

WATERSIDE HILL

Circular hill walk

8km/5 miles

Allow 3 hours

Minor roads, hard surface path, beaten earth and grass path, soft in places. Gates and a stile

Moderate to strenuous

Boots recommended

PARKING is available at the roadside in the centre of Dalry.

START at the Southern Upland Way (SUW) information shelter to the rear of the town hall. Follow the waymarkers over Waterside Hill to meet the road at Garroch Glen. Leaving the SUW, turn left and follow the road towards Glenlee power station, part of the Hydro Electric scheme. Take the path on your left before the power station and follow it through fields and along the floodbank back to Dalry.

Above the SUW shelter in Dalry stands Dalry motte where a 12th century castle once stood. The path continues to downhill to cross the

suspension bridge, known locally as Boat Weil after the ferry crossing that used to exist here. From here follow the river upstream to meet the road.

From Earlstoun power station, another link in the Galloway Hydro-Electric scheme, the route heads uphill through bracken and heather. Waterside Hill has fairly gentle slopes with rocky outcrops near its modest summit (172m/276ft). The SUW skirts round the summit and offers fine views of Dalry and the Ken valley before heading downhill to Garroch Glen.

A story, dating back the eighteenth century, tells of a farmer, Adam Forrester, who after a lively night spent at a local inn, was riding home. On his way, he caught some witches merrymaking in the local kirk. On being disturbed, they became incensed and chased him over Waterside Hill. Before the summit, to protect himself and his horse, Adam Forrester drew a circle in the ground around them with his sword. The evil spirits were unable to penetrate it and finally gave up at sunrise. This tale is thought to be the real Tam O' Shanter, as told by Robbie Burns and if you look carefully the circle can still be seen today.



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