

# WALKING

*in and around*

## **Moffat**



The natural place to walk

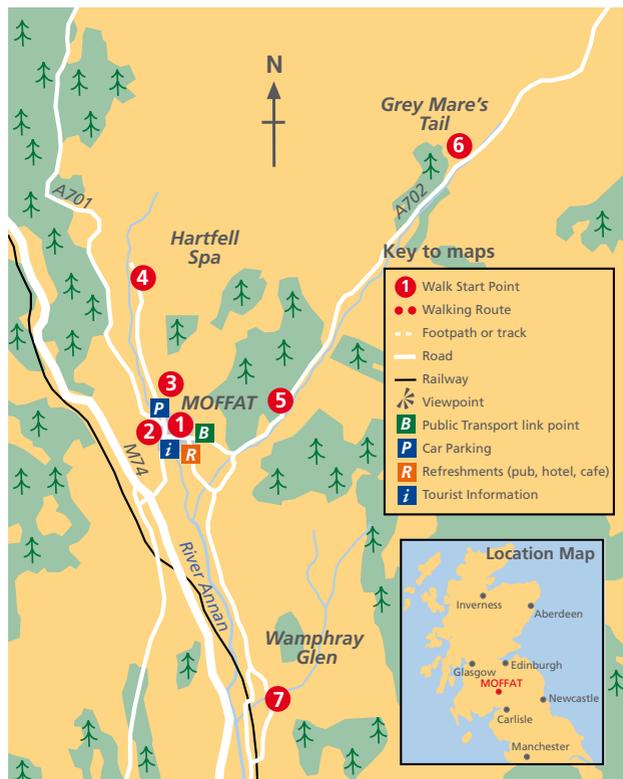


Moffat lies cradled between rolling border hills on the banks of the River Annan, five miles south of its source in the dramatic Devil's Beef Tub. This natural bowl was a favourite place for hiding cattle rustled by the Border Reivers.

Focal points include the bronze sculpted Moffat Ram, the former bath houses (now council offices) and the old court house crowned with the town steeple and clock.

Moffat's popularity increased with the discovery of 'health giving' sulphurous spring waters of Moffat Well, first analysed in 1797 and marketed in the spa fashion to the benefit of the whole town. The Moffat Well water had to be taken fresh from the spring, unlike the iron rich (but more remote) Hartfell Spa source that was bottled and sent out to the West Indies. The carved keystone in the roof over Hartfell Spa bears the bloody heart emblem of the Douglas family, who owned the lands of Newton, and can be seen on walk 4.

The walks in this leaflet give a good overview of Moffat and its environs. They take in the upland drama of the Grey Mare's Tail and Loch Skene, the secluded Wamphray Glen, woodland walks in Craigieburn Forest, and the popular waterside paths close to the town.



### 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 Nos. 322 and 330 cover this area in detail.

## THE WALKS

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## Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.

- Leave gates as you find them.
- Keep dogs under close control at all times.
- Keep to paths across farmland.
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls.
- Respect farm livestock, crops and machinery.
- Take your litter home with you.
- Take care on country roads.
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- Guard against risk of fire.
- Make no unnecessary noise.



## ARCHBANK AND FRENCHLAND

Circular town and farmland walk

6km/3 1/2 miles

Allow 1 1/2 hours

Pavement, minor road, tracks and grass. Gates

Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

**PARKING** In Moffat High Street.

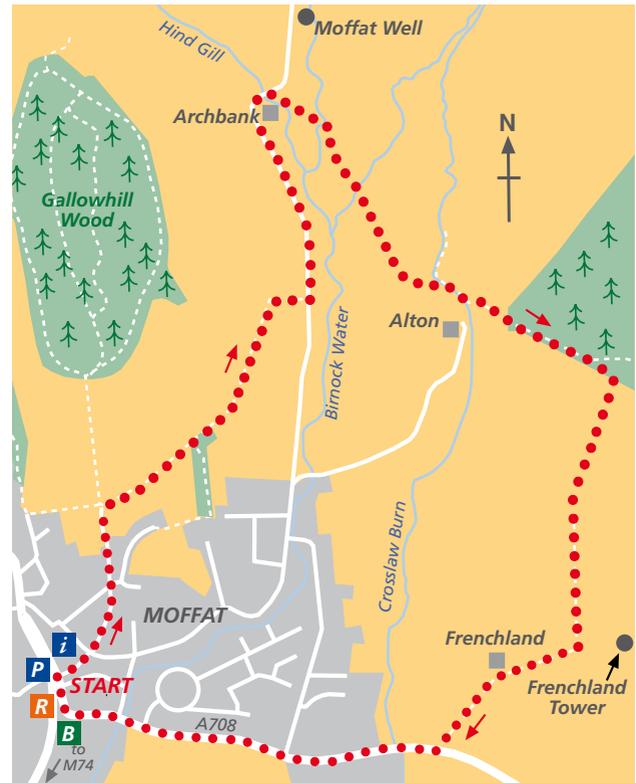
**START** from the bottom end of the High Street.

Walk towards the War Memorial and turn right at the Clock Tower down Well Street (signed for Old Well Theatre and Well Street shops). Head uphill on Old Well Street past Dowding House and the Old Well Theatre. Dowding House is named after Air Chief Marshal Lord Hugh Dowding (1882-1970), the most famous son of Moffat and the 'Architect of Deliverance' whose preparation and operations gave the Royal Air Force victory in the Battle of Britain.

Continue between the narrow road signs and past the end of Hartfell Crescent. At the top of the narrow section of road, enclosed by a wall and high earth bank, turn right



Alpacas at Archbank.



following the fingerpost for Heatheryhaugh. This is a good vantage point over the eastern side of Moffat. The track narrows to a path that reaches a field entrance. Pass through the kissing gate into the field and follow the fence line in front of you that runs parallel to the road below. Turn right after the kissing gate by the water trough and descend between the fence and wall to reach the minor road. Turn left following the road past Archbank House and on over the bridge with interesting balconies jutting out over a gorge section of Hind Gill.

One hundred years ago this route to Moffat Well was bustling with noise and activity of pedestrians and passengers in carriages, drawn by the health fad for sulphurous waters.

8 At the end of the bridge parapet turn right, signposted – Alton 1/2, through the gate and follow the edge of the bank for a short distance. As the ground drops away turn left and descend to the bridge over Blae Beck via a red sandstone track. Pass through the gate and follow the grass track until it swings left. At this point continue straight ahead, leaving the main track, to cross a small burn before reaching a kissing gate in the dyke. Cross the field to the next kissing gate and then bear left towards the redundant section of wall at the site of an old pond. Another kissing gate takes you on to a farm track. Turn right and just before you reach the farm of Alton, turn left through the pedestrian gate set in the left side of a field gate.

Cross the burn at the multi-stemmed lime tree and walk uphill alongside the fence to reach the gate into the corner of the plantation. Follow the rough path between the trees and the dyke. This strip opens out and you will find a kissing gate next to a large boulder set in the dyke. Enter the field and aim for the nearest barn. You will cross a drain before reaching a pair of gates just up from the field corner. Continue to the next gate at the head of a track. Follow the track through a right angle turn to reach Frenchland Farm. Look to the left just before making this turn and you will just be able to see the top of the remains of Frenchland Tower built by a French family in the late 16th century.

Follow the track through the farmyard and then through a left turn to reach the Moffat to Selkirk road. Turn right and follow the verge until you can cross the road to join the pavement. Pass the hospital, the fire station and Moffat rugby ground on route to the town centre.



Greycill Head from Archbank



Circular riverside and town walk

4.5km/3 miles

Allow 1 1/2 hours

Path, rough path, minor road and pavement. Gates

Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

**PARKING** Enter Moffat from the south, cross the Annan Water and turn left into the car park opposite Station Park.

**START** Head towards the river and turn right, signposted for 'Waterside Walks'. Follow the riverside path, with views over the town to the forested Gallow Hill. This river corridor is a wildlife haven where you may see grey herons, sand martins, dippers and various species of duck. On reaching the old road bridge turn right up the first flight of steps. At this point you can opt for a shorter return to the town and you will avoid the rougher section of path up river from the



Heron

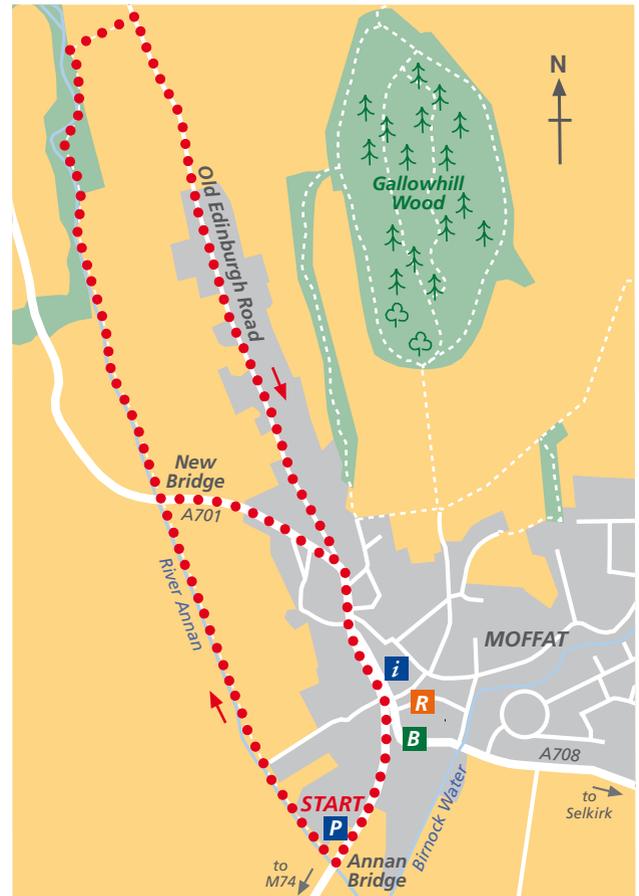
bridges.

For the longer route, climb the second flight of steps, cross the road and turn left down the grass ramp behind the barriers. Continue along this uneven section of riverside path. At the fork before the bench turn right and right again at the waymarker. The path moves away from the side of the main channel and along the edge of a copse. Turn right

through the metal kissing gate set in the fence line and follow the track alongside the power lines to reach the road through a kissing gate.

This is the Old Edinburgh Road, for centuries the route to the capital via Tweedsdale. You will pass Hydro Garage and Cottages, reminders of the time when Moffat was a popular spa resort.

Once inside the 30mph limit move to the pavement. At the end of Old Edinburgh Road turn left to Moffat High Street. You will pass Moffat's famous and imposing ram atop the Colvin Fountain, gifted by a local industrialist. At the bottom of the High Street cross to the right hand side and pass St Andrew's church to return to the car park.





Circular town and woodland walk

4km/2½ miles

Allow 1 hour

Pavement, minor road, beaten earth tracks and paths

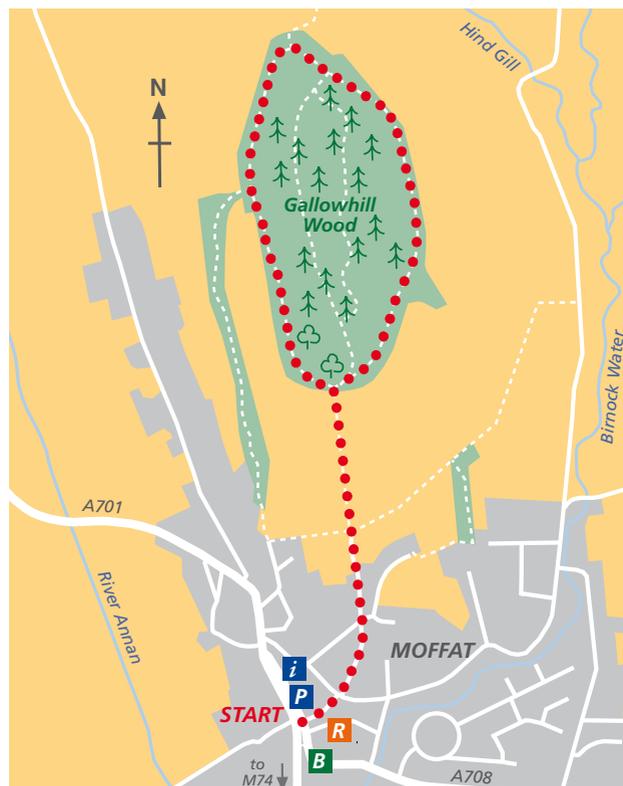
Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

**PARKING** In Moffat High Street.

**START** from the bottom end of the High Street.

Walk towards the War Memorial and turn right at the Clock Tower down Well Street (sign-posted for Old Well Theatre and Well Street shops). Head uphill on Old Well Street past Dowding House and the Old Well Theatre and continue between the no through road signs and past the end of Hartfell Crescent. At the top of the narrow section of road, enclosed by a wall and high earth bank, turn slightly left and then immediately straight ahead. This path starts



at a large grated drain and follows a narrow woodland strip uphill, to connect with a circular track and path inside the edge of Gallowhill wood.

You can walk either a clockwise or anti-clockwise circuit of the wood. At the top end of the wood take a short spur path to the boundary for views out over Hind Hill to Greygill Head, a craggy hill favoured by ravens, with an old quarry on its lower slopes. Moffat Well is in the valley below Blaebeck Farm at the foot of these hills.

Return to the main path and complete the circuit before descending the woodland strip to Well Street and returning to Moffat High Street.



Linear upland route following Auchencat Burn

5.5km/3½ miles

Allow 1½ hours

Grass and hard surfaced track with drain crossings and wet patches. Gates

Strenuous

Boots recommended and a torch for the spa

**PARKING** Drive up Moffat High Street and turn right on Beechgrove immediately after the school. This is signed for Annan Water and is the start of the Old Edinburgh Road. After three miles park at the corrugated Annan Water hall. Ensure that you do not block any field entrance and leave space for another vehicle (Moffat Mountain Rescue).

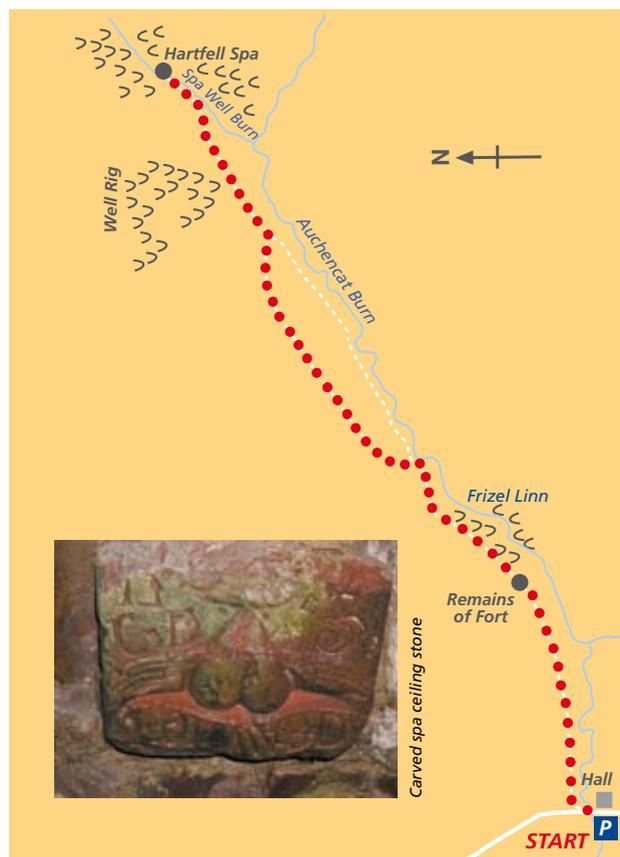
**START** Cross Auchencat Burn, turn right through the kissing gate and follow the side of the burn to the second gate. Follow the top edge of the valley to the next gate. Cross the small burn on the flat ground to your left and return to the edge of the slope. You will soon reach a stone wall that bisects the earthworks of an old settlement, possibly a fort from the first millennium BC. Pass through the kissing gate and follow the fence.

When the fence turns right (to a point) take the short route (the open side of the triangle) to rejoin the fence line. Pass through the final kissing gate and turn left along the fence to

connect with the track that runs above the landslip and then contours the slope. As you approach the steep scree lined valley of Spa Well Burn the track descends to connect with a path leading to the valley entrance and on to the chalybeat (iron rich) spring of Hartfell Spa.

Discovered in 1748 by John Williamson, who was leading a mining operation by Auchencat Burn, this spring water had curative properties for 'debility and anaemia'. Unlike the sulphurous water from Moffat Well this could be bottled and was sent as far afield as the West Indies.

Return along the same route or take the burnside route if it has been re-instated.





## CRAIGIEBURN FOREST

Circular woodland walk

4.5km/3 miles

Allow 1 hour

Hard surfaced forest road and beaten earth paths. Gate/stile at start

Moderate

Boots or stout shoes recommended

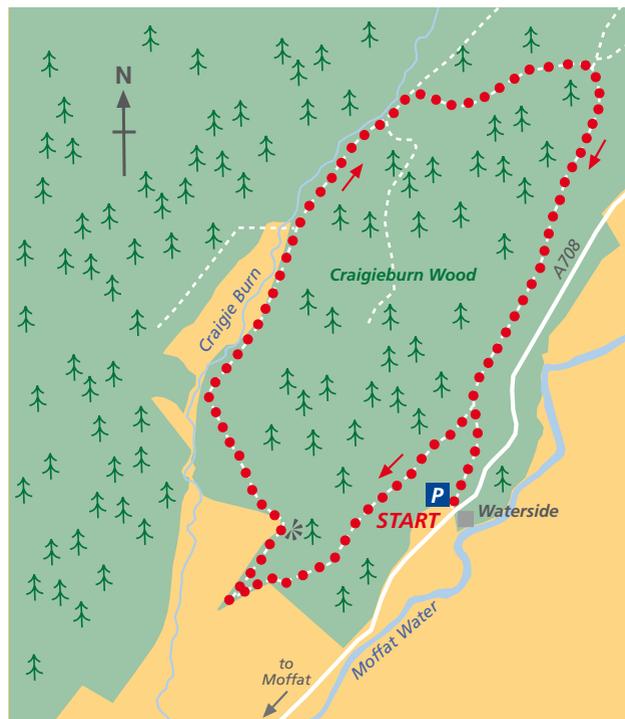
This is the shorter of two walks offered by Forestry Commission Scotland at Craigieburn. Follow the yellow waymarkers for the 6 mile route.

**PARKING** From the bottom of the Moffat High Street take the A708 Selkirk road. After 2.8 miles you will reach a property on the right called Waterside. Start indicating left for the Forestry Commission Scotland Craigieburn car park.

**START** Enter Craigieburn on the forest road and turn left at the junction following the red waymarker posts. After a gentle climb followed by a short descent you will reach the road terminus. Take the path to the right (dogs should be leashed from this point) alongside the power lines to join the drystone wall. Look out for the "lunky hole" (purpose built sheep hole) in this section of wall.



Devil's Matchstick lichen



The path takes a sharp turn with the wall at a point in the boundary. Turn left at the next corner and you will reach a seat giving good views out through the mouth of Moffat Dale. Continue past the seat to connect with the forest road. Stay on the main forest road, passing one road to the left and one to the right.

From this point you should get a good view along Broken Back to Capel Fell. Turn right at the corner junction and enjoy the winding descent through mixed woodland with views out across Moffat Dale.



Crothead Hill

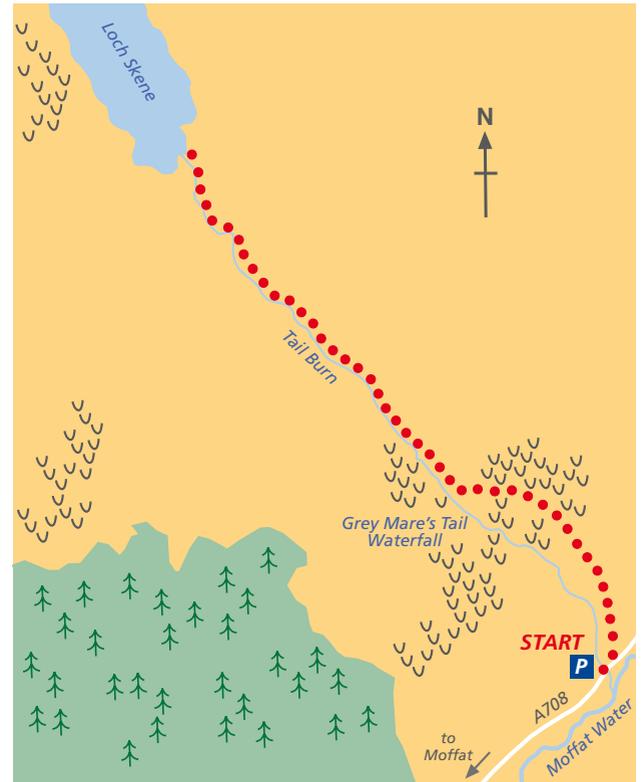


- Linear route up steep pitched path that levels out
- 4km/2½ miles
- Allow 1½ hours
- Hard surfaced uneven path with drain crossings and wet patches
- Strenuous
- Boots recommended

The National Trust for Scotland's Grey Mare's Tail Nature Reserve is most famous for its impressive waterfall that gives the reserve its name. However, the remote and wild mountainous landscape above the waterfall coupled with its outstanding botanical richness make the reserve one of Scotland's upland jewels, on a par with its other famous mountain areas. The Grey Mare's Tail is a popular destination for those who wish to see its spectacular waterfall, the 5th highest in the UK, yet few people associate the waterfall with its mountains, its abundant wildlife and scenic loch.



Wild Goats



For hill walkers and natural historians, to miss out visiting the Grey Mare's Tail is to miss out on a key site in the upland landscape of Scotland.

**PARKING** From Moffat take the A708 Selkirk road. Continue for nine miles and you will reach the car parks at either side of the bridge across the Tail Burn. Park and pay at the ticket dispensers. The visitor centre is open from April to September and you may be able to view nesting peregrines on TV and learn about the nature reserve and ongoing projects.

**START** From the visitor centre cross the Tail Burn on the stepping-stones and turn left following the burn side path to the stoll seating area where you get a good view of the impressive 61m waterfalls.

20 Turn right just before the seating area and climb the stone pitched path up the valley side. This section has been carefully constructed to indicate the nature of the path higher up. If you find this section too challenging then you should consider an easier walk.

Make the most of any rest stops to take in your surroundings. This area supports the greatest range of rare upland plants in southern Scotland. The varied bird life includes peregrines, heron, dippers, grey wagtails and skylarks. If you are downwind of feral goats their pungent scent may assail your nostrils before you see this hardy breed.

At the top of the falls the old march dyke on the opposite side of the burn leads your gaze toward White Coomb, a popular summit with hill walkers and an excellent viewpoint for Moffat Dale. This valley is a good example of glacial erosion. The path levels off, leading you past the remains of a shepherds' bothy and enters a landscape of drumlins (glacial deposits) before reaching the delightful vista across Loch Skene. The clean waters are now populated by vendace, Britain's rarest freshwater fish, recently introduced as part of a species recovery programme after being killed by pollution in Mill Loch at Lochmaben. A donor population living in Basinthwaite Lake in the Lake District was used to successfully seed Loch Skene.

On descending by the same route you can fully appreciate the forces of the last ice age. The glacier that deeply scoured Moffat Dale chopped off the end of this side valley giving us today's dramatic feature of the Grey Mare's Tail. The falls have eroded back from their original line on their slow journey towards Loch Skene.





## WAMPHRAY GLEN

View to Turf Hill

Circular wood, farmland and quiet road walk

5km/3 miles

Allow 1 1/2 hours

Hard surfaced track, beaten earth paths and minor road. Gates and stiles

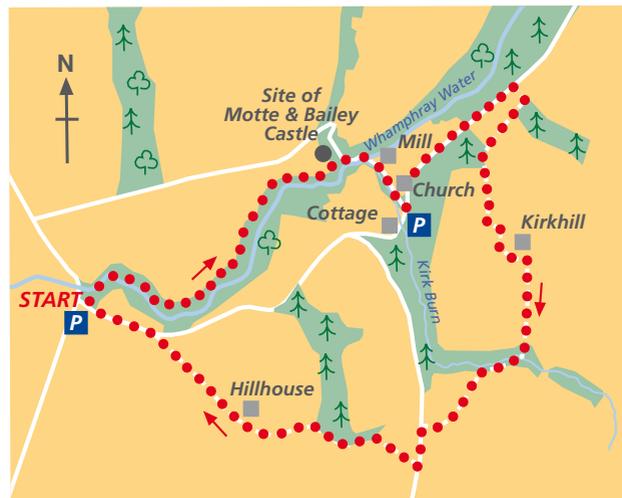
Moderate

Boots recommended

**PARKING** From Moffat take the A708 Selkirk road, after 1/2 mile turn right onto the Old Carlisle Road signposted Newton Wamphray/Boreland. After another 6 1/2 miles you reach Pumplaburn, continue over the bridge and turn left. As soon as you round the corner draw off to the left where you will find parking space near the information board for **START 1**. If there is no parking space continue up the road and turn



Wamphray Church



left at the first junction. After the first cottage (on the opposite side of the road,) you will find another information board and car park. Start your walk to the top side of the church and follow the directions from **START 2** on the next page.

**START 1** The path starts to the side of the information board. Descend the steps to the raised path leading through ash and alder alongside Wamphray Water. Cross the bridge and turn right to reach the steps up the riverbank. Pass under the power lines and cross two smaller bridges to reach the field. Follow the field edge (fingerposts) under the pylons, then under the low voltage lines to skirt the fence to the kissing gate, followed by a stile. Follow the wire fence to reach a corner by a drain. Cross the drain and follow the post and rail fence uphill to then descend old steps above the waterfalls. Follow the meandering fence up the far side and you will meet a line of lime trees. To your left is the flat-topped mound or motte that supported the wooden tower used to defend the large flat area or 'bailey' of this fortified Anglo-Norman steading.

24 Continue down the fence line to reach the bridge and the kissing gate to the minor road. Turn right and cross the wooden road bridge by Wamphray Mill. Climb uphill past the parish church. The north door has a carved lintel that was taken from the ruins of an old chapel at Banygill three miles up the glen. At the T-junction turn left, **(START 2)** and follow the road past the top side of the churchyard and along the boundary of Milne Wood.

After the gentle S-bend you will reach a fingerpost at the start of a beech-lined track to the right. Go through the kissing gate and follow the track to ford the burn emerging from a plantation. Pass through a pair of kissing gates and on reaching the sharp left turn (towards the cattle sheds) take the pair of kissing gates either side of the double field gate on your right. Follow the double fenced track with new hedges leading you around the mature beech trees at the perimeter of the steading. Pass through the gate at the end of this grass section to meet the main farm access track. Turn right and continue past the cottages to reach the minor road. Turn left and at the first corner turn right through a kissing gate. Follow the grass track as it descends through another gate to the wood and on under the pylons to reach two more gates before Hillhouse Farm. Walk past the farm to meet the public road where a left turn will take you back to the car.



Dub's Pot, Wamphray Water



View to Hartfell Spa Burn

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# WALKING

*i n a n d a r o u n d*

## **Moffat**



### **FIND OUT MORE...**

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

For further information about public transport, eating out, events and attractions or to book your accommodation contact:

**VisitScotland Dumfries & Galloway**

**t 01387 253862**

**[www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk](http://www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk)**

**[dumfriestic@visitscotland.com](mailto:dumfriestic@visitscotland.com)**

**The Travel Line**

**t 0871 200 2233**

**[www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)**

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

**Dumfries & Galloway Council Ranger Service**

**t 01387 260366**

**Forestry Commission Scotland Ranger Service**

**t 01387 860247**