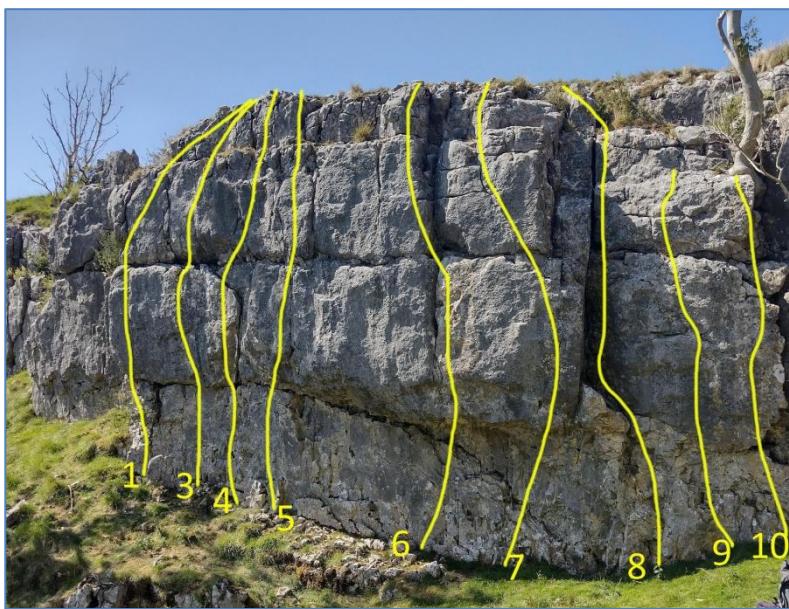
3/ Iron Man 8m 5b

Using the bolts of the previous route start in the corner and step up and left to the break. Climb the edge above.



Vintage Wall

The routes are all topped out. There are several bolts located on top or in a shallow cleft above the crag. Lower-offs can be made by hanging longish slings from these. It may be advisable to link a couple for extra safety.



1/ Swoop 8m 6a *

Climb the right side of the arête on good holds to the break. Continue on even better ones.

2/ Last Amongst Sequels 16m 7a **

(Not on the topo)

Climb the arête and then traverse the break all the way to exit just before Dear Diedre.

3/ Atomic Finger Flake Revisited 8m

7a+

A tough and tight eliminate. Just right of the arête, make a long reach for a broken and sharp flake, first for right hand then share on it. Good foot-work allows a long reach or pop to good holds in the horizontal break. Reach up to a pocket and flakes. Finish straight up.

4/ Short - but Sweet 8m 5c *

The crack and flake system to the right clipping the bolts to the left.

5/ Fingerpost 8m 7a **

Pull through the roof to reach the start of the double flake system and a flat hold. Climb the flake to the break then the hollow shield and its right-hand crack to finishing jugs. The shield vibrates if hit but is sound.

6/ Snap, Crackle and Pop 8m 6c+ *

Reach through the roof to a flat hold and then a splintered hold/slot in the wedged blocks in the crack. Tough and quite reachy moves gain good holds and a finish on the left.

7/ Funshine 8m 6a+ *

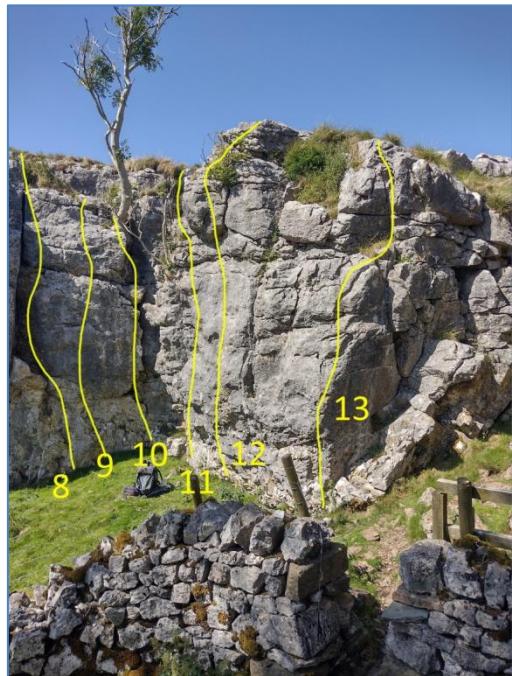
A little artificial but fun. Climb the left arête of the obvious groove, starting through the roof. Finish by taking the leftward slanting crack-line. The big plinth of Dear Diedre is in at this grade – add a couple if just the arête is used.

8/ Dear Diedre 7m Hard Severe

After a bulgy start (was given V Diff!) onto the plinth, the corner groove leads easily to the top. Tends to get vegetated.

9/ Dynamite 7m VS 5c font 5+ *

Pull for a good flake. Another one and steady climbing leads to a good ledge. There is a top-rope bolt above if needed. The bouldering version starts low, from side-pulls or undercuts make a long reach to the flake.



ANFO Font 6a

Sit start under the right side of the Dynamite wall. Span to holds in the centre of the face from a low side pulls on the right edge. Finish as for Dynamite.

10/ Jaws 7m font 3 - Severe

The corner to the right has a steep start.

Lime Wall

The wall at right angles. There is a bolt on top to aid belaying/top-roping.

To avoid over complication only some of the lines are marked on the topo. There are some very good boulder problems and extended traverses with specific beta.

British Heart Foundation Traverse (High Finish) font 6b

Left to right. Sit start from the right edge of Jaws. Gain the triangular hold, then the little hold at the base of the first crack to make a long move to the bow shaped crack on *Man with a Bun*. Climb the crack of *Scot Gate Crack* to gain the finish of *Watch for Walkers*. A **Low Finish** font 6b+ goes past *Scot Gate Crack* to the arête and up *Watch for Walkers*.

11/ Lime Ladder 6m - VS 5a font 4+ *

1m to the right of the corner. YMC. A SDS is Font 5

12/ Man with a Bun 6m 6b *

The wall to a flake and then the thin break (no crack). A steep but juggy finish remains. An old boulder problem is font 6a and finishes at the break. A SDS is font 6b.

Heart Break Traverse font 6a *

R to L traverse across the wall and passing the big jug on *Man With a Bun*. **Heart Break Traverse Low** font 6b Traverse right to left from a sitter on the arête. Take a low line via the square hold on *Scot Gate Crack* and bow shaped hold on *Man With a Bun*. Finish slightly higher on slopers or go low with a powerful move off a small hold in a crack. Both about the same grade. **The August Bank Extension** font 6b crosses to the cleft of Jaws and soars across the Dynamite wall to finish up *Dear Deidre*.

Scot Gate Crack font 4+

The crack from the big square hold and finish as for *Watch for Walkers*. A SDS is font 6a.

Dales Way Arête Font 6b+

Sit start. The left side of the arête beside the path. Finish as for *Watch for Walkers* (or climb down from the good holds on the arête). It is worth padding the rocky landing of this one.

13/ Watch for Walkers 7m Severe font 4

The right edge of the wall.



Dales Way Arête – John Hunt

Gate Wall

Just to the right of the gate.

Open Gate 8m 5b

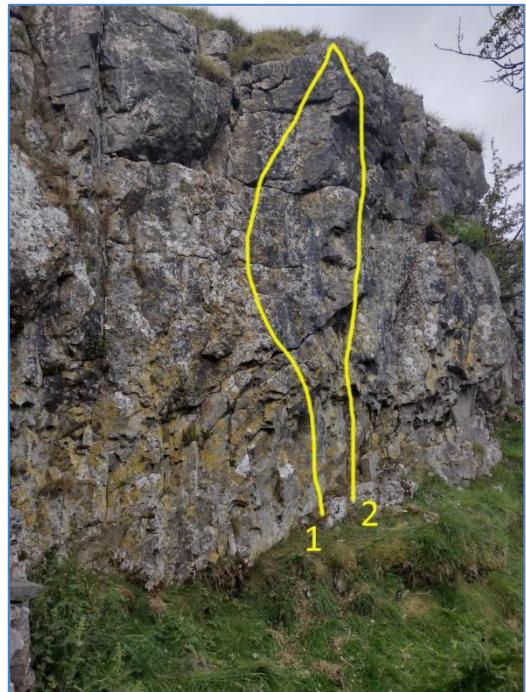
Use the bolts on the right. Follow very good holds up into the corner. Step up and right to finish.

The Gatekeeper 8m 6b

Climb the rib moving slightly rightward then back left to finish. A straight up version is possible but feels forced.

History:

Full details are not known though many have played here in the past. The easier climbs and boulder problems have been climbed for many years by YMC members back in the late 1970s. Some aid climbs in the lower gorge were done earlier. Nigel Baker and Paul Clarke visited back in the day and Paul returned on a few occasions but found that the main wall at the upper crag didn't really work well with a bouldering or trad approach though a few problems were done. Huw Goodall also visited. Those on the right side were re-climbed and helpfully recorded on UKC at a later date. In 2025 Paul returned and later recruited Dave Turnbull to adopt a sport approach and re-establish some old lines and added new ones. They also developed climbs in the lower gorge along with a number of supporting friends. John Hunt reappraised the bouldering at the upper crag and came away with some good problems and links.



Notice:

The BMC recognises that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions.

All fixed gear has been placed with regard to making these climbs as sport routes. However, the rock is mountain limestone and it is for the individual to assess the security they provide. Areas of loose rock remain between the cleaned lines. These should be avoided.