

Directions



- Distance:** 18 miles (29 km). The route can be shortened by taking the blue dotted line.
- Start point:** Holme Cultram Abbey.
- Grade:** Moderate.
- OS Map No:** 314, 1:25 000 scale.
- Refreshments:** Shop and The Wheatsheaf in Abbeytown.
Joiner's Arms, Newton Arlosh.
- Toilets:** Holme Cultram Abbey.

It is recommended that this cycle tour starts at **Holme Cultram Abbey**. Inside, there is a useful exhibition explaining how the abbey has influenced the character of the area by draining the marshes, establishing granges, producing salt, raising sheep and cattle and even building a 'new town' at Newton Arlosh. Many of these monastic influences can be seen along the way.

This route follows relatively quiet roads and encircles **Wedholme Flow** – a nationally important wetland area that had been damaged through drainage and peat cutting. It has since been restored to provide a rich wetland habitat. Other wetland areas can be seen from the road near Moorhouse and Oulton.

This cycle ride has been designed to utilise quiet country roads as much as possible, though there are sections where cycling along busier B roads is required.

Wedholme Flow



Holme Cultram Abbey

Good cycling guide:

- Always follow the Highway Code.
- Cycle on roads, byways, bridleways and cycle paths (but not on footpaths).
- Take special care at junctions, cycling downhill or on loose gravel.
- Give way to pedestrians, horse riders and wheelchair users.
- Ring your bell or call out to warn people of your approach.
- Don't assume that other road users can always hear or see you.
- Follow the Country Code.
- Respect crops, livestock and wildlife.
- Take all litter home.
- Ensure your bike is road-worthy.
- Use your lights in poor visibility.
- Wear a helmet and bright clothing.
- Carry a spare inner tube, levers and pump.

Please take care when cycling. Solway Coast National Landscape is not responsible for issues arising as a result of the road conditions.

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Front cover:
Cyclists at Holme Cultram Abbey.



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Abbeytown Circuit

A self-guided cycle route in the
Solway Coast National Landscape



**Solway Coast
National
Landscape**

A gentle cycle tour starting from Holme Cultram Abbey, linking several places associated with the abbey. The route encircles Wedholme Flow, a nationally important nature reserve, and passes through a string of rural villages where natural and human environments sit side by side.

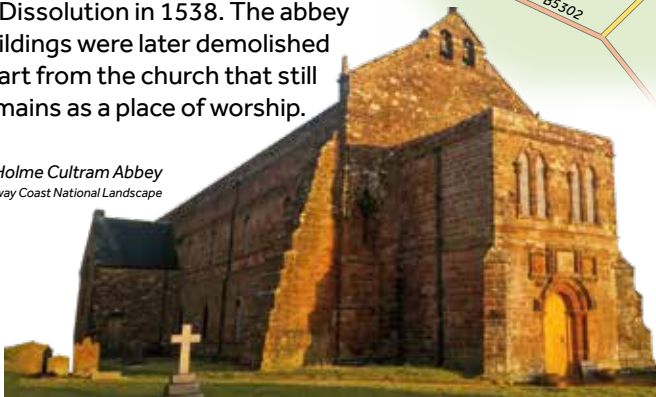


Holme Cultram Abbey

Holme Cultram Abbey

Founded c.1150 by Cistercian monks from Melrose Abbey in Scotland. The original name for the area was Culterham, but 'Holme' was added by Norse settlers to describe an island or dry area within the wetlands. Once the monks arrived, they began to cultivate the land by draining the marshes, felling trees, planting crops, introducing sheep and establishing granges (monastic farms). They also made salt, farmed fish and smelted metal. The abbey grew wealthy on the proceeds, extending its influence over the whole area until the Act of Dissolution in 1538. The abbey buildings were later demolished apart from the church that still remains as a place of worship.

Holme Cultram Abbey
© Solway Coast National Landscape



Newton Arlosh

When a storm c.1304 destroyed the port at Skinburness, the inhabitants moved inland to a new town at Arlosh, which became Newton Arlosh. Around this time, St John's Church was built. It is a good example of a defensive church that provided refuge for villagers during Scottish raids in the thick-walled tower. The main door is unusually narrow, so that only one person could pass through at a time.



St John's Church, Newton Arlosh



Bog asphodel

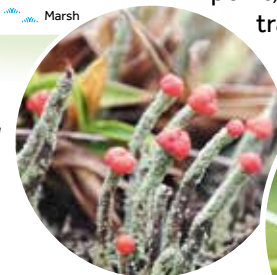
Wedholme Flow

One of three sites forming the South Solway Mosses National Nature Reserve. Wedholme Flow was significantly damaged by peat extraction but recent restoration work has ensured it has once again become an important habitat for bog flora and fauna. From the entrance point, there are 3 waymarked trails to choose from.

Kirkbride Airfield

Established in World War Two to provide storage and maintenance support for aircraft before they were delivered to a front-line unit. Many of the aircraft hangars and buildings still survive.

Red-tipped matchstick lichen



Banded demoiselle

