

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Huntly-Kinnoir Wood-Battle Hill Circular (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

This walk provides an attractive mix, taking in Huntly's pleasant townscape and the gently undulating farmland and woods surrounding the town. There are very satisfying open views from Brunstane Hill on the edge of Kinnoir Forest, and from Battle Hill, a prehistoric site.

Duration: 3 hours



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent rail service from/to Aberdeen. A number of Stagecoach bus options. Check timetables. Free car-park near the start/finish of walk. Enter from East Park Street opposite Christie Park football ground.

Length: 7.860 km / 4.91 mi

Height Gain: 168meter **Height Loss:** 168 meter

Max Height: 191 meter **Min Height:** 113 meter

Surface: Moderate. A mix of rough farm and forest roads, grassy fields and good woodland paths. Not suitable for off-road mobility scooters due to a locked gate that must be climbed over, and narrow paths with boulders and high tree roots.

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

Difficulty: Medium.

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead near to any livestock, and on public roads and streets. You are likely to encounter sheep and cattle in fields on the route.

Refreshments: There are a number of options in Huntly.



Description

This walk nicely combines town and country environments. It twice crosses the River Bogie, named in a number of local folk ballads in the Doric dialect such as “*Adieu to Bogieside*” and “*Bogie’s Bonnie Belle*”, songs of emigration, rejection and lost love. The gentle ascent into the edges of Kinnoir Forest, above the confluence of rivers Deveron and Bogie, provides the first of many sweeping countryside views taking in, most notably, Tap o’ Noth, Clashmach Hill, and the Knock. The Battle Hill is usually approached uphill, directly from the town of Huntly, but on our route we make a very pleasant descent from Kinnoir Woods to the eastern end of the hill through pasture land. The path then taken on the southern side of the hill provides marvellous views of the surrounding farmland and further afield. It is generally understood that the name Battle Hill refers to a battle in the 14th C between the Gordons and the Comyns, either on the hill or between it and Huntly. The route around the side of the hill takes a short diversion to a low summit, possibly the site of an Iron Age fort. There is a developing understanding that Battle Hill was an important place in prehistory – with evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement including a hut circle and, possibly, a large cairn. In the final section, the route takes us on a stroll through the attractive town of Huntly which probably dates back to a castle, the Peel of Strathbogie, built in the late 12th C. 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.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at war memorial

(57.44889; -2.78486)

Start the walk at the Huntly War Memorial on Castle Street. Walk down East Park Street, passing the Huntly F.C. Christie Park football ground on your left. Continue walking down to the end of the street.



(2) Right along Lennox Terrace

(57.44684; -2.77660)

In 545 m, at the end of East Park Street, go right along Lennox Terrace. (545 m)



(3) Left down steps

(57.44640; -2.77703)

In 50 m, or so, where Lennox Terrace meets Mill Road, go left down the steps onto Jake Forbes Close. At the end of the Close, turn left to cross the bridge over the River Bogie. Continue following the pavement as the road bends under a railway bridge and starts to ascend. (602 m)



(4) Left off Aberdeen Road after rail station

(57.44435; -2.77517)

In 330 m from the steps, just after passing the entrance to the railway station on your right, go left off Aberdeen Road onto a narrow tarred road. (932 m)



(5) Veer left along rough road

(57.44549; -2.77430)

In about 170 m, veer left off the tarred road at a right-hand bend and follow the rough road, parallel with the railway line on your left. (1.1 km)



(6) Past gate into Kinnoir Forest

(57.45490; -2.76629)

In 1.2 km, go straight on, passing a gate (no longer there at our re-visit, June 2024) into Kinnoir Forest. Carry on up the hill through the trees. (2.3 km)



(7) Right at junction in woods

(57.45818; -2.76464)

In 300 m, take the rough road to your right. Keep following this road, ignoring any turn-offs to your left. (2.6 km)



(8) Over gate and down field edge

(57.45508; -2.75492)

In 800 m, arriving at an isolated house on your left, go right, over the locked gate into the field*. Follow the gorse bushes down through the field, to your left. Ignore any turn-offs to other fields on your left. Keep going downhill with the old stone dyke and fence on your left side as you head towards the woods of Battle Hill ahead of you. As you get closer you will notice a pedestrian gate ahead of you. (3.4 km)

** Note: this upper area of the field was very muddy at our re-visit in June 2024. Also, cows with calves were present in the linked, adjoining field.*



(9) Through gate and left

(57.45003; -2.76143)

In 700 m, go through the pedestrian gate and follow the path around Battle Hill on your left. (4.1 km)



(10) Right through gate

(57.44492; -2.76435)

In 600 m, go right through a gate and follow the path going gently uphill for a short distance. (4.7 km)



(11) Right off path

(57.44515; -2.76513)

In about 100 m, go right off the main path onto an indistinct path. Walk up the short distance to the hill-top ahead of you. (4.8 km)



(12) Site of ancient fort

(57.44536; -2.76434)

Soon, in less than 50 m, you are on the summit of a low hill where the previous forest has been felled. There is evidence of archaeological digs. This is the site of a possible Iron Age hill-fort. There are great views, particularly to the west and south. When you are ready, re-trace your steps back to the gate at Waypoint 10 where you turn right and carry on taking the path around the Battle Hill woods, with fields below you on your left. (4.8 km)



(13) Go right near main access point

(57.44351; -2.77078)

In 600 m, arriving at a clearing near the main access point to Battle Hill, go right and uphill to start following the path that goes clock-wise around the Battle Hill. (5.4 km)



(14) Left and downhill by sign

(57.44433; -2.76986)

In 100 m, or so, follow a path left and downhill by a signpost on your right. Walk downhill towards the wall of a large house on your left and a field on your right. Keep following the path as it leaves the wood, with the wall of the house on your left. (5.5 km)



(15) Left along tarred road

(57.44476; -2.77140)

In 100 m, at a junction, go left along the narrow tarred road with small field on your right and large houses on your left. Keep following the narrow access road as it bends right to take you downhill towards Aberdeen Road. (5.6 km)



(16) Right along Aberdeen Road

(57.44272; -2.77265)

In 300 m, upon descending to the Aberdeen Road, go right along the pavement. (5.9 km)



(17) Left down Old Toll Road

(57.44339; -2.77396)

In just over 100 m, turn left and cross the road with care to go down the road signposted as The Old Toll Road. This old turnpike road (now a dead-end) takes you past light commercial/industrial units and some houses. (6.0 km)



(18) Left down path to A96 Bye-pass

(57.44150; -2.77691)

In 300 m, or so, go left off the road and down a path to the side of the A96 Huntly bye-pass road. Follow the path as it turns right along the edge of the very busy road. Keep following the path as it goes under a railway bridge before veering away from the road to the right up the embankment. (6.3 km)



(19) Carry straight on towards bridge

(57.44137; -2.78201)

In 300 m, where the path emerges up the embankment from the side of the main A96 road, carry straight on past some houses on your left. Very soon you will see the attractive old iron bridge over the River Bogie. Cross the bridge and follow the rough road up to the junction with Bleachfield Street where you turn right along Gladstone Road with a children's play park initially on your right. (6.6 km)



(20) Left along Settrington Street

(57.44369; -2.78311)

In 400 m, turn left to cross Gladstone Road and go down Settrington Street to the end. (7.0 km)



(21) Right along Church Street

(57.44455; -2.78667)

In 200 m, turn right off Settrington Street onto Church Street. Follow Church Street to the end, passing Huntly Parish Church on your right. (7.2 km)



(22) Left up Duke Street

(57.44703; -2.78452)

In 300 m, turn left to walk up Duke Street towards Huntly town centre. (7.5 km)



(23) The Square at Huntly

(57.44743; -2.78619)

In 100 m you will have arrived at The Square in the centre of Huntly. Walk clockwise around the square noting 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. Leave the square at the north end, walking up Castle Street towards the Huntly War Memorial where you started the walk. (7.6 km)

[thanks for photo taken by Bill Harrison- geograph.co.uk]



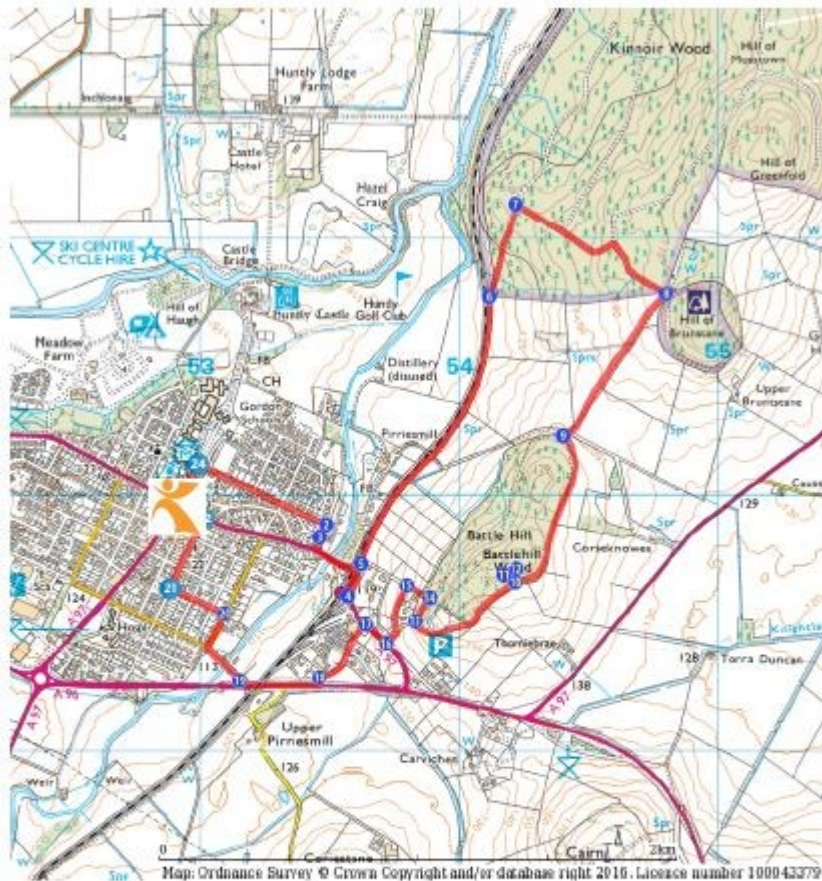
(24) Finish walk back at war memorial

(57.44892; -2.78493)

In 300 m you have arrived back at the Huntly War Memorial where you started the walk. If you look down West Park Street, to your left, you will see the fine spire of St Margaret's Church. If you wish to extend the walk you can carry straight on past the war memorial towards the Gordon Schools Simpson Building (road goes through archway) and down to the ruins of Huntly Castle and the River Deveron. (7.9 km)



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](#)