

APPS

There are two 'apps' for the area that might be of interest to visitors which can be downloaded from the usual app stores:

Scotland Starts Here supported by the South of Scotland Destination Alliance

Reivers Road – see www.reiversroad.com where you can download and purchase trails to explore with audio tours of the area and parts of the Scottish Borders.



INSPIRING SCOTLAND



Scottish Government
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Cover Photograph by Nicol Nicolson



EXPLORE LANGHOLM & ESKDALE



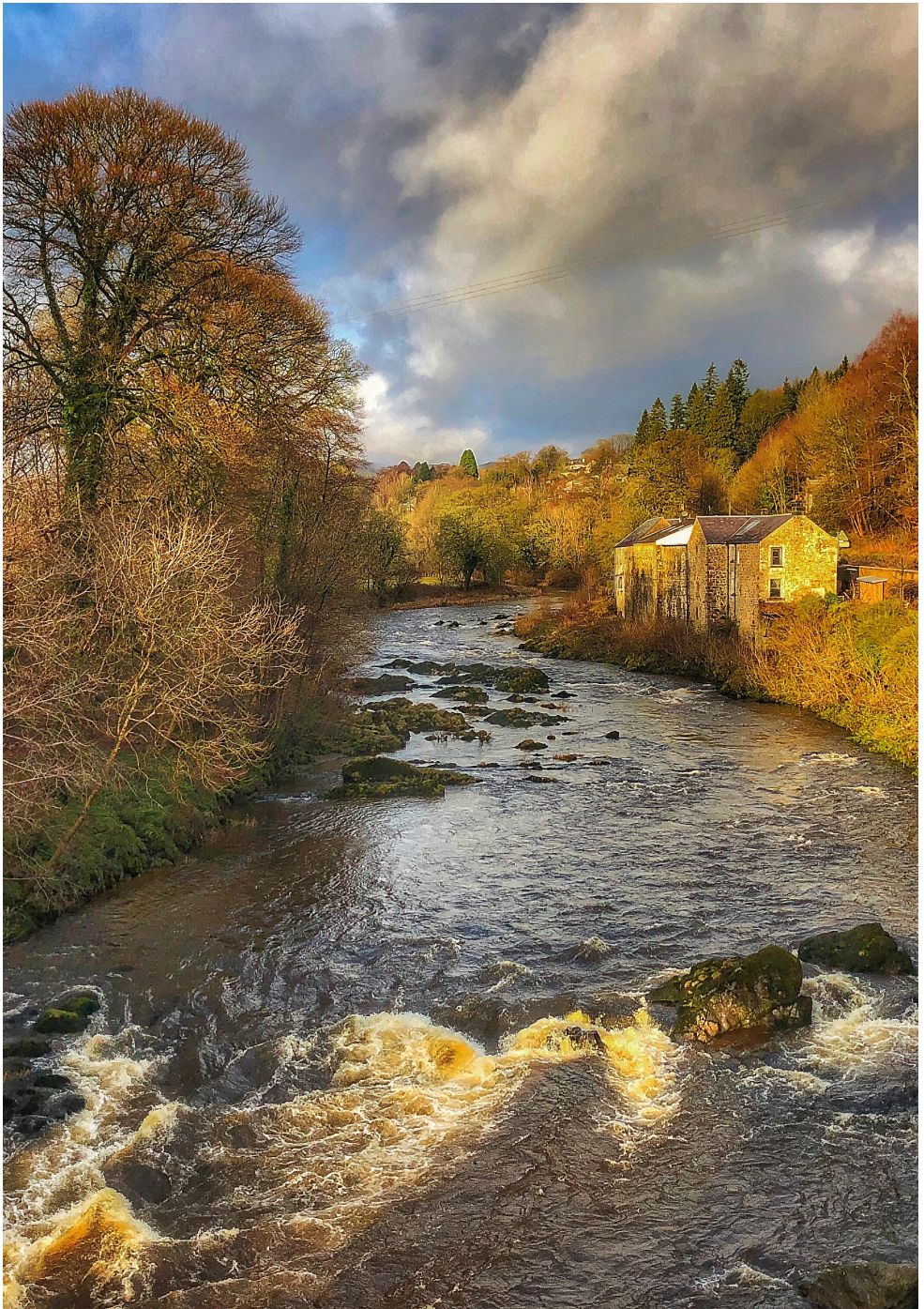
Langholm from the hills *Photograph by David McVittie*



Langholm and Eskdale are hidden gems in the south of Scotland with wonderful natural resources scenery and colourful histories. These are not the mountain areas of the Highlands but much more accessible with rolling rounded hills that boast an abundance of wild-life. The people are welcoming and helpful and there is a community pride amongst the area's citizens that means they will always be willing to tell you about their home town and the area. The guide covers the town of Langholm as well as the outlying areas both north and south of the town.

LANGHOLM
ESKDALEMUIR
WESTERKIRK
EWES
CANONBIE

INTRODUCTION & CONTENTS



Langholm Old Distillery from Skipper's Bridge

Photograph by Nicol Nicolson

LANGHOLM

Langholm was once much larger than it is now and as a result was called ‘the muckle toon’ and it is still known as that today. It is one of the historic castle towns of the Scottish borders and was built on the site of the battle of Arkinholm which took place in 1455 and which broke the power of the Douglas clan in the area. The town was made a Scottish burgh in 1621.

With a population of approximately 2200 people, it stands at the meeting of three rivers – the Esk, the Ewes and the Wauchope. It is a town of two halves with an old town and a new town – the latter being constructed by the Duke of Buccleuch as a handloom weaving centre at the end of the eighteenth century. Most of the streets of the new town are named after members of the Buccleuch family.

Langholm was a former mill town producing high quality tweed mainly for men’s suiting. There is still one small tweed producing mill in the town – Drove Weavers. Both Edinburgh Woollen Mill and Border Fine Arts started businesses in the town but are no longer based here. Langholm is at a crossroads between two administrative regions with Scottish Borders to the north and east and Cumbria to the south, but it is part of Dumfries and Galloway region.

Information can be found on the Welcome to Langholm website: <https://welcometolangholm.co.uk/> and there are a number

of local social media sites such as What’s on in and around Langholm <https://www.facebook.com/groups/275499149300726>

GETTING THERE

Often bypassed to reach Edinburgh and the north or Galloway in the west Langholm is a hidden gem which is easily accessible from the north of England and the two major cities of Scotland. It sits on the tourist route along the A7 road to Edinburgh and is only 25 minutes by car from Junction 44 of the M6.

PLACES TO STAY

The Crown Hotel

This is an ancient coaching inn with strong historical ties to the town’s celebrated Common Riding. Meals are served daily. <https://www.crownhotellangholm.co.uk/01387381138>

The Douglas Hotel

Accommodation and food but not lunches. Excellent reviews on Trip Advisor. <https://www.douglashotellangholm.co.uk/01387381547>

The Eskdale Hotel

Accommodation and food as well as coffees. Trip advisor certificate of excellence 2018. <https://www.eskdalehotel.co.uk/01387380357>

Border Guest House

Family run bed and breakfast accommodation on Langholm High Street with excellent reviews. <https://www.border-house.co.uk/en-GB01387380376moirabeattie@aol.com>



Langholm Town Hall Clock Tower

Photograph by Nicol Nicolson

PLACES TO STAY

The Ewes Water log cabins:

Beautiful log cabins close to Langholm with a café/diner on site. Dog friendly and up to date facilities. Excellent reviews on Trip Advisor. 013873 80494
<https://www.eweswaterlogcabins.co.uk/>

Ewes Water Caravan Site:

This is situated at Milntown at the north end of the town In the grounds of Langholm Rugby Football Club.

Self-catering

There is also self-catering and Airbnb accommodation locally.

PLACES TO EAT AND DRINK

As well as the hotels mentioned above other places include:

Borderlands Brewery: is a recently established business making high quality ales and is open for purchase of beer a few hours a week. 07843896644.

The Buck Hotel: is an old established pub with a yard that offers outside refreshments during the Summer months. Opened in 1784 it is the town's oldest licensed premises. 013873 80400.

The Buccleuch Centre: (See below under places to visit). Teas, coffees, snacks, lunches and pre-show dinners are on offer in a lovely setting. 013873 81196

The Loon Chen Chinese Takeaway: this takeaway is situated at the north end of the High Street near the Buck hotel and sells a large range of Chinese food as well as fish and chip shop meals. 013873 80687.

Pelosi's Corner Café: is a small café in the Market Place offering refreshments and is normally open daily, except Sundays until 3pm. Pelosi's famous ice cream can be purchased here and is made in Langholm from a traditional Italian recipe. 013873 81250.

Polyanna's Wine Bar and Bistro: is at the south end of the High Street and sells a wide range of pizzas, burgers and kebabs to eat in or takeaway and holds karaoke nights. 013873 81387.

Truly Scrumptious: is also situated in the Market Place and is a vintage-style tea shop offering scones, tray-bakes and filled rolls. 013873 80402.

The Whitshiels Café: is on the road north and about a mile from the High Street. It offers home cooked breakfasts and lunches and has good parking. 013873 80494.

SHOPPING IN LANGHOLM

Langholm boasts a small range of over twenty independent shops including two butchers, a baker (no baking on site), two craft shops, a jewellery manufacturer, a high-quality cabinet maker, an independent grocer, a paper shop, a small mini market and a supermarket, a pet food store, a beauty parlour, two hairdressers/barbers, a shop selling electrical goods and a community charity shop. There are also regular pop-up shops and a monthly market.



The Ruins of Langholm Castle

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

TEXTILE-RELATED BUSINESSES

Elliotts Shed which makes a range of tweed products including throws and tweed woven on restored hand looms. <https://www.elliottshed.com/>

Drove Weavers Ltd <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHLw9snj68A>

Roses Wardrobe Vintage which makes vintage-style clothes to order. <https://roseswardrobe.co.uk/>

Yarns to Yearn For sells a wide range of yarns from lambswool, silks and fancy dyed yarns as well as its famous tartan teddy bear. The company are also renowned for their Muckle Toun tartan goods. <https://www.yarnstoyearnfor.com/>

OTHER SERVICES

Langholm has a cottage hospital but no emergency unit. **Langholm Health Centre** is situated in Charles Street and will see visitors by appointment. 013873 83100.

Veterinary services are provided by the Lockerbie-based **Ark Veterinary Centre** which has a surgery in Henry Street, Langholm. 01576 202552.

Langholm has no full-time post office but has a 'visiting' post office twice a week which operates out of the library at the back of the Town Hall on Wednesdays and Fridays.

There is one High Street bank and one Building Society on Langholm High Street. A mobile bank service visits weekly on a Thursday morning and parks beside the community centre at the bottom of Charles Street.

Stevenson and Johnstone provide a range of legal and estate agency services. <https://www.sandjlangholm.co.uk/> 013873 80482

There is a pharmacy situated in the Market Place near the Town Hall. Langholm also has a community run newspaper which has a High Street office. The paper is published every Thursday. <https://www.eladvertiser.co.uk/>

MOBILE PHONE SIGNALS

Mobile phone signals vary around Eskdale depending on which network your phone is on and can't always be relied on when travelling in the area.

BUS SERVICES

The main regular bus service running north and south through Langholm is the X95 service from Edinburgh to Carlisle and the service is run by Border Buses who have an app. The service stops at railway stations at Galashiels and Carlisle. There is also a town service which operates daily except Sunday. Limited services run to Eskdalemuir and Annan.

PLACES TO VISIT

Welcome to Langholm Office: The Welcome to Langholm office in the Market Place is staffed by volunteers and provides information to visitors and local people. It is well worth a visit to have a chat and find out what else there is to see and do in the area. It regularly hosts exhibitions of works by local artists and makers.

Langholm Castle: The castle is a ruin situated on the Castleholm which is a short walk from the Kilngreen where there is free parking. It was built by



The Hugh MacDiarmid Memorial

Photograph by Nicol Nicolson

the Armstrong clan in 1526 and was occupied for more than 250 years. An information panel on the Castleholm outlines its fascinating history and the role it plays in key border events.

The Buccleuch Centre: The Buccleuch Centre is a community-managed arts and cultural centre situated in Buccleuch Square in the new town of Langholm. It offers a regular programme of events and concerts (see website). Live shows include singers of worldwide fame and the centre also offers access to livestreaming of operas, plays and concerts from elsewhere. The centre also has a coffee shop/restaurant offering pre show meals which must be booked in advance. It is also available for functions and conferences. 013873 81196 info@buccleuchcentre.com. <https://www.buccleuchcentre.com/>

The Hugh MacDiarmid Memorial and the Malcolm monument: Hugh MacDiarmid, the critically acclaimed Scottish poet, grew up in Langholm. He was fiercely political and a great supporter of home rule for Scotland and found inspiration for his works in the town, the Common Riding and the surrounding countryside. A sculpture by Jake Harvey was erected on the hill above Langholm in his memory. It depicts symbols he mentions in his poetry which is by and large written in Scots. If you follow the signpost to Newcastleton from the A7 north heading out of Langholm and drive, or walk, for about a mile. Just before the cattle grid at the top of the hill there is a

small parking place on the right-hand side.

From there take the track to walk to the Malcolm Monument which stands on the top of Whita Hill. This obelisque is in memory of Sir John Malcolm who was born at Westerkirk. He played a key role in the building of the Indian empire, was the first British Ambassador to Persia and became a Governor General of India. Referred to locally as 'the monument' it is a landmark that can be seen from afar and the stunning views from the summit of Whita Hill are truly breath taking.

The Tarras Valley Nature Reserve: In 2021 the Langholm Initiative, a Langholm based community development trust raised enough money to buy 5200 acres of land. The area is a site of special scientific interest and a special protection area for hen harriers and the moorland also attracts other ground nesting birds in the Spring. Named after the river Tarras, the community are developing the area into the Tarras valley nature reserve to allow people to access and explore this area.

Future plans include new trails, wild-life hides, guided walks, dark skies viewing points, camping and glamping sites as well as volunteering opportunities. The site can be easily accessed at its southern end from the town and there are many trails leading through the woods and onto the moor. Everyone is welcome to visit and explore and further details can be found on the Facebook page. www.langholminitiative.org.uk



The War Memorial in Buccleuch Park

Photograph by John Hills

PARKS

There are two main parks in Langholm – the Buccleuch Park, which is next to Langholm Parish Church, and the Kilngreen at the north end of the town where there is parking and toilet facilities. There is play equipment at both and the community have plans to develop the Buccleuch Park. There is a spectacular war memorial in Buccleuch Park.

OTHER THINGS TO SEE

The Telford Trail: Thomas Telford, the famous civil engineer, was born in 1757 in Eskdale and apprenticed in Langholm. Start the Telford trail in Langholm by taking a look at the Langholm Bridge, which he worked on as an apprentice. It is at the north end of the High Street on the left and spans the Esk just after it meets the river Ewes. You can also see Telford's archway apprentice piece behind the Town Hall in Langholm Library Gardens. Pick up a leaflet from the Welcome to Langholm office for directions on how to follow the rest of the trail which continues in Westerkirk.

Neil Armstrong: Neil Armstrong, astronaut and first man to set foot on the moon, was made a freeman of the Burgh of Langholm in 1972 and there is information about his visit to the town behind the Town hall. The area is the home of the Armstrong clan. You can also see more information about this at Gilnockie Tower which is the centre of the Clan Armstrong.

THINGS TO DO

Sports and Leisure

Bowling: is held at Langholm Old or Langholm New Town bowling greens during the Summer months. <https://www.facebook.com/Langholm-New-Town-Bowling-1411493662489925>.

Cricket: is played during the Summer months on the Castleholm

Cycling and Mountain Biking: There is good road cycling around Langholm on mostly quiet roads and there are a number of short and longer circular routes. There are no E-biking charging points available at the moment but this is likely to develop in the future.

Mountain biking is not well developed in Langholm although local enthusiasts can guide people to suitable tracks. Other mountain biking is available at Newcastleton, which is 12 miles away, where there is one of the 7 Stanes mountain bike trails. <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/activities/mountain-biking/7stanes>

Eskdale Sports Centre: The Eskdale sports centre, which is situated beside Langholm Academy and Primary Schools, has a fitness suite and gym hall and offers some classes. It's a council owned facility and memberships are available. <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15635/Eskdale-Sports-Centre-Langholm>

Fishing: For information about fishing on the Border Esk see the Border Esk and Liddel Angling Club website. Permits can be purchased from Stevenson and Johnstone in Langholm and at Canonbie Post Office. The



Langholm Common Riding

Photograph by Nicol Nicolson

season is from 1 April to 31 October and sea trout from 1st April to 31st August. <https://bordereskfishing.co.uk/the-fishing/> <https://www.sandjlangholm.co.uk/>

Football: played by Langholm Legion on the 3G pitch next to Langholm Academy <https://www.facebook.com/groups/310402934142;>

Geocaching: Geocaching is a kind of treasure hunt using a downloadable app that makes going for a walk with young people far more exciting. It uses GPS technology on a mobile phone. There are quite a number of geocaches in and around Langholm. For more information see the weblink <https://www.geocaching.com/play>

Researching family history/genealogy: The Langholm and Eskdale area is fantastic for people tracing their ancestors with so many old cemeteries in good condition, lists of grave markings of some old graveyards available in booklet form and the potential to use Scotland's People as a fair priced site to search for information. Information may also be available from the Langholm Library which is situated in the Town Hall although admission is by **appointment only**. <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>

Rugby: Langholm Rugby Club celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2021 making it one of the oldest clubs in the country. The club was in its heyday in the late 1950s when it scooped all the championship cups in Scotland. Matches are played at Milntown which is just off the A7 about a mile north of Langholm Market Place. There is also a youth trust which

develops young people's rugby skills.

Walking: A booklet outlines fourteen waymarked walks of the area and this can be purchased in the Welcome to Langholm office in Langholm Market Place. Walkers should follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code when out in the countryside and be aware that the mobile phone signals vary a lot and there can be areas without any signal at all. <http://www.langholmwalks.co.uk/walking6.htm>

EVENTS

Langholm Common Riding: The main event of the year is Langholm Common Riding. It always takes place on the last Friday of July. This spectacular event is preceded by rideouts and during the fortnight before the day there is a buzz around the town. Many people regard the Common Riding as a homecoming event and the resident community enjoys meeting up with its 'exiles' and welcomes home family members.

The Common Riding Day starts early in the morning with a flute band waking everyone up. The horses gather in the market place from about 8.00am when the elected cornet is handed the burgh standard (flag) to carry around the common land. In the afternoon horse racing, athletics, highland dancing and Cumberland wrestling are held on the Castleholm.

Spring Fling: Some of the many local artists and makers resident in Eskdale participate in the Dumfries and Gallo-way Spring Fling annual event which takes place in the late Spring. It offers people an opportunity to visit studios



Bonfire Night at the Kilgreen

Photograph by David McVittie

and purchase original works. There are an increasing number of very talented artists choosing to make the area their home, including illustrators and furniture makers.

Langholm Agricultural Show: Langholm Agricultural Show, locally known as 'the cattle show' is held every year in September on the Castleholm. It is everything you would expect from a traditional agricultural show and is always a highlight in Langholm's calendar.

Bonfire night: Annually there is a community bonfire around 5th November with a fireworks display held at the Kilngreen.

Christmas lights: A fun day is held in the centre of Langholm to celebrate the switch-on of the Christmas lights. This is normally held at the end of November/beginning of December.

Langholm Chilli Fest: Langholm declared itself the Chilli capital of Scotland in 2019 and in 2021 held its first Chilli festival which was hailed a great success. With cooking displays and fun competitions including a chilli eating competition the crowds thoroughly enjoyed this event. Langholm Town Band and Langholm Pipe band made the event one to remember. Look out for it being repeated.

Charging points

There are electronic car charging points at the Kilngreen,



Eskdalemuir

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

ESKDALEMUIR

Sheep farming predominated in the area for hundreds of years but forestry, particularly in Eskdalemuir, started to take over from the mid to late 1950s onwards.

The White Esk river rises in the hills at a place called Foulbog and not far from there it is said, the last wolf in Scotland was killed. The river joins the Black Esk several miles further south. It probably runs over more peat than the White Esk and gets its name from its dark colour.

The valley has been inhabited for thousands of years and there is evidence of this in the landscape with its many archaeological remains. The settlement today is dispersed with the largest concentration of people living near the old school and community hub. Just south of the old school the road splits and there are two ways to proceed down the valley – the main road running on the east side of the valley and the other road going down the west side which is, in places, a single track road.

Getting there:

Eskdalemuir can be reached on the north side from the Scottish Borders entering the area high up in the hills. The B723 coming from Lockerbie also brings you to Eskdalemuir or the B709 to the south and the town of Langholm.

Places to stay:

Self-catering accommodation - there are a number of Airbnb's in the area as well as other self-catering accommodation. <https://www.eskdalemuir.com/places-to-stay-in-eskdalemuir>

Hostels:

When the Samye Ling Tibetan Buddhist Centre is open there is hostel accommodation for rent on site. Check out the website. <https://www.samyeling.org/>

Bothies:

There are two bothies for walkers in the area and these are managed by the Mountain Bothies Association. <https://www.mountainbothies.org.uk/bothies/southern-scotland/>

Places to eat:

The community-owned Eskdalemuir Old School and community hub offers an oasis in the middle of the countryside. There's free parking across the road from the hub. The food in the café is mostly home made with vegan and vegetarian options on offer.

During the Autumn and Winter the stove is usually on in the dining area offering a cosy place to warm up with a warm drink. There is access to Wifi here and facilities for repairing punctures or doing minor bike repairs.

If you're staying nearby you might be able to access classes such as yoga or a writers' group or take part in a ceilidh. There are normally exhibitions on in the building and there is a small shop for basics and dried goods. The shop also sells products made by local artists. The hub has information about bus timetables and other local iknowledge. Check for opening hours in advance particularly in Winter. Contact details: 01387 73760 <https://www.eskdalemuir.com/hub@eskdalemuir.com>



Kagyū Samye Ling Under Winter Snow

Photograph by Sharon Tolson

Places to Visit:**Kagyü Samyé Ling**

At the time of writing Kagyü Samyé Ling Tibetan Buddhist centre is not open to the public but some of the buildings are visible from the road. You can see the large copper topped stupa and some of the sculptures in the grounds. The centre was founded in late 1967 after Tibetan Buddhist monks fled over the mountains to escape from the Chinese who took over Tibet at that time. The late Akong Rinpoche was one of these monks and is revered by many people both locally and across the world. The centre has developed into the Buddhist monastery it is today with a temple prepared lovingly which has beautiful paintings and gilding and is quite magnificent. When open there is a café in the grounds and the centre runs a wide range of courses. There is also an extensive organic garden on the site. <https://www.samyeling.org/>

The Handfasting Haugh

Where the white and black Esk meet there is a triangle of land known as the 'handfasting haugh'. Handfasting was a traditional form of marriage, possibly Celtic, where a woman and man could marry for a year and a day and after that decide whether or not they wanted to stay together. This might have been to test fertility. It has been said that a stone with a hole in it was used and the couple held hands through this stone. This custom was possibly practised into the 1700s. There is little to see today but it is just to the north of the King Pool.

The King Pool

This pool is just to the south of where the two river Esks meet. It is said that an ancient King drowned in this river pool whilst he was crossing the river. He is said to be buried up on the hill above it at a site known as King Schaw's grave although there is not much to see there except a stone kist (that site is only accessible from the road on the east side of the valley). It is believed that this ancient monument was destroyed in the late nineteenth century and that a skeleton was found in the kist.

Standing Stones

There are two stone circles close to each other on the eastern side of the valley at Eskdalemuir – the Loupin' stanes and the Girdle stanes. They are accessible to visit although there might be livestock in the fields so take care. There is an interpretation panel nearby on the roadside but no parking place as such and you will need to be careful pulling a vehicle in off the road. Standing stones in Scotland probably precede the ones at Stonehenge.

The Archaeological Trail

There are a number of prehistoric sites of interest on the Archaeological Trail in Eskdalemuir including Bailliehill, Castle O'er, Bessie's Hill and King Schaw's Grave (mentioned above). These are mostly hill forts from thousands of years ago and most have good vantage points. All the sites have interpretation panels. They are said to have been occupied by peoples such as the Selgovae or Novantae during the iron age period. The sites are accessible but involve



The King Pool a popular spot for wild swimming

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

walking up hill – King Schaw’s grave is the easiest to get to on foot along a forestry track.

Walking in the area

There is one waymarked walk in Eskdalemuir – see the section on Romans below. There is an off-road walkway between Eskdalemuir village and Samye Ling. Ettrick Pen (692 metres) which is accessible from Nether Cassock farm is the highest hill in the area. It is classified as a Marilyn, a Graham and a Donald. There are superb views from the Cairn on the top. There is a circular forest walk at Bessie’s Hill to the south of Eskdalemuir village and off road car parking there too.

Cycling

Some cyclists doing LEJOG (Lands End to John O’ Groats) come up (or down) Eskdale and most roads are fairly quiet although at the northern end you might encounter log lorries. The Old School and Community Hub hosts cyclists who are doing long distance and endurance cycle rides. Bike pumps are available at the Old School.

Swimming

There are various pools in the Esk where people swim during the warmer months of the year. It is recommended that you ask locals for advice on this. If you’re not used to river swimming take care as some pools can be deceptively deep.

Driving

The drive from Eskdalemuir to Enzieholm bridge down one side of the valley and up the other is very scenic and a few of the

archaeological sites can be visited on the way.

Charging points

At the moment there are no electronic car charging points in Eskdalemuir.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

The seismographic station and observatory

The Eskdalemuir observatory was set up in the 1900s to measure solar radiation, electro-magnetic fields and seismological activity. It also acts as a weather station. There is another seismic array just near the county boundary with Scottish Borders which also measures nuclear explosions and monitors activity globally.

The Romans

There is evidence of the Romans in Eskdalemuir with the remains of a camp at Raeburnfoot and a Roman pathway stretching north east to Craik Forest. This is on the Reivers and Romans trail which is waymarked <https://www.scotlandsgreattrails.com/trail/romans-reivers-route/>

The Black Esk Reservoir

This reservoir is situated just off the B723 road to the west of Eskdalemuir village and covers about 110 acres. It is managed by Scottish Water and there is a walk around the reservoir.

Forestry

Eskdalemuir is extensively forested and some of the forest tracks are used by the RAC Rally which brings cars and spectators to the area.



Westerkirk Parish Church at Bentpath

Photograph by Glen Laidlaw

WESTERKIRK

Westerkirk is the parish to the south of Eskdalemuir and is hilly with mixed livestock farming. The river Esk is larger here due to all of the small tributaries that join it, including the Meggat Water.

Getting there

Westerkirk can be reached by driving north from Langholm on the B709 or south from Eskdalemuir or from the south west on the road that merges at Bailliehill.

Places to stay

There is some self catering accommodation including AirBnBs in Westerkirk.

Places to eat

There are no cafes, shops or restaurants in Westerkirk so it's best to bring a picnic if you're visiting the area.

PLACES TO VISIT**Westerkirk Parish Church and Old Cemetery**

Park at Bentpath Hall (locally Bentpath is known as The Benty) and walk across the lovely old bridge to the Church. Westerkirk Parish Church can be opened by appointment and is worth a visit to see the beautiful stained glass windows depicting animals and birds of the area. The Church still hosts weddings and services. The Church, the manse behind it and the bridge are all listed buildings.

Visit the old cemetery where you can find the 1790 Robert Adams' designed mausoleum. The mausoleum was built for the Johnstone family

who lived at nearby Westerhall and who owned the largest estate in the area. The estate was broken up and sold in the early 20th century. Also, within the churchyard stands the headstone carved by Thomas Telford in memory of his father, which reads: "In memory of John Telford who after living thirty three years as an unblameable shepherd died at Glendinning 12 November 1757." Thomas' father died when Thomas was a baby.

Thomas Telford

Thomas Telford was born in the Parish at Jamestown and attended the village school. Of the area he wrote: "I ever recollect with pride and pleasure my native parish of Westerkirk where I was born on the banks of the Esk in the year 1757".

He became a very famous civil engineer and the first president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, His father died when he was less than a year old and he and his mother moved down the valley to the house known as the Crooks which still exists.

You can visit Jamestown although any houses that were there when Thomas was born in 1757 are long gone. There is a cairn there in his memory and a small plaque installed by the Institution of Civil Engineers to commemorate the 250th anniversary of his birth.

Thomas had, as his patron, William Johnstone of Westerhall who was a member of the main landowning family in Westerkirk. William became very wealthy by marriage and took the name Pulteney. He was an advocate, a landowner and an MP.



Westerkirk Parish Library and Thomas Telford Monument

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

Thomas was sometimes known as 'young Pulteney' and Sir Pulteney Malcolm who grew up at Douglen in Westerkirk was presumably named after William. Thomas is buried in Westminster Abbey in London.

Behind the Town Hall in Langholm is an apprentice piece, which is a stone arch, made by Thomas Telford. Next to that is the 'marble man' a statue to Sir Pulteney Malcolm who became an Admiral in the British navy.

Jamestown Antimony Mine

The Johnstone family of Westerhall began searching for lead in the area in the eighteenth century and it is said that a slave or freed slave found antimony. A mine was then dug and the settlement of Jamestown created to house the miners. You can still see the mine entrance in the hills if you follow the stream up on the east side of the valley from Jamestown. There is also an interpretation board. A library was started for these miners which became the Westerkirk Parish Library now at Bentpath. Thomas Telford left a bequest in his will to the library.

Westerkirk Parish Library

This library, which still lends out books today, was founded for the antimony miners and has over the years built up a considerable collection of books and archives and artefacts pertaining to Thomas Telford. It can be visited by appointment. It really is a hidden gem in this small parish. <http://www.westerkirk-parishlibrary.org/>

Archaeological sites

There are several prehistoric sites

although not all of them are on the trail map or have interpretation panels. One at Boonies, Bentpath is worth a visit. It is very accessible and is only a short walk from the library. Others involve a short uphill hike to get to.

The Frederick Johnstone memorial

Up above Bentpath in the woods is a memorial to Frederick Johnstone a member of the Westerhall Johnstone family. You can park at the village hall and cross the road, into the field and walk up to it.

Westerhall Estate

Westerhall Estate has extensive grounds and opens its gardens on occasions as does the farm, the Craig, further south of Bentpath, the latter in early Spring to show off its collection of snowdrops.

OTHER THINGS OF INTEREST

The Benty Rideout

Organised by the Castle Craigs Club, one of the pre-Langholm Common Riding rideouts comes to the Benty where the riders (all male) are treated to refreshments in the village hall. During the time the riders spend in the village hall, their horses are looked after (or 'held') mostly by young people in the adjacent field. People from Langholm like to picnic around the field to see the horses and riders. It is normally held a fortnight before the Common Riding.

The Benty Show

The Benty Show is a small annual agricultural show held the first Saturday in September in the field behind the village hall.



The Bridge at Bentpath

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

The Craig Farm and James Ewart Racing

From the road south to Langholm or on the small road signposted to Hawick, you can view the Craig's sand ride for training racehorses. The family are also developing, in conjunction with others, one of the first medicinal cannabis-growing sites in the country.

The Malcolm Family

The Malcolm family lived at Burnfoot which is a mansion situated further south, on the same side of the river as Westerhall. Four of the sons from this family were knighted for services. One, Sir Pulteney Malcolm, was knighted for guarding Napoleon on St Helena while Sir John Malcolm was a soldier and diplomat during colonial times in India. The monument on Whita Hill at Langholm is to Sir John.

Walking

There are some lovely walks in the area including to Greensykes bothy from Jamestown. You can park at Jamestown just over the small bridge (barns are on the right) and take the track that runs for a while north alongside the river. Continue into the hills for a couple of miles going through a few gates, remembering to shut them, before dropping down where you will see the cottage on your right. The bothy is managed by the Mountain Bothies Association. If you plan to stay overnight follow the code which is on the website <https://www.mountainbothies.org.uk/>.

Parking is available at Bentpath Hall from where you can walk up the road on one side of the valley to En-

zieholm bridge and down the other – this walk is all on roads however but is reasonably quiet, particularly on the east side of the river.

Cycling

The roads are relatively quiet and there is good cycling from Bentpath or Langholm through Westerkirk to Eskdalemuir and back – you can cycle up one side of the valley and down the other – particularly if you like hill climbing challenges. There are no mountain bike tracks as such although there are some forest tracks that can be used.



Ewes Valley

Photograph by Stan Wilson

EWES

Ewes is a small parish due north of Langholm cut in two by the A7 road which is said to be the 'scenic road' to Edinburgh. It was another sheep farming community but that is changing as some land is now being forested. The Ewes is a tributary of the Esk. There is a history of Ewes in a book – follow the link <http://www.mcvittie.co.uk/Ewes.htm>

Getting there

The best way to get to the Ewes valley is by driving south from Hawick down the A7 or north from Langholm.

Places to stay

There are self catering cottages in the Ewes Valley.

Places to eat

There are no shops, cafés or restaurants in Ewes although occasionally pizza is available at the Arkleton Walled Garden.

PLACES TO VISIT

Arkleton Walled Garden

This Victorian walled garden has been restored in recent years and is open during the Summer months for small events and you can pick your own flowers. There is also a glamping wagon there for rent. <https://the-walled-garden.co.uk/> DG13 OHL 013873 80830

Hermitage Castle

Hermitage Castle is the most intact castle in the area and is approximately 16 miles north east of Langholm. Access is from the A7 in the Ewes Valley and from Newcastleton and Liddesdale. This castle was

built to help control the Scottish and English border area in the fourteenth century. The border area was divided into 'marches' and Hermitage castle was created for peacekeeping purposes in the middle march where the border reivers were extremely active. The Armstrongs and Elliots were particularly known in the area. The castle is an impressive building sitting in a small valley and is associated with Mary Queen of Scots who rode there from Jedburgh to visit the Earl of Bothwell who had been wounded. He later became her third husband. The castle is managed by Historic Environment Scotland and it is best to check their website for opening times. www.historicenvironment.scot 013873 76222 Newcastleton TD90LU

Walking

If you park at Ewes Hall there are several walks you can do. One of the popular walks is the Meikledale Walk – see Walk 14 in the Langholm Walks book where you can find the details of the route.

You can purchase these books at the Welcome to Langholm shop. <http://www.langholmwalks.co.uk/map14.htm>

Cycling

The A7 is a busy trunk road but there is a cycle route from Langholm up the Ewes valley for approximately eight miles. You then turn east towards Hermitage Castle, carry on towards Newcastleton and back over the hill road through the Tarras valley to Langholm. This route has some challenging hills and is not for inexperienced cyclists.



The Church at Canonbie

Photograph by Sharon Tolson

CANONBIE

Canonbie is the parish at the southern end of the Esk valley and is situated in the heart of what was the Debateable land – an area of land which during the sixteenth century didn't belong to either Scotland or England. Canonbie had an Augustinian priory which was founded from Jedburgh Abbey and there are still place names such as Priorslynn which bear testimony to that.

The area was the homeland of the border reivers and just across the border at Netherby was a Roman settlement called Castra Exploratum which means Fort of the Scouts. Like many other border places there are few surviving buildings from earlier times because they would have been razed to the ground on a regular basis. One of the exceptions is Gilnockie Tower.

Settlements in Canonbie parish are Canonbie, Harelaw, Rowanburn, a former mining village, Evertown known locally as Glenzier, Gilnockie and Claygate.

Getting there

The village now known as Canonbie is the largest of the settlements in the parish and was previously known as the Bowholm. Canonbie can be reached easily from the south or north on the A7 and is only a short drive from Carlisle or the M74 at Gretna. The river Esk runs through it and attracts people for fishing.

Places to stay

The Crosskeys Hotel offers accommodation at the centre of the village and there are also self-catering

holiday homes and Airbnbs nearby.
013873 71010

Places to eat

The Crosskeys Hotel in the village is open regular hours although there is also a community café held at the Church and run by volunteers.

Car charging points

There are two car charging points at the doctor's surgery in Canonbie.
DG130UY

Places to visit

Kirkandrews upon Esk Church

Just across the Border from Canonbie, accessible from the A7 and well worth a visit is the Church of Kirkandrews upon Esk. It is Georgian in design and the interior was created in an Italian style. There is parking available at the Church. <https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Kirkandrews-upon-Esk-Church-1481582428774886/>

Gilnockie Tower and the Clan Armstrong Centre

Gilnockie Tower which houses the Clan Armstrong Centre is situated near the village known as the Halls, just to the north of Canonbie. It was a borders peel tower and has been sympathetically restored by its current owner. It is open to the public daily and is well worth a visit. As well as the border reiver history you can find out more about the history of the Armstrong family and about Neil Armstrong's connection to Langholm. Neil Armstrong, first man to set foot on the moon was made a Freeman of Langholm in 1972 when he and his wife visited the town.



Border Reivers at Gilnockie Tower

Photograph by Mairi Telford Jammeh

gt@gilnockietower.co.uk 013873
71373 <https://gilnockietower.co.uk/>

ROWANBURN

The village of Rowanburn was a station on the branch railway line between Langholm and Carlisle which joined the Waverley line coming from Hawick south at Riddings Junction. There was also a railway station at Gilnockie. Rowanburn was a coal mining village and the miner row cottages have been upgraded by their owners and can be seen on the right hand side as you drive up from Canonbie. There is evidence of mining in the painted wheel at the entrance to the village when arriving from Canonbie. You can also see Border reiver heritage in a large carved wooden statue of Lang Sandy a very tall and notable man. The people of Rowanburn keep the old phone box stocked with jams and home baking for purchase using an honesty box. Take a look inside!

Other places of interest

Play park

There's a small children's play park on the playing fields next to Canonbie Hall.

Events

Canonbie Hall is where the annual Flower Show is held. There is fierce competition in flower and vegetable growing, crafts, home baking, crook making, photography and a number of other classes. There are also special classes for young people. Games are held on the playing field adjacent to the Hall and you can see displays of vintage cars and tractors. It is a sociable day out and refreshments

are available.

Walking

There are some lovely walks in the Canonbie area and there are interpretation boards at various points which give some information and other facts about the history.

The Fairy Loup: This is walk 12 in the Langholm walks book. The Fairy Loup is a waterfall. The word 'loup' means jump and is also mentioned in relation to one of the sets of standing stones at Eskdalemuir – the 'loupin' stanes'.

Cycling

As mentioned above the A7 is a busy trunk road but there are several circular routes that can be taken in the Canonbie area which follow the quieter roads in the area. Mountain biking is available at Newcastleton which is one of the 7 Stanes. <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/activities/mountain-biking/7stanes>

Other sports

Tennis: the tennis courts beside the village hall have recently been refurbished and information is available through the Canonbie tennis club facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/431590574568001>

Green bowling: there is green bowling beside the village hall in the centre of Canonbie.