



## The Knowe Church, Bewcastle

This beautiful little church is where many of the descendants of the border reivers have worshiped for centuries. It replaced an earlier Presbyterian chapel nearby, built by the congregation because they were "dissatisfied by the method of worship in the parish church." The official registers date its founding to 1788.

The first minister corrected a published account of the inhabitants, saying, "We lie, no doubt, at a distance from the polished part of the county, and like all people in similar situations may be behind others in point of civilisation. No part of the county has made greater advances than we have done for several years. For four years last I have not witnessed a single example of a woman going without stockings or shoes. As for cattle, beef, mutton, pork, butter etc we can dispute with any parish in the county."

See our farming exhibition; learn how the people of the fells make their living. Sit and absorb the peace here.

GR NY 533 779 **CA6 6PG**  
To Kirkandrews on Esk 16 miles

## Kirkandrews on Esk

Here on the northern frontier of the Roman Empire, still in England, (the border between Scotland and England starts upriver of the church) is an unexpectedly elegant Grade II\* Georgian church in a parkland setting, unusually on a north-south axis. This is the Debatable Land of the English/Scottish Border whose history and that of its reiving clans belies the peacefulness of the location.

Nearby are the Kirkandrews and Gilknockie pele towers, evidence of the lawless region. Near the A7 is the old Waverly railway line, the Scotsdyke station still clearly visible.

Just beyond the churchyard is a suspension bridge constructed in 1877 to replace the ferry used to bring worshippers across the river to church. There is a footpath along the river to Longtown.

To enjoy the interior telephone 01228 791466  
or 013873 80421

GR NY 391 719 **CA6 5NF**

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# OVER THE WALL

A SHORT TOUR  
NORTH OF  
HADRIAN'S WALL



Kirkandrews on Esk



**T**here is more to see here than the Roman legacy: you might find that a refreshing change. Venture north beyond the wall on a short tour. You'll discover a tranquil landscape with a turbulent history and insights into more recent times on a 25 mile route from Gilsland to the Anglo-Scottish border. There are four suggested halts, all churches. They encapsulate the development of the communities who have lived here since the Romans departed and importantly offer parking from which you can explore the area. You don't have to go into them, but know that three are open during daylight hours. All have WWI war memorials.

**You might choose to drive, cycle or walk from one to another. Distances, postcodes and national grid references are listed under each entry.**



## St Mary Magdalene, Gilsland

This is a small, tranquil Victorian church, connected with the nearby Gilsland Spa – even the Romans used the curative waters. By the 1780s an hotel had been built. Sir Walter Scott visited and here met his future wife in 1797.

The owner of the hotel funded the building and endowment of a small church on his land for his guests and the people of the village in the valley below. The coming of the railway also saw the burgeoning of the village, previously three distinct hamlets, into a thriving tourist venue now given the name Gilsland after the spa it served.

After enjoying the tranquility of the church, wander through the romantic landscape of the Spa woods and Irthing Gorge – accessible from Gilsland Spa Hotel car park – stout footwear needed in winter!

Open daily during daylight hours  
[www.laverock.co.uk/gilsland](http://www.laverock.co.uk/gilsland)

GR NY 637 673 **CA8 7AR**

Gilsland to Bewcastle 11 miles  
*Most of the journey follows the Maiden Way,  
 a bridleway from Birdsawald*



## St Cuthbert's, Bewcastle

Here is a church with a rare eighth century Anglo Saxon cross in the churchyard, next to a ruined castle on the site of an unusual hexagonal Roman fort connected to Hadrian's Wall via the Maiden Way. Bewcastle church, cross and castle are part of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

Pevsner ranked the 8th century Bewcastle cross as one of the 12 most important monuments in Britain.

Farmed, lived in and fought over for three thousand years, Bewcastle still retains the rugged splendour of the border regions and is the home of the border reivers, many buried in the churchyard.

The simple church dates from the 13th century. Although plain it is imbued with a rare, deep peace. In the churchyard is an exhibition in the old schoolroom that covers the community's sometimes turbulent border history, the wildlife and the landscape.

Open daily during daylight hours  
[www.bewcastle.com](http://www.bewcastle.com)

GR NY 565 745 **CA6 6PS**

St Cuthbert's Bewcastle to the Knowe Church 4 miles