

# Visit Lake District, Cumbria

## Let's Go Culture in Westmorland & Furness

### Penrith

The historic market town of Penrith offers plenty to discover, with its location making it a great base from which to explore the tranquil Eden Valley and North Pennines. Join us as we explore some of the area's fantastic arts, heritage and culture attractions, with something for all to enjoy.

Penrith can be easily reached by car - it is just off the M6 and A66. 'Penrith – North Lakes' train station is ideally located in the centre of the town, as is the well served bus station.

**Top tip: if you are arriving by bus or train, be sure to take 15 minutes to cross the road from the train station and explore the historic remains of Penrith Castle before heading into town.**

#### 1 - Penrith & Eden Museum



Photo: © Penrith & Eden Museum

Start your day with a visit to the [Penrith and Eden Museum](#) to learn more about the region's history, culture and geology. Located within the old Robinson's School building, which is also home to the Penrith Tourist Information Centre (TIC), the museum features revolving exhibitions with ever changing displays of cultural and historical interest. Alongside these are the permanent displays, each telling its own story. Be fascinated by fossils pre-dating the dinosaurs, understand the minerals that lie beneath your feet, and learn how and why Eden is home to one of the largest stone circles in Britain – Long Meg and her Daughters.

While there, pause to pick up walking routes or public transport timetables from the TIC – the friendly and knowledge staff are always happy to help you plan your visit.

- **Open hours: Monday – Saturday, 10am – 4pm.**
- **Entry: Free**
- **Getting there & parking: On street disc zone parking is available for 1 to 2 hours; for longer stay parking, there are several pay & display car parks nearby. The museum is also within walking distance of Penrith Bus Station and Penrith – North Lakes train station.**

#### 2 - EVAN Gallery and Studios

Just a short walk away, you'll find the [EVAN Gallery and Studios](#): home to the work of over 40 artists, with unique artworks including paintings, drawings, sculptures, ceramics, jewellery and textiles on display across three gallery spaces. You can even see the artists at work at one of six working studios, and purchase artworks directly from those who created them.

Tip: For music fans, EVAN also organises a range of events that take place in venues across the Eden Valley. Held in intimate venues and village halls, tickets are just £5 and promise an evening of entertainment from talented local musicians – a great way to round off a day spent exploring.

- **Open hours: Monday – Saturday, 10am – 4pm.**
- **Entry: Free**



While you are in town take stroll around town and visit St Andrew's church and the beautiful independent galleries that are close by.

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#### 3- Brougham Hall



Built in the 14th century, **Brougham Hall** is a hidden gem nestled in the countryside just a stone's throw from Penrith. Once a fortified home, and partially demolished in the 1930s, today it is a restoration project which is also home to a variety of artisans' studios as well as an excellent café (the cakes are a must). Wander the grounds, see the artists at work, and buy their creations. Feeling creative? Workshops and classes are available – be sure to book ahead.

Tip: Just five minutes' drive from Brougham Hall stand the romantic remains of Brougham Castle, which is run by English Heritage and is free for members; otherwise entry charges apply.

- **Open hours:** Daily, 10am – 5pm in summer; 11am – 4pm in winter. Café open 10am – 4pm daily.
- **Entry:** Free, suggested donation of £3/adult; £2/child; £10/family to help restoration works.
- **Getting there & parking:** On-site parking is available. Stagecoach bus 104 stops at Brougham, which is a short walk away.

Meet, eat, shop and explore – **Rheged** has it all under one roof, and whatever the weather this unique venue is the ideal place to keep the whole family entertained.

Discover British arts and crafts at Rheged's gallery space: playing host to four exhibitions a year, a diverse range of crafts, textiles, painting and photography are on display from established and emerging artists. There's also a programme of creative classes covering everything from watercolour painting to weaving, calligraphy to baking. Check ahead to see what's on before you visit.

Catch a film at one of Rheged's two cinema screens: movie choices range from seasonal and popular classics to modern blockbusters, as well as special screenings and events throughout the year. Or, indulge in some retail therapy at shops selling clothing, home and lifestyle products from British makers and ethical brands.

For families, there's plenty to discover, with an indoor play area; toy shop; 'Making Space' where kids can get creative; and child-friendly movies during the day. Once you've finished exploring, the café offers seasonal dishes featuring food and drink from local producers in a relaxed environment.

- **Open hours:** 9:30am – 5pm (café); 10am – 5pm (shops and gallery); various hours depending on movie times (Deli and Cinema); 6am – 10pm (filling station).
- **Entry:** Entry to the centre is free; tickets must be bought for the cinema, gallery, and selected events.
- **Getting there & parking:** Rheged is located just off the A66 near Penrith. On-site parking is free for 5 hours for visitors to Rheged. From Penrith – North Lakes train station, take Stagecoach bus X4 or X5.

#### 4 - Rheged



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#### Surrounding Penrith:

Just a short drive northwest of Penrith are two unique cultural attractions to explore.

#### 5- Upfront Arts Venue



Set in beautiful tranquil countryside a short distance from Penrith is Upfront Art Gallery.

This fascinating venue offers an Art Gallery, [Puppet Theatre](#) and music events. Also on site is a vegetarian café whose walls are adorned with the works of local artists. Scheduled to open autumn 2025 is an interactive puppet museum, which is sure to keep children of all ages entertained.

**Open Hours:** Wednesday to Sunday 10am – 4.30pm and Bank Holiday Mondays.

**Entry:** Entry to the art gallery is free. Ticket prices apply for the Puppet Theatre and music events.

**Getting there:** Junction 41 of M6 and follow the Wigton road (B3503) – Unthank and Hutton-in-the-Forest.

#### 6 - Hutton-in-the-Forest Historic House

[Hutton-in-the-Forest historic house](#) has been in the same family since 1605 and may date back to as early as the 13th or 14th century – making it one of the most historic houses and gardens in Cumbria. The house and its stunning gardens are open April to October.



**Open Hours:**

**House:** 11.30 - 16.00 Wednesdays, Thursdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. **Gardens:** 10.00 - 17.00 Everyday except Saturday – check website for exact opening dates as they vary slightly year on year.

**Entry:** Tickets can be bought online or in the Cloisters Tearoom, which is onsite.

**Getting there:** 6 miles northwest of Penrith and 2 miles from M6 Junction 41 on the Wigton road (B3503).

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We hope you enjoy your visit to Penrith and the surrounding countryside – located in the Westmorland and Furness area of Cumbria, which spans across the eastern half of the county from north to south.

Want to explore this area's culture and heritage further?

Check out our handy itineraries on [www.visitlakedistrict.com/lets-go-culture](http://www.visitlakedistrict.com/lets-go-culture)



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