

Burrow Head

Distance: 5 miles/8 km Map: OS Explorer 311 Wigtown & the Machars – Dumfries & Galloway Core Path 356

Walk 22



— - Walk

• • • • - Alternative route

- 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.

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A fine cliff-top walk from Isle of Whithorn at the south end of the Machars peninsula.

Start: At the public car park in Isle of Whithorn.

Refreshments: St Ninian's Tea Room café and the Steam Packet Hotel in Isle of Whithorn

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. Start from the public car park by the library in Isle of Whithorn. There is no longer an island here due to harbour extensions in 1790 that built a causeway from the mainland and extended the harbour to become the home port for around a dozen trading vessels. Start walking back towards Whithorn and you will see a signposted path on the left, leading past a stone building through a gate and into field. Cross the field to another gate in a stone wall then head for a marker post in the next field. From the marker post, descend to a footbridge across a small stream then continue across fields parallel to the coast. The path is marked by yellow footpath signs where it crosses walls and fences.

2. The scenery now becomes more rugged and the cliffs gain in height. You may see gannets feeding close to the shore here. They nest on the Scares rocks between Burrow Head and the Mull of Galloway. Cormorants and porpoises are often seen along this coast. The path continues close to the edge of the cliffs. Be careful here in windy weather. During rough seas you may hear the waves crashing into blow holes in the cliffs below. The rocks here are sedimentary rocks of the Silurian period and have been folded until they form vertical sheets and columns. At the foot of the cliffs there is a natural arch formation known as the "Devils' Bridge" but this is difficult to see from above.

3. The path passes a small building then reaches the highest part of Burrow Head which is marked by a cairn set back in the field. This cliff-top location was used for filming the finale of the 1973 cult classic film "The Wicker Man". The route now descends past the sites of Iron Age forts and some impressive rock formations to reach a caravan park.

4. Follow the track through the park to reach the end of a surfaced road at Cutcloy Farm and cottages. The road slopes gently downhill for around two miles to return you to Isle of Whithorn. The hill on the left of the road just after Cutcloy rejoices in the name of The Howe Hill of Haggamalag. In Isle of Whithorn you can sample refreshments at either the

St. Ninian's Tea Room by the car park or you can walk around the edge of the harbour past some interesting historic buildings to the Steam Packet Inn. This dog-friendly pub has an extensive food menu and a good selection of home-brewed and local beers.

5. If you follow the road to its end there are several additional items of interest. There is a seat carved from a massive piece of granite that is a memorial to the Kirkcudbright based fishing boat "Solway Harvester" that sank with the loss of seven local men in January 2000. Round to the right, across small field, are the ruins of St. Ninian's Chapel. The oldest parts of the existing structure date back to the 14th century but there was probably an earlier chapel on this site since the 12th century. There is a "witness cairn" where pilgrims and visitors to the chapel are invited to add their own stones, often bearing the names of family members. The white tower at the end of the peninsula is a navigational aid that has been guiding boats into the harbour for hundreds of years.