

DALBEATTIE WALKING FESTIVAL 2026

27th August – 30th August

Welcome to the
18th Annual Festival

Discover Our Beautiful Area
Join Us for Some Wonderful
Walks & Events



This year's festival has been organised by Dalbeattie Community Initiative volunteers Kath Kilcullen and Dean Freeman and supported by our volunteer walk leaders – our Walking Festival Team. Special thanks also go to National Trust Scotland for supporting our event.

Join our team on a broad range of walks. We hope that you will find something to encourage you into the 'great outdoors' in this wonderful part of Scotland.

Charges, Booking and Information

There is a charge of £4 per adult per walk. All school age children are free of charge.

Registration

Registration for all walks and events is **15 mins prior** to the start time indicated on each description, so please arrive at the registration point with plenty of time to register and pay for the walk. Bookings are not taken for any walks.

The registration point is at **ROCKS AND WHEELS Wee Hoose, (NX83735 61380), What3Words Location: [///resettle.climber.playoffs](https://www.what3words.com/resettle/climber/playoffs)**

Carparking

Carparking will be available at Rocks and Wheels, via Mill Street, past the Islecroft Stadium Carpark and Islecroft Caravan Park.

Minibus to Start Points

Some walk start points are further than walking distance. We will provide minibus transport to start points where we can.

Start and Finish Times

Walks will begin promptly at their stated start time. For any walks requiring minibus transport, the minibus will depart at the stated start time of the walk. Finishing times are the expected time back at registration point. Please note all finishing times are approx. and subject to slight change.

Walk Grading

The grading system is as follows:

Leisurely:

Suitable for most people, some country and/or urban walking experience is an advantage. May involve stiles/stairs/stepping stones etc but will generally follow established paths and tracks.

Leisurely Plus:

As Leisurely but a little more difficult and over longer distance.

Moderate:

Suitable for people with some country and/or urban walking experience. May involve stiles/stairs/stepping stones etc with the possibility of some sustained climbs, steeper gradients and rough open hillsides.

Moderate Plus:

As moderate but more difficult and over longer distance.

Strenuous:

Requires an above average fitness level. Likely to involve open hillsides, steep ascents or descents and greater distances. May involve easy scrambling.

Please ensure you choose walks most suitable to your health and walking ability.

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Thursday 27th August

Walk 1: National Trust Scotland Nature Walk Rockcliffe & Mucklelands

10am ~ 12noon

A 1½ hr circular walk led by an NTS Ranger from Rockcliffe shore around semi-ancient coastal woodland, species rich grassland and shore with beautiful views across the Rough Firth and the Solway. Paths can be rocky, uneven, and steep in places (especially the short climb to the top of Mote of Mark).

Walk rating: Leisurely / EVENT

Walk 2: Heartstane

10am ~ 12:30pm

Let John lead you on a walk up to the Dalbeattie Heartstane. This impressive granite heart sculpture sits nestled in the Dalbeattie Town Woods. Expect wide forest paths with gradual inclines. This walk is roughly 5-miles.



Walk rating: Moderate

Walk 3: Doach & Orchardton Tower

1pm ~ 3pm

Join Kath for a 3-mile circular walk around the Plantation at Doach which is dominated by some of the tallest Douglas Firs in the South West. The views at the summit are well worth the climb, looking towards Kippford, the Solway Firth and on a clear day, the Lake District. Afterwards, a quick exploration of Orchardton Tower, built around 1450, a unique circular tower from the late medieval period, which survives in this area.

Walk rating: Leisurely+

Walk 4: Almorness

1.30pm – 4.15pm

Join Howard on this 5 mile walk in an area not accessible by vehicles. After passing close to Almorness House the walk continues through woodland and crosses the beach at Horse Isle Bay, with views North towards Kippford. The return route climbs to the top of a grassy hill, the Moyle, which offers superb views out across the Solway before returning across a variety of terrain along the side of Orchardton Bay.

Walk Rating: Moderate +

Friday 28th August

Walk 5: Around Mabie

9am – 3.30pm

Using a mixture of woodland trails, forest paths and forest tracks this attractive and varied walk winds its way up and around wooded slopes above the River Nith and Solway Plain. Under foot conditions are generally good with the occasional short stretch of rough steep ground which can be muddy following rain. Distance: 8 miles.

Walk rating: Strenuous

Walk 6: Palnackie Circular

10am – 12.45pm

A moderate walk of around 5 miles, we start at Palnackie car park and pass the Millenium Viewpoint while heading to Tornat Wood. We go through the wood and emerge onto the merse with views across to Kippford. We cross the merse and head through the woods to Almorness with Rough Firth immediately to our left and passing Cockleha'en cottage. From Almorness we follow the road back to Palnackie, passing Orchardton Tower on the way.

Walk rating: Moderate

Walk 7: Little Dornell

1:15pm ~ 4:45pm

Join Dean for a moderate walk of around 5 miles through the Dornell Estate. Good paths and fairly gentle slopes culminate in a stunning 360-degree view from Little Dornell over Loch Ken and the surrounding hills. **Not suitable for dogs.**

Walk rating: Moderate

Walk 8: Mystery Walk

2pm ~ 4pm

If you think you know Dalbeattie, think again! This 1½ hour ramble will take you to all the places you didn't know



existed! We will finish at Rocks and Wheels café for some well-earned refreshments.

Walk rating: Leisurely

Saturday 29th August

Walk 9: Trostan Hill

10am ~ 12:45pm

Starting at Loch Arthur Plantations the walk explores some of the southern parts of Mabie Forest. We head towards Trostan and make our way to the top of Trostan Hill with magnificent views over the Solway, after which we descend to Glensone to be picked up for the return back to Dalbeattie. 6 miles long with a total climb of 800 feet, mainly on forest tracks with a narrow path to the top of Trostan Hill for about a mile.

Walk rating: Moderate +

Walk 10: Walk, Wild Swim and Yoga

11:30am – 3pm

The walk will take around 45 minutes to 1hr on mostly flat undulating paths off-road. Horse Isles Bay and the cove at the White Port Beach can be boggy so please wear appropriate footwear.

We anticipate swimming at White Port Beach which is quite sheltered and has a gradual entry to the water, so you may stay in the shallows. Bring swimwear and a tow float if you have one. Bring your own towel, hot drink for warming up after the swim, and a picnic lunch. To finish up, there will be a short standing beach yoga session.

Walk rating: EVENT

Walk 11: Hedgehog Walk & Cuppa at Rocks and Wheels

1pm – 3pm

Join us on a leisurely stroll down Dalbeattie High Street, into the natural beauty of the Town Wood and then Colliston Park, following the Golden Hedgehog Trail. Learn about the town's historic links to hedgehogs, the heritage sculptures and how you can help with hedgehog conservation. We finish our walk at Rocks and Wheels with a cuppa and a chat. Distance: 3.11 miles (5km)

Walk rating: Leisurely

Walk 12: Castle Douglas Circular

2pm – 4:15pm

Back by special request, Kath and Isabel will help you explore part of the town not often seen. This wide, circular walk will take in views over Threave estate, Carlingwark Loch and much more. Expect some quiet streets, grassy tracks and boardwalk, mostly on level ground. Bring water and a snack.

About 5 miles.

Walk rating: Moderate

Sunday 30th August

Walk 13: Colvend ~ Dalbeattie

10am ~ 4pm

An all-day walk of around 10-12 miles from Colvend to Dalbeattie. The exact route and distance will be flexible to group member preferences on the day, but the 'menu' includes: Barean Loch, Dalbeattie Forest Heartstone, Moyle Hill, Gallowleck, Woodhouse, Plantain Loch, etc. Bring a packed lunch and plenty of water. Decent paths throughout but good walking boots recommended.

Walk rating: Strenuous

Walk 14: Woodland Clay Faces

11am ~ 1pm



Use your imagination to create faces on tree trunks using clay and natural materials gathered from the woods. Combined together, these will form an impressive temporary art installation for everyone to enjoy. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Walk rating: EVENT + Family Friendly

Walk 15: Rhonehouse

10am ~ 12:45pm

Join Janice for a 6mile circular walk from Rhonehouse taking in the Bridge of Dee loop and part of the Threave Estate walk. The walk is on quiet roads, track and fields. Bring water and a snack.

Walk rating: Moderate

Walk 16: Lotus Hill

1pm – 4pm



Starting at Kissock Forest car park just southwest of the main bulk of Mabie Forest. We will go anti-clockwise on this

circular walk to the summit of Lotus Hill, with fantastic views of Loch Arthur and Criffel from the top. The climb can be fairly challenging and there are likely to be some boggy areas, so good footwear is essential. There are also some fallen trees to be navigated. The walk is around 3.7 miles.

Walk rating: Strenuous

Walk 17: Explore Crossmichael and Cemetery

2pm – 4:30pm

A new walk for the festival, Isabel will lead you round and above this pretty village with views over Loch Ken and the surrounding countryside. We will climb a quiet, country road, tracks and a field then down to the marina. This is a 3½ mile walk, ending at the historic churchyard with time to browse the 'Wee Hearse Hoose', a fascinating small visitors' centre. Bring water and a snack.

Walk rating: Moderate

Walk 18: Forest Floor Explorers

2:30pm – 4pm

A gentle family adventure exploring the small wonders of the woodland. Using magnifiers, join us in searching for mini beasts, mosses, lichens, leaves, textures and other hidden details that we might otherwise miss. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Walk rating: EVENT + Family Friendly

Enjoy Walking Safely

We want you to enjoy your walks in and around Dalbeattie. All the walks will be led by experienced local guides who will carry a mobile phone, first aid kit and emergency contact numbers.

To ensure that you get the maximum enjoyment, there are some basic preparations that you can make to ensure that you are fully prepared for your outdoor adventure.

Weather:

The weather in Scotland can be very changeable, even in the summer and it can change at alarming speed. All previous walking festivals have been affected at some point by heavy rain, usually followed by brilliant sunshine!

Planning:

Choose walks that are appropriate to you or your group's fitness, experience and ability. This guide gives an idea of the difficulty of each walk ranging from Leisurely to Strenuous but most of the walks will have some gradients to tackle.

What to wear:

It is essential that appropriate footwear is worn on all walks, it must provide good ankle support with a firm sole and secure grip. Hillwalking boots are strongly recommended. Warm, wind and waterproof clothing is recommended, even on a dry or sunny day. It will get colder and windier the higher you climb and along the coastal routes.

Food and Drink:

Take ample food and drink for each member of your group. If your walk spans over lunch time remember to pack your lunch along with water and some extra high energy snacks.

Registration:

All participants will be required to register at the **meeting point** before the walk commences and be checked in at the end. Please do not wander off on your own during the walk as we will have to come and search for you!!

Liability:

Dalbeattie Community Initiative cannot accept liability or responsibility for any incidents or injuries that may occur during these walks. People undertaking the walks do so at their own risk.

Dogs - if you wish to bring your dog, be aware that it must be on a lead at all times due to the sensitivity of the wildlife.

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We hope to see you at Dalbeattie Walking Festival

- 18 Guided Walks & Events
 - 4 days of activity
 - Dogs on leads welcome
- Hill Walking, History, Woodland Discovery & Family Friendly
 - Walks to suit all abilities
- Leisurely ~ Moderate ~ Strenuous
- 27th August to 30th August 2026



For further information contact:
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Find us on Facebook or at theinitiative.scot