

# KIRK DAM – ROUTE 1

**Route:** Churchyard via Kirk dam, Loch Fad road and causeway; rising to the B881.

**Start point coordinates:** 55.82879,-5.05722

**Length:** 3.0 km

**Terrain:** Mostly good, made path and roadway; final section involves steep climb through a grassy field.

## As you travel

We are often in a hurry to start tasks. Before setting out, pause in the lower graveyard overlooking Kirk Dam, and listen. Use this place to gather your thoughts. Nature inhabits this place; grasses, mosses, yew trees, birds of all kinds – you may even glimpse goldcrest. Early ornithologists thought that these tiny birds migrated on the backs of woodcocks, giving them their name – woodcock pilot. As you set off today, allow your thoughts to be guided by what you see, hear, and feel.

Walking over Kirk Dam and through the woods, you are at the end of a considerable network of streams and channels, built to provide power for the cotton mills of Rothesay. Humans, channelling nature for their own use. Nature has reclaimed the dammed valley now, as it will reclaim everything we build.

Turning towards Loch Fad, you leave the township behind. The hill to your right, Barone Hill, has been home to many across the ages. Stone age, early and late iron-age dwellers lived here; leaving their mark with a standing stone, a crannog, and a fort. To your left you see a mound beside the Kirk Dam water – Balilone – an iron-age dun, a fortified dwelling house. People have walked along these hills and fished the loch shore for millennia. We are not new to this landscape.

Climb from Loch Fad to the road, and pause to look down on the valley below, running through the island from northeast to southwest. This is the Highland Boundary Fault, separating the central lowlands from the highlands. A division in the old tectonic plates that formed this area.

## Think as you go

**John 1:1-3** In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through him, and apart from him, not one thing was created that has been created. ]

