

DEE WALK AND TONGLAND

- Linear riverside and woodland walk with loop**
- 7.5km/4½ miles**
- Allow 2½ hours**
- Beaten earth, hard surface and grass paths, minor road and roadside pavement. Kissing gates.**
- Moderate**
- Stout shoes or boots recommended**
- OS Explorer 1:25,000 map number 312**

takes you along the riverside, where you have a view of the bridge. Tongland Bridge was built from a design by Thomas Telford, the famous road and bridge builder, at a cost of some £7000. The first foundations, laid in 1804, were washed away and the following year work was restarted and the bridge completed and opened in 1808. As the river at this point has a remarkable tidal rise of some 20 feet, each of the bridge approaches has three tall flood arches to assist the flow of water at high tides. The remains of the old railway bridge can be seen upstream.

Continue alongside the river, passing under the arch of the old railway bridge, with Tongland Power Station in front of you. Further upstream from here is the Tongland Dam and reservoir. Beyond the railway arch, follow the path alongside the river and into a strip of woodland. The path meanders through the woodland and comes out at Tongland Old Bridge, over the old river bed of the Dee. Cross the bridge and walk up the minor road to join the A711. Turn left and walk along the pavement towards the Power Station.

Follow the pavement past the power station back to Tongland Bridge where you can retrace your steps along the Dee Walk.

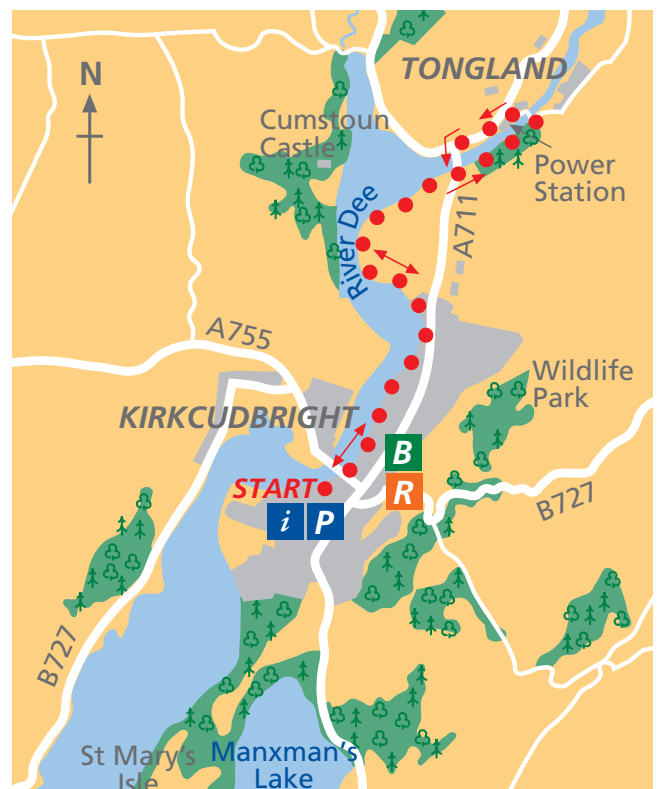
PARKING is available at the Harbour Square car park in the centre of Kirkcudbright.

START from the car park. Leave the entrance opposite the Post Office and turn left, heading for Kirkcudbright Bridge. This bridge was constructed in 1926 to replace an iron structure. Before the bridge was built, the River Dee was crossed by ferry which, because of the tidal nature of the water here and the very strong currents, could be difficult and dangerous. Staying on this side of the river, cross over Bridge Street onto the Dee Walk straight ahead. Follow this along the river through the park area where, at the end, you will cross a bridge over the Boreland Burn. Turn left on to the flood bank protecting the low lying fields to your right.

If you go quietly along your way, you are likely to see a great number of birds, including estuarine feeders such as oystercatcher, curlew, redshank and grey heron. Depending on the time of year, you are also likely to see duck species such as tufted duck and goldeneye. There will nearly always be a cormorant looking for good fishing and there is also the chance of seeing an otter. As you go round the bend to where the Tarff Water joins the River Dee, there are extensive reed beds. These are an attractive safe haven for wildlife, including sedge warblers which can be heard chattering amongst the reeds in summer. Looking across the water, the rather grand red sandstone house you can see is Cumstoun House, a private dwelling. In its grounds is the ruin of Cumstoun Castle, a tower house built around the 15th Century.

Continuing along the path, you enter a riverside woodland. This change in environment brings in small birds such as blue and great tits, great spotted woodpeckers, treecreepers and the ubiquitous wren.

Once you reach Tongland Bridge, carefully cross the road and go through the gate at the other side. The path



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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.