

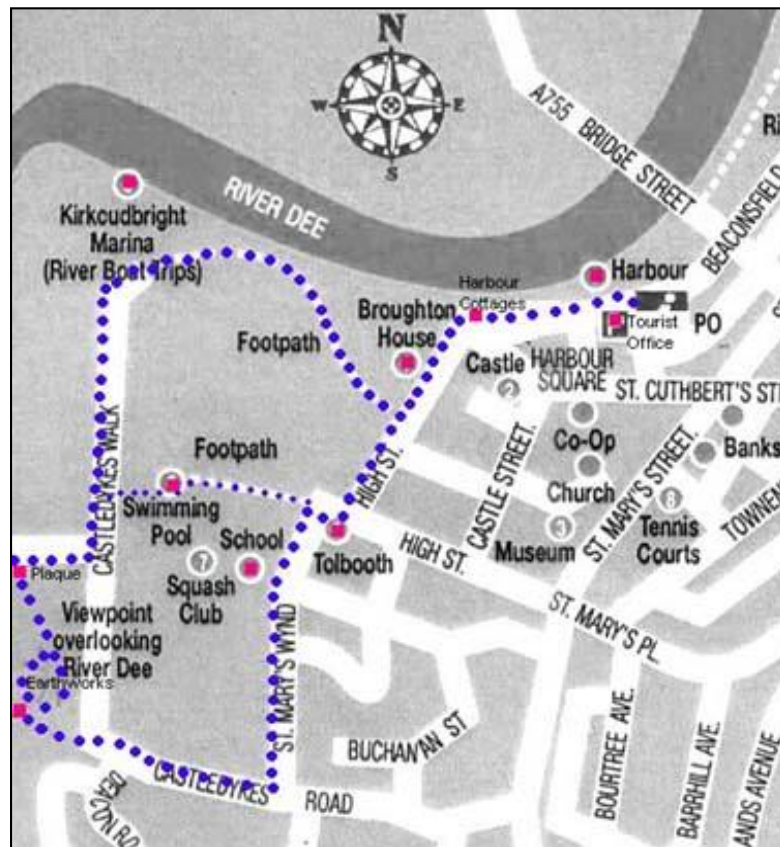
This walk, near the shore, explores the town's maritime connection. The walk connects the Harbour, Marina and the Castledykes earthworks.

The working Harbour maintains a long standing fishing tradition. The more recent floating Marina caters for both local and visiting sailors.

Castledykes earthworks are the remains of Kirkcudbright Castle which once occupied an impregnable defensive position.

The suggested **start** for this walk is at the **Tourist Information Office** in the Harbour Square.

The **Harbour** is safe from the vagaries of the open sea, being 5 miles upstream from Little Ross Island. It has existed in various forms over the years. The present structure, built in 1922, has since been modified and extended. The large tidal range and silty deposits in the estuary, influence the movement of shipping. A buoy-marked navigable channel, and the regular removal of silt and mud from the harbour, ensure that the fishing boat trade is retained.



Walk along to the **Harbour Cottages**, passing between Mote Brae and the Cottages, onto the High Street. Bear to the right and carry on to **Broughton House**; turn right down a footpath between high walls to the shore. Continue round to the seated **viewpoint** overlooking the **Marina**.

The **Marina** floats up and down with the tide providing safe facilities for visiting sailors. Constructed in 1995, improved 2001, it replaced a fixed timber jetty. The Marina is at the end of Castledykes Walk, where there is a boatyard, the sailing club premises and a parking area. Walk along the road to the Swimming Pool; just beyond it, the Castledykes earthworks are opposite the school playing field.



[Marina viewpoint](#)



[Marina downstream](#)



[Castledykes plaque](#)



[Castledykes viewpoint](#)



[Academy school gates](#)

The earthworks are all that remain of **Kirkcudbright Castle** built in 1264. Threaded through the earthworks are grass paths. A short distance away a plaque, fixed on a large boulder, depicts the history of the Castle. Adjacent to the Castledykes earthworks is a seated **viewpoint** facing down the estuary.

The image on the **plaque** is based on the slight evidence that remains of the castle. It states that: *Alexander 3rd. of Scotland built the castle in 1264. In 1291 it passed to English hands, when it was strengthened. Following William Wallace's uprising, King Edward invaded Galloway in 1300 with a fleet of 60 boats, staying at the Castle. Later records do not refer to it; indicating that it may have been slighted during subsequent conflicts.*

By 1577, most of the stone had disappeared from the castle. Much was used in Castle MacLellan, whilst the Tolbooth and other properties owe their walls to this once proud stronghold.

From Castledykes viewpoint, return to the **Swimming Pool**. The indoor pool was built mainly by public subscription in 1997, and is open to visitors, (tel. 01557 331881).

*"A few grassy mounds are the only vestiges which remain to mark the spot where once stood the spacious domains of royalty. This castle was situated near the river, and has evidently been surrounded by a fosse, into which the tide probably flowed to render it secure".- from "Rambles in Galloway", by M. McL., Harper. 1876.* The following account is given in the Imperial Gazetteer:- *"The Castle - now vulgarly called Castledykes, but known in ancient writings as Castlemains - belonged originally to the Lords of Galloway, when they ruled the province as a regality, separate from Scotland; and seems to have been built to command the entrance of the harbour. Coming into the possession of John Baliol, as successor to the Lords of Galloway, it was for some time, during the war of 1300, the residence of Edward I. ; and, passing into the hands of the Douglases on the forfeiture of Edward Balliol, it remained with them till 1455, when their crimes drew down upon them summary castigation, and in that year was visited by James II. when on his march to crush their malign power."*

From the Swimming Pool car park, go through the school (Academy) grounds past the tennis courts, onto a footpath, leading to the Tolbooth. This gravel path through shrubs, along a boundary wall, emerges at the **School gates**.

The **Academy** was founded circa 1576. The core building of the present Academy opened in 1818. It remained a small place, until additions were carried out between 1893 and 1931. Nevertheless, the continuity of architecture and scholastic excellence was preserved.

Alternatively, the walk can be extended from the Castledykes viewpoint by walking to the corner of the football ground and onto Castledykes Road. Walk along the road, turning left into St Mary's Wynd, past Castledykes School, the Academy, the Tolbooth (1629), and along the High Street to the Harbour.

Follow the "[Old Town Walk](#)" to see some of the varied and historic old buildings within Kirkcudbright. More information about the history of Kirkcudbright and the surrounding area can be obtained from the Stewartry Museum, tel. 01557 331643, and found on [www.old-kirkcudbright.net](http://www.old-kirkcudbright.net) - an internet browse through the history, topography and genealogy of the ancient Parish and Burgh of Kirkcudbright.

Sponsored by [Skye House](#) Kirkcudbright, a self catering town house in the High Street.