









-  Tourist Information Point
-  Parking
-  Picnic Site
-  Place of Interest
-  Golf Course
-  View Point
-  Hill Top
-  Public Toilet

The Kirk was an important place of pilgrimage in the middle ages with at least 15,653 pilgrims recorded in 1413. One significant pilgrim was the future Pope Pius II who visited the court of James I with a message from Rome. After landing in Scotland, he walked to Whitekirk, the nearest shrine, barefoot (in winter) to express his thanks for surviving the voyage. The present church was reconstructed in 1917 after the earlier building was set alight in 1914 as a suffragette protest.

This walk offers a superb view of Newbyth House, the former home of the prominent Baird family. In the mid 1600's, Sir John Baird purchased the lands of Foord and Whitekirk and sold his estate of Byth in Aberdeenshire. The new estate became the Barony of Newbyth. This was the childhood home of General Sir David Baird, the hero in the capture of Seringapatam in India in 1799 and a distinguished soldier in the Napoleonic wars between 1801 to 1808. The present house was designed by Archibald Elliot, a noted Edinburgh architect, in the 1820's. Used as an Army hospital in World War II it is now converted into flats.

Crossing the 'white bridge' from Preston Mill you enter rich farmland created by agricultural reformers such as George Rennie of Phantassie. Beneath the soil lie the remains of a 2000-year-old round house, showing that this was prime farming land long ago too. Houston Mill close by was where Andrew Meikle (d 1811), who invented the threshing machine, worked. The weir and lade further downriver were built to drive other mills, at Knowes and Tynninghame. Knowes Ford was a favoured spot for East Linton artists, including William Ferguson (d 1922), a colourful character who lived in a caravan here for 17 years.

The start of the walk gives fine views of the three bridges that cross the Tyne at East Linton - the medieval road bridge, the 1846 railway bridge and the 1928 A1 bypass bridge. The steeply sloping woodland further along the path was one of East Linton's market gardens, established by George Rennie, of Phantassie, in the 18th century. His brother John, the famous engineer, designed a waterwheel for irrigating the orchard. Beyond the trees looms the new A1 Bridge (opened 2004), and just before the footbridge to Hailes Castle are the foundations of Hailes Mill, a grain mill first mentioned in 1565.

