

East Lothian coast

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Gullane and Aberlady Bay

Distance 9.5km **Time** 2 hours 30
Terrain coastal and countryside paths
 and tracks **Map** OS Explorer 351
Access buses from Edinburgh and North
 Berwick to Gullane

The section of coastline between Gullane and Aberlady is one of the finest in Scotland. An exquisite sandy beach backed by wind-ruffled dunes drifts along Gullane Bay to Gullane Point, beyond which is Aberlady Local Nature Reserve. A stretch of the John Muir Way returns to Gullane to complete one of East Lothian's best walks.

Begin by facing the ruin of St Andrews Kirk at the west end of Gullane's Main Street. It is thought that a church was first established here during the 800s, although most of what remains dates from later.

Turn left, then right onto West Links

Road and follow it to its end. Once through a gate beside Gullane No 1 Golf Course, bear right and climb steeply west up a grassy hill to the corner of a wall.

Here, pick up an obvious path that rises north, to the left of the wall, to gain the summit of Gullane Hill. The view from the top takes in the Pentland Hills and Edinburgh. Continue across the summit to pick up a track to the right of the 7th tee.

Follow this as it descends west. When it splits, keep right and continue, enjoying views over windswept Gullane Bents. When the path forks again, keep left, following the sign for Gullane Point to a waymarked path on the right. This carries on high above the coast, through dune grass, towards Hummell Rocks.

At a junction turn right onto a track and, just before a line of World War Two concrete block defences, keep right where

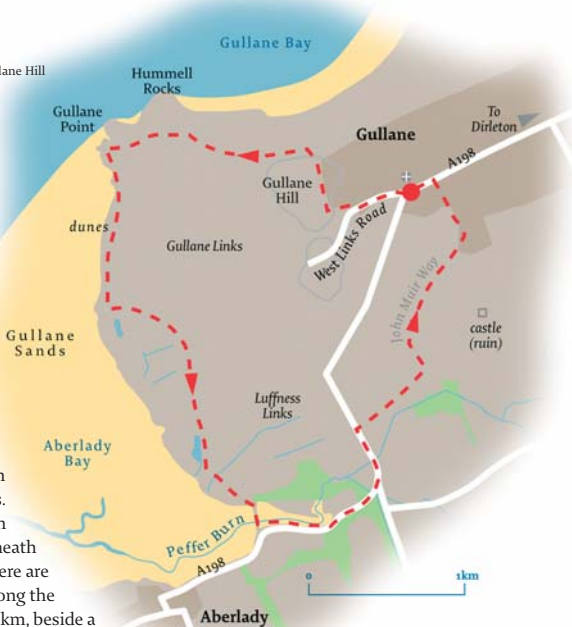
◀ The Pentlands from Gullane Hill

a path descends to a sandy beach at Hummell Rocks. Follow the path along the top of the beach, underneath steep dunes, keeping left at the next fork to reach Gullane Point. At a junction, go right onto a sandy path which swings left and drops down onto Gullane Sands.

This golden beach stretches south beneath huge dunes, and there are wonderful views along the coast. After nearly 1km, beside a large wooden stake, turn left away from the beach and climb over the dunes into Aberlady Local Nature Reserve.

During autumn, more than 30,000 pink-footed geese fly in from Iceland to feed before moving on during winter. Wheatears, whitethroat, blackcaps, redshank and lapwing may also be seen at different times of the year.

A good track heads east through the reserve. In a while turn right at a crossroads and continue south, soon passing through a pocket of woodland. You eventually leave the reserve via an old



wooden bridge to emerge at the A198. For a break, Aberlady is well worth the short detour (right) from here.

To continue the walk, turn left and follow the John Muir Way beside the A198 for around 1.5km. Just before the entrance to Luffness Links Golf Club, carefully cross the road and go through a gate. Here, the John Muir Way continues towards Gullane along a field-edge path.

Nearing Gullane, pass through a gate and keep straight on to Saltcoats Road. Turn left and return along Gullane Main Street.