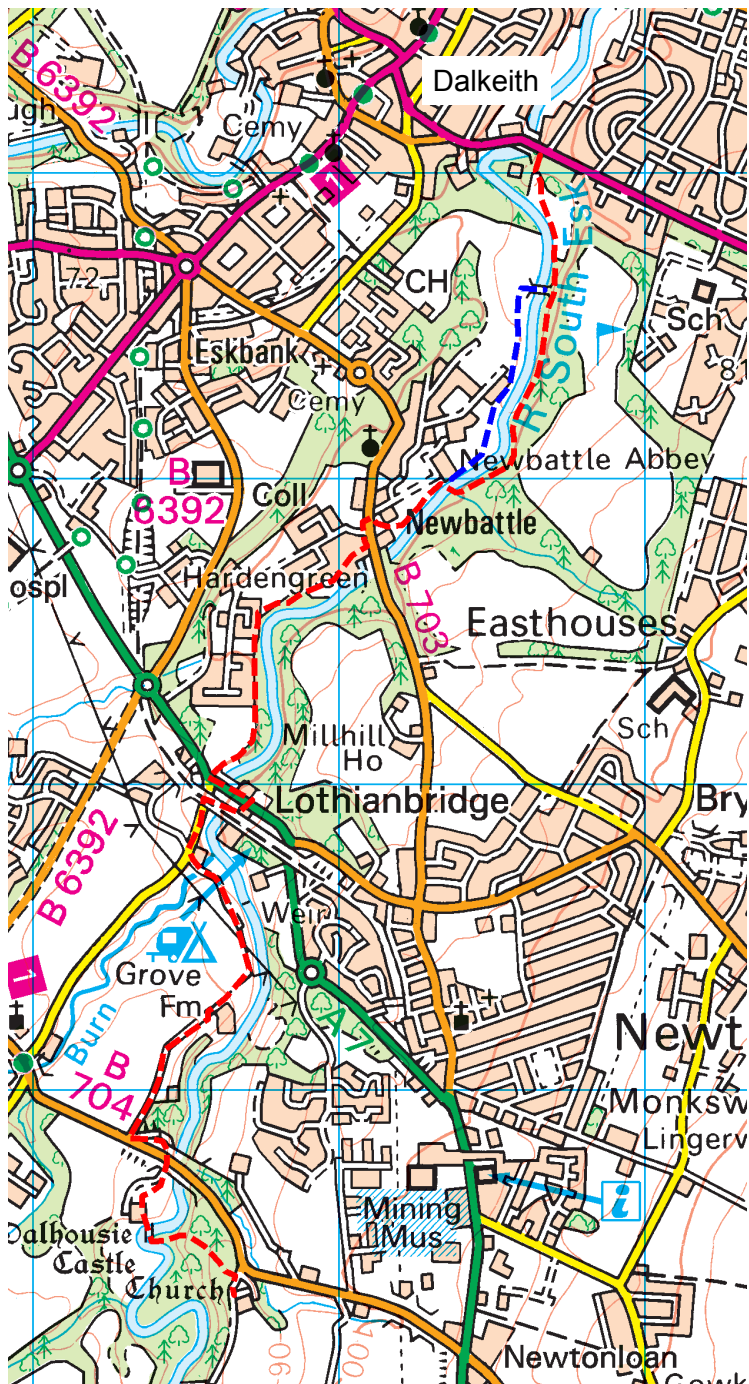


# Out and about in *Midlothian*



Old Cockpen Church (c.1148)

## Introduction

**Walk up the river South Esk from Dalkeith to the original Cockpen Church. On the way pass many historic places including The Maiden Bridge, Newbattle Abbey College, Lothian Viaduct and Dalhousie Castle Hotel. This walk is almost entirely off road.**

## Route Details

Start in Dalkeith near the bottom of Newmills Road. Follow the green sign for Waterfall Park and Eskbank. From here the walk follows the South Esk upstream for 3 miles. Walk through Waterfall Park to the Maiden Bridge (beware of golfers above you).

Continue on the same side of the river through a gate and woodland path until level with Newbattle Abbey College. Cross the new timber bridge beside the ice house. Turn left and follow the path round to the main drive gate. Exit the gate, turn left and cross Newbattle Road. Continue left past Newbattle Abbey Crescent for 30m then 1st right up a vehicle track between white painted wall ends. Follow the main path behind the houses (¾ mile). This section ends on the A7 beside the Sun Inn.

## Key Points of Interest

**Newbattle Abbey**  
a Cistercian monastery founded in 1140 by monks from Melrose.

**Lothian Viaduct** built for the Waverley line in 1849. Now in use again as the Borders Railway.

**Old Cockpen Church**  
C.1148

The route continues under the Lothian Bridge viaduct ahead. To cross safely, turn left and cross near the Sun Inn car park entrance then right, back to the road signed Carrington. Pass under the viaduct. In 150m, left beside a cottage, signed Dalhousie Bridge. This path passes the back of Grove Farm, onetime walled garden for Dalhousie Castle. Continue right, up the farm access road then left down Dalhousie Castle Hotel drive. Pass by the left side of the hotel and over the old stone bridge. Immediately after the bridge, turn left up a few steps and on up an old earth track. This can be muddy near the top. Cross the stile over the metal gate then turn right. In 70m old Cockpen church can be found tucked in behind trees on the left. There is evidence that this church has existed since 1148.

Return to Dalkeith by the same route. After crossing the main road at the Sun Inn, rejoin the river bank path. In 200m, turn right onto an informal riverside path until it rejoins the access track near Newbattle Road. Once back at Newbattle Abbey follow the left river bank, don't cross to the ice house but continue along the terrace to the golf course, then right over the Maiden bridge and left back to your starting point.

## Walk

**Dalkeith to old Cockpen Church via South Esk**

**Distance:** 6.5 miles / 9km (return)

**Ascent:** 360ft / 110m

**Time:** 2¼ hours

**Terrain:** Almost entirely off road • Low level • a little tarmac • mainly well marked paths • a few muddy places.

**OS Map:** No 66 Edinburgh

**Start point:**  
Near bottom of Newmills Rd, Dalkeith

Grid ref:- NT 337 670

**For Sat Nav users:**

**Lat:** 55.89160' N  
**Long:** 03.06021' W

**Public transport:** Yes

**Car Parking:** Yes

**Refreshments:** In Dalkeith

Route: Ian Brown

Photos: Ian Brown