Irvine Valley
Trails

You're free to explore the countryside – responsibly

What is widely known as the 'right to roam' gives everyone a right of access to enjoy the outdoors responsibly.

As you explore the countryside, take care of the surroundings by taking your litter home and picking up after your dog. Be aware of your impact on the landscape and do not disturb wildlife.

Respect the interests of those working and living in the countryside by leaving gates as you find them and avoiding fields that are being ploughed or harvested.

Respect people's privacy and peace of mind, especially at night. Also, be mindful of your own safety. Keep alert for possible hazards and take extra care when with children.

KNOW THE CODE BEFORE YOU GO
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4 Strath
Path

How long and how easy?
The Strath Path is about 1.5 miles (2.4km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about half-an-hour alongside the river on a surfaced path. Other walks from here in Galston take you to paths through Cessnock Woods and to Burn Anne Walk.

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Galston Mill, 1965

Dipper

Loudoun Gowf Club

River Irvine

NEWMILNS

Mason's Holm

Barr Mill

Strath Mill

GALSTON

5 Cessnock
Woods

Thornwood

CESSNOCK CASTLE

Bank Wood

Cessnock

Burn Anne Walk

How long and how easy?
The triangular walk through Cessnock Woods is about 1 mile (1.6km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about half-an-hour along the surfaced path. There are some slopes towards the south.

You could link this trail to the Burn Anne Walk, a total of about 5 miles (8km).

Fish ladder

10 Darvel to Priestland
'Up the Bankers'

How long and how easy?
The Darvel to Priestland 'Up the Bankers' walk is about 1.3 miles (2.1km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about half-an-hour. Some of the hills are quite steep and not all the pathways have a hard surface. You could link it to the Dyke Walk or the Long Cairn Walk for more extended outings.

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Ranoldcoup Bridge, Darvel, 1975

Loudoun Hill

Priestland

High Greenbank Farm

Long Cairn Walk

Cemetery

Quiet road to Strathaven

DARVEL

Priestland

Newlands

Loudoun Hill

How long and how easy?
The Up the Line to Loudoun Hill walk is about 3 miles (5km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about an hour-and-a half.

The path is mostly surfaced and gives you expansive views across the Irvine Valley. There are stiff climbs at Loudoun Hill.

12 Up the Line to
Loudoun Hill

'The Spirit of Scotland' sculpture at Loudoun Hill

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Tales along the trails

The valley of the River Irvine is full of delights and surprises. It's here for you to explore by following our network of trails. Many of them link up to make longer walks.

As the seasons change, so do the trees, plants, birds, animals and other wildlife you can see and enjoy. You'll also discover how people have adapted nature for farming and industry.

The long and the short of it
From the 14 Irvine Valley Trails shown below, we've described in detail six of the most popular. Some will take a couple of hours or more; some only half-an-hour. Paths are signposted and there's lots to find out on the way.

1   Grougar Walk
The River Irvine is home to spawning salmon and trout. Watch for kingfishers, dippers and grey wagtails.

2   Armsheugh Woodland
Trees grow above the Volga Burn, sparrow hawks hover overhead and bats fly out at dusk hunting for midges.

3   Sir Chris Hoy Cycleway
The 3-mile (5km) route along the Hurlford to Galston railway line links to other quiet lanes and roads.

4   Strath Path
The river once powered textile mills. Now it's home to white otters, trout, salmon and fleeting kingfishers.

5   Cessnock Woods
Spring flowers, summer bird-song, autumn colours and raptors in winter make this a wood for all seasons.

6   Burn Anne Walk
Follow the 'Burnawn' through woodland and then head for open farmland along quiet roads with views of Arran.

7   Big Wood
There are lots of little paths to explore in the woodland which is at its best in May when carpeted with bluebells.

8   Dyke Walk
A hilly but rewarding route through woodland and farmland with sweeping views of the Irvine Valley.

9   The Five Miler
This circular route starts where Foulpapple Road leads uphill past farmland to Mucks Water and Glen Water.

10 Darvel to Priestland 'Up the Bankers'
A steep climb leads up to farmland and then down to the Gower Water, a major tributary of the River Irvine.

11 The Weavers' Trail
Part of the path used by the handloom weavers of the Irvine Valley taking their lace to Glasgow and Paisley.

12 Up the Line to Loudoun Hill
Follow the route of the old railway, past relics of the viaduct, and then climb up Ayrshire's extinct volcano.

13 Quiet road to Strathaven
Look out for raptors searching for prey in fields and woodland and pass by many of the giant wind turbines.

14 Long Cairn Walk
Stroll past farmland alongside the Gower Water and then climb the hill to stand on top of Bronze Age cairns.

Hurlford
GALSTON
NEWMILNS
DARVEL
Priestland
Loudoun Hill

1km   1km   3km   4km   5km
1 Mile   2 Mile   3 Mile

1 Grougar Walk

How long and how easy?
The Grougar Walk is about 1 mile (1.6km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about half-an-hour along the surfaced path.

You could link it to the Armsheugh Woodland walk, adding about 2 miles (3.2km). However, there are short steep stretches in the woods and stepping stones across the Volga Burn.

Templetonburn
Sawhill
Hurlford

Kingfisher

2 Armsheugh Woodland

Woodhead Cottage
Armsheugh
Greenwood Bridge

How long and how easy?
The Armsheugh Woodland walk is a little over 1 mile (1.6km) long. At a modest pace, it takes about half-an-hour.

The path is partly-surfaced but there are short, steep stretches in the woods and uneven stepping stones over the burn. There's also a 'there-and-back' path alongside the fields. It's about 1 mile (1.6km) long.

Fly Agaric, fungus