

CAN YOU DIG IT?

YES WE CAN!

ARE WE THERE YET?

We want to challenge you to a bit of a treasure hunt...for milestones!

Did you know that these stoic waymarkers can be hundreds of years old?

Milestones have been around since Roman times, but their heyday really began in the 1700s. They were designed not only to inform travellers of directions and distances, but to help coaches keep to schedule. At the height of their era, there were 20,000 miles of roads with milestones across Britain.

Check out The Milestone Society website (www.milestonesociety.co.uk) for more details on their history.

A large number of these mileposts have been lost from road realignment, broadening and other improvements throughout the centuries, but many remain hidden in plain sight both along the side of country roads and also in our towns.

CAN YOU HELP US FIND OUT HOW MANY STILL STAND WITHIN THE GALLOWAY GLENS?

We can create a map of where the milestones once sat, but we need your help to find out if they're still there and what condition they're in. Some photos would be great too!

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

Why not make it the focus of some of your next walks or trips out, on your own or with family and friends?

We can give you the map, assign each milestone with its own unique number and provide you with a simple recording form to help you take notes.

TIPS ON PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR MILESTONE:

1. Feel free to take photographs from more than one direction to give views of the milestone from all angles.
2. Take some photographs that have the milestone filling the frame, but also include one or two that are taken from a few metres away – it's great to have a view of the feature in its setting to show what it sits on, what it's next to and its distance from the roadside.
3. Close ups of any interesting details are also helpful, particularly any inscriptions, decoration or even later graffiti or defacing – it's all a part of its history!
4. Please avoid having people in your photographs – this would bring up concerns over consent and we'd like the images to be available as a public resource.
5. We're not looking for professional-level photography here, don't worry. Whatever you can capture is great and if it's just one shot taken with your phone then we'd still love to have it!



PRO TIP

www.what3words.com have assigned each 3m square in the world a unique three-word address that will never change. You can download their free app and use it to record the unique three-word address for your milestone.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A CAMERA?

If you don't have access to a camera or camera phone, then no problem. You can still record the milestone's location and give us a description. Then it'll be on record for people to visit it later if they want to take a photograph.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A PRINTER?

If you don't have access to a printer then just download our recording form to a mobile device or take a note of the headings as a guide for what you need to write down.

WHAT IF THE MILESTONE SITS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Please do not enter private property without the permission of the landowner. If a milestone sits in private land and you're unable to get permission, then you can still record and photograph it from a public space. This might mean that it'll be from a distance, but this will still have value and more importantly, will respect the privacy of any residents.

WHAT IF THE MILESTONE'S NOT THERE?

We want to know that too! Many milestones were removed or defaced in World War II to baffle potential German invaders – another interesting part of their history! Be sure to check a bit further around the area just in case its been moved or is hidden in vegetation. It's also possible that the line of the road has changed and the milestone might now sit further back. Also check to see if there are any remaining traces, such as a base or even just a depression in the ground – take a quick snap if you do spot anything!

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THE INFORMATION?

We'll use the information to create a database of the milestones within the Galloway Glens area. This and any photographs will then be forwarded to the Dumfries and Galloway Council Archaeology Service who will add each site as a record into the Historic Environmental Record. This will preserve the knowledge and make it publicly available, but it will also highlight the milestones as a consideration for any future developments proposed in their area.

ANY MORE QUESTIONS ?

If you have any questions about this project, just email helen.keron@dumgal.gov.uk or get in touch with us through the 'Can You Dig It' Facebook or Twitter accounts (@GGLPArchaeology).

You can also let us know how you get on – feel free to share with us through email or on social media what you've managed to find – we're always interested, and love a good photograph! Simply tag us by including @GGLPArchaeology in your post or tweet.

CHECKLIST

You will need to take with you:

- A copy of the milestone map from us, and the location of your selected stones.
- A copy of the recording form, or pen and paper with headings for notes.
- A camera or phone with camera.
- A tape measure or ruler for measuring dimensions.
- Some way of logging its location – either a smart phone with What3Words downloaded, a GPS or a good old-fashioned map!
- Clothes and shoes suitable for the task – see our safety tips below.

STAY SAFE:

This project involves working near roadsides, and your safety is more important than anything else – these stones have been around a while and they'll be around for a while yet! A few tips to consider:

- **Stick to daylight hours** and avoid weather where visibility is poor, such as fog or mist.
- **Avoid bad weather** such as snow or ice. Remember rain will also make a grass verge slippery.
- **Stay vigilant for passing vehicles** and follow the highway code when walking along or crossing roads.
- **Don't stand on the road while doing any recording** – do all notes and photography at a safe distance from the roadside. If you can't get close to the milestone safely, then record what you can from a distance and use the zoom function on your camera.
- **Be as visible as you can** – wear bright clothes or reflective clothing if you have it.
- **Be careful of obstacles** such as barriers, road signs and vegetation. Also watch out for sharp litter.
- **Watch your step** – road verges can often be uneven, sometimes quite steep or with hidden hollows or ditches, so take your time.
- **Watch out for animals** that might be lurking and be careful around hedgerows which could contain nesting birds.
- **Avoid bare ankles or legs in long grass** – ticks are common, opportunistic and spread Lyme Disease. Tuck your trousers into your shoes!

RECORDING FORMS:

For each milestone you find, we'd like you to give us a short description. To make this easier, we've created a recording form as a guide on what to write.

- **Take a note of the unique number** that we have assigned to your milestone – this will be labelled on our map.
- **Record its location.** If it's where the map shows it, then just confirm 'Yes'. If not, then there are a number of ways you can record its location – either as GPS coordinates, a what3words reference (see our Pro Tip above) or simply note where it is in relation to its mapped position e.g. 5m to the north of the map location.
- **Record its dimensions.** Just a measurement of how high, wide and deep it is.
- **Give a description.** Milestones vary in how they were made; some were of stone, others of cast iron and some a mixture of the two. They also varied in shape. Add in any details that you find interesting or think are relevant. Archaeologists also love a good annotated sketch (don't worry, ours are rarely that good!), so feel free to use the back of the recording form if you want more space.
- **Is there an inscription?** If so, write what it says, or what you can make out.
- **What condition is the milestone in?** Is it damaged or defaced in any way? Has it been badly weathered or is it covered in vegetation or moss?

HOW TO SEND US YOUR IMAGES & INFORMATION:

Email your notes and/or images through to helen.keron@dumgal.gov.uk

- If you have used the recording form, you can either scan or photograph it & attach it to the email along with any photographs.
- If not, then just type up your notes directly into the email.

GOOD LUCK!!