

HODDOM CASTLE AND FARM WALKS

Circular Estate, riverside and country walk

Option A - 2.5km/1 1/2 miles, Option B - 5km/3 miles

Allow Option A - 1 hour, Option B - 1 1/2 hrs

Beaten earth, tracks, minor road, grass paths

Steps and Stiles in places

Option A - Easy. Option B - Moderate
Stout shoes recommended Circular

PARKING The Hoddom and Kinmount car park and picnic site is signposted off the B723 Annan to Lockerbie road at the junction with the B725 Dalton road about 4 1/2 miles north west of Annan.

These are walks of great natural variety. The woodlands provide a haven for many animals, like red squirrels, roe deer and greater-spotted woodpeckers, while the river margins are rich in wild flowers and butterflies.

Please keep dogs on a lead at the caravan park and in fields where livestock is present.

Note. Dogs are not allowed on the Golf Course.

Hoddom Castle was built c. 1552–65 by John Maxwell, 4th Lord Herries. The massive central tower is the original part of the Castle, with many extensions and alterations added much later. Situated near the main invasion route into western Scotland and regarded as impregnable the castle was one of the strongest and most important in the defence of Scotland's border.

Several other waymarked walks start from here including the Woodcockair walks which involve steep hills and care must be taken as timber felling and clearing contractors are often working. However the Hoddom Castle Riverside and Farm walks described here are not hilly.

START from the car park, follow the blue signed path through the woodland for Hoddom Castle. When you reach the tarmac drive turn to the right towards the gatehouse for about 25 metres then take the waymarked riverside path for Hoddom Castle. A few metres along this path, a path to the right leads to the Hound's Monument.

This monument was erected beside the river in memory of an otter hound called Royal, which died in the winter of 1898 having spent too long in the water in pursuit of an otter. The ruined building on the river's edge was the Hoddom boathouse. The large house on the opposite side of the river is Hallguards. The high ground on which it is built is thought to be the site of an earlier 14th century Hoddom Castle.

Retrace your steps back to the main path. Follow the blue arrow signs through the woodland to Hoddom Castle. There is a car park at the Hoddom Castle Caravan Park and the café in the Castle provides welcome food and refreshments during the summer season.

Continue past the car park and the front of the Castle following the blue waymarkers marked "Riverside Trail". The track passes through woodland to a stile. Climb the stile and cross the meadow to a footbridge over the River Annan.

At the footbridge you have the option of crossing the river to follow the waymarked Farm Trail, or returning downstream on the Riverside Trail to Hoddom Bridge and the car park.

OPTION A – Riverside Trail (Blue markers)

Follow the blue markers downstream along the riverbank. After crossing a stile follow the blue signs along the path beside the river with the golf course on your right. Take care along the edge of the golf course if play is in progress.

Birds frequently seen along the river include dippers, herons and kingfishers and on sunny summer days sandmartins and swallows fly over the water and neighbouring fields.

Cross the stile from the golf course into a wooded area. Proceed along the path for about 250 metres to a junction. At this point ignore the blue marker unless you wish to go back to the Castle. To reach the car park, go straight ahead on the riverside path which is signed Hoddom Bridge. After about 50 metres, the path divides; take the path going slightly uphill to the right. After about 100 metres, the path meets the main drive. Turn left down the drive towards the main gate and gatehouse. Just before the gate, take the steps on the right which lead back to the car park.

OPTION B – Farm Trail (Red Markers)

Cross the river and turn left, follow the path as it goes along the banks of the River Annan and later the Water of Milk. Take care after heavy rain, as the river rises very quickly, and the path can become flooded in places.

Just before a bridge over the Water of Milk, turn right to join a lane. Turn right along the lane. At the deserted steading of Hoddom Mill follow the road to the left. At the next road junction, take the road to the right towards Mainholm Farm. This leads back to the footbridge over the River Annan. After crossing the bridge follow the blue markers of the Riverside Trail back to the car park at Hoddom Bridge as in Option A.



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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.