

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Huntly - Castle and River Deveron Circuit (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

*** As at Jan 2023 the short diversion onto the old bridge at Waypoint 4 is inaccessible due to ongoing bridge repair work ***

An easy walk from the centre of Huntly, with minimal overall ascent. The route incorporates some very scenic sections, with the impressive ruins of Huntly Castle adding an interesting historical dimension.

Duration: 1.5 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent rail service from/to Aberdeen. A number of Stagecoach bus options. Check timetables. There is a suitable free car-park off Castle Street, near the walk start/end point.

Length: 5.150 km / 3.22 mi

Height Gain: 46 meter. **Height Loss:** 46 meter.

Max Height: 132 meter. **Min Height:** 117 meter.

Surface: Smooth. Mostly on tarred roads and pavement or hard-surfaced paths. The section along the riverbank path at Waypoint 5 may be muddy. The route is suitable for off-road mobility scooters.

Difficulty: Easy.

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

Dog Friendly: Yes. On lead on public roads.

Refreshments: Options in Huntly: Bank Cafe; Castle Cafe, Dean's Bistro/Cafe.



Description

This is a short but pleasant stroll around and about Huntly, taking in the historic castle, an ancient bridge, and the scenic banks of the fast-flowing River Deveron. In the early part of the route we enter an impressive archway passing through the oldest part of the Gordon Schools complex. The school was founded in 1839 by the Duchess of Gordon as a memorial to her late husband and was designed by the notable Scottish architect, Archibald Simpson. This leads us to the ruins of Huntly Castle, where Historic Environment Scotland have a visitor centre. The core of the present building dates to the late 15thC, based on an earlier motte, the 12thC Peel of Strathbogie. The castle, ancestral home of the chiefs of Clan Gordon, the Earls of Huntly, played an important part in the bloody history of Scotland's development as a nation [see [link below](#)]. Passing around the back of the castle we make a short detour to an old single span stone bridge over the River Deveron. The bridge, probably rebuilt in the 17thC on the foundations of an earlier structure (there are mediaeval mason's marks on some of the stonework), is an extremely scenic spot with fine views up and down river, with the eye also being led up the long and impressive driveway to the Castle Hotel (formerly the Castle Lodge, built as a family home for the Dukes of Gordon during the 18thC). The mid section of the route proceeds upstream on the banks of the Deveron, passing the Nordic Ski Centre (the UK's only purpose-built all-weather facility for Nordic Skiing). In this section there are attractive open views over the farmland and forests that surround the town. In the final section, the route takes us back to Huntly's Square. A modern planned town was established in 1769 to support industrial and agricultural changes, with the original name of Milton of Strathbogie finally dropping from use. A circuit of The Square takes in the main points of interest: the Memorial Fountain; the Duke of Richmond statue, the Gordon Arms building, the Huntly Hotel building, the Brander Library and the old Post Office. *Wikipedia link for Huntly Castle:* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huntly_Castle



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at The Square in Huntly

(57.44746; -2.78620) <https://w3w.co/withdraws.punTERS.tidy>

Start the walk from the Square in Huntly town centre. Walk out of the Square in a NE direction up Castle Street. At the x-roads on West Park Street, continue straight on, passing by the war memorial and heading towards the old Gordon Schools* building. Pass through the central arch and continue on down the avenue of trees towards Huntly Castle.

**Note: The school was founded in 1839 by the Duchess of Gordon as a memorial to her late husband and was designed by the notable Scottish architect, Archibald Simpson.*



(2) Pass Huntly Castle

(57.45446; -2.78246) <https://w3w.co/finds.directors.nuptials>

In about 850 from The Square you will pass the ruins of Huntly Castle*. After admiring the castle structure (or visiting the Castle and grounds - tickets and access from the Historic Environment Scotland visitor centre), carry on past the building down the narrow tarred road, heading now towards the River Deveron. (848 m)

**Note: the core of the present ruinous building dates to the late 15thC, based on an earlier motte, the 12thC Peel of Strathbogie. The castle, ancestral home of the chiefs of Clan Gordon, the Earls of Huntly, played an important part in the bloody history of Scotland's development as a nation. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huntly_Castle*



(3) Continue - right - along riverbank

(57.45514; -2.78272) <https://w3w.co/ejects.bets.taxed>

In less than 100 m, behind the castle, the road meets a y-junction near the banks of the river. Carry straight on here towards the old arched bridge over the Deveron (you may wish to deviate onto the riverbank path for a short distance to appreciate the old bridge and the fast-flowing river here). (937 m)



(4) Turn after crossing the old bridge

(57.45573; -2.78045) <https://w3w.co/receive.couch.stretcher>

Cross the old bridge (Castle Bridge, or Elgin's Bridge)* to appreciate views up and down river, and the impressive driveway up to the Castle Hotel (formerly the Castle Lodge). When you are ready, return over the bridge and re-trace your steps back to the y-junction at Waypoint 3. (1.1 km)

**Note: an old single span stone bridge over the River Deveron. The bridge, probably rebuilt in the 17thC on the foundations of an earlier structure (there are mediaeval mason's marks on some of the stonework), is an extremely scenic spot with fine views up and down river, with the eye also being led up the long and impressive driveway to the Castle Hotel (formerly the Castle Lodge, built as a family home for the Dukes of Gordon during the 18thC.*



(5) Veer right over bridge - then sharp right

(57.45518; -2.78282) <https://w3w.co/distorts.chuckling.coping>

In about 200 m, take the right fork at the y-junction and take the road that crosses the flat bridge. Turn right immediately after the bridge, passing through a small car-park, to take the hard-surfaced riverbank path, with the River Deveron on your right side. (1.3 km)



(6) Veer right for riverside path

(57.45584; -2.78555) <https://w3w.co/heap.friction.reputable>

In another 200 m, or so, veer right to leave the smooth-surfaced path (which passes the Huntly Nordic Ski Centre*) onto a rough-surfaced track that soon becomes a narrow path along the riverbank. Keep following this path for about 400 m (before reaching a circular bench) then go left to re-join the smooth-surfaced riverside path. Carry on walking along this main path in a westerly direction, with the river on your right side. (1.5 km)

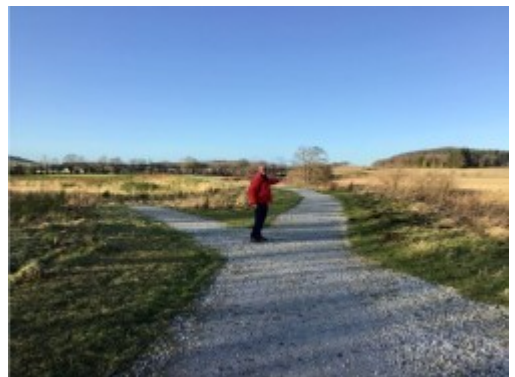
**Note: the UK's only purpose-built all-weather facility for Nordic Skiing.*



(7) Carry straight on at angled x-roads

(57.45378; -2.79765) <https://w3w.co/gentle.emulating.mimed>

In 800 m, at an angled x-roads, continue taking the path going straight ahead, parallel with the river. Before too long, this path bends sharp left, away from the river, in a southerly direction, towards the town. Keep following the path as it does so. (2.3 km)



(8) Right along path into trees behind cemetery wall

(57.45179; -2.79986) <https://w3w.co/sands.conspired.mistaking>
In 400 m, the path meets a t-junction at the walls of a cemetery.
Take the option going right, a narrow path through trees, with the cemetery wall on your left. (2.7 km)



(9) Right at pavement - then cross into Milton Road

(57.45199; -2.80275) <https://w3w.co/hypocrite.slices.boater>
In 200 m, the path meets the pavement on a road heading out of Huntly towards Bridge of Gibston. Go right here, very briefly, before crossing the road and entering the housing development at Milton Road. Follow Milton Road to its end between the houses then take the pedestrian exit towards Deveron Road. (2.9 km)



(10) Left along Deveron Road

(57.45059; -2.80515) <https://w3w.co/barman.seagulls.wink>
In 200 m, at the pedestrian exit* from the Milton Road housing development, go left at the attractive metal barrier, then cross the road and go left to follow the pavement along Deveron Road, back towards the centre of Huntly. (3.1 km)

**Note: there is a good view here towards the summit of Clashmach Hill, on the southern outskirts of Huntly.*



(11) Cross road and right along woodland walkway

(57.44999; -2.79804) <https://w3w.co/pigment.command.licks>
In 500 m, or so, after passing the Huntly Motors garage on your right, cross the road to then go right to join the hard-surfaced pedestrian path through the trees, still heading back towards the centre of Huntly. (3.6 km)



(12) Left at paths x-roads into woods

(57.44980; -2.79028) <https://w3w.co/stammer.worker.keen>

In 400 m, where the pathway descends into a little dip and there is a paths x-roads, take the option going left between the trees. Soon, this path meets Burnside Road, facing towards the caravan park. Go right along the pavement of Burnside Road and follow the pavement as it bends right (past an old bridge on your left) and goes gently uphill towards the centre of Huntly, passing the Gordon Primary School on your left as Burnside Road meets Seton Terrace and then Seton Drive. Continue taking this obvious route in order to meet West Park Street, near the centre of Huntly. (4.0 km)



(13) Cross West Park Street then down Chapel Street

(57.44950; -2.78695) <https://w3w.co/unrated.kinder.device>

In 900 m, where Seton Drive meets West Park Street, cross West Park Street to walk along Chapel Street*. At the end of Chapel Street, go sharp left to follow Deveron Road the short distance back to The Square. (4.9 km)

**Note: you will pass the impressive St Margaret's Catholic Church, in Italianate style, on your right as you enter Chapel Street.*



(14) Finish walk back at The Square

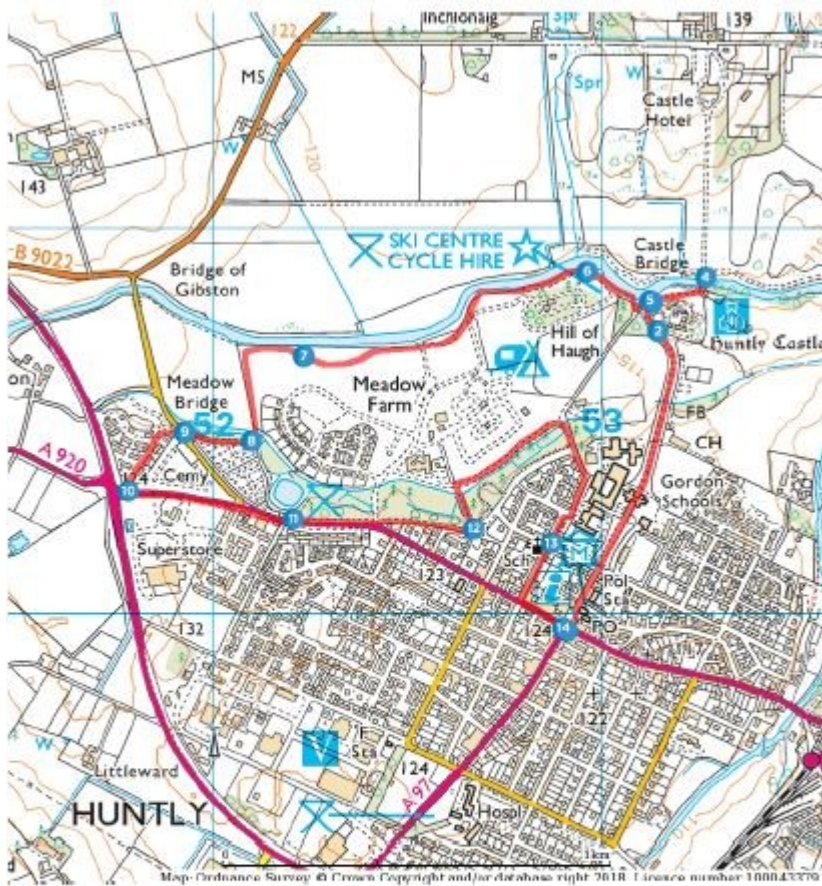
(57.44753; -2.78641) <https://w3w.co/shady.occurs.headboard>

In 300 m, you will have returned to the central Square* in Huntly where the walk ends. (5.2 km)

**Note: A circuit of The Square takes in the main points of interest: the Memorial Fountain; the Duke of Richmond statue, the Gordon Arms building, the Huntly Hotel building, the Brander Library and the old Post Office.*



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 OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on Alltrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)