

The Clints of Dromore

Distance: 3-4 miles/5-7 km Map: OS Explorer 319 Galloway Forest South

Walk 13



- 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.

— - Walk

• • • • Walk to see the first of Matt Baker's sculptures

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.

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A rugged walk over some challenging terrain. The Clints of Dromore are a range of granite cliffs at the head of the Fleet Valley in the shadow of Cairnsmore of Fleet. This walk loops over the Clints and visits some interesting sculptures and wildlife viewing areas.

Start: At the Cairnsmore of Fleet National Nature Reserve Visitor Centre, about 7 miles from Gatehouse of Fleet

Refreshments: Cafes and pubs in Gatehouse

Note: It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made. Thank you for your help. *Happy walking.*

WALK

1. Follow the B796 for about 6 miles northwards from Gatehouse of Fleet then take a turning along a minor road to the right, signposted for the Cairnsmore of Fleet National Nature Reserve Visitor Centre. Follow the road for about a mile to the car park and visitor centre. There is a good display about the local landscape and wildlife and some information postcards about a series of sculptures by local artist Matt Baker, associated with poems from Mary Smith of Castle Douglas. The sculptures are of various forms and are hidden away in the landscape.

From the visitor centre follow the track towards the Big Water of Fleet disused railway viaduct. You can stay on the track and visit a wildlife pond on the left or follow a faint path along the riverside to look for the first of Matt Baker's sculptures.

2. The first sculpture is a small work found hanging on a rock in the middle of the river. It is called "Scene Shifter" and echoes the form of the viaduct.

3. The railway viaduct is on the disused "Paddy Line" that used to run from Dumfries to Portpatrick, connecting with ships to Ireland. It was featured in the 1935 film of John Buchan's "The Thirty Nine Steps". Just past the viaduct there is a carved bench in a small fenced enclosure by a parking area. You can cut the corner here by heading up past the bench to reach the track that slant up to the old railway embankment.

4. Another short diversion lets you explore the abandoned village of Little Cullendoch a couple of hundred yards further along the track from the viaduct. There are just the bases of the walls of the buildings left now but if you look closely you may find another sculpture hidden among the walls. Follow the course of the railway line for about half a mile. There is another sculpture, called "Ocean", hanging from a rock face on the right side. You will come to a gate and signpost on the left where the path for the Clints of Dromore branches off. Climb very steeply up a shallow gully to gain the ridge. Hidden in amongst the heather on the right side of the path there are some Rosnes Benches.

5. These are part of another art project and are a great place to take a breather and admire the view back down the valley towards Gatehouse. The route is now marked by vertical posts that lead you along the broad ridge above the Clints.

6. When you first gain the top of the ridge, make your way over to the first rocky outcrop on the edge of the cliffs to find a group of granite sculptures called "Hush". The cliffs are home to a herd of wild goats and you will probably see them as you look along the line of cliffs. Peregrine falcons also nest here, and you have a good chance of seeing them in the spring and early summer. Follow the line of well-spaced marker posts over rough, heathery terrain until you reach the highest part of the ridge at Mountain End. This is a good viewpoint for the massive bulk of Cairnsmore of Fleet, the most southerly 2000+ foot hill in Scotland.

7. From Mountain End, follow a faint path down a broad ridge to traverse beneath the cliffs of the Clints. Some sections can be quite boggy after wet weather.

8. Eventually you will reach a gate where the path crosses the old railway line. Continue across farm land along an improving path to reach the road and the way back to the visitor centre.