

SOLWAY COAST

RAMBLES

Five Circular Walks around the Roman Frontier



Frontiers of the Roman Empire
inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005

This guidebook is one of a range of books, information leaflets and newsletters covering a wealth of subjects that all explore and describe the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The publications are available through the Solway Coast Discovery Centre, Liddell Street, Silloth on Solway, Cumbria CA7 4DD.

The Solway Coast Discovery Centre is open seven days per week between 10am and 4.30pm. Along with a shop, there is a large exhibition that describes and brings to life 10,000 years of Solway Coast history, and can be enjoyed for a small fee. As with all our public provisions, all profits are returned for the protection and maintenance of the Solway Coast AONB.

The guidebook has been published by Solway Rural Initiative Limited on behalf of the Solway Coast AONB Partnership and has been developed through close collaboration with the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail team.

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Solway Coast Rambles

Five Circular Walks
around the Roman Frontier

by Brian Irving

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Introduction

This guidebook takes the walker through what is probably the most tranquil backwater throughout the length of Hadrian's Wall.

The five themed circular walks described here all radiate from the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail but none have a common theme. Instead they are a celebration of the natural and cultural heritage of the Solway Coast, itself designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The area is also a World Heritage Site, a European Marine Site and a Special Area of Conservation. Most importantly though the area still retains its wild and unspoilt character.

The walks take the individual through a varied landscape and they reveal the history of that landscape including its wildlife,

habitats and its agricultural history. Places of interest are explored along each route and the maps themselves seek to place the walker in both time and space.

The five themes are all unique to the area and they link important events and human endeavours creating a unique experience for the walker to enjoy and absorb.

Since Roman times, and before, the Solway Firth has been a frontier and as such has a rich and diverse story to tell. Overlaid onto this backcloth are the stunning range of wildlife habitats and the life that they support.

The Solway is important internationally for its bird populations and this provides a further breathtaking spectacle for the walker to enjoy.



I hope that you enjoy your explorations on the Roman Solway and that the Solway experience will stay with you forever!



The Roman Solway

If you have explored other parts of Hadrian's Wall you will no doubt have a vision of what the wall looked like where it still stands as a monument to Roman endeavour.

However, on the Solway little survives of the wall fabric itself for a number of reasons. The mile fortlets and towers were built of stone but their remains have been re-cycled into other buildings that still stand today. Probably due to a lack of quarry stone along the Solway, the wall was built of turfs, topped with a wooden palisade fence, in archaeological terms this type of structure has little chance of survival. However it can be seen in places as a linear earth feature.

The Roman occupation of the Solway Coast was purely a military operation to defend and control the northernmost flank of the empire.

When any army is deployed long term, on frontier defence especially, the logistics of supplying the troops must be considered, as does the re-enforcement of the frontier.

The layout of forts and their adjoining highways has left us with a clear understanding of the simplicity and elegance of the Roman military tactics.

The first line of defence, west of the military fort at Carlisle, is along the known line of Hadrian's frontier. The line stretches down the coast until Maryport.

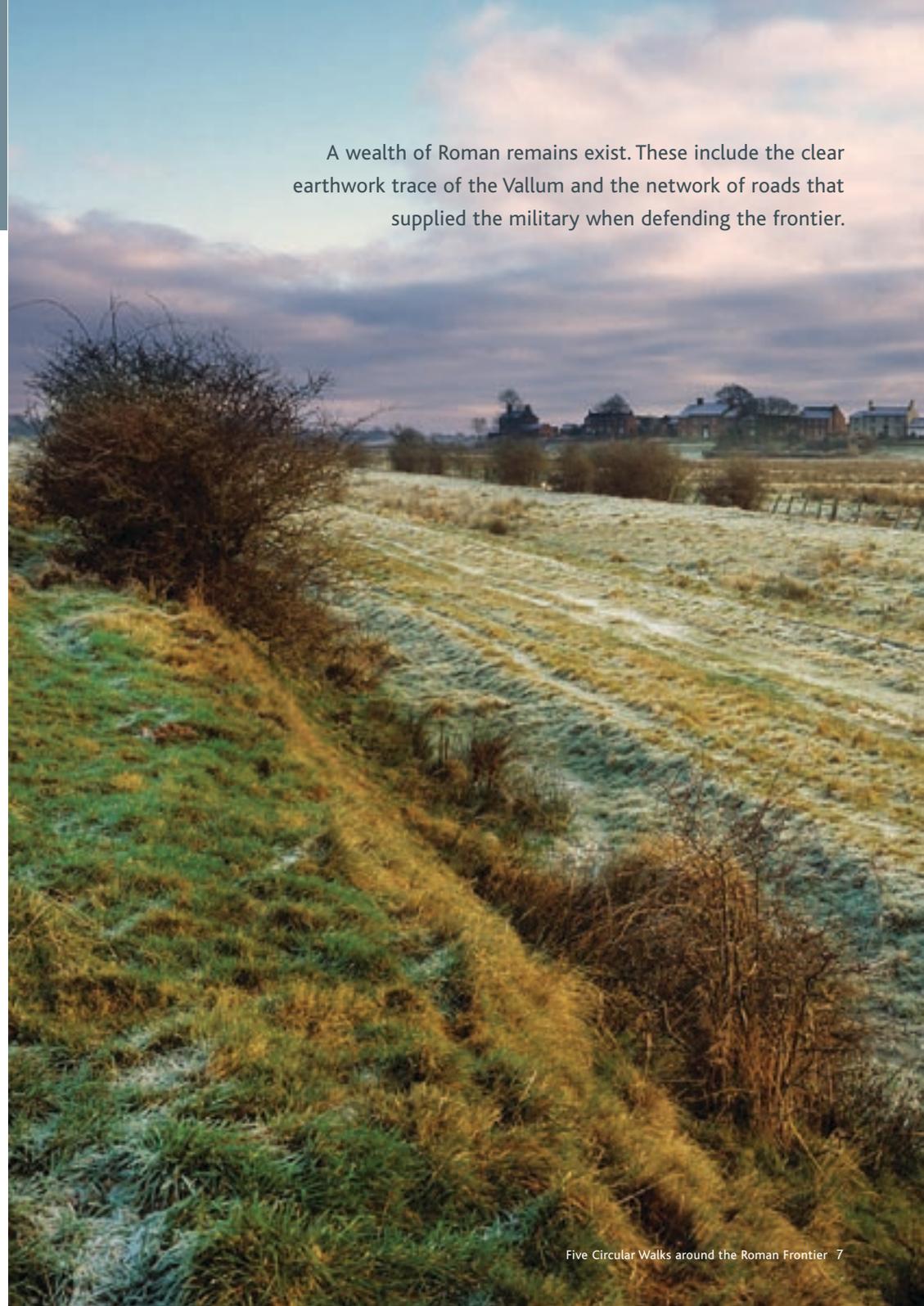
Behind this line is a secondary line of forts from Papcastle in the south to Old Carlisle further north.

By looking at modern maps it is relatively simple to pick out the lines of the adjoining roads under the standard principle that Roman roads were straight.

We can then extrapolate a further line of communication as a third line of supply and communication towards Penrith in the south.

These supply lines were both for supplying the garrisons with food but were also used to bring pay to the troops and also as fast routes for defensive purposes.

A wealth of Roman remains exist. These include the clear earthwork trace of the Vallum and the network of roads that supplied the military when defending the frontier.



The Roman Solway



It must have been important to the military regime to have these spurs because it would have been relatively simple to supply troops and goods along the line of the wall and its associated road 'The Stanegate'.

However, the Romans chose to build on extremely difficult terrain such as across peat bogs to connect to the second line of military forts.

There are many other artefacts on maps associated with the Roman military

occupation of the Solway Coast and close scrutiny may reveal other roads not yet discovered. Before the Roman occupation the Carvetii were the Iron Age inhabitants of the Solway Plain and were a small tribe within the area controlled by the Brigantes, a larger tribe.

Unlike other tribes, the Carvetii lived in small rural groups and not in large densities in villages and towns. These small groups consisted of extended families and were scattered around the

area. The evidence for the settlements are hundreds of small trackways and ring ditches. They knew how to farm the land in various ways from animal husbandry through to the growing of crops.

Whilst these people were expert at feeding themselves, after the Roman conquest they were paid to supply the Roman military with food and other provisions. Other than agricultural produce they would have supplied beer, milk, game and fish.

The Solway Coast, once it was colonised by the Roman army increased the local population by around 1000%. This meant that productivity had to rise to meet the demand for food. For example a garrison of 500 soldiers at Bowness on Solway would require 163,000 Kg of grain per year.

On the back of this food supply need, new routes had to be initiated linking frontier forts with secondary garrison forts throughout the Carvetii territory.

Under Roman rule the Carvetii would have had around 150,000 men provisioning around 9,000 Roman soldiers. Some will have become soldiers themselves whilst others will have been direct suppliers.

Most Roman forts and towns have an associated 'Romano British' settlement adjacent to them called a 'Vicus'. The Vicus was the equivalent of the modern market where most commodities were traded. The Roman soldiers brought wealth in their pay and this was quickly returned to the local economy of the Solway Coast.

Toward the end of Roman occupation the Carvetii had lost their independent identity and name and became part of the new Kingdom of Rheged.

Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail

In May 2003, after a lapse of 1600 years, an historic link between the Solway and Tyneside was re-established. For the first time since the Roman occupation of Britain ended, perhaps, the public can now follow an unbroken 84-mile signposted footpath between Bowness-on-Solway (the Roman Maia) and Wallsend on the Tyne (Segedunum).

Of course over the years many other associations have connected England's narrow isthmus; George Stephenson, for example, transported his locomotive Rocket from Port Carlisle bound for Liverpool and the Rainhill trials in the 1820's, but the creation of the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail cements it for good.

It passes through some of England's most beautiful and dynamic landscapes – the forces that shaped our island's geography have left behind a kaleidoscope of scenery – from estuary mudflats and rugged moorland to the vibrant cities of Newcastle upon Tyne and Carlisle.

To the untrained eye, west of Carlisle the Roman archaeology is scarcely evident on the ground, however, while the Trail nevertheless endeavours to follow the historic course of Hadrian's Wall there are some important exceptions - and for good reason.

In seeking to respect the internationally important nature conservation interests of the Solway, the Trail has been deliberately aligned away from the most sensitive sites so as to safeguard the birdlife and its habitats.

Finding the right balance between access and conservation while respecting the needs of farming is never an easy task. Hadrian's Wall Heritage and the Solway Coast AONB unit work closely together to promote and help spread the benefits of responsibly managed tourism on the Solway. The Trail is clearly signed and waymarked, important tide information notices installed and there are maps, leaflets and guides to the route to help you get the most from your visit.

You do not have to walk all of the Trail in one go, although many people do; it is just as popular as a short-stay destination, perhaps walking a section over long weekend, or for a day walk. The circular walks described will help you appreciate the unique natural and cultural heritage of this special part of Hadrian's Wall Country.

While walking the Trail or one of these walks and following the advice within Every Footstep Counts your visit will make a positive contribution to the well-being of the Solway.

Visitors are also encouraged to follow the tips and advice within the World Heritage Site's very own country code. "Every Footstep Counts" is promoted right across the Trail and while some of its messages relate more to the better preserved archaeology further to the east most also apply to the Solway section of the route. The code, for example, explicitly advises visitors (and local walkers) with dogs to keep them on a lead, important on the Solway both for its wildlife and farming.



Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated in 1964 and covers around 118 square kilometres of the Solway Plain. The area is under management through the Solway Coast Management Unit and is governed by a Joint Advisory Committee.

The Solway Coast is a unique landscape, shaped by the sea, the wind, and the people who have lived and worked here.

It is the AONB's air of wilderness, an all too rare quality in today's landscape, that is most important to some. The salt marshes and sand dunes can convey the illusion of being far from civilisation.

In fact, the marshes have been farmed for centuries, probably first cultivated by the monks of the Cistercian Abbey of Holm Cultram, who raised more than 6,000 sheep on the lush grasses.

Before the monks, the Romans set their mark on the landscape, wisely avoiding the marshes and constructing a network of forts which ran down the coast from the western end of Hadrian's Wall, at Bowness on Solway.

In 1307, King Edward I died on Burgh Marsh, in view of the coveted Scottish shores.

Today, the marshes are still important for local agriculture, and also support huge flocks of wildfowl which have made the Solway Firth renowned and gained it status as a RAMSAR (internationally important for wildlife) Site.

As many local people know, the sand dunes are an important breeding site for the rare natterjack toad. Cumbrian shores provide a refuge for a third of the UK population which is carefully nurtured by conservation agencies with the all-important help of the landowners.

Behind the coast, the agricultural land of the AONB is typified by the small fields which are hard to find elsewhere. Many of these small enclosures probably date back to medieval times and are another example of the inextricable way the Solway landscape is linked to history.

The buildings of the AONB are an important part of its landscape, too. Fortified buildings that reflect the area's turbulent past are not picturesque ruins, but still part of local community life. Squat fishermen's cottages and cobbled streets, clay dabbin barns and red sandstone farms, Cumberland long houses and Georgian terraces all give each village its own character, and are a source of local pride.

Whatever makes the AONB special, management is needed to help maintain and enhance those unique qualities. The AONB designation itself, National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Conservation areas, a Special Area for Conservation and a Special Protection Area all bear witness to the Local, National and International recognition this very important landscape has already received, and certainly deserves.

Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site

Hadrian's Wall was inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1987 as the most complex and best preserved of the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site is now part of the transnational WHS called Frontiers of the Roman Empire which also includes the German Limes and Scotland's Antonine Wall.

What makes Hadrian's Wall special is that there is so much of it left to see, despite the damage caused by ferocious northern winters, barbarous border warfare – and centuries of builders helping themselves to the precious stones.

It might seem hard to believe, but today this amazing feat of engineering is still in danger. If we don't treat it with the respect it deserves, we could end up losing it.

Hadrian's Wall is a very fragile monument. Stones removed or damaged can never be

replaced. Every single footprint – of human or an animal – causes a tiny bit of wear and tear that over time adds up to irreparable harm.

Unlike other precious objects, we can't and we wouldn't want to put the Wall behind glass in a museum.

So we rely on you the visitors, at Hadrian's Wall and the many fascinating historic sites around about, to do your bit.

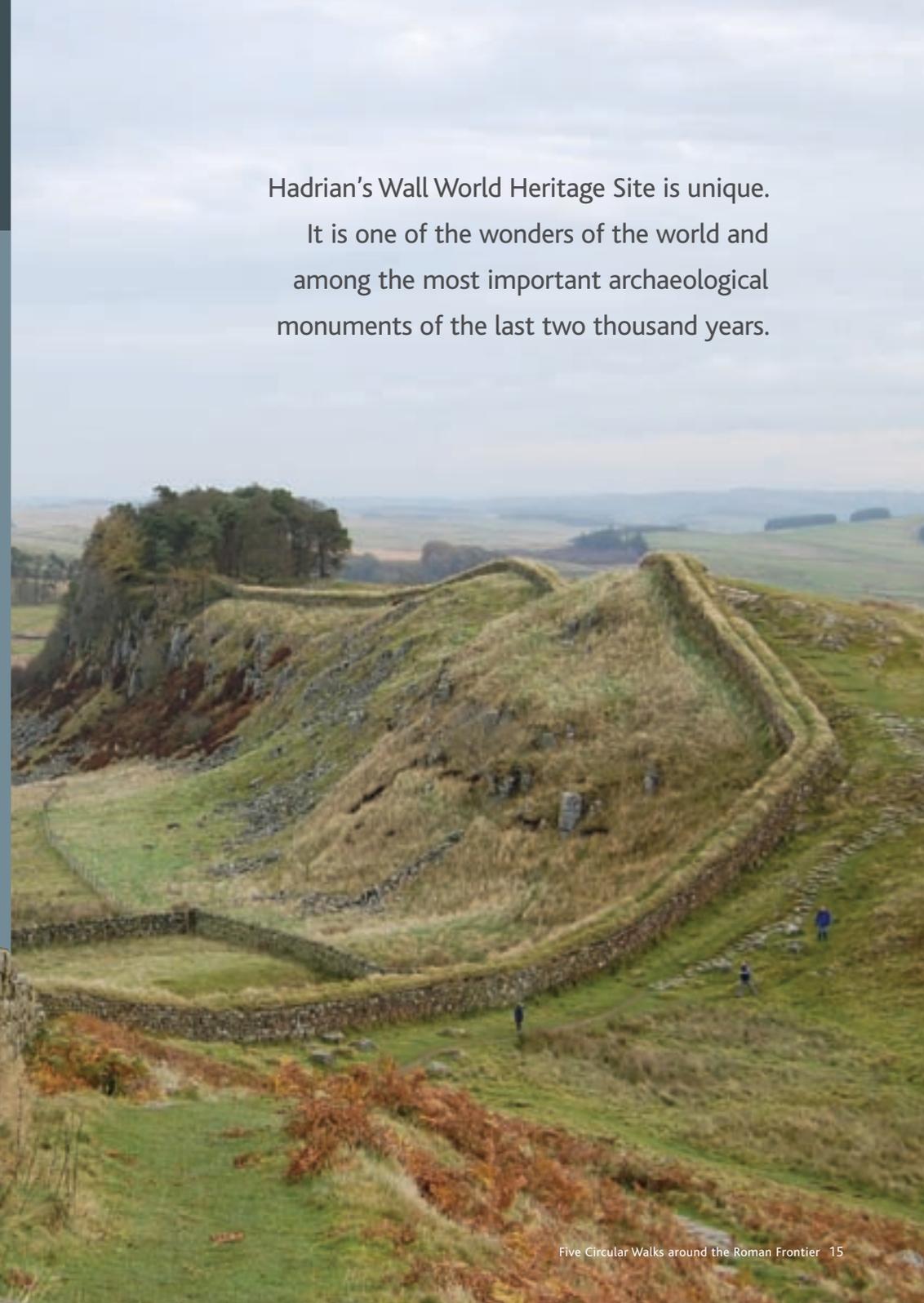
Help us to make sure this special part of our heritage is handed on to future generations in good time.



Please have a look at
'Every Footstep Counts' overleaf.

Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site is unique.

It is one of the wonders of the world and among the most important archaeological monuments of the last two thousand years.



Every Footstep Counts



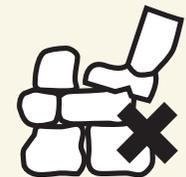
Start and finish your walk along the Wall a different places, or follow a circular route. This way there will be half as much wear on the path next to the Wall.



You can support the people living and working in the World Heritage Site by staying nearby whenever you can and using shops, restaurants and pubs in the area. You will be most welcome to come along to local events, too.



During the wet winter months the ground is water-logged and this is when the risk of damage to the monument is greatest. Instead you could walk one of the alternative trails that are being developed close to the Wall.



Never climb up or walk on top of Hadrian's Wall.



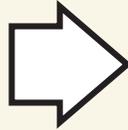
Help to take pressure off the Wall itself by visiting a Roman fort as a part of your journey. They all have visitor facilities and will tell you all about Roman life and times.



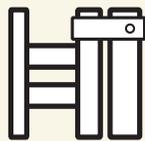
Use public transport, including the Hadrian's Wall Bus, wherever you can.



Take any litter away with you and never light fires.



Stick to the paths signed from the road with coloured arrows.

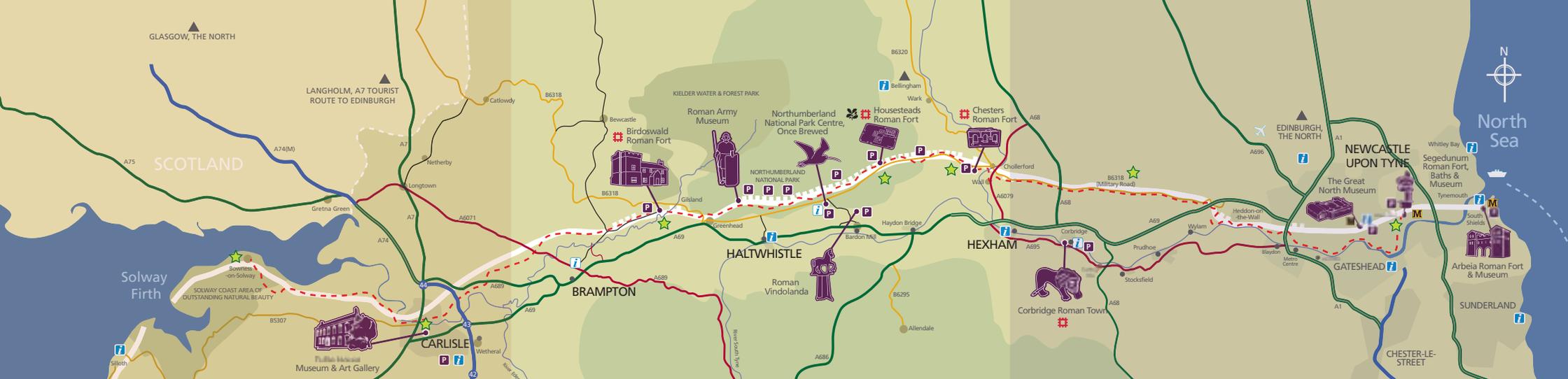


Close all gates behind you unless it is clear that the farmer needs the gate to be left open.



Always keep your dog under close control. Your dog can scare or harm farm animals. Keep it on a lead around livestock, but let go if chased by cattle.





Key to map

Approximate line of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site



Major Roman Site



Tourist Information Centre (year-round)



Tourist Information Centre (seasonal)



Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail



Roads



Motorway



Rail station*



Tyne & Wear Metro station



Airport



Ferry port



Passport Stamping Station



Access and Safety

The terrain of the Solway Coast is quite varied and it is advised that hiking boots or shoes are used when following any of the routes described. Some of the walks must inevitably use the highway and in certain places blind bends and fast sections will be encountered so always be aware of the dangers associated with the road conditions. Off road, the walks are all on well sign posted and fully maintained rights of way. However, the nature of the Solway area (low lying) can create very wet areas that are prone to mudding and flooding. This situation can be exacerbated where the route takes you down tracks used by farm machinery and along routes used by farm stock.

The Map Key

The Map Key and Gradient Profile should provide you with a mental picture of what to expect along the route of your walk including types of stile, gate and bridges etc. It also describes the path surface but wet and icy conditions must be factored in before setting off.

The Key should also be useful for those walkers with limited mobility or disability whereby they can assess how far into a route they could venture and without having to complete it, they could return by the same route.

The Tides

The area marked red on the map above is the area of most danger to the walker. The Solway Firth has a very fast tidal surge and can inundate large areas of saltmarsh and roads very quickly. Where any of the walks are within the area marked red the walker is asked to check tide times and heights. This information can be gleaned from the Internet, through tide books or through the Coastguard. There are also two tide boards at Bowness on Solway and Dykesfield which display tide tables. The routes will flood if the tide is above 8.5m and the duration of high water where routes are impassable is around one hour each side of high water. The frequency of high tides is around two four to five day cycles per month. The tables can only give you an estimate of the time and height of the tide as they can change dramatically due to winds, barometric pressure and the condition of rivers flowing into the Solway. A combination of wind, low pressure and flooded rivers can produce tides up to 3m above their estimated height and upto an hour earlier than their anticipated height. These conditions can also extend the high water period by a considerable amount. As with mountain walking or sailing always

tell someone when you plan to finish a walk, especially if you are factoring in a tide during the walk.

I hope this short do's and dont's section has not dampened your enthusiasm as the combination of tide, good walking and the spectacle of thousands of waterfowl and wading birds will make your day even more worthwhile if it is associated with a tide.

Clothing & Equipment

As with all walking on western coastal area's you will be exposed to the prevailing wind from the southwest, this can be mild and warm or it can be wet and cold. Above all, conditions can change very quickly, especially when the tide turns. So waterproofs, extra clothes and warm drinks are essential if the weather is changeable.

Mist and fog can descend in certain conditions so a compass and whistle is worth putting in your backpack.

I have already mentioned good boots or shoes but like me, always take spare socks.

Dogs

Finally, please keep dogs under control when you are close to stock and be aware that the saltmarshes are grazed by both sheep and cattle throughout the year.

This is a difficult walk and should only be attempted by experienced ramblers. Conditions under foot can change dramatically due to rainfall levels.

This walk should not be attempted without map and compass as mist and fog can descend. The raised mires can be dangerous and the unwary could get bogged down within areas of wet peat deposits. Furthermore, this walk crosses land owned and managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and as such they have asked that walkers refrain from using this circular walk from October through to June to avoid disturbance of grazing geese and breeding waders.

Much of the Cardunock Peninsula is covered by raised mires, or peat bogs. They began forming 8,000 years ago, after the last ice age, but once covered a far larger area. The mires have been drained around their edges to provide grazing for farm animals. This probably started in medieval times, but the process became much more common during the 1800s when huge areas of common land were fenced off for farming, after the Enclosures Acts.

Where the raised mires survive, in spite of being drained and cut, they are still growing. This growth depends on two things: a plant called Sphagnum moss, and a high rainfall. The moss will only grow in very wet places and forms a

natural dome. As it dies, the dead remains form peat, while more moss grows on top. This mound of peat, holds in water like a sponge so the bog keeps swelling and growing.

The mires were a source of fuel for local people. Most deeds on the older houses near the mires had a Right of Turbary, which was a licence to cut peat to burn. Today Bowness Common and the other raised mires are protected, but you can see the hollows and shallow ditches where peat was taken.



- ① Start in Bowness on Solway, on the corner by the Kings Arms Inn. Before you leave the village, take a look at the information board on the wall of the Kings Arms Inn.
- ② As you walk down the road out of the village, look at the field on your right, opposite the Church. The Roman Road which entered the Fort of Maia passed through this field.
- ③ As you leave the road and walk down onto Bowness Common, look at the Gradient Profile below. This shows clearly the slight dome which gives the raised mires their name, contained by the higher ground around it. Peat bogs can be dangerous places to walk: in winter it is very wet, and the clumps of heather and grasses make an uneven surface. There are also deep, hidden ditches and a risk of fire in dry summers. Please take care!
- ④ The farm of Rogersceugh rises out of Bowness Common on a steep knoll. It is rare to find buildings in the middle of a raised mire - they simply sink - but Rogersceugh is built on boulder clay and not the dangerous peat of the mires.
- ⑤ Back on Bowness Common think for a moment how old the raised mires are. Peat takes a very long time to form - for each metre depth of peat, a hundred years have passed. The surface you are walking on is hundreds of years old and 80% water. The peat contains a perfect record of past plant life and scientists can study preserved pollen and seeds from the mires to find out what was growing before records began.
- ⑥ Following the track towards North Plain Farm, you will see ponds and wet meadows which are a haven for local birdlife. These fields are owned and managed by the RSPB.
- ⑦ If you are lucky, you might see lapwing, oystercatcher and teal on Campfield Marsh Nature Reserve.

Before your walk

A part of this walk is closed in winter and spring to protect rare wildlife.

Please phone Solway Coast AONB Unit on 016973 33055 to check the path is open.

Circular Walk One

This quiet Solway Wilderness is a haven for wildlife. On the raised mires you might expect to see birds like the curlew, redshank and snipe. On a calm day in summer butterflies flit between the flowers of heather and bog asphodel, and dragonflies hunt over the pools and ditches.

There are also some more secretive creatures on the mires. Red grouse are usually only found on heather moors on the high fells, but here you can find the only group at sea level in England. Much heather habitat has been lost over the centuries, and grouse do not travel far, so this group of birds are now totally isolated from their relatives on the high moors.

Adders are also about on the mires. This snake has poor eyesight, but can sense the smallest vibrations on the ground.



Map Key

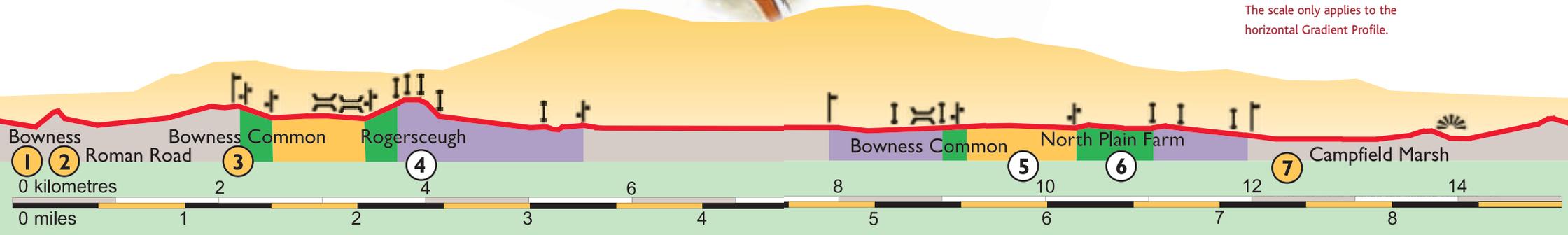
- Route
- Gradient moderate steep
- Road Bus
- Point of Interest
- Access to Road
- Telephone Toilets
- Parking Refreshments
- Signpost Bridge
- Perch/Seat Step Stile
- Gate Narrow Gate
- Kissing Gate View Point

Path Surface

Grass	Firm/Even
Soft	Rough/Uneven

Gradient Profile
The highest point on this walk is 24m

The scale only applies to the horizontal Gradient Profile.



Before leaving the Discovery Centre it is advisable to check tide times, etc, as the Grune itself can be dangerous on exceptionally large tides. And is therefore not advisable unless with an experienced guide.

Turn right outside the Discovery Centre, and walk past the Community School entrance, the Sports Hall, then onto a small path beside the Primary School playground. This takes you to the main B5300 road, which you cross and go straight ahead into the Car Park beside the pine tree compound (a major Rookery in Spring and Summer). Pass the public toilets and carry on straight ahead onto the promenade.

① Heading North follow the promenade past the Coastal Way finger post, and second car park with toilets, (NY11416) then towards East Cote Lighthouse, which is quite a feature built in 1914 and is still in use today.

Carry on along the promenade; eventually you will come to a narrowing of the pathway which guides you up a ramp on to the grass (NY11772). At this point you have a choice you can stay on the lower narrow promenade path or join the grass footpath on the roadside verge. If you decide to stay on the lower promenade footpath there are breaks in the sea defences to allow you to leave the lower path in an emergency.

As you now approach the back of the sea

front houses at Skinburness you will be guided up on to the grass path, which will then lead you through a narrow gravel track where you walk along a tarmac lane between the houses.

② Note: on your left are the former longhouses of Skinburness, which are reputed to be the haunt of smugglers from Scotland. It was said that this area was the place in which Sir Walter Scott modelled the Crackenthorpe Inn mentioned in his book the Red Gauntlet. The longhouses are now converted in to family homes.

Carry on along this small secluded lane, with the sea defence on your left. This was put in place to prevent coastal erosion and flooding. Cross the top of Dick Trod Lane and go through the gate with the cycle rack. (NY1246). Pass the large retirement home and its well manicured lawns on your right hand side.

Your walk will now continue over gravel and eventually you will drop down onto the beach, where the footpath was severely eroded during heavy tides of 2007. After a short distance you will be guided back on to a grass path, which will lead you past a detached house which is in an idyllic location over looking the Scottish coast; on passing this property note the view point opposite. The outward views of the walk you will note are of shingle, open sea and dunes.

Progressing along the path you will find

yourself surrounded by gorse bushes, which are nesting areas for many passerine birds including Linnet, Stonechat and Whitethroat. In the summer you may also hear the occasional Cuckoo which will be up to no good laying her eggs in others nests. As the footpath narrows take a left turn through the gorse which will lead you to the next kissing gate on your walk (NY13300). You are now entering sheep grazing areas; it is advisable to keep dogs on a lead from here on.

For a short distance the coastal fringe will be out of view, however, there is a well marked footpath which will eventually bring you to another gate, where you will be guided through a narrow gorse area leading on to a well walked path with plenty of way markers pointing the way.

③ In the distance, on the horizon to the left of the Anthorn masts, you will notice a former Second World War Pillbox. Here you can sit and enjoy the spectacular views over Moricambe bay; a bird watchers paradise when the tide is coming in, flowing up the River Waver Estuary. You are now at the half way point of the walk.

For your return journey, turn right from the Pillbox and follow the shingle-mud track by the River Waver Estuary, taking in the vast views of saltmarshes, creeks and on a clear day the Lake District

Hills. Follow the track through a series of fenced off areas with public kissing gates. Along this footpath you will notice some large blocks of concrete rubble, these were dumped here after war time coastal defences were removed. They now form part of a sea defence protecting the Grune from erosion, also providing habitat for Rabbits, stoats, weasels etc.

On your way up this track you will also notice that you are climbing a slight gradient which eventually leads to a series of gorse and hawthorn hedgerows. It is worth spending a little time to look over the Skinburness Marsh, where large numbers of geese can often be seen and heard in winter. There is also the chance of seeing Peregrines hunting these marsh areas in pursuit of wading birds.

You should now have gone through a series of gate ways, and will be approaching the little Grune hamlet with Marsh Cottage, on your right, the first of these quaint coastal properties. As you pass this cottage you will come to a three way marker post (NY12916). Turn right in between the houses and follow the secluded country lane, which will guide you back on to the Coastal way.

④ You have now gone full circle, and simply need to retrace your steps along the Cumbria Coastal Way, before returning to the Solway Coast Discovery Centre.

Circular Walk Two

Long House, on the beach at Skinburness, was immortalised by Sir Walter Scott in 'Red Gauntlet' as the inn where a meeting took place between Charles Edward Stuart (the 'Young Pretender' who'd stealthily landed on the Solway shore with his Jacobite supporters). It was from Skinburness quay that many troops from the north of England were shipped to the Crimean War.

Grune Point is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of its importance for breeding Natterjack toads, wading birds and over-wintering wildfowl.



Map Key

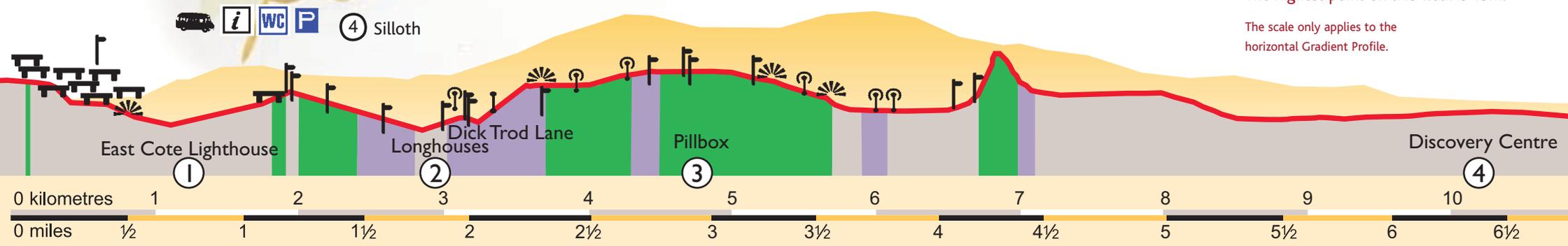
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- Road Bus
- Point of Interest
- Access to Road
- Telephone Toilets
- Parking Refreshments
- Signpost Bridge
- Perch/Seat Step Stile
- Gate Narrow Gate
- Kissing Gate View Point

Path Surface

Grass	Firm/Even
Soft	Rough/Uneven



Gradient Profile
 The highest point on this walk is 15m.
 The scale only applies to the horizontal Gradient Profile.



It is hard to believe when the tide is in that there are ways to cross the Solway Firth on foot. The journey is dangerous and many have tried and failed. Even those who know the Solway ebb and flow would not attempt the journey without a guide. And yet in 1300, an Archbishop of Canterbury made the trip across the four channels of the Bowness Wath, on a quest laid on him by the Pope himself.

The term wath is taken from the Norse word 'vath', meaning ford of crossing. The reason why it is so difficult to cross the Solway on foot is that the exact location of the waths changes over the years. Part of the skill in crossing the estuary lies in being able to read the Solway's shifting sands to see where the wath is today.

Robert of Winchelsea, Archbishop of Canterbury was sent to stop the war. Edward 1 was waging on Scotland.

The Pope gave him a letter, which he was to deliver in person to the King. As things turned out, Robert was to have a wasted journey. After crossing the Solway in fear of his life, he found that Edward's army was already turning for home.

The countryside looked much the same for centuries after Robert's visit. It was only 150 years ago that things began to change when new transport links opened up the wild Solway.

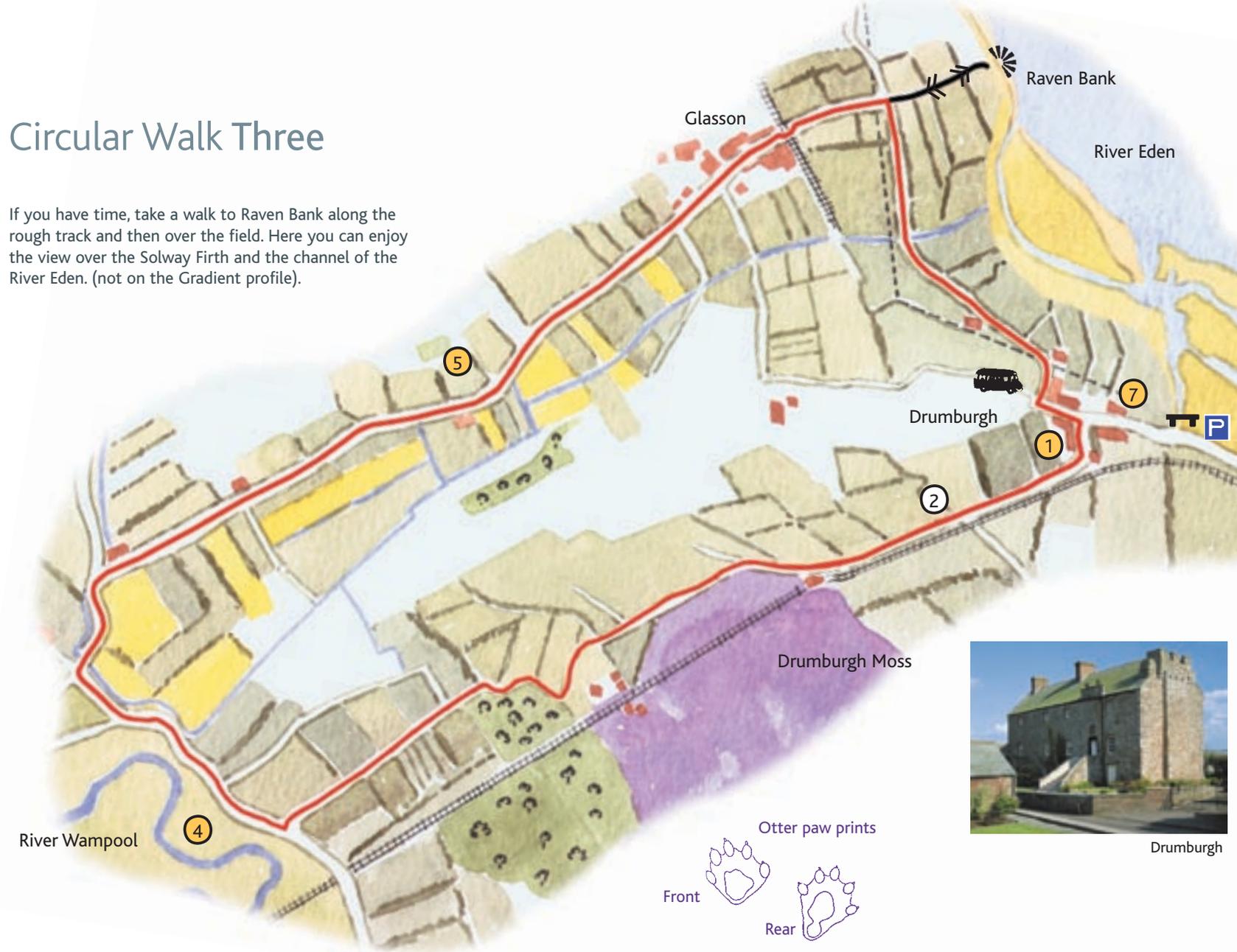
The North British Railway ran from Carlisle to Silloth, crossing the raised mires where butterflies, dragonflies and adders still thrive.

The railway closed in the middle of the last century, and now the natural world is laying claim to ground that was only borrowed by the machine age.

- 1 Start your walk from the centre of Drumburgh.
- 2 The walk now follows the bed of a Steam Railway which ran between Drumburgh and the Victorian seaside resort of Silloth. The builders of this line had many problems because of the boggy ground. The foundations of the line sank several times before the engineers finally managed to lay a firm bed for the track.
- 3 You are now skirting the edge of Drumburgh Moss National Nature Reserve. Rare plants thrive in the special conditions this habitat provides. Insect eating plants such as the sundew and butterwort can be found here lying in wait for unsuspecting flies and bugs.
- 4 The River Wampool is one of two small rivers that empty into Moricambe Bay. It has a healthy population of otter, although you would have to be very lucky to see one. Otters are quiet, nocturnal creatures that live on a diet of fish, frogs and other river dwellers. Look out for otter paw prints under foot.
- 5 As you travel along the road to Glasson imagine how it must have looked when Robert of Winchelsea was crossing the Solway. The road would have been little more than a drovers track sitting on top of the Moss laid on bundles of wood which provided a foundation in the soft peat. The mires had not been drained for farming then, and covered a much larger area.
- 6 Glasson is an old farming settlement which formed on higher ground overlooking the mires and marshes.
- 7 Back in Drumburgh, take a moment to admire Drumburgh Bastle. A Bastle is a fortified manor house, or a mini-castle. This one was built around 1307, in the year Edward I died. Like many of the buildings along Hadrian's Wall, it was built with good, dressed Roman stone from both the Wall and local forts. Look out for the Roman Altar by the steps.

Circular Walk Three

If you have time, take a walk to Raven Bank along the rough track and then over the field. Here you can enjoy the view over the Solway Firth and the channel of the River Eden. (not on the Gradient profile).



Map Key

- Route
- Gradient moderate steep
- Road Bus
- Point of Interest
- Access to Road
- Telephone Toilets
- Parking Refreshments
- Signpost Bridge
- Perch/Seat Step Stile
- Gate Narrow Gate
- Kissing Gate View Point

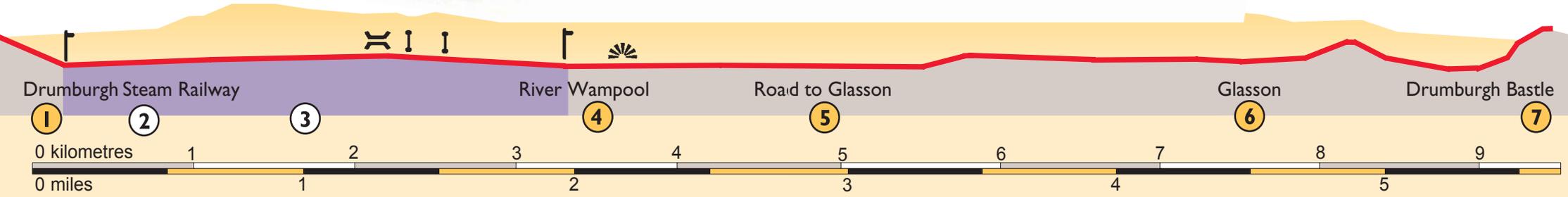
Path Surface

- Grass Firm/Even
- Soft Rough/Uneven



Gradient Profile
The highest point on this walk is 20m.

The scale only applies to the horizontal Gradient Profile.



The Eden Estuary Trail

4

Edward the First of England was King from 1274 to 1307 and spent most of his reign in campaigning on England's western and northern borders. He was known as Longshanks, for his height, and the Hammer of the Scots for his hard and efficient pursuit of supremacy in Scotland.

In the winter of 1306, while attempting to quell another uprising he became ill and rested at Lanercost Priory for several months. He died on Burgh Marsh, of dysentery, within sight of the shores of Scotland which had plagued him for so long. The monument pictured here marks the place of his death, and although it was slowly sinking into the marsh, engineers have recently rescued and restored it, so that we can go on remembering Edward I, Hammer of the Scots.

Architecture on the Solway Coast is varied and fascinating. Thatched cottages are rare on the Solway. During late medieval times, reedbeds were common, providing abundant raw materials for thatching. Later drainage works to improve marshes for rearing sheep, meant that many wetland habitats disappeared. Clay Dabbin barns are a relic of past times. They were constructed of frame timbers or 'crucks', the walls were made from a mixture of clay, pebbles and straw.

The intertidal river Eden is an ever-changing environment due to the



twice-daily inundation of the river channel by the incoming tides. This provides a spectacle for the birdwatcher all year round.

In Spring the Solway is a feeding area for those birds migrating north to their breeding grounds in more northerly countries. In Summer it is home to a large breeding population of gulls, terns, wading birds, and other saltmarsh species.



Circular Walk Four

7.5 miles (12 km)

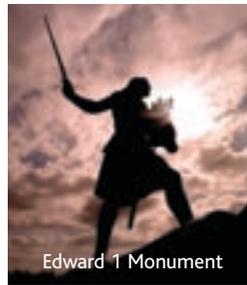
- 1 Start at the Greyhound Inn. As you walk out of Burgh By Sands you can see the history of the village come to life through the range of building styles. Boulder and clay barns known locally as 'Clay Dabbins' can be seen alongside thatched cottages and Victorian brick built houses.
- 3 The Edward I Monument was erected in 1685 to commemorate the site where the King died in 1307. Edward died whilst camped on the marsh close to the Stony Wath where his army could cross to Scotland at low tide. Please pause to read the panel in front of the monument.
- 4 Old Sandsfield. As you leave the marsh and head up the River the building on your right was once an inn for those trading with Scotland across the Wath, or ford. Old Sandsfield appears in Sir Walter Scott's "Red Gauntlet", as the inn called the Lady Lowther, whose landlord was Father Crackenthorpe.
- 6 Across the river, the red escarpment is called Red Rocks. The site is geologically unique and has been designated a Regionally Important Geological Site or RIGS. The outcrop is made up of sandstone which was laid down as desert dunes around 300 million years ago.



Also across the river is the village of Rockcliffe, named after the escarpment. The church in Rockcliffe is notable for the height of its spire. Churches of this grandeur are uncommon, but Rockcliffe lies within a large estate, and the church probably benefitted from this wealth.

- 7 Situated above the Eden, Beaumont was probably founded by the Romans as a strategic point. The settlement is typical of the Solway Plain in that dwellings are set within the four points of the compass which are marked by farms.
- 8 The remains of the wall are not easy to see on the Solway. This lane actually passes along the line of the Vallum, a complex of ridges and ditches which mirrors the line of the Wall.

Circular Walk Four



Autumn sees the return of thousands of northerly breeding birds some of which are Solway winter residents such as goldeneye, barnacle geese, pink footed geese and whooper swans. Many are on passage to warmer wintering grounds such as Africa. In winter, due to the large concentrations of birds, predators abound such as peregrine falcon and its smaller cousin, the merlin. The walker is sure to see a wide range of bird species and should be on their guard for rarities at all times of year, as the inner Solway regularly produces notable species.

Please beware of traffic on this road

Map Key

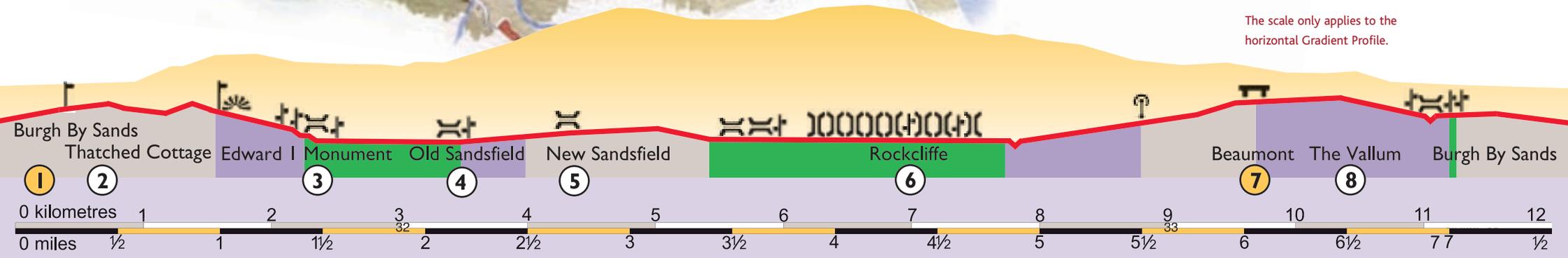
- Route
- Gradient moderate steep
- Road Bus
- Point of Interest ①
- Access to Road ①
- Telephone Toilets
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Path Surface

Grass	Firm/Even
Soft	Rough/Uneven

Gradient Profile
The highest point on this walk is 35m.

The scale only applies to the horizontal Gradient Profile.



Thurstonfield Lough, was used as the header tank for the water courses which run toward the Solway.

These streams powered corn mills, with different mills working on different days of the week, to maintain the flow of water. The establishment of the Lough and its sluice, which still survives today, provided water to the mills even in times of low rainfall. This water management allowed each settlement down stream to run its own mill. Today, the Lough serves as one of the Solway's precious wetlands, and a valuable refuge for coots, great-crested grebe and teal. Please keep to the right of way and do not disturb the private areas surrounding the Lough.

One of the Solway Villages you will visit is Moorhouse, a small settlement with an illustrious past. The large imposing building is Moorhouse Hall, built c.1780 by a Carlisle solicitor who's father farmed in Moorhouse. This partnership between father and son created one of the largest estates on the Solway Plain.

Along the banks of the Sunken Lanes of the Solway Villages Trail,

wildflowers flourish undisturbed. In April and May, bluebells and primroses emerge, followed by the nodding heads of water avens in the damper places. Later in the summer the tall pink spires of the foxglove emerge, backed by the cream flower heads of the aromatic meadowsweet.



- ① Start at the Greyhound Inn in the traditional linear village of Burgh By Sands.
- ② After walking through Burgh by Sands you will cross the Railway Bridge which also spans the line of the now derelict Carlisle to Port Carlisle Canal. The canal operated until 1854 when it was filled in and the railway laid on top. The railway closed in 1962 after over 100 years.
- ③ After leaving the road you enter a world of Sunken Lanes with high hedge banks or 'Kests' and equally impressive hedgerows. These old lanes are a snap shot in time and are living examples of what highways looked like in Medieval times. Many of these old lanes linked settlements and provided droving roads which contained the stock being driven due to their high steep sides and made large herds easier to manage.
- ④ Thurstonfield is a village which built up around the farming industry on the fertile Solway Plain. The village's old mill still survives. Look out for the mill house on the right on your way to the Lough
- ⑤ Thurstonfield Lough was once an essential link in the chain of water milling on the Solway. Now it is a popular fishing venue and a place to see dragonflies and damselflies. The Lough is privately owned, so please follow the signs and keep to the path.
- ⑥ On the left hand side as you enter the village of Moorhouse is Stone House Farm. Bonny Prince Charlie stayed here on his first night in England before going to Carlisle as the pretender to the throne of England.
- ⑦ After crossing Powburgh Beck you will soon be able to see Monkhill windmill. The village of Monkhill was served by two corn mills. The windmill was responsible for grinding corn when a drought meant the watermill could not operate. The watermill was powered by water from Monkhill Lough. The lough is now sadly drained for farming, but the stream which filled it can still be seen away on your left.
- ⑧ As you return to Burgh, the Parish Church stands as a sentinel. The church was built in the twelfth century and the pele tower was added in the 14th century. The church is built almost entirely of sandstone robbed from Hadrians Wall and the Roman fort, the boundaries of which enclose the church. In 1307 the body of Edward the I of England rested in state in this church before his last journey to London

Circular Walk Five



Burgh Church

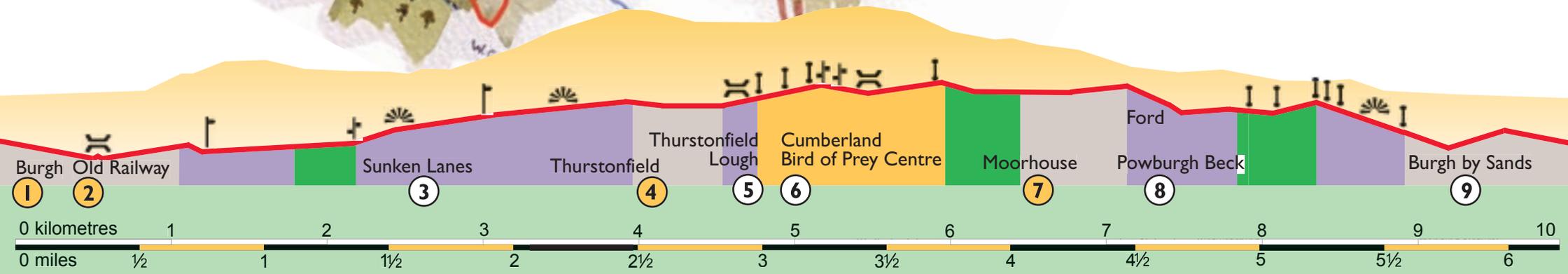


Map Key

- Route
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Path Surface

Grass	Firm/Even
Soft	Rough/Uneven





Further Local Information

VISIT THE PAST • SEE THE FUTURE • UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT

To find out more about the Solway Coast AONB, visit the Solway Coast Discovery Centre. The Discovery Centre includes a new exhibition, art gallery and an education resource area.

The exhibition showcases the Solway Coast and describes its wildlife, heritage, landscape, communities and a time line outlining historic to present and future perspectives. Entrance fee applies, concessions available

The Tourist Information Centre has been newly designed and includes exhibitions about the history of Silloth Airfield and the Carlisle to Silloth railway, as well as a large range of stock and binoculars to entice birdwatchers.

The new art exhibition includes the work of local artists and has a bi-monthly featured artist.

SUMMER OPENING (after Easter)
10am-4pm weekly (closed 12.30-1.00pm)

WINTER OPENING (October to Easter)
10am-4pm Thursday - Monday
(closed 12.30 - 1.00pm)

Closed from Christmas until new year

For further information www.solwaycoastaonb.org.uk
or phone 016973 31944

To get the most enjoyment from your walks it is strongly recommended that you use the relevant Ordnance Survey map to accompany the guide"

RECOMMENDED OS SHEETS

Recommended OS Sheets

OS Explorer and Outdoor Leisure 1:25 000

OS Explorer OL 43 Hadrian's Wall, Haltwhistle & Hexham

OS Explorer 314 Solway Firth

OS Explorer 315 Carlisle

OS Explorer 316 Newcastle upon Tyne

PLEASE USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

For all public transport information call Traveline or visit www.traveline.info



Further Information

Hadrian's Wall Country stretches across Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyne & Wear in the north of England. Hadrian's Wall Country is our name for the land from Ravenglass to South Shields that takes in the living breathing story of the Wall along with its coast, countryside, towns and villages. There's much to see and do apart from the Wall, major forts and museums to dramatic landscapes, wildlife, the areas turbulent border Riever past, Christian heritage, castles and bustling markets towns and villages. There are numerous trails to follow whether walking or cycling, short or long, there's something for everyone.

For advice and information about the World Heritage Site and Hadrian's Wall Country visit hadrians-wall.org

Online Shop

Visit hadrians-wall.org/shop for a full range of Hadrian's Wall books, map, gifts and local products to help plan or celebrate your visit, or even make a donation to help support the ongoing conservation, preservation and management of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

For more information about Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail visit:

hadrians-wall.org

"nationaltrail.co.uk/hadrianswall"

or call the Hadrian's Wall information line on:

01434 322002

Email: info@hadrians-wall.org

