

WALK 1: PENPONT - KEIR MILL CIRCULAR

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Situated in the Nithsdale area of Dumfries and Galloway, the villages of Keir Mill, Penpont and Tynron (KPT) fall partly in the Thornhill Uplands Regional Scenic Area. The northerly reaches of KPT lie in the Southern Uplands, where the historic parishes of Penpont and Tynron are bisected by the Scaur and the Shinnel rivers which tumble down dramatic lowland glens to Keir Mill, where they join the river Nith. The beautiful hills, dales and plains of the KPT area have a vibrant cultural, environmental and historical heritage just waiting to be explored, with walks and hikes for everyone.

The KPT Development Trust was founded in 2017 to benefit the larger KPT community, through contributions from the three villages plus funding from external sources.

WITH THANKS TO:

- Paths For All - www.pathsforall.org.uk
- KPT Joint Community Benefit Fund
- Keir, Penpont and Tynron Community Councils
- The residents of the communities of Keir, Penpont and Tynron
- Discover Kirkmahoe - www.kirkmahoe.com

Photography ©Susan Hall 2019

Route descriptions and maps by KPT Footpaths

Please respect the Scottish Outdoor Access Code:

<http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot>

- **Respect the interests of other people**
Respect the privacy, safety and livelihoods of those living or working in the outdoors, and the needs of other people enjoying the outdoors.
- **Care for the environment**
Look after the places you visit and enjoy, and leave the land as you find it.
- **Take responsibility for your own actions**
Remember that the outdoors cannot be made risk-free and act with care at all times for your own safety and that of others.

Please keep dogs on leads when around cattle and farmlands, and dispose of their mess responsibly.



WALK 1: PENPONT - KEIR MILL CIRCULAR

A circular, low level route along the tree-lined banks of the beautiful Scaur and quiet country lanes. With stunning views, wonderful wildlife and the history of the bicycle, there's a lot packed into this short walk.

A mostly uneven, rough, earthy path, occasionally narrow, along the river. Exposed tree roots in places. Can be very muddy underfoot. There is no barrier between path and the river. One wide gate, one bridge and a set of steep steps, plus access onto public roads. Some short, gentle slopes.



3½ miles / 5.5 km
Allow 1.5 hours

Grid reference: NX 847 945
Postcode: DG3 4BP

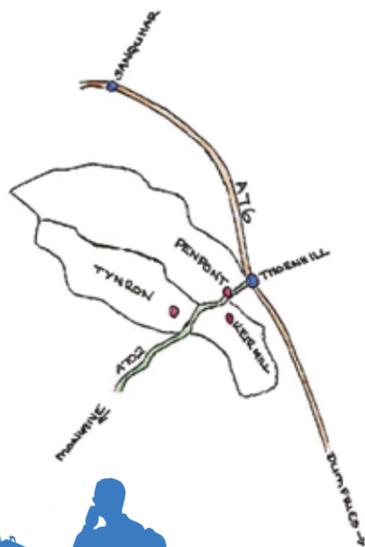


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The KPT Community

HOME OF:

- The Keir Hills and the Scaur and Shinnel Glens
- The Bicycle
- Tynron Doon
- Allan's Cairn
- Andy Goldsworthy Artwork
- Tibbers Castle
- Tynron Conservation Area
- Spectacular Scenery
- Red Kites and Red Squirrels
- Covenanted History
- Cycle and Walking Routes for all abilities



KEIR, PENPONT & TYNRON FOOTPATHS

Presented by KPT Tracks and Trails
A KPT Development Trust 'Connecting Our Communities' Group



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kpttandt



kptdevtrust



1

This low level walk explores scenic riverside paths and quiet country roads. Parking is available in Penpont. There is a shop and a cafe (limited opening hours) on Main Street, and public toilets on Marrburn Road. The walk is in total approximately 3.5 miles/ 5.5 km, and will take about one and a half hours.

Penpont is at grid reference NX 847 945, postcode DG3 4BP.



2

From the crossroads in the centre of the village, walk south down Keir Road for approximately 200 metres. You will have fine views of Penpont Church, built in 1867 in the red sandstone common in the area. Cross the stone bridge over the River Scaur and then go through the small gate on your left hand side immediately after. Cross a small field, where locals used to enjoy a game of tennis in years gone by, before emerging on the banks of the Scaur.

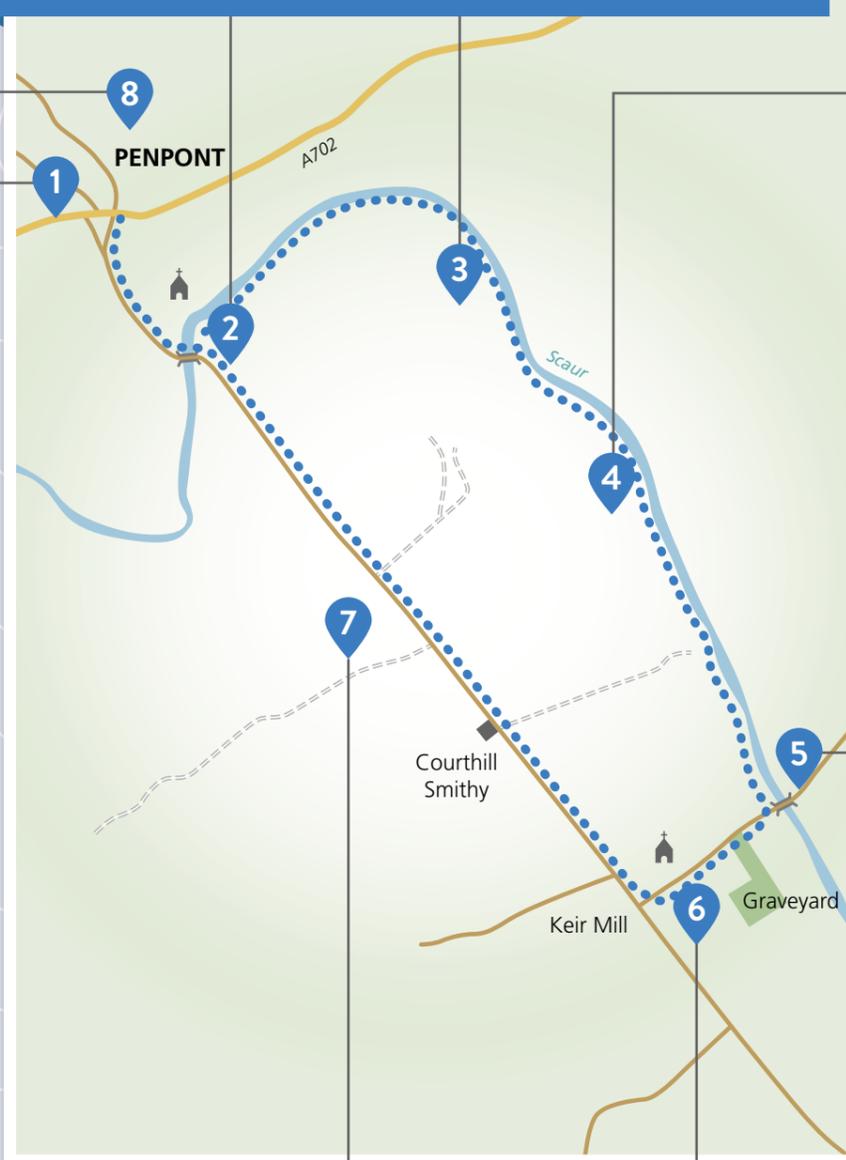


3

The path along the river is lined with native trees, and there are thick carpets of bluebells and snowdrops early in the year. Benches along the way invite you to admire the view and take in the beautiful scenery, or perhaps you might watch for dippers or nuthatches.



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4

The path edges are defined by old bricks, if you look carefully you can spot many different ones, but they all originate from the buildings at local coal mines owned by the Duke of Buccleuch. When the buildings were demolished the bricks were transported to Penpont for use in the construction of the path.



8



Returning into Penpont village you can find out more about the local heritage of the KPT community at the Joseph Thomson Local Heritage Centre on Marrburn Road (limited opening hours), which is the birthplace of renowned African explorer Joseph Thomson (1858-1896). Close to Penpont church is the beautiful war memorial, created by William Kellock Brown and erected in 1920. Just outside Penpont on the A702 towards Thornhill you can see the Millennium Cone by local sculptor Andy Goldsworthy.



5

At the end of this stretch of path cross a small wooden bridge, and go up the steps that lead onto Mortonholm Road at the distinctive metal bridge. You can either return directly back the way you came along the river, or turn right toward the village of Keir Mill.



7

This long, straight section of road passes Keir's old school, and on the right hand side there are lovely open views of Keir Mill village and its church, built in 1815 of local Capenoch ashlar stone, as well as the distant Lowther Hills. To the left lie the Keir Hills and the Scaur and Shinnel Glens beyond. The road takes you past Courthill Smithy, home of the world's first pedal bicycle invented by Kirkpatrick Macmillan. Follow this road back into Penpont.



6

Cycling enthusiasts can take a small detour off this road to the old graveyard, where the inventor of the world's first pedal bicycle, Kirkpatrick Macmillan (1813-1878), is buried along with his family. The path to the graveyard skirts by an old water mill built in 1771, which is now a house. Returning back to Mortonholm Road, turn left back towards the T junction then turn right back to Penpont (there is a signpost here to Penpont).

