

CASTLE HILL & WATCH HILL

- Circular lochside and castle site walk**
- 6km/4 miles**
- 1 ½ hours**
- Hard surfaced and grass tracks and roads.
Gates and stiles**
- Moderate**
- Stout shoes or boots recommended**

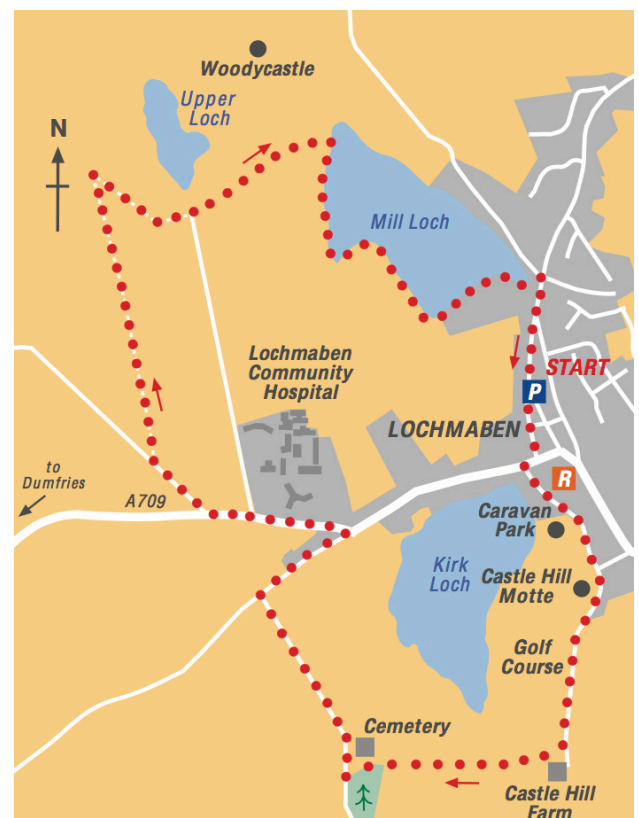
PARKING Enter Lochmaben on the Dumfries Road. At the sharp right turn in front of the Bruce Hotel turn left and follow the parking signs. Pass the public toilets on your left and you will soon reach the car park.

START Leave the car park on the exit side and cross the road to Croft Terrace and turn left. You will soon meet the Dumfries Road, which you should cross, turning right in front of the Crown Hotel. After 30m you will reach a tarmac track to the left that runs between the houses and leads you around the caravan park. Continue past the golf course clubhouse and around the foot of Castle Hill. This mound is the modern home for the 2nd green and the 3rd tee, but was once crowned with a motte and bailey castle built by the Bruce family around 1170.

Continue alongside the golf course, this section affords good views (to your left) of the flat-topped Burnswark Hill, a favoured site for ancient forts. Just before the farm you will find a pedestrian gate and a public footpath sign on your right. Follow this path over the burn, through a small wood and on through the kissing gate by the cemetery wall. Turn right along the quiet road and right at the T-junction. On reaching the main road cross carefully and turn left along the pavement and past Lochmaben Community Hospital. Take the second road on your right that is sign-posted for Watchhill and Shieldhill. After a short distance follow the public footpath sign along the track to the right. On reaching the last house follow the beech hedge to the gate to reach a farm track running between hedges.

This track is a good vantage point for viewing Mill Loch (to the right) and Upper Loch (straight ahead). At the end of the straight section pass through the double gates and turn right. At the junction continue ahead passing the cottages on your left and on through the kissing gate. Follow the old fence line surrounded by broom and gorse.

The prominent hillock to your left is crowned by a circular earthwork and forms the centre of an impressive lowland fort called Woodycastle. On reaching the fence boundary before the reed beds, turn right and follow the perimeter of the loch, climbing the stiles that mark your route. The last stile gives access to a strip between the gardens and the lochside. Continue to the play park, turn right along the pavement and right at the next fork to return to the car park.



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