

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Aberdeen-Torry Battery-Girdle Ness Circuit (Aberdeen City)

Route Summary

On the outskirts of Aberdeen, this undemanding short walk provides some unforgettable views of the harbours, old and new, combined with sweeping coastal vistas, and a special perspective on the city skyline.

Duration: 2 hrs.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: The Stagecoach 59 and First Bus 12 services stop on Victoria Road in Torry. The route could be readily modified to start and finish at Waypoint 4, on Victoria Road. Free parking at the Torry Battery car-parks.

Length: 5.4 km / 3.36 mi. **Height Gain/Loss:** 91 meter.

Max Height: 37 meter. **Min Height:** 3 meter.

Surface: A mix of tarred surfaces, hard-surfaced paths, rough roads and grassy tracks. Due to steps, only suitable for off-road mobility scooters by staying on Greyhope Road to reach Waypoint 2, and also sticking to Greyhope Road for the return section, from Waypoint 9.

Difficulty: Easy.

Child Friendly: Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance.

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead on or near public roads, and on the golf course.

Refreshments: The [Greyhope Bay Centre cafe](#) is recommended.



Description

This is an especially interesting and attractive coastal walk. The proximity to [Aberdeen Harbour](#) enhances, rather than detracts from, the walking experience. From airy vantage points high above the sea and harbour channel, there are first class views of the harbour, out to sea, the famous sweep of Aberdeen beach, and the wider cityscape. The route starts from the [Torry Battery](#), constructed in 1860 to provide the harbour with a defensive artillery station. It has not been operational since the end of WW2, and some of the associated buildings have been demolished, leaving only some ruins, boundary walls, a gun emplacement, and an impressive fort-like walled entrance. In recent years the location has had a revival as a dolphin watching viewpoint and there is now an attractive Greyhope Bay [community café](#) from which there are some stunning views to enjoy. In the first section, the route descends to a coastal path alongside the harbour channel providing good views of the iconic modern [Marine Operations Centre](#) and the nearby old Control Tower, built in the early 19thC. If there are dolphins around, this is the best place to be! A short section on city streets leads to Torry's small but charming Bruce Community Garden before heading back to the Girdle Ness promontory and crossing a part of Balnagask golf course where there are some superlative views. Close to [Girdle Ness lighthouse](#), an impressive listed building erected in 1833 by Robert Stevenson, the route reaches a viewpoint over the new [South Harbour](#) which now dominates Nigg Bay. This recently completed maritime engineering project on a massive scale now allows large cruise ships to dock at Aberdeen. After visiting the now unused fog horn ("The Torry Coo that Doesn't Moo"!) on the cliffs that front the lighthouse, the final main section of the walk hugs the coastline, visiting a pretty little beach in the lee of the South Breakwater. In relation to the mid section of this walk, the Scottish Access Code guidance to golf courses may be helpful: <https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/practical-guide-all/golf-courses>



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Seafarers' Memorial - Torry Battery

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The walk starts from the Seafarers' Memorial - a striking metal cross, which stands just a little above the highest car-park at the Torry Battery*, and commands a fine view over Aberdeen Harbour** and the wider city. From the Memorial, walk downhill through the car-parks (whichever route suits you best) to where the access road meets Greyhope Road. Cross the road and take the steps down to the seafront, facing the harbour entrance channel. Turn left here and keep following the path that eventually emerges back onto Greyhope Road by allotments. Follow the road in a westerly direction, towards the city until you reach the bottom of Baxter Street, on your left.



* Note: For more information about the Torry Battery, see:

https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/aberdeen/torrybattery/index.html?utm_content=cmp-true

** Note: for information about the Harbour of Aberdeen, see: <https://www.portofaberdeen.co.uk/>

(2) Go left and up Baxter Street

In 1.23 km from the start, go left and up Baxter Street. (1.23 km)



(3) Divert right into the Bruce Garden

In 230 m, at the top of Baxter Street, take a short diversion right into the pleasant and well-maintained Bruce Community Garden. Leave the garden on Victoria Road and turn left to proceed along the pavement on Victoria Road. (1.46 km)



(4) Proceed onto access road for Nigg Bay Golf Club

In 370 m, cross St Fittick's Road onto the access road for Nigg Bay Golf Club. Passing the car-park on your right, in about 130 m, veer to your left off the rough road onto a grassy path that ascends towards a memorial bench, where there are marvellous views over the harbour and Aberdeen city. (1.83 km)



(5) Viewpoint at memorial bench

In 190 m from Waypoint 4, stop to take in the marvellous views of Aberdeen harbour and city at the memorial bench. When you are ready, facing the front of the bench, turn right and walk along the grassy area behind a golf green. In about 80 m you will arrive back onto the rough road that you were on previously. Go left here, to continue walking away from the golf clubhouse and car-park, facing the sea, ahead of you. (2.02 km)



(6) Turn right to cross golf course

In 470 m from the memorial bench, just before the rough road you are on enters a section with gorse bushes on both sides, turn right to follow a grassy track downhill and over the grassy fairways. Take care to avoid flying golf balls and give way to golfers, as required*. In about 270 m, at a low point, when you have crossed the last fairway, veer left through the mown rough to join a narrow path that ascends up a hillside, keeping the golf course on your left and gorse bushes on your right. At the top of the short ascent, passing a golf green on your left, make your way towards a viewpoint bench at a golf tee, clearly visible ahead of you. (2.49 km)



* Note: see the *Scottish Outdoor Access Code for crossing golf courses safely and responsibly*:

<https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/practicalguide- all/golf-courses>

(7) Viewpoint bench above South Harbour

In 505 m you will have arrived at a bench at the rear of a golf tee where there are great views to Girdle Ness Lighthouse and over Nigg Bay, and the new South Harbour*. When you are ready, follow a path heading in a northerly direction, on the edge of the golf course. The narrow grassy path runs parallel with a wall on your right side as it makes for Greyhope Road. (3.04 km)

* Note: See:

<https://www.portofaberdeen.co.uk/about-us/aberdeen-southharbour>



(8) Right along Greyhope Road

In 230 m, upon reaching Greyhope Road, go right along the pavement, soon passing close to Girdle Ness Lighthouse on the Girdle Ness promontory, then going gently downhill, now overlooking the new South Harbour, and looking out for an opening to a rough road on your left side. (3.27 km)

** Note: Girdle Ness Lighthouse was established in 1833 and engineered by Robert Stevenson. The lighthouse is listed as a building of Architectural/Historic interest. For more information, see: <https://www.nlb.org.uk/lighthouses/girdle-ness/>*



(9) Go left off Greyhope Road

In 420 m, leave Greyhope Road to enter a rough road on your left side. The rough road descends to an old sewage pumping station, but you will divert left onto a rough path before reaching the old building. Follow this path uphill as it soon passes the now disused fog horn for the lighthouse, known locally as the "Torry Coo"*. After passing the old foghorn, re-join the pavement on Greyhope Road and proceed back in the direction of the city. After the road descends to a car-park, cross the car-park, taking a diagonal route to meet a coastal path which soon drops down steps to pass the blocked entrance to the South Breakwater on your right side. Keep following the coastal path as it passes a sheltered sandy beach and carries on in a westerly direction, back towards the city, with the harbour channel on your right side until you reach the Old South Breakwater**. (3.69 km)



** Note: for more information about the "The Torry Coo that Doesn't Moo", see: <https://historyquineaberdeen.blogspot.com/2012/07/torry-coo-that-doesnt-moo.html>*

*** Note: See: <https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/detail.aspx?tab =main&refno=NJ90NE0023>*

(10) Left off coastal path and up steps

In 1.26 km, after walking on the coastal path by the harbour entrance channel, turn left and up steps where the path passes the Old South Breakwater (a much shorter and older structure than the main South Breakwater you passed a little earlier). Ascend on the steps to Greyhope Road where there are eye-catching murals facing you painted on the wall by the access road for the Torry Battery. Turn left here and continue along Greyhope Road, passing the Battery access road. In about 160 m from the top of the steps, turn right off Greyhope Road into a car-parking area and then veer right again to take the path gently ascending to the Torry Battery area, where you may wish to stop for a refreshment in the excellent Greyhope Bay Centre and Cafe, where there are great views down to Aberdeen harbour, beach and the wider city. (4.95 km)



(11) Finish the walk at Torry Battery

In about 400 m, or so, from Waypoint 10 (at the foot of the steps), you can finish the walk at the Greyhope Bay Cafe, at one of the nearby Torry Battery car-parks, or indeed at the start point, above the car-parks, at the Seafarers' Memorial cross. (5.39 km)



Route Map (with waypoints)

212-Aberdeen-Torry Battery-Girdle Ness Circuit



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSM](#)

[Access Walk on Alltrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)