

# IN AND AROUND KIRKCUDBRIGHT (updated Apr '23)



I hope you enjoy my guide of things to see and do in the delightful Artist's Town Kirkcudbright (pronounced Cur-koo-bree). I have covered things to see and do as well as places to eat and drink. However, there is so much to experience I cannot cover everything.

Many people just head straight for the Highland and Islands, but they then miss out on the Scottish, less travelled, Dumfries and Galloway, where there is a plethora of hidden gems of things to see, do and visit, with some stunning land, loch and seascapes.

I have written this guide to help you plan your stay, but the information is subject to change, so where possible check out the attractions own website for up-to-date details relating to opening times, COVID and any charges. Most of the information can be found via google.



Before we get into the things to do in a little history of Kirkcudbright...

Kirkcudbright received its 'title' of Artists' Town' through E. A Taylor, artist, critic and husband of Jessie M. King who first used the term to describe Kirkcudbright in an article he wrote in the 1930's. Amongst the historic artists who have lived and worked here are Tim Jeffs, Dorothy Nesbitt and the group of artists known as the 'Glasgow Boys' with E.A. Hornel being a member of this group.

It is great to know that artists still come to live and work here, one outstanding artist is Joshua Miles, he is South African but now splits his time between his homeland and here. I have a Joshua Miles piece hanging above the sideboard. His studio and gallery is on the corner of the High Street and Castle Street and well worth a visit. It is uplifting that the 'art' scene isn't just a historical thing, but that artists still flock to the town today and there's a thriving artists' community. You'll find multiple art galleries dotted around, as well as shops selling local art too. There are also plenty of arty/crafty events held in Kirkcudbright throughout the year, which is fantastic for somewhere relatively small.

However, Kirkcudbright is not just about art, it has a long and interesting history, so I would recommend picking up a book, about the town, from one of the shops in town.

# Things to do in Kirkcudbright: activities and culture

## 1. Watch the boats at Kirkcudbright harbour



The harbour is at the heart of the town. If you're driving, it will probably be the first place you find and have a wander to stretch your legs. If you are lucky you will get to see the skill of the boats captains as they manoeuvre the boats in and out. The primary catch for this fleet is scallops which are used in the local restaurants, but also sent far and wide.

## 2. Browse local art at the Harbour Cottage Gallery



To start with the art theme, I recommend you head to the iconic Harbour Cottage Gallery. This quaint cottage has the best location in town: right on the harbour.

The gallery is free to get in and has ever-changing exhibitions on, their website has loads of information and a list of the exhibitions due on. On one of my many visits, it was full of some really stunning work by local artist Bothyart (<https://bothyart.com>), the heart shaped slates in the bedrooms are work from Sandra, plus the three pieces of work on the back wall of the guest lounge.

They also have their own collection of donated paintings, all from local artists. Although it's small, you can spend ages in there having a browse.

### 3. Visit the brilliant Kirkcudbright Galleries



Set in the old Kirkcudbright Town Hall building, the Galleries feature a changing programme of local art exhibitions so it's always worth checking their website to see what's coming up. In recent times, they have had an exhibition on the Glasgow Girls and Boys (the artist gang featuring the aforementioned legend, Jessie M King) and also Charles Oppenheimer who spent time in Kirkcudbright.

The Gallery is so well laid out, light and airy, that even though it isn't the size of say, a national gallery, it feels like you're in a much larger space than you are. The variety of art is brilliant: everything from huge landscapes of the local countryside to little tiny pieces like Jessie's gorgeous bee jewellery box.

On occasion there are exhibitions of current local artists and even photographic exhibitions. And the Crème de la Crème is the delightful café to enjoy tea and cake after you have strolled around the exhibits.

### 4. Secret streets and alleyways



One of the quaint aspects of Kirkcudbright is the many little colourful tiny streets and alleyways. Slowly stroll down the High Street and Castle Street to see these little gems. They always look like they'll offer nothing and just lead to some bins (and alright, some do) but if you head down them there's often a beautiful scene to be found, tucked away from most passers-by. Locals put a lot of effort into these hidden gems. An example is Greengate Close, just off the High Street. It's full of well-tended flowers and brightly painted front doors, and it's especially stunning in the soft evening light. They are so charming.

## 5. Check out Jessie M King's house



Having given you a flavour of some artists and how Kirkcudbright received its' title, how about going and checking out E.A Taylor and Jessie M. King's house. The house is so eye catching with its gorgeous paint work. It is privately owned, so unfortunately no tours here. So, a little bit of information on Jessie M. King: now sadly departed she did fortunately leave quite a legacy in the form of art.

To find out more about this famous illustrator who settled in Kirkcudbright and set up an artists' community you can visit the Tolbooth Arts Centre. (#6 on the list). If it is showing, I recommend you watch the video about her, unfortunately sexism is very evident as she created amazing art and work, then when she dies a newspaper listed her just as 'the wife of artist E. A. Taylor'!

However, her fantastic art is also on display locally in the Kirkcudbright Galleries.

## 6. Visit the Tolbooth Art Centre



The Kirkcudbright Tolbooth was opened in 1993 by H.M. The Queen. This amazing building was originally built around 1625 – 1629 as the town's Tolbooth. A 'tolbooth' or town house was the main municipal building of a Scottish burgh, from medieval times until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The 'tolbooth' usually provided a council meeting chamber, a court house and a jail. Amongst the people incarcerated in the tolbooth during its use as a prison were people accused of witchcraft as late as 1805. There is more interesting history on this building found on the internet.

Kirkcudbright Tolbooth was designated a category A listed building in 1971 and still retains many of the original features inside and outside, including original stonework, doorways, the

clocktower, the cell gate hinges and set of 'jougs' (or a prisoner's metal collar) fixed to the outside wall.

In modern times it has been a famous location for the filming of the cult classic 'The Wicker Man'.

It was renovated in the 1990's and is currently used as a visitor centre and art gallery. The Tolbooth also has a little cafe inside as well as a gift shop, both worth stopping in.

## 7. Wander Kirkcudbright's pretty streets and look out for Wickerman filming locations



If you have seen the film 'The Wicker Man' then you may think some of the streets seem familiar, as many were used in the film.

The Church that Howie attends at the beginning of the film is Greyfriars Church by the harbour. The alley that Howie chases the Hobby down is just by the Tolbooth. Also, the Harbour Cottage Gallery is featured in a few scenes. See how many you can spot.

## 8. Maclellan's Castle



One of the outstanding features of Kirkcudbright is the medieval castle ruins standing majestically at the end of St. Cuthbert's Street. It is such a shame that it has scaffolding on it at the moment.

Despite this, it is still possible to go inside for a small charge – check the website for current price and opening times.

A brief history: in 1569 Thomas MacLellan on Bombie was given the site of a ruined Greyfriars monastery in the town of Kirkcudbright. This was built in around 1455 and was demolished leaving only its chapel, which still remains and is now called Greyfriars Church. The L-shaped castle build began around 1577. Despite never being finished in its entirety it was home to the MacLellan's and their descendants until 1752. By this time the castle was in a state of ruin and the roof had collapsed.

As the castle is mostly a ruin, with a few bits restored, it is only small so it doesn't take long to go around, but it is worth a visit and to wander through if only to find the secret spy hole behind the fireplace. This was designed by the Laird who liked to eavesdrop on other people's conversations.

More information can be found on the Internet, visiting the Castle or purchasing one of the numerous books about Kirkcudbright.

## 9. Stroll to Kirkcudbright marina



Kirkcudbright's marina is worth walking to, both when the tide is in and also when it is out. You can access it via a side street near Broughton House on the High Street, just along from the Harbour Cottage Gallery. If you love photography, you can get some lovely images of the colourful boats and their reflections, either on the water or the mud. It can be quiet here so can be a place for a bit of solitude.

## 10. Visit the National Trust's Broughton House

Broughton House and its' garden stand in the heart of Kirkcudbright, on the High Street. It is an 18<sup>th</sup> Century town house that was once the home of Scots impressionist artist E. A. Hornel between 1901 and his death in 1933. During this time Hornel renovated the house and created a Japanese influenced garden.

This house is now an impressive museum, combining both original interiors and exhibition spaces, and is dedicated to E. A. Hornel's life and work as an artist, collector and antiquarian.

Hornel was one of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century 'Glasgow Boys' and bought the impressive house in 1901, transforming it into his studio and salesroom as well as his home. Hornel was a colourist with an eye for sensual detail. Many of his works hang in the house alongside those of his contemporaries.

He was also an avid collector: his vast library and archive, regularly used by visiting scholars, includes one of the world's largest collections of works by Robert Burns as well as rare documents on Galloway's rich history.

His gallery, which was constructed in 1910, with its ornate fireplace and Parthenon frieze (inspired by the Elgin Marbles), is one of the finest rooms in south-west Scotland.

The outside also did not escape attention. Hornel and his sister designed a beautiful garden, which enjoys sweeping views over Kirkcudbright and the River Dee. The stunning garden is now a gentle labyrinth of stepping stones, wisteria-covered paths and Edwardian charm.

If you are lucky, you may see the adorable resident cat, who can be found patrolling the gardens.

## 11. Admire all the colourful houses



One of the sights that make my heart sing is the gorgeous pastel-coloured houses dotted around the different streets. Have a wander and see what different colours you can find.

## 12. Visit the Stewartry Museum

The original Stewartry Museum was founded in 1879, and initially occupied part of the Kirkcudbright Town Hall. As the collection grew, the present purpose-built museum was planned and opened in 1893. The Museum has an old-world charm and exhibits a wealth of objects relating to the area known as The Stewartry, or Kirkcudbrightshire. The Stewartry Museum holds an impressive local history library and archive collection relating to the Stewartry and an extensive photographic archive. All of these resources can be accessed when visiting the Museum. Prints of the photographic archive can be supplied. For those unable to visit the museum in person a postal research service is also available for a small fee. A temporary exhibitions programme and a selection of children's trails run throughout the year. Special event days take place during the holidays. For more details see our exhibition programme.

Throughout the year, there are various themed exhibitions in addition to the permanent displays, so there is often something different to see when you visit. It has a packed charm, where the staff are helpful, chatty and knowledgeable, so if you want to learn more about this history of this area, this is the place to come.

What's more, it is free to enter, but look out there are some taxidermy birds!

## 13. Dark Space Planetarium

New to Kirkcudbright, there is now a Planetarium. This really goes well with the area, which has designated Dark Skies areas. On a clear night the skies here are quite spectacular. So, with the Planetarium you get to step into a galaxy of wonders.

There is something for everyone of all ages, with many interactive exhibits and space themed experiences.

The Planetarium is an amazing state-of-the-art dome screen to give an immersive visual experience. Here you can enjoy a trip to the stars, rocket launches, travel to the edge of the solar system, or even inside the human body.

The location is at the Old Johnston School a short walk into town and just opposite the fire station.

At the time of writing this information sheet, you need to book tickets online.

## 14. Barrhill Woods Wildlife Hide



One of my favourite places is the Wildlife Hide in the woods above the house. It is free to use, but a contribution would always be welcome. (During Covid the hide is closed but it is possible to stand quietly by the structure and still see the wildlife). As you stand with your back to the house the hide is found in the top left corner of the woods. The best time of year to see the squirrels is March/April and October/November. If you are not lugging heavy camera equipment the easiest way to get to the hide is to walk. From the B&B turn left along Woodlands Avenue. Cross the road. In the corner you will see steps going up to the woods. Go up here. Shortly you come to a sort of crossroads. Go straight ahead. You will see a metal gate. Go through this and follow the grass track up the field. You will go past two stones. At top, go through another metal gate. Follow up. Now bear left, as the track forks go right. You will see the hide ahead of you.

If you want to drive, again go left from the house. Down the hill. Where you see the hospital on your right, turn right. Follow the road all the way (you will be above Tesco) to the end. Turn right (Straight on). Follow main road, past cemetery (on your left). Keep going until a sharp left bend. Now go right (straight on essentially), the entrance to the woods is directly on your right. It is possible to drive all the way, through a barrier and park by a hut. Park here. Follow the wood up – slightly to your left. The hide will be a short way up.



## 15. Laura Boswell Printmaker Courses and Workshops



I am delighted to announce that 2 of my former guests now also live in Kirkcudbright. Laura is a supremely talented artist who works with linocut, woodblock and traditional Japanese woodblock printing. Laura and her husband Ben host courses and workshops for beginner and experienced artists. Look up the availability on Laura's website:

[www.lauraboswell.co.uk](http://www.lauraboswell.co.uk)

To see some of Laura's work, there is a set of 5 cards (which can be purchased from Laura's studio, along with other amazing pieces of art) hanging in a frame in the guest lounge.

Book your accommodation at Barrhill Woods B&B to ensure you have a place to stay.

## 16. Joshua Miles Printmaker Artist



So, shortly after I arrived in Kirkcudbright I was having a wander around The Whitehouse Gallery in the town, I spotted a stunning print by Joshua Miles. I just had to have it. It hangs in the B&B Guest lounge. Joshua and his family moved to Kirkcudbright from South Africa and his studio can be found on the corner of Castle Street. He is so talented and has many linocut prints to peruse, (too many to choose from if you ask me). His studio is well worth a visit, and you can always then pop in across the road to see Laura Boswell's work. They have a brown sign, Printmakers Corner. I love it.

The above image shows my latest Joshua Miles purchase, which will be hanging in the Guest Lounge.

## 17. The Old Mill, Palnackie, Studio and Workshops

Founders, Edward and Lucy, have created a space to explore the connections between creativity, spirit and the natural environment.

There is an exhibition space showing the works of Edward C Campbell and Lucy Lee. Upstairs and in the garden are studios open and welcome for visitors.

In the upper studio various creative workshops are run based around making art materials from plants and other foraged materials.

Check out the website for more details:

<https://theoldmillpalnackie.com>

## In and around Kirkcudbright: food and drink

After your hearty breakfast, should you feel peckish, there are lovely places for cake and a coffee, or for your waistline busting evening meal there are quite a few local choices.

I would say, where possible, pre-book your evening meal(s) to avoid disappointment in not being able to get a table.

### 18. Have a coffee and browse in Jake Irving Ceramics

When you have spent a few hours working your way around historic Kirkcudbright I can highly recommend a coffee and cake break in Jake Irving Ceramics, personally the cheese scones are the best, but the homemade cakes are amazing as well.

Whilst you enjoy your beverage you can also browse the gorgeous ceramics. You may recognise some of the pieces for sale, as your breakfast table is adorned with some.

If you are looking for souvenirs, that don't take up too much space, there are some stunning seaside inspired pieces available.

### 19. Have lunch and/or cake at the Kirkcudbright Galleries Café

As mentioned under the Kirkcudbright Galleries point above, the Café is perfect for a reviving beverage and cake, or enjoy a delicious soup or sandwich, where the bread is sourced from Earth's Crust – a must visit bakery in Castle Douglas.

### 20. Enjoy a meal with views of the castle at The Castle Bistro

I can highly recommend booking a table at The Castle Street Bistro, found on the corner of Castle Street and St. Cuthberts Street looking out at MacLellan's Castle. The menu is not extensive but there is very likely to be something you will enjoy. Vegetarians are also catered for. Where possible, Paul, sources all the ingredients locally.

This bistro is small but has a great atmosphere and is not pretentious in anyway. If you are lucky enough to be seated in the bay window you can enjoy a view of MacLellan's Castle and people watch as well.

I can highly recommend the pizzas.

If you are not able to get a table, there is also a small takeaway menu available.

### 21. Eat local Scottish seafood at The Auld Alliance

This is another great restaurant, though I have not managed to eat here yet, but other guests have highly recommended it. This is a true restaurant, rather than a café/pub style. Again, the menu is not extensive but offers a unique blend of Scottish/French cuisine. The wine list looks amazing on their website.

I have it on good authority that the 'Cullen Skink' (creamy haddock broth) is to die for.

So, I would recommend you check out their website for the current menu.

### 22. The Garret bar and restaurant

Set in the lively fishing port of Kirkcudbright, The Garret is a charming Georgian townhouse in the heart of the historic High Street.

In recent years The Garret changed hands and at that time was renovated and decorated.

There are a few options here to eat:

The Restaurant

The Café-Bar – here dogs are welcome

The Terrace Garden and Marquee.

I would recommend checking their website for the current menus.

## 23. The Selkirk Arms Hotel

The Selkirk Arms Hotel, just on the High Street (you can see the windows from the Sunroom) has a long history.

Here you can enjoy top quality bistro style fare, cooked well, in a cosy and welcoming traditional Scottish pub/hotel. Please check their website for the current menu's.

During the summer months, weather permitting, on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday it is possible to enjoy a wood fired outdoor cooked pizza and flatbread.

Dogs are allowed in the garden and The Wee Bar, but please call the hotel to check as this arrangement is subject to availability.

## 24. Try some tasty pub food at The Kirkcudbright Bay Hotel

The Kirkcudbright Bay Hotel is a family run establishment situated in the heart of the town. The Hotel serves light lunches and 3-course evening meals in their purpose built conservatory or the beer garden. Dishes are prepared using locally sourced seafood and Galloway meat.

The bar serves real ale from Five Kingdoms Brewery which can be sampled in the traditional bar or the cosy snug.

Please check out the hotel's website to check menu's and to book your table.

## 25. Feast: For the Vegan and Vegetarian look no further (St. Cuthbert's Street)

A fairly new restaurant to Kirkcudbright, this family run eatery caters really well for the Vegan and Vegetarians (with the odd meat menu choice for those who are not).

There is no website or phone number, so just stroll down St. Cuthberts Street (heading either to or away from the Castle) and pop in.

## 26. Clann: Variety of simple menu choices with lovely cake (corner of St. Mary's Street)

Another fairly new restaurant to Kirkcudbright, with a great choice of freshly cooked food. The cake is rather lovely too. If you need a small space for a group, there is a private room available. Call to have a chat: 01577 337264

## 27. Have a drink or three at The Masonic Arms

If you are just looking for a place to rest your weary feet and enjoy a wee drink or two The Masonic Arms is a good choice.

It serves craft ale, local beer and has a massive choice of gins.

It is also dog friendly to friendly dogs, so if you don't have your own, there may well be a furry to pat when you are there.

It is a really friendly pub and I thoroughly enjoy taking part in the weekly quiz (unfortunately really to just make up the numbers), but good fun none the less.

## 28. Sample some local gin from the Dark Art Distillery

If you love gin, or know people who do, this is the place that should definitely be on your list of things to do.

Take the tour (tickets to be booked online) where you also get to sample the product. (I personally do not like gin, but did book on a tour with my sister and brother-in-law, who love gin, and they rate it amongst the best they have tasted).

The distillery is located in the Old Johnson School, by the Dark Space Planetarium) with easy parking.

The name for the gin (Sky Garden) and distillery is connected to the fact that the Galloway Forest Park is one of the darkest places in Europe which is perfect for stargazing.

Despite only having opened in 2021 they have already been finalists in the Scottish Gin awards. I defy you to not buy a bottle or two.

## 29. Takeaway food

If you find yourself unable to book a table anywhere, I am Ok with takeaways being brought back to the B&B – though the food must be consumed at a dining table and not in your room. Let me know if you need plates, cutlery and glasses or a bottle opener or corkscrew.

Most of the Takeaway's only take CASH!!!

I can recommend:

Canton House Chinese – you will find a menu (not necessarily up to date though) in room info  
Meleks Fryer – lots of choice – you will find a menu (not necessarily up to date though) in room info

Rob 'n' Roll – again lots of choice

Masterpiece – found on Castle Street. They do amazing sandwiches with a huge choice.

There is also a Thai takeaway found by the Golf Course club house (I have not bought from here, but I know a lot of people who rate it. Golf Club, Stirling Crescent, DG6 4EZ  
07465 812 331

There are of course restaurant's, Pub's and takeaways in other towns like, Castle Douglas and Gatehouse of Fleet.

In Gatehouse of Fleet I can thoroughly recommend the Galloway Lodge for a tasty lunch. The Masonic in Gatehouse of Fleet (not to be confused with The Masonic in Kirkcudbright) serves lovely food.

## In and around Kirkcudbright: shops

Kirkcudbright has plenty of nice shops, especially considering how small it is. If you're planning a visit, set some time aside for browsing. You'll likely end up wandering into places and finding quirky and unique stuff.

### 30. Rhubarb

Rhubarb is situated right opposite St Cuthbert's Church and well worth a visit.

Carolynne and Brenda (daughter and mum) own and work in the shop. They provide a special and handy place to shop for gifts and treats for your home, your family, friends and just as importantly yourself!!

The look is cool, clean, crisp contemporary country home living – with lovely cushions, throws and table linen. Stylish pewter picture frames, lamps, contemporary jewellery, scarves, a lovely range of quirky cards, gifts for baby, funky soft toys plus fabulous organic clothes for children up to the age of five. It's an absolute treasure trove of classy, carefully selected bits and pieces. It sells super-chic candles, handmade soap, wrapping paper, unusual greeting cards, notebooks, kitchen things like tea towels, general small homewares, a few clothes, and all sorts of other gifts from brands like Sophie Allport and Katie Loxton.

The posters in the hallway came from Rhubarb.

### 31. Stock up on foodie treats at Brambles Delicatessen

If you are looking to buy artisan food and drink look no further than this cute little shop. It's a good one for if you're planning a picnic for your lunch or you want some treats to take home. There's fresh produce like cheese, pastries, pies, cakes, brownies etc, but also cupboard things.

They also do a fabulous selection of chutneys, ideal for people you can't think what to get them for Christmas.

### 32. Kirkcudbright Post Office

You may not think, souvenirs equals post office, but it is possible to purchase some prints (framed or not) from some of the local artists.

It is also a great place to buy maps, OS maps, local walking guides and books on Kirkcudbright and the area.

There are also some books written by locals, both novels and interesting guide books.

### 33. The Whitehouse Gallery

Another recommended shop is The Whitehouse Gallery.

You may need slightly deeper pockets than the post office, but it is possible to find some amazing pieces, both art (from mostly local or Scottish artists) and glass and pottery pieces.

Some of the glass on display in the lounge is from The Whitehouse Gallery.

There is traditional art and some beautiful contemporary work as well.

Again, another website worth checking out as there is often seasonal exhibitions on work from selected artists so keep an eye out for these.

### 34. The Picture Framers

In addition to all the quality framing services you would expect from this framing shop there is also a display of local prints and original art work for sale. They usually have a mixture of oils, watercolours and acrylics – some by local artists and some by international artists. You will find in your bedroom art from a couple of local artists whose work is sold here.

You will also find a good range of prices so there should be something to suit any budget.

If your stay is only short, unfortunately you will probably not be able to get any work you purchase framed in time – but always worth asking.

## In and around Kirkcudbright: Events

One of the many reasons I decided to move to Kirkcudbright was, pre-covid, the full range of ad-hoc, monthly and annual events that grace the summer festivities calendar.

Listed below are just a few of the events that were part of the 2019 calendar:

### 35. The monthly Farmers and Producers' Market

From about April to October/November, usually on the last Sunday, there is a Farmers and Producers Market.

Here you can pick up, or just sample, a good selection of food and drinks. There is also often a selection of arts and crafts from local sellers as well.

You can check if the market will be on, via the Kirkcudbright Town website.

### 36. Kirkcudbright Art Tours

A number of my guests have taken the opportunity to book one of Fiona's tours. They have all been very complimentary. See the poster in the hallway, or the website for details. It is possible to book as a member of a group, or to have an exclusive tour.

So, you can make the most of your visit by joining an informative and entertaining lady on a wander about town.

Fiona will show you the top spots and undiscovered locations where you will learn about famous artists past and present. You may also meet artists who make Kirkcudbright their home today, learn of surprising characters from history, film and literature, visit private gardens and hidden closes.

### 37. The Annual Jazz Festival

A 4-day festival for the lovers of Jazz. Keep checking the Events page on the Kirkcudbright town website or <http://www.kirkcudbrightjazzfestival.co.uk> for details of when this historic and popular event will be running.

### 38. Arts and Crafts Festival

A 4-day festival for the lovers of all things Arts and Crafts. Over 80 venues showing a vast range of all things arty and crafty in many of the private homes in the town.

This is a great opportunity to see some gardens that are normally not open to the public. It also showcases a lot of local artistic talent.

### 39. Festival of Lights

A 4-day festival with numerous places set with stunning lights, along with a firework display

This is a fun filled festival which is very popular with the local residents. As an example there is a copy of a flyer in the room pack.

### 40. Tattoo

Whilst not on the same scale as Edinburgh, Kirkcudbright puts on its' own Tattoo.

This is also a very well attended event on the town calendar. Again, details can be found on the town's website.

## 41. Riding of the Marches



A time honoured, tradition where a cavalcade of upwards of 80 horses are ridden around the boundaries of the town. They make a fantastic sight, beautifully turned out, horses and riders. Not to be missed. They ride right past the front door as Woodlands Avenue is one of the boundary roads.

The 'march' dates back to 1455 when Kirkcudbright received Royal Burgh status through a charter granted by James II. The king's messenger rode with other officials around the new official boundaries, ending in the Harbour Square. It is the [Kirkcudbright Cornet's Club](#), a group of local riders who e-enact this ride.

## 42. Kite Festival



A not to be missed spectacle of huge 'kites' that are flown across the football pitches close to the swimming pool. They have to be seen to be believed to understand how big they are. This is usually a 2 day spectacular. Check out the dates and details on the town's website.



## 43. Other Stuff going on

Each year is slightly different, but there is usually something going on in and around town between April and November.

It could be a Food Festival or a Vintage fair. Maybe a car boot sale or a plant sale is your interest.

Usually there is also a 2-day Country fair with many displays and activities that take place throughout the days.

To get a flavour of what is happening (particularly in these Covid times) check out the 'Events' option on the Kirkcudbright town website.

**Festivals, Events & Art Exhibitions by date**

14 | High Kirkcudbright 2019

15 | www.kirkcudbright.town

○ colour of dot indicates month event ends ✓ Free event

**March - April**

- 1 Mar - 22 Apr ✓ Sir John Tenniel's Illustrations for Alice in Wonderland KG
- 30 Mar - 9 Jun ✓ Japan-art and inspiration KG
- 1 - 13 Apr ✓ Dumfriesshire & Galloway Fine Art Society HCG
- 20 - 21 Apr ✓ Kirkcudbright Vintage Fair, 10am-4pm PCH
- 14 Apr Garden Open - 3 Millhall 2-5pm, park at the Dhoon, £4, kids free www.KT
- 15 Apr - 4 May ✓ Edge Textiles Scotland HCG
- 28 Apr ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 1 - 19 May ✓ Colour in Creation - An exhibition of arts of crafts TAC
- 4 May - 16 Aug ✓ Modern Makers KG
- 5 May ✓ Kirkcudbright Annual Spring Plant Fair, 10am-3pm HS
- 6 - 16 May ✓ Kirkcudbright Crafts Association HCG
- 12 May ✓ Kirkcudbright Car Boot Sale, 10am-2pm HS
- 20 May - 1 Jun ✓ New Beginnings - Kie Stewart & Peter Campbell HCG
- 22 May - 8 Jun ✓ Paintings from Kirkcudbright - Sunsets Rathore TAC
- 25 May ✓ Half Marathon & Beeches Run, 10am-4pm KA
- 26 May ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 3 - 15 Jun ✓ One Fine Day - Painting printmaking & sculpture HCG
- 9 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Car Boot Sale, 10am-2pm HS
- 9 Jun Garden Open - Glenlivet & The Limes, 1pm, £5, kids free KT
- 9 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 11 - Jun ✓ Landscapes Revisited - George Lawson TAC
- 12 - 30 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Jazz Festival - various venues, see website www.KT
- 13 - 16 Jun ✓ Art and Crafts Trail Taster, 10.30am-5pm HCG
- 17 - 22 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 18 Jun Buckland Burn Up & Children's Fun Run, 11am HDP
- 22 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Vintage Fair, 10am-4pm PCH
- 22 - 23 Jun Charles Oppenheimer - RSA Showcasing over 60 works KG
- 22 Jun - 1 Sep ✓ Galloway Children's Festival, 11am-4pm TC
- 23 Jun ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 23 Jun ✓ Gallery Open Exhibition HCG
- 24 Jun - 6 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 25 Jun ✓ Space Fact & Fiction - Hands on activities SM
- 29 Jun - 28 Sep ✓ Kirkcudbright Historical Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 2 Jul ✓ Creative Explosions - Paintings by Patricia Graves TAC
- 14 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Car Boot Sale, 10am-2pm HS
- 8 - 20 Jul ✓ Sandra Jaekel - Artist HCG
- 9 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 10 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 7pm K
- 11 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright and District Pipe Band Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 16 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 17 Jul - 11 Aug ✓ My Colours - Shona McQueen - Paintings and drawings TAC
- 17 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 2.30pm K
- 18 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 19 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Riding of the Marches, 7pm-9pm TC
- 20 - 21 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Country Fair, 10am-4pm C

**July - August**

- 22 Jul - 8 Aug ✓ Gallery Summer Exhibition HCG
- 23 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 24 Jul - 11 Aug ✓ Galloway Girls Revisited - Mixed craft and paintings TAC
- 24 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 7pm K
- 25 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 28 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 30 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Historic Walk, 7pm-8.30pm TIC
- 31 Jul ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 2.30pm K
- 1 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 2 Aug ✓ Maggie's Tour of Old Kirkcudbright, 7pm-8.30pm leaves SA
- 2 - 5 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Art and Craft Trail, 11am-5pm www.KT
- 7 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 7pm K
- 8 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 9 Aug ✓ Maggie's Tour of Old Kirkcudbright, 7pm-8.30pm leaves SA
- 10 - 25 Aug ✓ Fine Art Society in Edinburgh - Galloway Paintings HCG
- 10 Aug Galloway ReCycle Sport! www.KT
- 11 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Car Boot Sale, 10am-2pm HS
- 14 - 31 Aug ✓ Galloway Perspectives - Local watercolour illustrations TAC
- 14 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Kirkyard Tours, 2.30pm K
- 15 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm H
- 16 Aug ✓ Maggie's Tour of Old Kirkcudbright, 7pm-8.30pm leaves SA
- 17 Aug ✓ Rotary Club Fun Day Beer Tent Barbecue, 11am-5pm HS
- 17 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Grand Parade, 2.15 pm-5pm TC
- 22 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Scottish Night, 7pm-8.30pm HS
- 23 Aug ✓ Maggie's Tour of Old Kirkcudbright, 7pm-8.30pm leaves SA
- 24 Aug Floodlit Tattoo and Firework Display, 7.30pm-10.30pm TC
- 24 - 25 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Vintage Fair, 10am-4pm PCH
- 25 Aug ✓ Classic Car Rally, 9.30am-4pm HS
- 25 Aug ✓ Rotary Club Duck Race, 2pm onwards HS
- 25 Aug ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 27 Aug - 7 Sep ✓ Emma Lock artist & S Halsstead photographer HCG
- 31 Aug - 10 Nov ✓ John Faed 1819 - 1902 A celebration of his Life & Work K
- 1 Sep Garden Open - 3 Millhall, 2-5pm, park at the Dhoon, £4, kids free www.KT
- 8 Sep ✓ Kirkcudbright Car Boot Sale, 10am-2pm HS
- 9 - 21 Sep ✓ Moonbroch Arts - Tracy McKeand & Amanda Wilson HCG
- 14 Sep - 8 Dec Gerald Scarle: Stage and Screen KG
- 15 Sep ✓ Kirkcudbright Annual Autumn Plant Fair, 10am-3pm HS
- 22 Sep ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC
- 28 - 29 Sep ✓ Kirkcudbright Kite Festival, see website www.KT
- 30 Sep - 5 Oct ✓ Evelyn Macintosh & Marie Atchison - Artists HCG
- 10 - 13 Oct ✓ Kirkcudbright Illuminaire (Festival of Light) & Fireworks TC
- 19 - 20 Oct ✓ Kirkcudbright Vintage Fair, 10am-4pm PCH
- 26 - 27 Oct ✓ Kirkcudbright Food Festival, see website or facebook www.KT
- 31 Oct ✓ Halloween Ghost Walk www.KT
- 24 Nov ✓ Kirkcudbright Farmers and Producers Market, 11am-3pm TC

Above is the full summer festivities calendar, as an example, this is from 2019.

Due to Covid, the festivities calendar has been seriously curtailed, so to know what is going on please keep checking

[www.kirkcudbright.town](http://www.kirkcudbright.town)

# In and around Kirkcudbright: Walks from the B&B

## 44. Barrhill Woods

Virtually on the doorstep of the B&B are the gorgeous Barrhill Woods.

You can go left or right, walk along Woodlands Avenue and you will find the entries at either end. The woods are vaguely rectangular in shape with quite a few paths that zig zag through. The woods are steep in places. If you walk the perimeter there are a couple of tricky bits, but passable with care.

The field that dissects the woods can be walked around, (there is a footpath that takes you straight through up to another gate into the woods) but during the summer months it has live stock in so if you are walking dog(s) they must be kept on a lead. Sometimes there are cows with calves, so I would advise not going through.

In May time the bluebells are stunning and worth a visit.

If you choose this walk, take your time, stop, listen and look for the birds and if you are lucky a sighting of a red squirrel. See point #14 in this guide.

## 45. St. Mary's Isle

Just down the hill (turn right from the house and head down to the main road. Bear right and cross over. Enter Castle Dykes Road, almost immediately on your left is the entrance to St. Mary's Isle) there are a few options.

A short, mud free walk. Just follow the road and when you see a road/track on your left, follow that and you come back out onto the main road going out of Kirkcudbright.

A longer, potentially muddy, tree rooted walk, approximately 3 miles tracks the perimeter of 'The Isle'. As you walk along the road you will come across and small sign to take a track on your right. You will now essentially just walk the shoreline all the way round the There are some lovely glimpses of the shore and in around May/June the Rhododendrons are stunning.

## 46. The 'High hills' (which really aren't high)

If you want an easier walk, walk down from the B&B as though going to St. Mary's Isle, but just keep walking down Castle Dykes Road. You will see the football stadium ahead of you. Bear right and just past the stadium you will see a track on your left. Here you can walk around what the locals call 'The High Hills'. There is the football field you can walk around, and there are tracks along the shoreline – but they are generally quite boggy. From here you can always walk to the Marina and walk into town.

## 47. Mutehill and Lifeboat Station

For the more intrepid walker you can walk towards the estuary mouth. Again, start your walk turning right from the B&B and head down the hill. Now turn left and just keep walking. There are some lovely views of Kirkcudbright Bay and Little Ross Island that guards the entry to the River Dee.

This walk can be upwards of 10 miles depending upon how far you walk.

Keep walking out of town. After a mile or so the main road bends sharply left, here you just go straight ahead keeping the shoreline on your right.

Eventually you will come to the Lifeboat Station. You can keep walking but you may need to check if there is live firing on the military grounds first. I have not done this walk, but apparently there are some nice isolated beaches to be found. i.e Gypsy Point and Torr Point.

## 48. River Dee



This is a picturesque flat walk (once you are down in the town).

Make your way down into town and head for the bridge.

Now heading to your right, away from the harbour, follow the banks of the river. Here there are a number of interesting boats that have seen the best of their working lives.

You can walk for about a mile along the banks. It can get boggy in places.

## In the wider Kirkcudbright area

### 49. Go Beltie-spotting



The Belted Galloway cow is the iconic breed of 'coo' for the area, though you will have to leave the boundaries of the town to spot them.

These 'Belties' are so photogenic, so if you can stop safely, taking a snap should be part of your visit. If you are unable to spot any, or stop for the photo I have a couple of images that can be purchased for your visit memories.

You will notice that in every bedroom here in the B&B there is a print of a Beltie. These prints can be purchased from the Picture Framers, or the Producers Market (if the artist has a stall, which she usually does). It is also possible to buy other souvenirs with iconic images on a multitude of products, in and around the shops in town.

It is even possible to buy homemade chocolates of Belties from Lily Knowles flower shop. Yum.

### 50. Visit a beach



One of the highlights of your stay could be a visit to one of the many beaches. You do need a car to get to these gems, but it is worth it.

The closest beach to the town is **The Dhoon**. It can actually be seen from the guest lounge. You drive over the bridge in town (near the harbour) and take the first turn left.

Just keep driving and you will see the grass car park on your left when the road bears left just before a little bridge. You will be pleased to know there are toilets available.

This is a small beach with lots of rock pools to explore.

When it is windy the waves crash dramatically onto the shore.

However, my favourite beach (and the dogs' favourite) is **Brighthouse Bay**.



When the tide is out the beach is vast.

To get to this beach, drive on past The Dhoon, and just keep going until you see a road on your left with a 'brown' sign for Brighthouse Bay. Just keep following the signs.

There is a reasonable car park here and there are also toilets here as well.

It can get busy in summer.

When you have had enough of the sand there is a lovely woods walk, on the right hand side tracking the side of the bay, and you can keep going out onto the cliffs.

This is a place good for the soul.

Another beach that is a favourite of some of my friends is **Carrick Shore**. This is a cracking little beach. It is a little complicated to explain how to get there, but if you would like I can show you how to get there on an OS map.



Sandgreen Beach, just past Gatehouse of Fleet off the A75. Another gem of a beach.



A bit further afield are some other lovely beaches to visit. Heading west (towards Stranraer) there is Mossyard. This is signposted just off the A75 past Gatehouse of Fleet. You do have to pay to visit. When there is a low tide there is an Island you can walk to. It is on my list of places to visit.

Heading towards Dumfries, via Dalbeattie, there is Rockcliffe, Kippford and Sandyhills beaches. I have visited Sandyhills and it is really nice. There are toilets and a little shop where you can buy some basic provisions.

There are some great walks to be had, but care must be taken re. the tides and quicksand in the area.

## 51. Dundrennan Abbey



If you are interested in history a trip to Dundrennan Abbey is definitely worthwhile.

This is easy to drive to, just turn right from the B&B and make your way down the hill and turn left onto the main road.

Just keep driving and you will see the ruins from the road as you enter Dundrennan.

## 52. Threave house, Gardens and Castle



There is plenty to see and do at Threave, just on the outskirts of Castle Douglas.

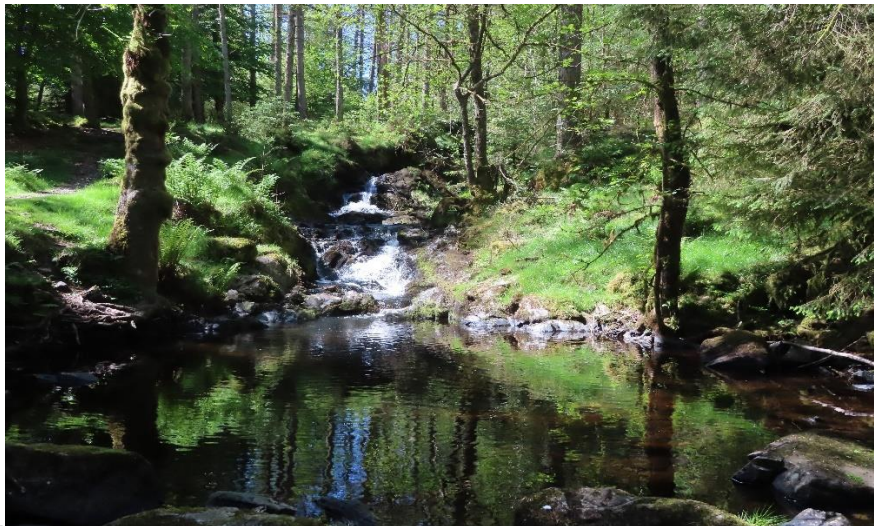
If you visit the house and gardens, you can visit multiple times as the seasons change, where the gardens reflect the changes. They are stunning. There are also a few places to rest up and enjoy a beverage or a cake or two.

I can also recommend the gift shop with plenty of gorgeous products to peruse

The Castle is a little drive away on the other side of the A75. The 'brown' signs lead the way. There is a lovely walk to head down to the castle, where you pick up a boat (you have to pay) to be taken across to the island.

At the right time of year, you maybe lucky to spot the nesting Osprey.

## 53. Kennick Burn



Kennick Burn used to be another favourite walk, but unfortunately many trees have been chopped down, but it is still worth a visit. Make your way down to the main road turn right and head out of town. Turn left after the bridge and turn right onto A75. Drive about a mile and turn left into Ringford. In Ringford turn left heading for Lauriston.

In Lauriston turn left at the crossroads. Drive about 4 / 5 miles and you will come to a carpark on your left. Park, walk back to road, cross over and you are at the start of the 1 mile walk. You head over a bridge and bear left. Follow the track, you will walk on some stony paths. After a while there is a right turn, where you cross another bridge, follow the track to the water fall. Walk up beside the fall and the burn and eventually you come back to the road. Turn right and you will be back at the car park.

## 54. Neilson's Monument



If Kennick Burn was not enough exercise, you can always stop off at Barstobrick (on the road leading from Lauriston back down to Ringford) and climb up to Neilson's monument.

Barstobrick is a horse-riding centre, where if you fancy a ride, they are highly recommended.

If you prefer 'shanks pony', then park up, and start walking up. After a distance you will see a turn on your left with a gate. Go through the gate, and just keep walking up.

When you make it to the top you will get a 360 view of the surrounding area. Stunning.

When you make your way back down, if it is open, you can always have a sandwich and coffee at the Barstobrick café.

## 55. Raiders Road (includes a burn and 2 lochs)

This is a very popular 'road trip'. The actual 'Raiders Road, is unmade for its' 10 mile length. Drive heading for Lauriston on the A762. Go through Lauriston, then through the hamlet of Mossdale. You will see a brown sign for Galloway Forest Park and Raiders Road. Shortly after that is a green sign. Turn left here.

The first loch you come to is Stroan Loch. It is beautiful and worth stopping to take some pictures.

Back in the car keep driving and you will come to 'The Otter Pools'. Again, worth a stop. Unfortunately, there have been no otters here for years, but still stunning. There are toilets here if needed.

Back once again in the car, keep going. You will come to a tarmac road. Turn right. Shortly you will come to Clatteringshaws. Yet another stunning loch, with a café that sells amazing cakes.

When you are ready to leave, turn right out of Clatteringshaws and you will be heading for Newton Stewart. Once at the A75, turn left and drive until you see signs for Kirkcudbright.



## 56. Visit some of the beautiful nearby towns and countryside

Even though I am biased, Kirkcudbright is the perfect location to use as a base to explore Dumfries and Galloway as it is almost in the centre of the county.

There are so many places to visit that it is impossible to list them all.

I would prefer to list only places that I have first-hand experience of, but as the vast majority of my life living here has been during the pandemic, I have not been able to explore, but here are places I have picked up from photos on facebook that look amazing.

SULWATH BREWERY (Ale Brewers, Castle Douglas)  
 BELLYMACK HILL FARM (Red Kite Feeding station, Laurieston)  
 BARSTOBRICK HORSE RIDING CENTRE (Ringford, Castle Douglas)  
 CAERLAVEROCK WETLAND CENTRE (South of Dumfries)  
 SOUTHERNESS LIGHTHOUSE & BEACH (South of Dumfries)  
 POWILLIMOUNT BEACH (1/2 Hr stroll from Southernness Lighthouse)  
 MERSEHEAD BEACH (RSPB Nr Southernness and Dalbeatie)  
 TWELVE APOSTLES – STANDING STONES (North of Dumfries Nr Holywood)  
 CRIFFEL HILL (Between Dalbeatie and Dumfries, tallest hill in Dumfries and Galloway)  
 PORTPATRICK (Harbour, heading west toward Stranraer)  
 LUCE BAY (West, heading towards Stranraer)  
 THE RHINS OF GALLOWAY (Southern and western point of Dumfries and Galloway)  
 LOGAN GARDENS (Southern and western point of Dumfries and Galloway)  
 ISLE OF WHITHORN (South of Wigtown, Wigtownshire)  
 GARLIESTON and GALLOWAY HOUSE (Wigtownshire, go west, south of Wigtown)  
 ST. NINIAN'S CAVE (Isle of Whithorn, Wigtownshire)  
 WIGTOWN (Book festival – west of Kirkcudbright)  
 SWEETHEART ABBEY (New Abbey)  
 DEVILS PORRIDGE MUSEUM (Eastriggs Nr Annan)  
 AVIATION MUSEUM (Heathhall, Dumfries)  
 ROBERT BURNS CENTRE (Dumfries)  
 ESKRIGG NATURE RESERVE (Lockerbie)  
 LOCH TROOL (North of Newton Stewart in the Galloway Forest)  
 CAIRNSMORE HILL (One outside Gatehouse of Fleet and one near Carsparin)  
 MORTON CASTLE/LOCH (North East of Thornhill)  
 CARDONESS CASTLE (Nr. Gatehouse of Fleet)  
 MURRAY'S MONUMENT (Nr Gatehouse of Fleet – a steep walk)  
 CALLY WOODS, (Gatehouse of Fleet)  
 PALNACKIE (Harbour, west of Dumfries)  
 BIG WATER OF FLEET VIADUCT (north, Nr Gatehouse of Fleet)  
 GOLF COURSES (Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas, Gatehouse of Fleet, Cally Palace Hotel)  
 FISHING (See [Fishpal.com/Scotland/Galloway](http://Fishpal.com/Scotland/Galloway) for information on where to fish and type of fishing).

And there are many more.....



Please also see, in the rooms, the laminated information on walks.

On [www.barrhillwoodsbandb.co.uk](http://www.barrhillwoodsbandb.co.uk) there are also other brochures you can download for information on other areas and walks.