

Tongue House High Close



Silver Hammer MS
High Close West Face
John Daly

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You are the sole judge of conditions, the suitability of any chosen route, the ability of the party and you take sole responsibility for your actions.

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Tongue House High Close

OS Ref: **SD 241 979**

Alt: **220m**

Tongue House High Close is an enclosed parcel of fellside above Tongue House Farm and below the track to Seathwaite Tarn. It contains three buttresses, one of them having delectable, yet very bold, climbing Fully described in the current Duddon Guide..

This miniguide describes a number of recent developments in this area. Reference to the maps in the Duddon guidebook will aid location.

Approach

The initial approach is the same for most of these buttresses. Coming from the south the Fickle Steps parking area is some 400m past a cattle grid where the road rises. Take the left-hand path down a boggy slope eastwards and follow it around to the north, through woods, for a kilometre, crossing Tarn Beck by a footbridge. Cross the wall using a tall stile. Follow the path through two gates and continue uphill until, at a sharp left turn, a hurdle can be seen ahead straddling the wall; climb over it into the Tongue House High Close enclosure.



Grades

22

14


24

1

Parking (off-road)

Fickle Steps
parking (7)

Tongue House North Buttress

30 mins Aspect: West 
Lat/Lng: [54.3708017269, -3.16844886079](#)

Introduction

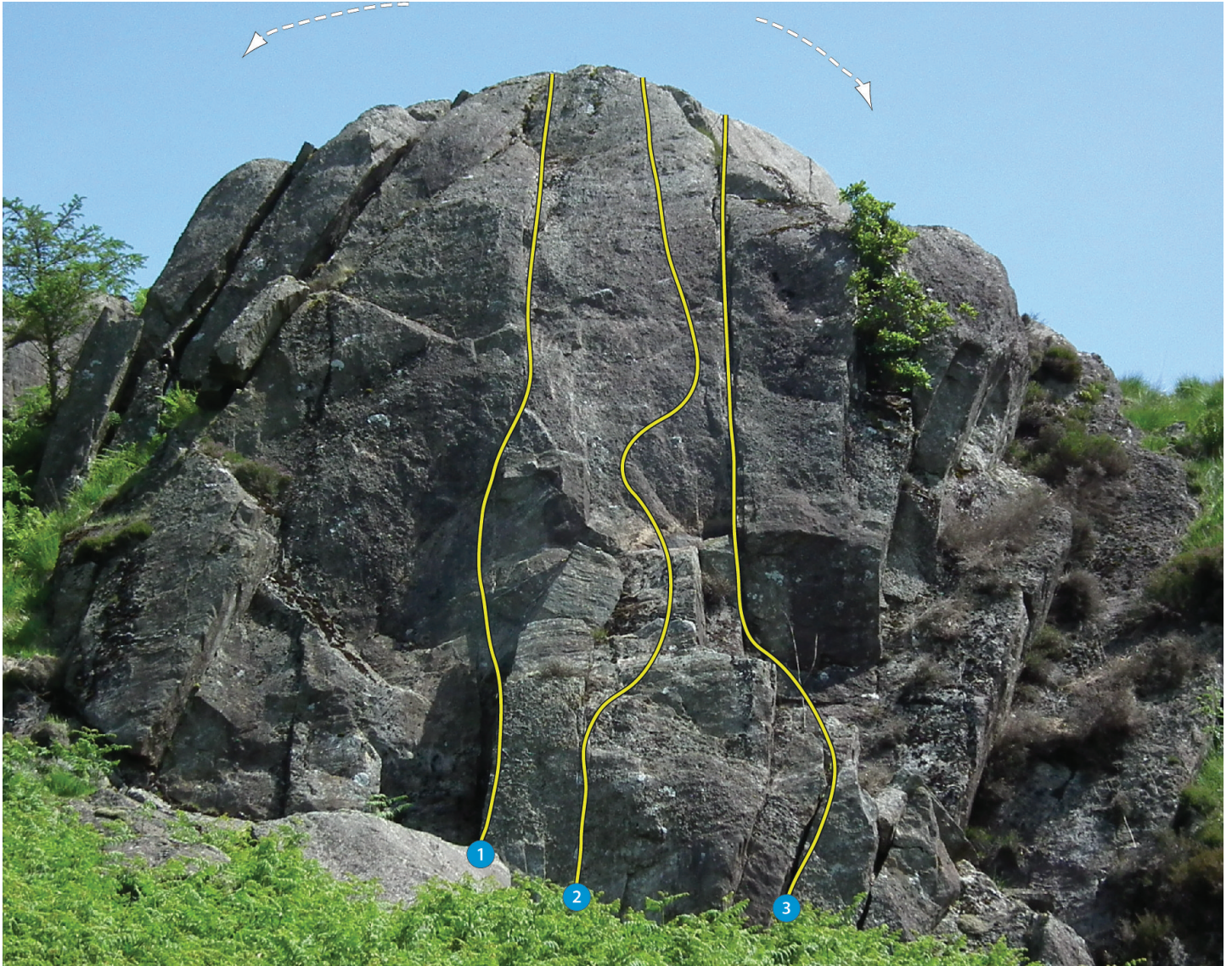
This buttress is situated at SD 2415 9785 Alt 265m

Approach

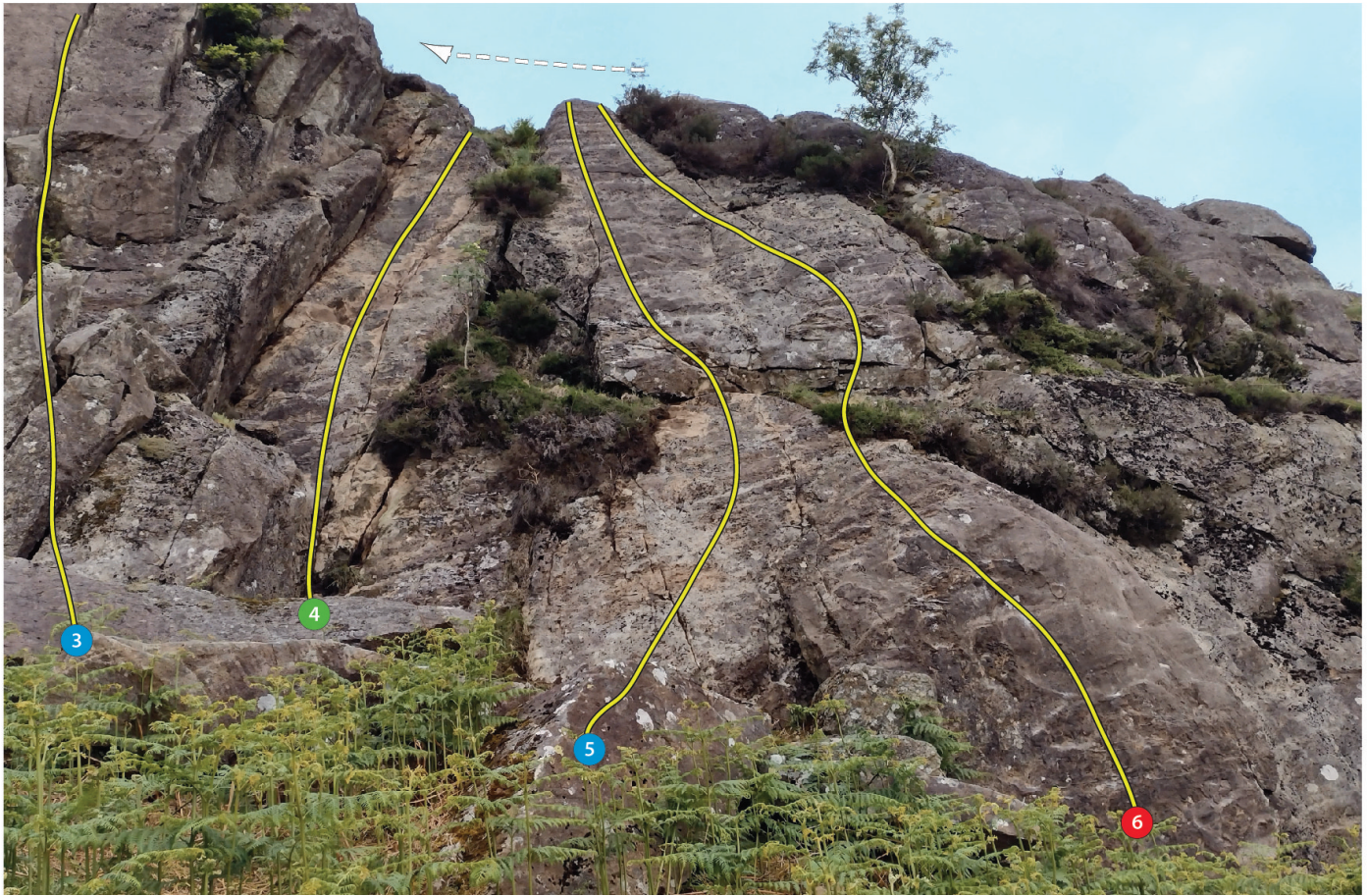
The buttress lies 30m above the hurdle.

Descent

To the left.



Tongue House North Buttress LHS



Tongue House North Buttress RHS

Below the centre of the wall are some large perched blocks, the first route starts just left of these.

1 Short Sharp Tongue HVS 5a 20m

Climb the left side of the blocks then stand on the upper one. A short awkward section leads to a good spike where the difficulties end, finish directly.

22 Jun 2019 A Phizacklea, S Fabbri, JE Holden

2 Matheson Road E1 5b 23m

A very contrived line up the narrow central slab which relies on side-runners in the right-hand crack. Without this protection, it has ground-fall potential above an appalling landing. From the left side of the lower block, pull up to the perched flakes then climb the centre of the slab, which eases when the good holds are reached.

The grade can vary with a more direct route being harder up to 5c technical grade.

22 Jun 2019 A Phizacklea, S Fabbri, JE Holden

3 Cowgirl with Lasso VS 4c 23m

Good, well-protected climbing; start directly below the right-hand crack line at a short diagonal crack. Follow the line.

22 Jun 2019 S Fabbri, JE Holden, A Phizacklea

The following routes climb the excellent slabs and a corner to the right of [Cowgirl with Lasso](#).

4 Pretty Boy Floyd VD † New 15m

Climb the prominent right-facing slabby corner pulling out right at the top. Spike belays.

21.05.2024 D Geere, J Daly

5 Total Recall HVS 5a † New 18m

Good climbing. Climb an initial slab to a ledge then climb the left edge of the main slab above to a crack (essential protection). Now boldly climb the slim slabby pillar above to the top.

21.05.2024 J Daly, D Geere

6 Two four 68 Never too late E2 5b † New 20m

Boldly climb the centre of the large flake. From its top cross a grass ledge then climb the right side of the main slab and a diagonal crack to join and finish up the slim pillar as for [Total Recall](#).

21.05.2024 J Daly, D Geere



High Close West Face

Introduction

(Duddon guide p144).

This buttress is about 70m left/west of [High Close](#) (Guidebook page 144). SD2420 9790 Alt = 290m

It is located only 25m back from the summit of [Tongue House North Buttress](#) and the best approach is as per this crag.



Tongue House High Close West

1 Crag Band View VD

Start at a boulder jamming a gully & climb a short clean rib, pass a grass ledge & then take the main slab straight to the top. Quite easy but only a single runner, mid-height (climbed & gardened onsite). The route ends just below the summit of High Close.

24.03.2024 D Scott-Maxwell, A Gittens

2 Close Quarters S 4b New 15m

Starts 2m left of [Close Encounters](#). Climb easily up a broken rib line passing left of a small Juniper then do battle with the teasing arête above climbing it directly. Belay well up left.

30.04.2024 J Daly, D Geere

3 Close Encounters S New 13m

Climb the centre of the prominent slab to a small roof, surmount this and finish up the slab above.

30.04.2024 J Daly, D Geere

4 Silver Hammer MS New 11m

Climb directly up the quartz-embazoned right-hand arête.

19.05.2024 J Daly, D Geere



High Close

Introduction

SD 2425 9785 Alt = 300m
 A rather nice well-hidden slab.
Page 144 Duddon guidebook

Approach

Park at the bottom of the Walna Scar Road. Walk 750m up the Seathwaite Tarn track where the track turns sharp right. Looking directly ahead, cross to and go through the gate in the wall and follow the boggy path. After 100m the remains of an ancient long house are reached. Continue on the path to more remains where to the left is a narrow valley with the crag on the far side.



Tongue House High Close

1 Soft Parade VS 4c 9m

Climb the pleasant slim pillar just left of [1001 Nights](#).
 2020 D Geere

2 1001 Nights MS 14m

Start 3m left of [Valley of a Thousand Routes](#). From a corner, climb the obvious curving flake/crack heading up rightwards.
 7.09.2021 M Lynch, A Lynch

3 Valley of a Thousand Routes S 26m

1 17m Climb up to the left of the crack, then up and right to the hanging crack. Up this to a ledge.
2 9m Climb the slabby groove.
 18.11.2018 A Phizacklea, JL Holden



4 High Close Call HVS 5a 13m

Thin moves lead to a nut placement on the left at 4m. Move up and right and climb the centre of the slab on improving holds.
 18.11.2018 A Phizacklea, JL Holden



5 Graham's Crackers E2 5b 13m

The unprotected right side of the slab.
 7.03.2021 A McVittie

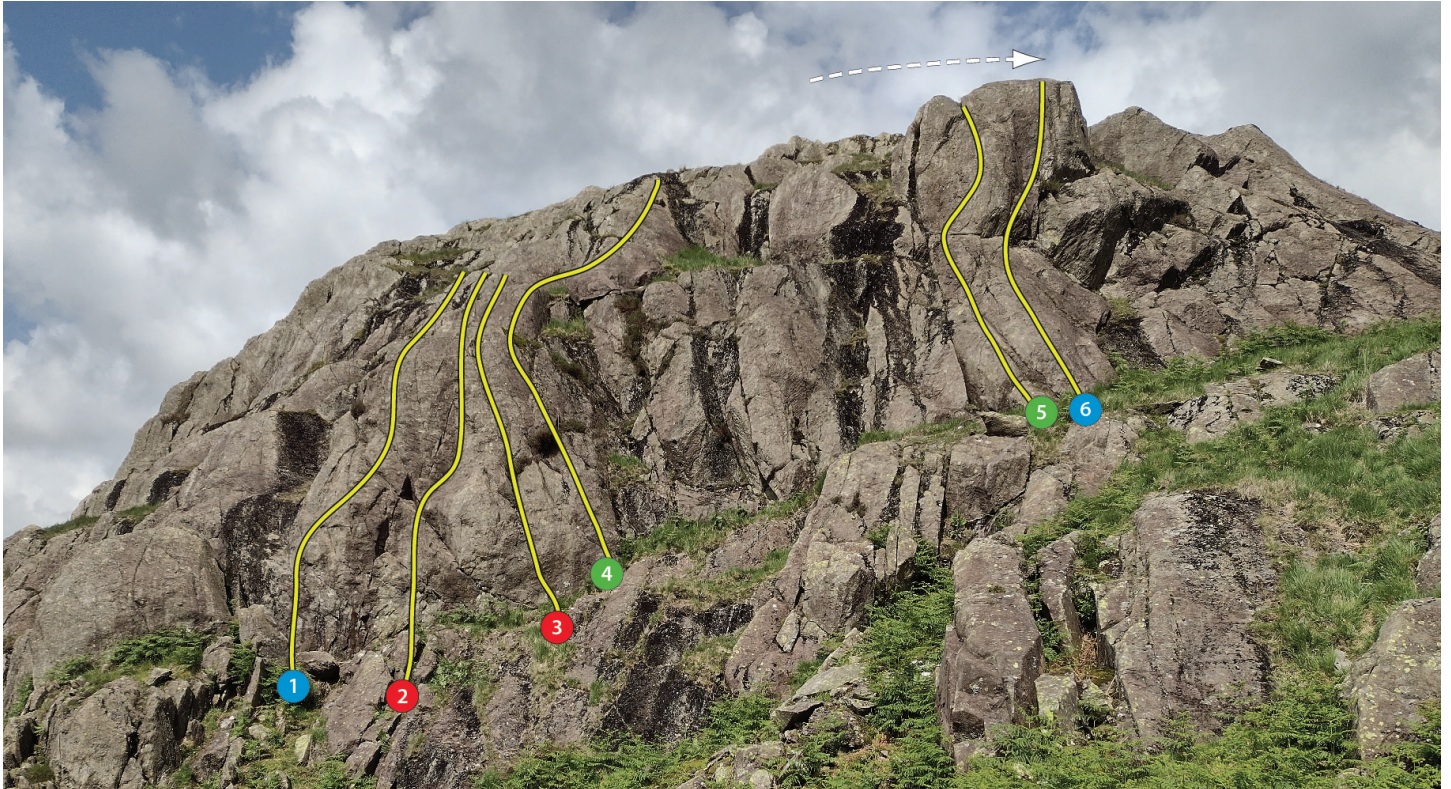
6 The One that got away MS 25m

1 16m Start just right of Graham's Crackers. Climb up behind a large flake then up the centre of the nice slab above. Nut belay in a shallow corner crack (as for [Valley of a Thousand Routes](#)).
2 9m Climb the slab to the right of the groove of [Valley of a Thousand Routes](#).

High Close Right-Hand End

Introduction

30m right of the main crag is an impressively steep bulbous buttress.



Tongue House High Close Right Hand End

The first three routes use nut belays in a crack on the left at 14m then scramble up to the top and descend to the right.

1 Home Run HVS 5a † **New** 14m

Start behind a large flake. A powerful start allows you to climb the left side of the buttress.

6.06.2024 J Daly, D Geere

2 The Super Bowl E2 5c † **New** 14m

Start beneath a ramp. Climb steeply up the centre of the buttress to gain the prominent niche/bowl, place protection in the crack on the right then bridge up the open groove above.

6.06.2024 J Daly, D Geere

3 Hard Ball E1 5b/c † **New** 14m

After a challenging start, climb the diagonal crack. A Rock 2 protects the start placed 2.5 metres up in a diagonal groove leaning across from the start of *Hot Flush*.

11.06.2024 J Daly

4 Hot Flush D † **New** 18m

Climb the slab to a grass ledge then the slabby rib above the perched blocks. Nut belay.

11.06.2024 J Daly

20m further right is a short rock pillar.

5 Dump Trump VD **New** 10m

Easily up a twin slanting ramp to beneath the steep prow. Gain a sloping shelf above and finish at the Nick.

31.05.2024 J Daly, M Lynch


6 The Felon MVS 4b **New** 10m

Climb the centre of the slab to gain an obvious corner. Climb the corner and finish up the steep arête on the right.

31.05.2024 J Daly, M Lynch



Tongue House Upper Slab

35 mins Aspect: **West** 
 Lat/Lng: [54.3689895634, -3.16993686881](#)

Introduction

Photodiagram on page 115 in the Duddon Guidebook

Approach

From the hurdle, head south on an old track curving round to the right. The **Upper Slab** is some 250m from the hurdle.
 SD 2415 9773 Alt = 250m

Descent

To the left.

1 White Line HS † **New** 10m

Follows the white quartz vein on the left side of the slabs

28.11.2020 E Rogers, RO Graham

2 Dhurrie VD † **New** 10m

28.11.2020 E Rogers, RO Graham

3 Left Crack VD 12m

28.11.2020 E Rogers, RO Graham

4 The Prince of Wales has been sold! HVS 5a 12m

Pull over a small bulge above the lowest part of the slab, move up left and climb the clean slab between two cracks (without using either of them)!

22.05.2019 A Phizacklea

5 Right Crack VD **New** 12m



28.11.2020 RO Graham, E Rogers

6 Oh No it Hasn't! VS 4b 11m

Climb the right slab to a diagonal break, finish up the rounded rib.

22.05.2019 A Phizacklea

Tongue House Lower Slab

35 mins Aspect: West  
 Lat/Lng: [54.3689895634, -3.16993686881](#)

Introduction

Beautifully featured rough brown rock set at a very amenable angle; with little drainage from above it dries very quickly. Climbing here will either be a real pleasure or very scary. Most of the routes are completely unprotected and with ground-fall potential they demand confidence, commitment and composure. The grading is subjective in the extreme. Belay well back.

Photodiagram on page 116 in the Duddon guidebook

SD 2410 9765 Alt = 225m

Approach

From the hurdle head south on a track curving round to the right for about 350m, cross a shallow gully, before dropping down to a flat terrace with a holly tree above the [Lower Slabs](#); convenient for gearing up, brewing tea and lounging about.

Descent

To the left.

1 Slip of the Tongue S 3c 15m

Stay left of the moss and lichen.

20 Jun 2019 CAG Morton

2 Tongue and Groove E1 5b 16m

Climb a conspicuous pale streak to the right of the lichen and moss to finish up a flared groove.

26 Feb 2019 J Daly, A Phizacklea, JL Holden

3 Mao Tse-Tongue Direct E3 5c 17m

Confidently climb the centre of the slab through small overlaps.

16 Jun 2019 K Phizacklea

The original way looped right across to the large crack to find side runners. A Phizacklea, J Daly, JL Holden - 26 Feb 2019



4 Caustic Tongue E3 5c 17m

The bold slab left of the wide crack.

20 Jun 2019 R Matheson



5 Tricked VS 4c New 17m

The wide crack.

August 2019 RO Graham, E Rogers

6 Tongue Twister Direct E4 5c New 17m

Beautiful climbing with no deviation or protection. Side runners reduce the tension.

20 Jun 2019 R Matheson

Tongue Twister - E3 5c A Phizacklea, J Daly, JL Holden - 26 Feb 2019 - with side runners.



7 Brothers' Climb E2 5b 17m

The bold and compelling arête is serious.

16 Jun 2019 K Phizacklea



8 Ticked VS 4c New 18m

The dirty corner will clean up.

August 2019 E Rogers, RO Graham

9 Whipper Tongue HVS 4c 18m

Climb the slab on chicken heads.

20 Jun 2019 R Matheson

10 Tongue in Cheek HVS 4c 18m

With a low crux there is no gear until half-height on the slab and crack. Thin sling advised.

16 Feb 2019 A Phizacklea, JL Holden

11 Tongue Tied HS 4a 12m

Climb the short corner and wall, left of the crack.

26 Feb 2019 JL Holden, A Phizacklea, J Daly

Cheeky Wall

Introduction

A short steep wall located 70m down right from [Tongue House Lower Slabs](#) (guidebook p116).



Tongue House Cheeky Wall

1 Cheeky Monkey E2 5b † New 8m

A little gem. Climb the right side of the wall to gain the sloping ledge then finish up the centre. Skyhook used.

19.05.2024 J Daly, D Geere

Midway between [Tongue House Lower Slabs](#) and [Cheeky Wall](#) is a slab alongside a left-facing corner.



Tongue House Blue Tongue

2 Blue Tongue HS 5a † New 10m

Climb the pleasant slab direct with a cheeky move next to good protection.

19.05.2024 D Geere, J Daly

Tongue House Wood

Introduction

SD 2400 9760 Alt = 190m

A hidden slabby wall of quality rough rock lying within the boundary fence of the wood some 60m below [Tongue House Lower Slab](#). The climbs are surprisingly open and sunny given its location. SW-facing

Approach

As for Tongue House High Close until the two gates are reached. Coming from the south, the Fickle Steps parking area is some 400m past a cattle grid where the road rises. Take the left-hand path down a boggy slope eastwards and follow it around to the north, through woods, for a kilometre, crossing Tarn Beck by a footbridge. Cross the wall using a tall stile. Mid-way between the two gates, head rightwards over boggy ground to the woods boundary fence. Follow this rightwards to a hidden gate which leads uphill to a second gate; access to the crag is best gained beneath the barbed wire at the seventh fence panel down from the second gate. Time 25 mins

Descent

Descend to the left very close to the finish of the routes. Currently a knotted rope attached to a tree assists down the first steep section then a narrow heathery ramp leads back to the start of [White Rabbit](#).



Tongue House Wood

1 White Rabbit E2 5b † New 14m

Start at the lowest point and climb the slab with increasing delicacy to a ramp. A short steep wall above gives an abrupt finish.

11.05.2024 J Daly, D Geere



2 Volunteers HVS 5b † New

Takes the slim right-facing corner starting from a block on the left and the steeper head wall above via the right-hand end of the ramp

11.05.2024 D Geere, J Daly



3 Croatian Vacation E2 5b † New 13m

Starts from a rock ledge 2m right of the *Volunteer's* corner and takes a direct line up the wall finishing at a block on the skyline.

27.04.2024 D Geere, J Daly



4 Embryonic Journey E1 5a † New 12m

Climbs the right-hand side of the slabby wall via a shallow groove at two thirds height. Bold.

27.04.2024 D Geere, J Daly



The Tongue

Introduction

Heading back up the open fell side in a NE direction towards Viking Crag takes you to a minor microcrag.
SD 2430 9765 Alt = 265m



Tongue House - The Tongue

1 Tongue in Cheek HVS 5a New 10m

Climb the crack and bulge.

16.08.2024 T Rogers, R Graham

2 Wishful Thinking - Direct HVS 4c New 10m

16.08.2024 T Rogers, R Graham

3 Wishful Thinking HVS 4c New 10m

Climb the dirty left side of the slab with little in the way of useful protection. Needs a proper clean!

2.05.2024 D Scott-Maxwell

4 China Crisis E1 5c New 10m

Climb the centre of the clean smooth slab with runners to the right. A couple of tricky moves at the top provide the fun.

2.05.2024 D Scott-Maxwell

5 Cheeky S New 10m

The wall right of the crack.

16.08.2024 R Graham, T Rogers

Little Gem Crag

Approach

SD 244 978

Approach as for High Close to the gate. Park at the bottom of the Walna Scar Road. Walk 750m up the Seathwaite Tarn track where the track turns sharp right. Looking directly ahead, cross to the gate in the wall then follow the wall up until it is possible to strike up directly to the crag. The crag can also be approached from both Fickle Steps and Walna Scar parking.



Tongue House - Little Gem Crag

1 Strawberry Arête VD New 10m

18.10.22 R Graham, T Rogers

2 Chocolate Pudding VD New 10m

18.10.22 T Rogers, R Graham

3 Rib and Crack HS 4b New 10m

18.10.2022 T Rogers, R Graham

4 Juggy Corner VS 4b New 10m

4.11.2022 R Graham, T Rogers

5 Tip Toe VS 4c New 10m

18.10.2022 T Rogers, R Graham

6 The Gutter D New 10m

4.11.2022 R Graham, T Rogers

7 Mantell VS 4c New 10m

18.10.2022 T Rogers

8 Crack and Wall HS 4b New 10m

4.11.2022 T Rogers, R Graham

9 Swinging Wall HS 4b New 10m

18.10.2022 T Rogers

10 High Step HVS 5a New 10m

4.11.2022 T Rogers, R Graham

11 Diagonal VS 4c New 10m

18.11.2022 T Rogers, R Graham

