

Directions



This 4.5-mile circular route partly follows the King Charles III Coast Path – a 2,700-mile National Trail around the coastline of England.

- Start:** Rockcliffe Village Green (small car park and roadside parking).
- Distance:** 4.5 miles/7.1 km
- Grade:** Easy
- OS Map No:** 315, 1:25 000 scale.
- Refreshments:** Crown & Thistle public house.
- Toilets:** Crown & Thistle for patrons only.
- Dog walkers:** Keep your dog on a lead and under control during the bird breeding season. Please bag and bin your dog's poo.
- Tides:** This area is liable to flooding, so please check the tide times and the weather before you embark on this walk.

From the start point, walk up the road to Castletown Farm, then take the footpath to gently descend to the river. Follow signs for the England Coast Path with Castletown House on your right. Beyond Demesne Farm, you will arrive at the sea dyke – a 1.5 mile/ 2.5 km-long embankment that follows the edge of the marshes. Walk along enjoying extensive views over the saltmarshes, with Anthorn Radio Masts in the far distance. Eventually, a signpost will direct you to turn away from the sea dyke and along a field boundary.

At the end, turn left onto a track. Turn right on the road to Gun Cottage. Turn right again and continue on the road for one mile past Castletown House. At the lodge, go straight over and follow the road, taking the next right to Castletown Farm. At this point, the road bends round to the left to follow the river – at which point you will have rejoined the path back to Rockcliffe.

Birdwatchers on the sea dyke



Remember the Countryside Code

Respect other people:

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment:

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors:

- Plan ahead and be prepared

Please note this is a suggested walking route. Solway Coast National Landscape is not responsible for issues arising as a result of conditions on the footpaths and roads.



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Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



**Cumberland
Council**

All information correct at time of going to press.

Rockcliffe Marsh

A self-guided walk in the
Solway Coast National Landscape



**Solway Coast
National
Landscape**

A place where land meets sea, where the River Eden flows past before discharging its waters in the Solway estuary and where red sandstone cliffs line the banks – giving the village its name.

Wharfs and quays once stretched along the tidal reaches of the river at Rockcliffe. Whisky and salt were regularly smuggled in from Scotland; with the locals using a variety of means to outwit the customs men. It was a busy village where once there were 8 public houses; now only one remains.

Rockcliffe

Near where the waters of the River Eden empty into the Solway Firth lies the small village of Rockcliffe nestling around a church with an ancient foundation and a pub called the Crown & Thistle in reference to its location close to the Scottish border.

St Mary's Church with its graceful spire is pure Victorian (1848), but it stands on a much older site of worship, as testified by a 1000-year-old Norse cross in the churchyard.



The Crown & Thistle

River Eden

The river flows in a northerly direction for some 90 miles from its source in the Mallerstang Valley through the beautiful Eden Valley to Carlisle before passing Rockcliffe. Here the river is in its final stage before the waters empty into the Solway Firth. Along its whole course are 10 stone sculptures known as Eden Benchmarks.

Eden Benchmark

Entitled 'Global Warming' by Anthony Turner, the reddish colour and curious amorphous shape of this final Benchmark is synonymous with a world that is overheating, whilst at the same time nurturing hope of continuing life.



Esk Boathouse

For centuries, this building served as an inn for travellers but was also involved in the smuggling trade. Not all its occupants were dishonest though, as the external plaque records.

*Here Honest Will the Boatman rowt on
Gentle and simple he did guide
To either Scotch or English side ...
An' none did ever dread the tide
Wi' Will the Boatman*



Pink-footed goose

Rockcliffe Marshes

A vast area of saltmarshes, creeks and mudflats that attract huge flocks of geese, winter migrants and other waterfowl.

Sea Dyke

Built in 1963 to protect the fields from flooding. It now provides an elevated walk along the King Charles III England Coast Path with extensive views over Rockcliffe Marsh.



Castletown House

Castletown House

The estate was purchased by Robert Mounsey, a Carlisle solicitor, who commissioned the distinguished architect, Peter Nicholson, to build a well-proportioned mansion in a Grecian style. The house was completed in 1811 and is still owned by the same family to this day.



Old Hall

An old castle or tower house once stood on a rocky bluff above the River Eden. It was built by the Dacres but passed to the Howard family through marriage and then sold in 1682 to the Rev. Charles Usher for £15,000 – a sizeable amount in those days. He demolished the castle and built the Old Hall in 1730.