



Walk 1 – “Hike over the Hills” - High, Expansive, Panoramic

Barholm Hill > Cairnharrow Hill > Ben John Hill > Laggan Whale Bones - A 4.5-Mile Circular Hill Walk from Your Lodge Door

One of the great joys of staying here is that adventure begins the moment you step outside. This 4.5-mile circular walk starts directly from the lodge and offers a wonderful mix of wide hilltop views, ancient history, fresh sea air and just enough effort to feel well earned — especially with the sauna waiting at the end.

Expect open hills, heather underfoot, a touch of bog in places, and some of the best 360-degree views in the Stewartry.

Walk at a Glance

- **Distance:** 4.5 miles
- **Time:** Around 2–3 hours at a relaxed pace
- **Height:** 457m (1,499 ft)
- **Location:** Dumfries and Galloway (Grid Ref: NX533561)
OS50: 083 (Newton Stewart & Kirkcudbright, Gatehouse of Fleet)
OS25: 312 (Kirkcudbright & castle Douglas)
- **Features:** Sub-circular, Stone Circle/Cup & Ring Mark (High Auchenlarie) grass-covered cairn on the summit (Cairnharrow).
- **Difficulty:** Moderate (steady climbs and uneven ground)
- **Terrain:** Tracks, pasture, heather, sheep paths, some boggy sections
- **Footwear:** Walking boots essential
- **Highlights:** Stone circle, cup-and-ring marks, hill summits, coastal panoramas, wildlife spotting

Remember – [The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) at all times – Top 4 Guidance Points:

- **Avoid disturbing farm livestock**
 - **Leave every gate exactly as you find it**
 - **No Fires**
 - **Watch out for the Electric Fence**
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The Route -



Location

Gatehouse of Fleet, Dumfries and Galloway,
Scotland

OS grid references

NX533561

NX 53336 56102

Coordinates

54.878127, -4.287538

Stage 1 - From your Lodge to Barholm Hill

Leaving the lodge, **turn left at the top of the drive**, then take the **next right towards High Auchenlarie Farm**. This easy start gently eases you into the walk, with early glimpses of the landscape opening out around you.

Enter the field directly behind Auchenlarie Cottage. Continue on walking through the **next three fields**, following the natural line of the land and each gate/opening in the middle of each field. In the third field turn right as soon as you enter the field and cross into the adjacent field to pass through a gate.



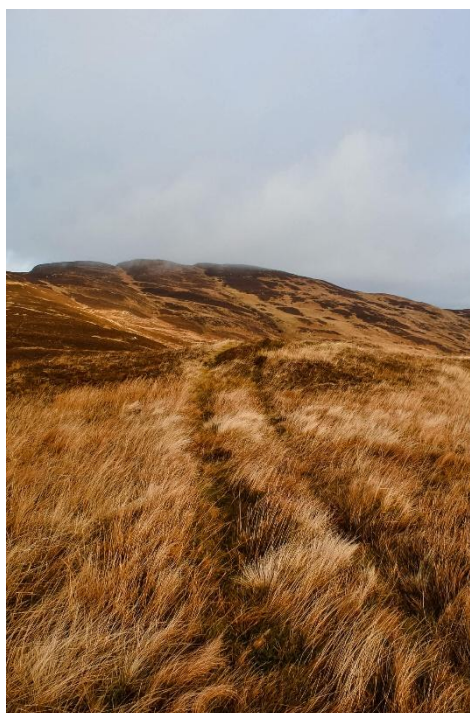
Ancient Marks in the Landscape

After crossing the **burn into the next field**, keep an eye out — this is where the walk takes a step back in time. Nearby you'll find a **stone circle and cup-and-ring markings (as indicated on the map)**, quiet reminders that people have been drawn to this landscape for thousands of years. It's a lovely place to pause, take photos, and soak up the atmosphere.



The Climb to Barholm Hill

From here, enter the next field up through the gate next to the burn and head up to the right in the field towards the march dyke. You'll **climb the stile on the march dyke (pictured here)**. Follow the **sheep path which eventually runs alongside the dyke**, which steadily leads you uphill to the **top of Barholm Hill**. The effort is well rewarded. As you gain height, the views begin to stretch in every direction — a fantastic spot for photos and a breather.





Stage 2 – Barholm Hill to Cairnharrow

Big Skies and Bigger Views

From Barholm Hill, continue on towards **Cairnharrow**, where the panorama really opens out. Over the dyke you will see the cairn, an indication you have made it - wind, light, space, silence. On a clear day, you'll enjoy sweeping **360-degree views** across:

- The **Machars**
- The **Ailsa Craig** in the far distance
- The **Galloway Hills** – Minnigaff, Clints of Dromore, Pibble Hill, Knockeans, Fell of Fleet, Carnsmore of Dee, Cambret Hill and Rhinns of Kells – all dominated by the towering hulk of Cairnsmore of Fleet.
- **Fleet Bay**
- The **Stewartry coastline**
- The **Cumbrian Fells**
- The **Wigtownshire coast**
- And, on especially clear days, the **Isle of Man**

This is classic big-sky walking — peaceful, expansive and wonderfully invigorating.



Stage 3 – Cairnharrow to Ben John/Laggan Whale Bones

A Gentle Descent and a Curious Landmark

The route then leads you back down towards **Ben John**, before descending further to the striking **whale bones at Laggan** — an unexpected and memorable landmark that always raises a smile and is a great opportunity for a photo.



From here, it's a straightforward **decent to the back road, turn right** which gently guides you back up the road towards your lodge.

What to Look Out For

- 📷 Endless photo opportunities at every stage (especially on a clear day)
- 🦌 Wildlife sightings — keep an eye out for birds of prey, grazing deer, foxes and ground nesting birds.
- 🌿 Seasonal changes, from heather in bloom to clear winter light
- 🌊 Fresh Sea air carried high onto the hills

Stage 4 - A Well-Earned Finish

After a walk like this, there's nothing better than returning to the lodge, kicking off your boots, and **letting tired muscles melt away in the sauna**. Fresh air, big views, ancient landscapes — and total relaxation at the end. 🔥