

# Deep Time Trail at Siccar Point

## Accessibility Guidance



### Overview of the Deep Time Trail

The **Deep Time Trail at Siccar Point** was created in 2026 to mark the Tercentenary of the birth of James Hutton (1726-1797), the father of modern geology. The trail marks a significant improvement in the accessibility and interpretation of Siccar Point, widely recognised as one of the most important geological sites in the world. [You can find out more about the trail here.](#)

The Deep Time Trail was created by the Edinburgh Geological Society, with the support of many other organisations and individuals. We are committed to maintain the trail, and to work to further improve access to Siccar Point. Please respect your surroundings and other visitors. Follow the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#).

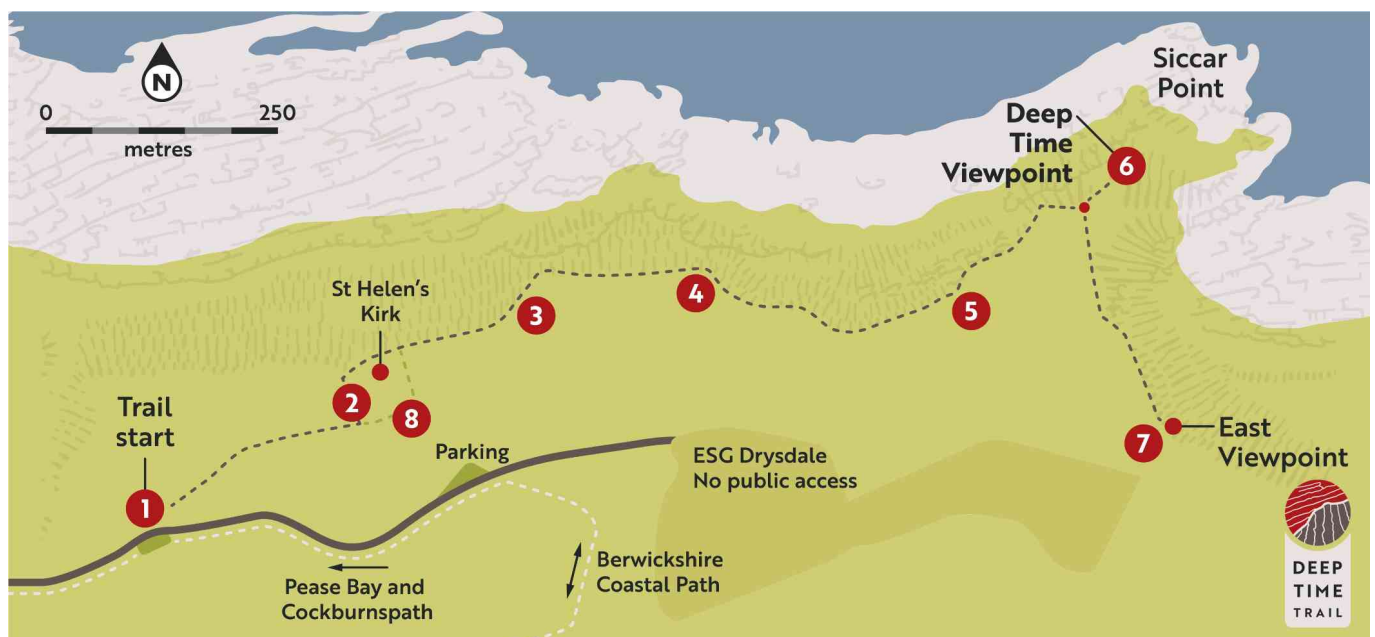
### Accessibility summary

The Deep Time Trail is a mostly level, step-free, grassy 1.3 km route from the nearest road to the viewpoint above Siccar Point. There are stony and uneven surfaces in places, with gradients of 10-15% for short sections. The route is at least 1m wide in all sections, and usually more than 2m wide.

At different times of year, the grass may be long, path surfaces might be muddy and there may be farm animals present. The biggest barrier to access are four “kissing gates” – these are swinging wooden gates between narrow posts, about 1m wide. While these are the preferred, safer barrier to keep farm animals in, they can be a barrier for access. Two of the kissing gates can be bypassed using wider field gates, as long as these are unlocked: this means most of the trail can be accessed without going through kissing gates, but you can only get to the viewpoints through kissing gates.

The Edinburgh Geological Society is keen to improve access, and we welcome feedback. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or suggestions, you would like to suggest improvements to this guide, or you would like to check on the current condition of the trail.

Contact **Angus Miller, Edinburgh Geological Society promotion coordinator**, [promotion@edinburghgeol soc.org](mailto:promotion@edinburghgeol soc.org) / +44 797 997 1310.



## Accessibility of the Deep Time Trail

Refer to map and numbered stops above.

### Parking / Trail start

There is a level parking area on the right side of the road. Please do not park on the left, as this blocks the lay-by and farm access. There is plenty more parking at the roadside further along the road, towards the ESG Drysdale site.



*Trail start point on the left, with parking on the right.*

### Trail start

On the left side of the road there is a lay-by (no parking). A vertical metal structure contains information panels. There are three bike racks.



*Start of the Deep Time Trail, with information panels and bike parking. The red arrow shows the start of the trail.*

### Route to stop 2

The trail starts with a short (10m) uphill section of rough track and a gradient of 10%. The track is unsurfaced, and used by farm vehicles so the surface is likely to change with time.

There is a narrow kissing gate on the right, but the wider field gate is currently missing and may not be replaced.

Go through the gate and turn right.



*First section of the trail, leading to a kissing gate.*

## Route to stop 2

After you go through the gate, the trail is level, wide and grassy for 200m. The grass may be long and the surface may be rutted.



*Grassy path towards St Helen's Kirk (church) and stop 2.*

## From stop 2 around the church

The grassy path turns north and descends with gentle gradient on the west side of St Helen's Kirk, following the church boundary wall, and turns right at the corner of the wall.

The next 50m of the track is used by farm vehicles and may be rough underfoot.



*West side of St Helen's Kirk (church), path descends to corner.*

## North side of the church

The route continues to a field gate / kissing gate at the north-west corner of the church boundary wall. There is a field gate (which is not usually locked) with a kissing gate at the side. On either side of the gates, the track is rough and used by farm vehicles.



*Gates at the north-west corner of St Helen's Kirk (church).*

### Route to stop 3

Beyond the gates, the route continues alongside a field wall and barbed wire fence. The path is wide, grassy and reasonably smooth.

There is a sustained climb, gradient about 10% for 200m to stop 3, where there is a bench.



*Grassy path alongside the wall / fence to stop 3.*

### Route to stop 4

The route continues on a wide grassy path, rising more gently for another 150m to stop 4, where there is a bench.

### Route to stop 5

The route continues on a wide grassy path, descending gently for about 300m to stop 5, where there is a bench.



*Grassy path alongside the wall / fence to stop 4.*

### Route to the Deep Time Viewpoint (stop 6)

The route continues on a wide grassy path alongside the wall / fence for about 250m to the path junction. For stop 6, the Deep Time Viewpoint, go through the kissing gate and follow the grassy, mostly level path for another 70m to the viewpoint structure.

The structure includes seating and there are two additional benches alongside.



*Kissing gate at path junction, with the stone structure at the Deep Time Viewpoint beyond.*

## Route to the East Viewpoint (stop 7)

From the path junction described above, the route continues south on a wide grassy path alongside the wall / fence for 200m to stop 7.

Stop 7 is accessed by a narrow kissing gate with no alternative access. There is a bench at stop 7.



*Stop 7, accessed through a narrow kissing gate.*

## Return route including stop 8

From stop 7, retrace the Deep Time Trail to the start point. At the north-west corner of St Helen's Kirk (church), instead of going through the gates, turn left to take the suggested return route via stop 8 (around the outside of the church boundary wall). On the approach to stop 8 there is a short, steep climb with a gradient of over 20%.



*Short, steep section on approach to stop 8.*

## Stop 8 and return to start

Turn right through the narrow gate to stop 8. The route is rough underfoot, and continues on a grassy path with a short section of descent to rejoin the outward route near stop 2.



*Narrow gate with stop 8 beyond.*

## Access to the rocks at Siccar Point (Hutton's Unconformity)

The Deep Time Trail described above is designed to take you to the viewpoint above Siccar Point. **The slope down to Siccar Point is steep and dangerous. We do not recommend descending to the rocks. They are best observed from the designated viewpoints.**

Some people descend to the rocks by following a steep fence line which has a rope attached. **This rope is unauthorised and untested. It is very strongly recommended that groups of people do not use this rope.**

While it is not recommended, there is an alternative route that zig-zags down the main part of the slope below the viewpoint structure.



*Steep grassy slope below the Deep Time Viewpoint. **We do not recommend descending to the rocks.** If you decide to go down the slope, at your own risk, the red arrows show the approximate position of a route that avoids the steep fence line.*

In recognition of the importance of Siccar Point, and its value for hands-on teaching for geologists, the Edinburgh Geological Society is actively considering how safer access could be achieved down the slope to the rocks. This will only happen after extensive consultation with interested parties. Comments, ideas and financial contributions are welcome.