



WALKING

in and around

Annan



The natural place to walk



Jubilee Suspension Bridge, Annan



The Royal Burgh of Annan has a long colourful history, and these walks explore the history of the area as well as the rich countryside around the town. The walks take you along peaceful riverbanks, through woods and along the edge of the Solway Firth.

The walks can be enjoyed throughout the year and offer a different perspective with the changing seasons – from the verdant green of spring, the summer wildflowers, the golden colours of autumn, and the clear crisp days of winter.

The walks make the most of the informal access that exists in the area. Please observe the Country Code.

THE WALKS

Annan, Waterfoot and Summergate Lane6

Barnkirk Point 10

River Annan 14

Hoddon Castle and Farm Walks 20

Repentance Tower 24

Saint Kentigern’s Churchyard 26

Kelhead Water 28

4 **Route information**

- A brief description, approximate distances and times are given for each route.
- Paths are graded for people of reasonable mobility as easy, moderate, strenuous or very strenuous.
- Accessibility by wheelchair is indicated on appropriate routes.
- Please follow the guidelines given for dogs.
- As with all walks, it is a good idea to take weatherproof clothing and stout footwear.

The orange covered OS Explorer 1:25 000 map (No 332) covers this area in detail.

Location Maps





Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.

- Keep dogs under close control at all times.
- Respect farm livestock, crops and machinery.
- Take your litter home with you.
- Take care on country roads.
- Guard against risk of fire.

Take particular care on the shore – the Solway Firth can be deceptive, with fast tides, strong currents and deep hidden channels.



Circular town and shore walk

5km/3 miles

Allow 1 1/2 -2 hours

Pavements, tracks, boggy merge and grass track

Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

A walk exploring Annan's maritime past and the Solway Firth – taking you from the centre of Annan to the wide-open spaces of the Solway Firth.

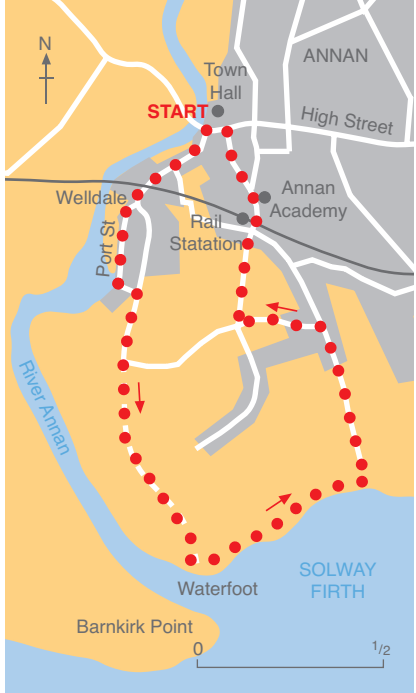
START from the Town Hall at the western end of the High Street. The Town Hall is a fine Victorian building built in 1878 from local sandstone and it reflects the pride and prosperity of Annan.

Turn right, and cross the High Street.

The large Georgian building on the corner opposite the Town Hall was built in 1780 and is known as Bridge House. This was the first Annan Academy. The writer Thomas Carlyle was educated here and eventually taught at the Academy. There are plans to turn this elegant building into a community resource, housing a museum and an information centre.

Proceed down the street to the left of Bridge House. This is Port Street, curving round to the right and passing the fine houses that belonged to wealthy traders in bygone days. Some of the windows were blocked up to avoid paying Window Tax imposed in 1701 and

remain so to this day! Continue along the street, passing under the railway bridge, then walk on past various old buildings until you reach the renovated Burgh Quay. This part of



Annan was once a prosperous bustling area, with the warehouses of the local merchants full of timber, cement, and grain. Now the once busy warehouses stand empty.

The ship building yards here once built fine ships which sailed all over the world, many with local names such as the “Annandale” and “Queensberry”. The largest and last clipper ship built was the 934 ton “Sarah Nicholson” which was launched in 1865. At the end of the 19th century, a fleet of fifty one shrimp trawlers, thirty whammel boats designed for salmon drift netting and thirteen herring boats worked out of Annan. These sturdy sailing boats fished the Solway from Annan to Maryport, Southernness and beyond.



Annan harbour at low tide

- 8 Turning your back on the quay, walk up the lane beside the site of the shipyard and turn right. This road leads past the last houses and becomes a country lane, running across the tidal river meadows or “merse” towards the mouth of the River Annan at Waterfoot.



The Burns cairn at Waterfoot

The river estuary at Waterfoot now has little to show of its historical importance. In the 18th and 19th centuries, many people embarked from the jetty when emigrating to Canada, New Zealand and Australia. A cairn on the remains of the jetty commemorates Robert Burns, who worked in this area as an exciseman in the 1790s.

Looking out across the sands of the Solway Firth, the stake and poke nets of the salmon fishermen are dwarfed by the scale of the landscape. In



Stakenets on the Solway

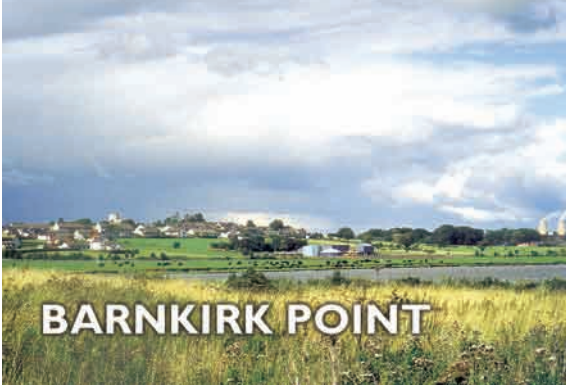
the fishing season, you may see the haaf-net fishermen standing chest deep in the fast flowing waters hoping to catch a trout or salmon.

From Waterfoot, walk across the tidal salt marsh, the “Annan Merse”, eastwards, winding your way around the tidal streams and creeks. Aim for the back of the Merse near the fence, this way you should pick up a fairly well-worn path. Keep a sharp lookout for the white post at the gate to Summergate Lane, which joins the side of the Merse after about half a mile.

This green lane takes you back to the outskirts of Annan. Soon after you reach the modern bungalows, take the lane on your left – called “Lovers Lane.” This narrow little lane is a riot of wildflowers in the summer – a different world to the wide horizons of the Solway Firth. Proceed straight down Lovers Lane passing a road to the left. When you reach the crossroads at the end of the lane, turn right and walk back into Annan along Elm Road. This takes you past the railway station and the present-day Annan Academy and back onto the High Street where you started.



Annan High Street



Circular walk along riverside to estuary

Option A - 7km/4½miles, Option B - 8km/5miles

Allow Option A - 1-2 hours, Option B - 2½ hours

Pavements, minor roads, paths and grass tracks

Steps and Stiles in places

Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

A good walk for exploring the countryside around Annan and Newbie – along the River Annan and the Solway Firth. Look out for the seabirds and waders on the mud and sand – herons, oystercatchers, turnstones and lapwings can all be seen in season.

START from the Town Hall, turn right along the High Street, leaving the centre of Annan. Cross the bridge over the River Annan and walk down the steps on the downstream side of the bridge.

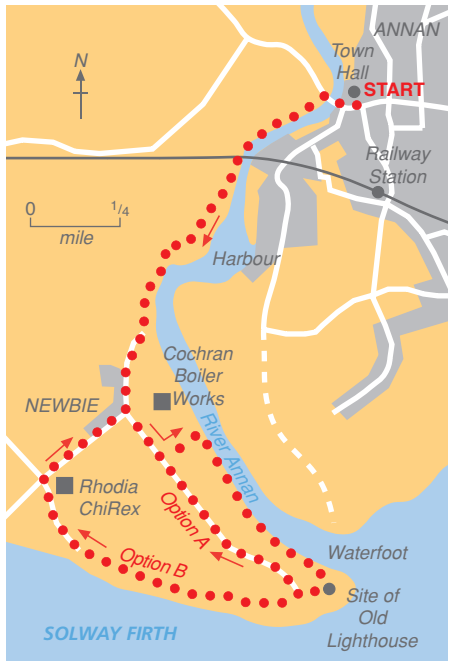
Follow the path along the flood bank past the Sustrans National Cycle Network bridge and under the arched sandstone railway bridge.



View along River Annan

Annan harbour has been renovated - from this side of the river you can see the once thriving Port Street, with its warehouses and merchants houses. The factory opposite is Youngs Bluecrest Sea Foods. Lower down, the quays are still used by local fishing boats.

The path follows the edge of the tidal saltings towards Newbie – the remains of two quays on this bank of the river are further reminders of Annan’s maritime past.



On reaching Newbie, pass the Cochran

Boiler Works entrance, leave the main road and keep straight on along the lane until you reach a stile on your left just before a locked road gate and kissing gate.

Cochran & Co moved here in 1899 from Birkenhead where they built small ships and also submarines of a revolutionary design. After a few years at Newbie they discontinued shipbuilding and developed a wide range of boilers.

The plant on the other side of the lane is the Rhodia ChiRex pharmaceutical plant.

Climb over the stile and cross the field, remaining close to the boundary with Cochrans. You will soon see a second stile, which takes you to the riverbank.

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Follow the river downstream, taking care as the banks are steep and the path narrow. This will lead you down to Barnkirk Point, where the River Annan meets the Solway Firth.

The views from here are wonderful – especially over the Solway and the sunsets over Criffel are breathtaking. However, it can be a bleak and windy place too. Robert Burns, when working near here as an excise officer in 1792, described it as “this wild place of the world”.

From here, the path turns west to join a track, past the site of the historic inn and farmhouse of Waterfoot, now sadly demolished.

At this stage, you have two options: -

OPTION A - Follow the track and after about 200 metres turn right at its junction with a tarmac lane and follow this lane back to Newbie.

OPTION B - Follow the track for about 200 metres. At its junction with a tarmac lane go straight on for about another 100 metres. Here, turn left up some steps to join the path to the top of Barnkirk Hill which overlooks the mouth of the River Annan.

This was the site of Annan Lighthouse which was built of timber in the early 1800s. It was destroyed by fire in the late 1960s and only the charred base remains. The lighthouse has been replaced with an electric beacon.

Return to the tarmac road, then follow the grassy track along the coast. This is a pleasant, easy walk with views across the Solway to Silloth. This track eventually brings you to a small car park at Newbiebarns.

There was a large fishing station here until recently. Salmon were caught in stake or trap nets and shipped daily to the English market.

Walk past several houses to the crossroads, turn right to return to Newbie. At the Cochran factory gates turn left, and retrace your steps to Annan.





Riverside walks

Option A - 2.5km/1 1/2 miles,

Option B - 5km/3 miles C - 10km/6 miles

Allow Option A - 45 mins, Option B - 1 1/2-2 hours

Option C - 3 hours

Stone paths, beaten earth, tracks and grass paths

Steps and Stiles in places

Option A - Easy Options B&C - Moderate

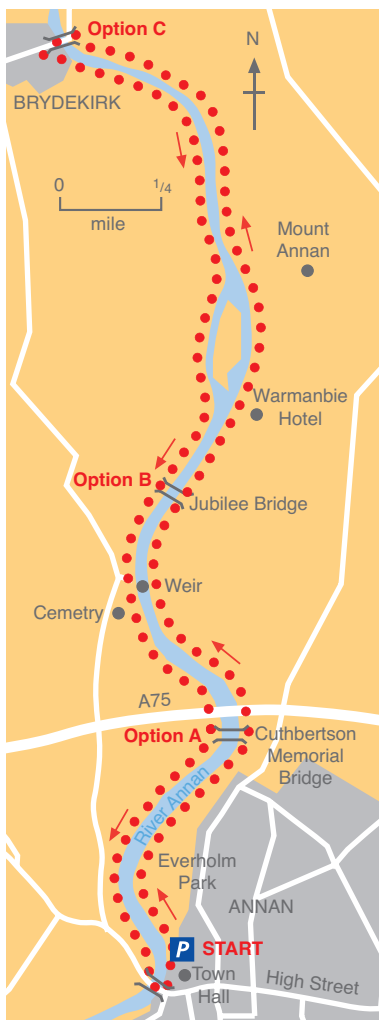
Boots or stout shoes recommended

This is a peaceful river walk, passing through woodland and farmland rich in wildlife.

START (Option A,B,C) from the Battery Street car park, follow the riverside path upstream through the Everholm Park. The park is beautifully laid out, with shrubs and trees sheltering the sports pitches and athletic ground.

At the far end of the park, the path leads through a gate into woodland. The river is never far away and the whole atmosphere is calm and restful. Coming out of the trees,





the Cuthbertson Memorial Bridge appears ahead. This footbridge was built as a tribute to those who died during the Second World War.

OPTION A-

Cross the bridge and turn left down the track, which follows the river downstream and back towards Annan. After a few hundred metres, the track swings away from the river – you can follow this track, which takes you along a lane to the main road. Turn left here and proceed to Annan Bridge.

Alternatively, take the narrow riverside path on your left and follow it back to Annan Bridge.

After crossing Annan Bridge take the road on the left just after the Blue Bell Inn. This is the Battery Brae. The car park is at the bottom of the hill.

OPTION B - On reaching the Cuthbertson Memorial Bridge, carry straight on up the right-hand bank of the river under the bridge which carries the A75 road. Follow the riverside path to the “Caul” or weir, which now supplies water



Track to Newbie Mill

to Chapelcross Nuclear Power Station. In the autumn, salmon and sea trout can be seen moving up the river to spawn. Please take care here, as the water is fast flowing, deep and cold.

Further upstream you reach the Jubilee Suspension Bridge .

The Jubilee Bridge was built in 1898 to commemorate the reign of Queen Victoria. The views along this stretch are picturesque, especially with the autumn colours on the trees.

Cross the bridge and follow the path downstream on the river bank towards Annan.

After entering a wooded area, pass a disused pump house and the Caul. About 300 metres after passing the Caul, you reach the walls of a disused mill sluice gate. Here you have the choice of

either carrying on down the river bank to rejoin Option A at the Cuthbertson Memorial Bridge, or turning right and climbing the steps onto a high level path which takes you to Annan Cemetery. Pass through the cemetery to the road and turn left towards Annan.

OPTION C - From the Jubilee Bridge, continue on the right hand bank of the river past the pumping station. The path follows the river across a meadow and then enters a wooded area. A stile on the right leads to a path to Warmanbie House Hotel which can provide food and refreshment. Here the river forms "Rabbit Island".

At the North end of the island Mount Annan house can be seen among the trees above the river. This was built by the Dirom family who also owned the nearby Corsehill Sandstone Quarry. The woodland abounds in wildlife: red squirrel, roe deer, otter, foxes, badgers, kingfishers, waterfowl and owls are all to be seen at various times of day and season. Respect these animals and do not disturb them unnecessarily; humans are the intruders here.

The path continues along the riverbank past a fishing shelter. At this point join an estate drive which continues up river towards Brydekirk. At the Lodge and the junction with the main road turn left and cross the bridge into the village.



Kingfisher

- 18 The original Brydekirk was situated about half a mile further up-stream, close to Brydekirk Mains farm. It had its origins around a small chapel dedicated to Saint Bryde or St. Bridget. Little evidence remains of the settlement and the chapel which was abandoned in the 16th Century. Lieutenant-General Alexander Dirom planned the present village in the early 19th Century. He envisaged a town based on textile factories with water mills, driven by the River Annan. The plan included a market place, ornamental gardens, crescents of houses, a school and churches. Despite much endeavour, the mills have been dismantled and Brydekirk remains a village.

Food and refreshments are available at the Brig Inn beside the bridge.

To return to Annan turn down River Street beside the Inn and keep straight on over grass where the road turns right. The riverside path strikes off on its own and enters woodland, which is a carpet of primroses and bluebells in spring and, in autumn, a natural larder with hazel nuts, brambles and sloes.

Brydekirk







Circular Estate, riverside and country walk

Option A - 2.5km/1 1/2 miles, Option B - 5km/3 miles

Allow Option A - 1 hour, Option B - 1 1/2 hours

Beaten earth, tracks, minor road, grass paths

Steps and Stiles in places

Option A - Easy. Option B - Moderate

Stout shoes recommended

PARKING The Hoddom and Kinmount car park and picnic site is signposted off the B723 Annan to Lockerbie road at the junction with the B725 Dalton road about 4 1/2 miles north west of Annan.

These are walks of great natural variety. The woodlands provide a haven for many animals, like red squirrels, roe deer and greater-spotted woodpeckers, while the river margins are rich in wild flowers and butterflies.

Please keep dogs on a lead at the caravan park and in fields where livestock is present.

Note. Dogs are not allowed on the Golf Course.

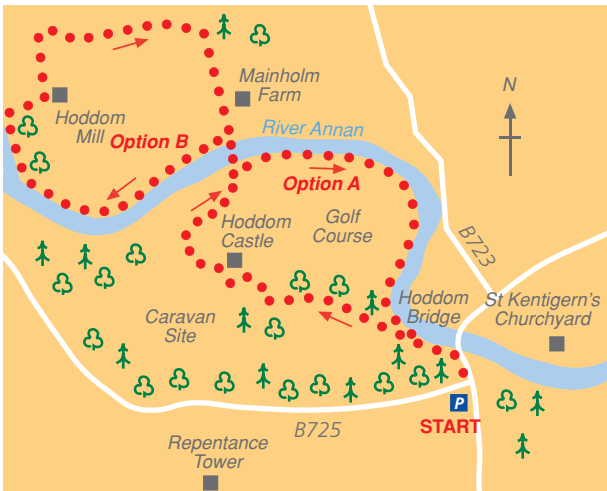
Hoddom Castle was built c. 1552–65 by John Maxwell, 4th Lord Herries. The massive central



Red squirrel

tower is the original part of the Castle, with many extensions and alterations added much later. Situated near the main invasion route into western Scotland and regarded as impregnable the castle was one of the strongest and most important in the defence of Scotland's border.

Several other waymarked walks start from here including the Woodcockair walks which involve steep hills and care must be taken as timber felling and clearing contractors are often working. However the Hoddom Castle Riverside and Farm walks described here are not hilly.



START from the car park, follow the blue signed path through the woodland for Hoddom Castle. When you reach the tarmac drive turn to the right towards the gatehouse for about 25 metres then take the waymarked riverside path for Hoddom Castle. A few metres along this path, a path to the right leads to the Hound's Monument.

This monument was erected beside the river in memory of an otter hound called Royal, which died in the winter of 1898 having spent too long in the water in pursuit of an otter. The ruined building on the river's edge was the Hoddom boathouse. The large house on the opposite side

of the river is Hallguards. The high ground on which it is built is thought to be the site of an earlier 14th century Hoddom Castle.

Retrace your steps back to the main path. Follow the blue arrow signs through the woodland to Hoddom Castle. There is a car park at the Hoddom Castle Caravan Park and the café in the Castle provides welcome food and refreshments during the summer season.

Continue past the car park and the front of the Castle following the blue waymarkers marked "Riverside Trail". The track passes through woodland to a stile. Climb the stile and cross the meadow to a footbridge over the River Annan.

At the footbridge you have the option of crossing the river to follow the waymarked Farm Trail, or returning downstream on the Riverside Trail to Hoddom Bridge and the car park.

OPTION A – Riverside Trail (Blue markers)

Follow the blue markers downstream along the riverbank. After crossing a stile follow the blue signs along the path beside the river with the golf course on your right. Take care along the edge of the golf course if play is in progress.

Birds frequently seen along the river include dippers, herons and kingfishers and on sunny summer days sandmartins and swallows fly over the water and neighbouring fields.

Cross the stile from the golf course into a wooded area. Proceed along the path for about 250 metres to a junction. At this point ignore the blue marker unless you wish to go back to the Castle. To reach the car park, go straight ahead on the riverside path which is signed Hoddom Bridge. After about 50 metres, the path divides; take the path going slightly uphill to the right. After about 100 metres, the path meets the main drive. Turn left down the drive towards the main gate and gatehouse. Just before the gate, take the steps on the right which lead back to the car park.

OPTION B – Farm Trail (Red Markers)

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Cross the river and turn left, follow the path as it goes along the banks of the River Annan and later the Water of Milk. Take care after heavy rain, as the river rises very quickly, and the path can become flooded in places.

Just before a bridge over the Water of Milk, turn right to join a lane. Turn right along the lane. At the deserted steading of Hoddom Mill follow the road to the left. At the next road junction, take the road to the right towards Mainholm Farm. This leads back to the footbridge over the River Annan. After crossing the bridge follow the blue markers of the Riverside Trail back to the car park at Hoddom Bridge as in Option A.



Water of Milk



Circular woodland walk with a hill viewpoint

2.75km/1³/₄ miles

Allow 1 hour

Beaten earth, stone path, road, grassy hill

Steps and Stiles in places

Moderate

Boots recommended

PARKING The Hoddom and Kinmount car park and picnic site is sign posted off the B723 Annan to Lockerbie road at the junction with the B725 Dalton road about 4¹/₂ miles north west of Annan.

Several other waymarked walks start from here including the Woodcockair walks which involve steep hills and care must be taken as timber felling and clearing contractors are often working. The Repentance Tower walk has no timber operations in progress.

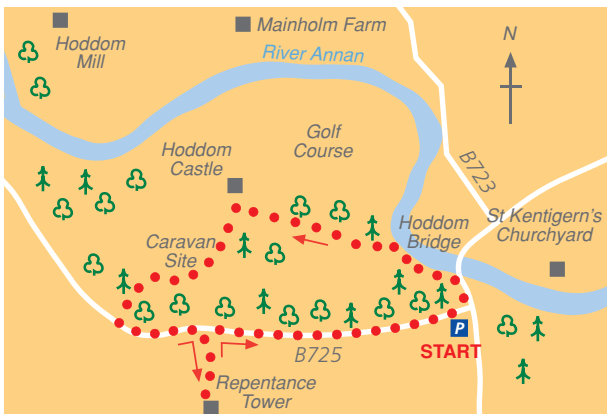
Please keep dogs on a lead at the caravan park and when crossing the fields to the Tower.

Repentance Tower stands on the ancient beacon hill of Trailtrow and was built by John Maxwell, 4th Lord Herries, as a watchtower for Hoddom Castle in the 1560s. Although the Tower is not open to the public the hill top provides superb views in all directions, towards the Solway the Lake District and over Annandale. No one knows why Repentance is carved over the entrance, but the most popular explanations are given on an information board at the tower gate. The surrounding graveyard has many ornate grave stones dating from the 17th century.

START from the car park, following the blue signed path through the woodland for Hoddom Castle. When you reach the tarmac drive turn to the right towards the gatehouse for about 25 metres. Then take the waymarked riverside path for Hoddom Castle. The path leads upstream for about 200 metres, before turning left. Continue following the blue arrow signs through the woodland to come out just before Hoddom Castle. There is a car park at the Hoddom Castle Caravan Park and the café in the castle provides welcome food refreshments during the summer season.

Just before the Castle turn left and pass the children's playground. At the end of the playground a finger post indicates the path to Repentance Tower; continue through the caravan park, following a second finger post to the edge of the wooded area, where a third finger post can be found. This marks the path which winds through the trees to the main road (B725). Turn left and a sign there reads "100 metres to the stile for Repentance". The steps and stile are signposted on the righthand side of the road. Take care on these steps as they can be slippery. There is no path up the steep hill to the Tower and care should be taken as the grass can be slippery.

From the Tower, retrace your steps to the main road and turn right towards the car park.





A flat riverside walk

1 km / 3/4 miles

Allow 1/2 hour

Main road, grass field

One stile

Easy

Stout shoes useful

PARKING The Hoddom and Kinmount car park and picnic site are signposted off the B723 Annan to Lockerbie road at the junction with the B725 Dalton road about 4 1/2 miles west of Annan.

Several other waymarked walks start from here, including the Woodcockair walks which involve steep hills and care must be taken as timber felling and clearing contractors are often working.

This is a short walk along the banks of the River Annan to an ancient burial ground which has many ornate 17th and 18th century gravestones.

The cemetery is known locally as St. Kentigern's. According to tradition, St Kentigern, who is also known as St. Mungo, came to Hoddom in 573 when returning to Glasgow after exile in Wales. At Hoddom he founded a monastery before returning to Glasgow where he became the city's patron Saint. The site was famous for its large collection of 8th and 9th century sculptures, some of which can now be seen in Dumfries

Museum. In 1991 the remains of a large 8th century monastery were discovered on the high ground behind the churchyard.

START from the Hoddom and Kinmount Estates car park and picnic site.



From the car park, follow the path signed for Hoddom Castle. When you reach the castle drive, turn right and walk out through the entrance gates and join the main road.

Take care as the corner is blind and the bridge is narrow.

Cross the bridge over the River Annan, and take the stile on the right hand side of the road which gives access to the riverside path.

This path runs downstream along the bank to the ancient churchyard. It is worth spending a few minutes in this tranquil spot before retracing your footsteps to the car park.





Circular woodland walk

1 km / 3/4 mile

Allow 45 minutes

Beaten Earth

Easy

Steps in places

Stout shoes useful

PARKING Kelhead Water car park is signposted off the A75, about 3 1/2 miles west of Annan, near the junction with the Hoddum to Ecclefechan road.

This is a short, sheltered walk through mixed woodland with the chance to see red squirrel and roe deer. In addition, the water supports a variety of waterfowl such as moorhen, coot and Canada geese, while the shrubs on the



Kelhead Wood

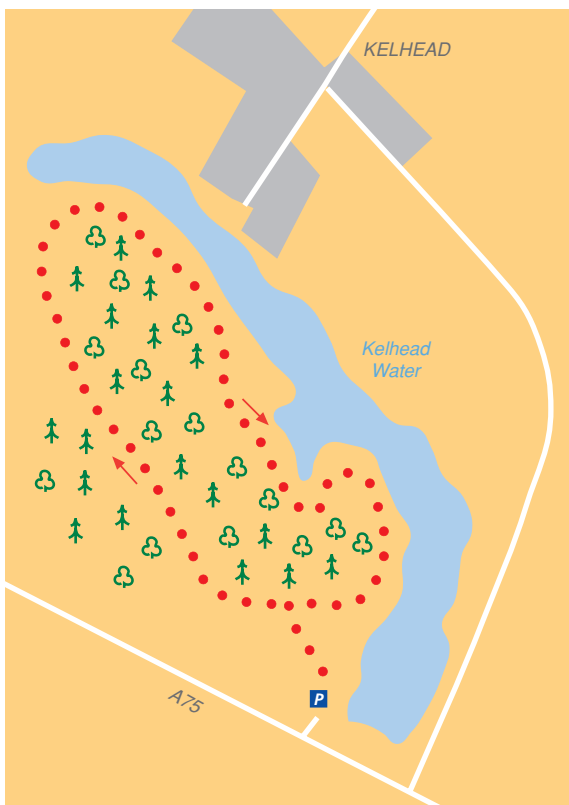
opposite bank provide an excellent habitat for many smaller birds.

In summer, the open area between the car park and the water's edge is a mass of wildflowers and a pleasant spot to enjoy a picnic.

Kelhead Water is a former limestone quarry, the first in Dumfriesshire. Opened in 1760, not long after the benefits of liming soil were discovered, it operated until 1928, after which the excavation flooded. A small stone arch is all that remains of Kelhead's four large lime kilns. A mineral railway linked the quarry with the main line at Cummertrees.

Today Kelhead Water is stocked with a variety of coarse fish and is popular with anglers.

START at the Kelhead Water car park and follow the waymarked path. This leads you on a circular route through mixed conifer woodland before returning along the bank of the Kelhead Water.



Particular thanks are extended to the owners of the land featured in this booklet, without whose co-operation this publication would not be possible.

This booklet has been produced by Gordon Clark, Jim Hawkins and Norman Martin members of the Annan Community Initiative with the assistance of the bodies shown below.



A Message from the Health Improvement Group
Walking can seriously improve your health & happiness. Enjoy!



WALKING

i n a n d a r o u n d

Annan

FIND OUT MORE...

This booklet is part of a series for walkers and cyclists, covering Dumfries & Galloway.

The booklet - Visitor Information the Royal Burgh of Annan - gives details of local accommodation, shops and facilities.

For further information about these booklets, and also about public transport, accommodation, eating out, events and attractions, please contact:

Dumfries & Galloway Tourist Board

01387 253862

Dumfries & Galloway Traveline

0870 608 2 608

www.dumfriesandgalloway.co.uk

info@dgtb.visitscotland.com

For further information about the history and natural heritage of the area contact:

The National Trust For Scotland

Ranger Service

t 01556 630262

Forest Enterprise Ranger Service

t 01387 247745

Dumfries & Galloway Council

Ranger Service

t 01387 260184