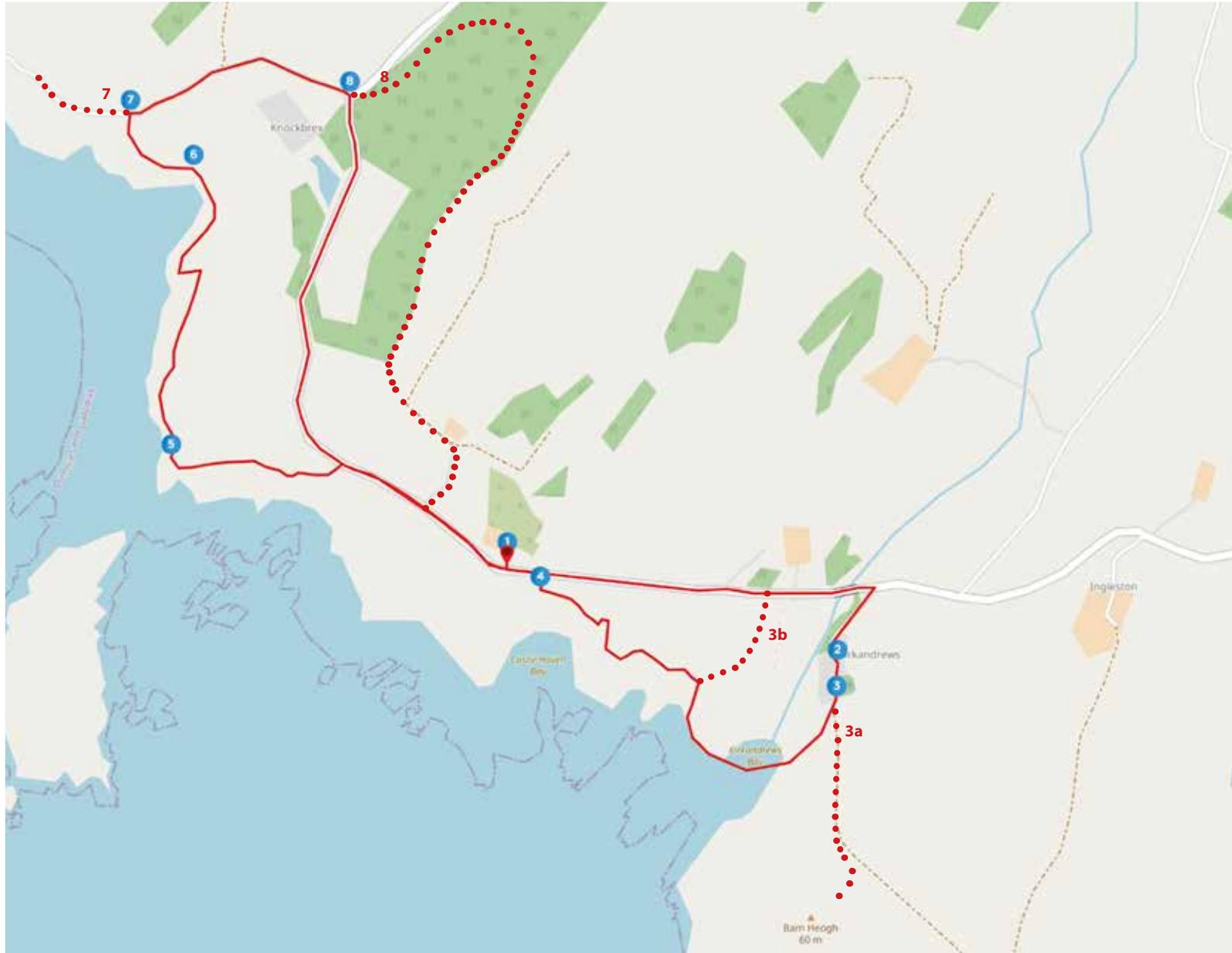


The Knockbrev Estate

Distance: 2-6 miles Map: OS explorer 312 Kirkcudbright & Castle Douglas

Walk 7



— - Walk

• • • • - Alternate Routes

- Leave gates as you find them
- Walk to the edges of crop fields, not across the middle
- Keep dogs on leads, especially if there is livestock in the field
- Cows with calves can be aggressive
- There is a large tidal range in the Solway Firth. Be careful if venturing into the tidal zone.

Disclaimer: This route was correct at time of writing. However, alterations can happen if development or boundary changes occur, and there is no guarantee of permanent access. These walks have been published for use by site visitors on the understanding that neither HPB Management Limited nor any other person connected with Holiday Property Bond is responsible for the safety or wellbeing of those following the routes as described. It is walkers' own responsibility to be adequately prepared and equipped for the level of walk and the weather conditions and to assess the safety and accessibility of the walk.

The Knockbrex Estate

Distance: 2-6 miles **Map:** OS explorer 312 Kirkcudbright & Castle Douglas

Walk 7

This walk lets you explore the Knockbrex Estate and see other examples of buildings associated with James Brown who was responsible for the building of the Coo Palace. It also takes in some interesting coastal scenery and visits an Iron Age fort. The Borgue coast is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is home to a variety of bird species. You may see roe deer, hares, otters and grey seals in the area.

The walk can be split into two sections, suitable for a half-day or summer evening excursion. There are also optional detours to visit viewpoints at Kirkandrews and Knockbrex Hill.

Start: Coo Palace

Footwear: Trainers in dry weather, boots or wellingtons in wet weather

Terrain: Minor roads, farmland and rocky coast

Please help future walkers by notifying us of any errors in the walk description or any suggestions for improving the directions.

WALK

1. From the Coo Palace warm up with a 1 kilometre walk eastwards on the road, crossing the Pulwhirrin Burn at Roberton Bridge then take the turn on the right to the village of Kirkandrews. The first building on the left is the “wee kirk” built by James Brown in 1906. It is open to the public on Sunday afternoons from Easter until the end of September and for Sunday evening ecumenical services at 7pm in July and August. James Brown is buried in front of the kirk at the left side. There are memorials to other members of his family on the right side.

2. At the far end of Kirkandrews village is the church yard which is the site of the original Kirkandrews church. There was a church at Kirkandrews before 1200 and it remained in use until 1670 when the parishes of Kirkandrews and Senwick were incorporated into Borgue parish. The gravestones in the church yard date back into the 1700s and the graveyard is still in use today. A notable grave stone is that of the Covenanter Robert McWhae, who was “barbarously shot to death” in 1685 for his beliefs. The stone itself is a 19th century replica.

3. If you would like a panoramic view over the area, you can walk up the track beyond Kirkandrews for a few hundred metres then head rightwards through a gate across rough ground to reach the summit of Barn Heugh which is marked by a large stone cairn (See 3a ● ● ● ● on the map). You can access the beach at Kirkandrews Bay by following the wall down to the shore at the end of the village. *The cairn at Barn Heugh is not easy to get to since the field is overgrown and quite rough. This would be for the more adventurous walkers.*

To continue the walk from Kirkandrews, either cross the bay in front of the village at low tide by taking the field after the row of houses (you will see some boats moored by the bay) and continue round the coast in front of Craig Cottage, or when the tide is higher, head back towards the road at the end of Kirkandrews, turn left over the Roberton Bridge and take the first gate on your left into the field [please do *not* use the footbridge in Kirkandrews village as this goes through a private garden]. (See 3b ● ● ● ● on the map) You can always find tide times on <https://www.dgwgo.com/dumfries-galloway-tide-times/>.

Pass to the right of Craig Cottage then down across the field to the stony beach. At the top of the beach is a large granite boulder. This is probably a glacial erratic, melted out of a retreating glacier in the last Ice Age. At the right side of the bay is a gate in the fence and this gives access through some gorse bushes into the next field at the head of Dead Man’s Bay. From the right-hand side of the beach (facing seaward) you can clamber over rocks or cut across the beach at low tide to reach a grassy area. Stay near the edge of the bay to avoid a boggy section. Skirt around the next rocky headland and you will arrive at another beach where a small stream reaches the sea. You can normally step across the stream at the point where it meets the sandy beach. From this point you can see a gate in a fence in the grassy area at the top of the beach. Go through this gate and head upwards across the field to arrive at a small gate that leads into the Iron Age fort of Castle Haven. It is also possible to stay on the seaward side of the fence then to scramble down a small cliff and ascend a flight of steps from the rocky beach up into the fort.

4. Castle Haven is an Iron Age fortified structure or “dun”. It was partially restored in 1905 by James Brown and bears an inscribed plaque on the north-east inside wall.

Exit Castle Haven on the landward side then turn leftwards contouring across the field in the direction of the Coo Palace.

From Coo Palace, walk westwards and past the entrance to the first galvanised gate on the left. Continue past this cattle shedding area and along the road until Coo Palace is just out of sight. As the road starts to sweep right there is a small layby on the left and another galvanised gate that gives access to a track leading down towards the sea. Follow the track alongside a fence then through a wooded area to a gate. Pass through the gate and some gorse and blackthorn bushes to emerge at a grassy area close to the sea.

5. You will now see the remains of the Knockbrex bathing house, another of James Brown’s quirky buildings. In front of the bathing house is a fine sandy beach that extends out to Barlocco Island at low tide. There is an old slipway and a “smugglers’ cave” at the north end of the beach. Follow the good track up through woodland to emerge at an impressive stone seat that gives a panoramic view over Ardwall Island, Wigtown Bay and the Galloway Hills to the north. From the seat, leave the track and follow a smaller waymarked footpath directly down a steep slope towards the sea, turning right to contour above rocks and emerge onto the pasture just above the shore line. Look out for a memorial to two of the Knockbrex estate’s dogs just above the rocky shore. The path is waymarked across the pasture heading past the old harbour towards Knockbrex House.

6. Cross the causeway in front of Knockbrex House then follow the footpath signs along the fence line just above the shore until you reach the surfaced road at a gate and footpath sign.

7. At this point you can extend the walk along the road for a few hundred metres to where the surfaced road ends and follow a good path up to a viewpoint on top of Knockbrex Hill (See 7 ● ● ● ● on the map).

8. To return to the Coo Palace, follow the minor road back towards Borgue or you can turn left up a track just after the entrance to Knockbrex House then follow a path looping through Doon Wood. (See 8 ● ● ● ● on the map) At the far end of the wood you can cut across a field track to Barlocco then down to the road close to the Coo Palace entrance. *This walk is for the more adventurous walkers and involves scrambling over or under large trees which have fallen on the path.*