

# The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

## Kincardine O'Neil Village Ramble (Aberdeenshire)

### Route Summary

This is a very pleasant walk in a mixed rural landscape on Deeside and along the banks of the River Dee itself. There are good views throughout, and many historical associations.

Duration: 1.5 hrs.



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 1.5 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** Typically, Stagecoach #201 to Banchory from Aberdeen, then #202 to Kincardine O'Neil. Check timetables. Parking in the little car-park behind the Village Hall, where the walk starts/ends.

**Length:** 4.61 km / 2.86 mi. **Height Gain/Loss:** 75 meter.

**Max Height:** 133 meter. **Min Height:** 93 meter.

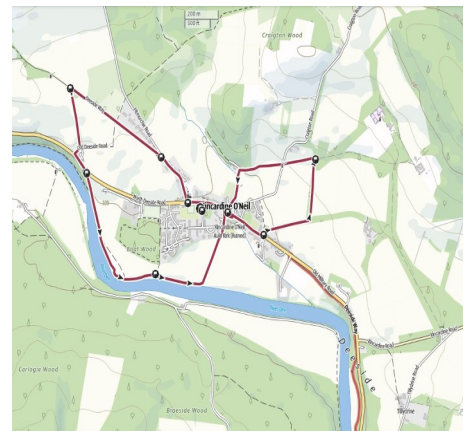
**Surface:** Moderate. On good paths and tracks. Good walking surfaces throughout. We believe this route may be suitable for off-road mobility scooters. We suggest going left in about 300 m after Waypoint 3 to take a diversion which avoids a narrow path between bushes after Waypoint 4, re-joining the route at the A93 road before Waypoint 5.

**Difficulty:** Easy.

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

**Dog Friendly:** Yes, but keep dogs on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

**Refreshments:** Village shops. Freshly made sandwiches in the Kinker Village Store and Post Office.



### Description

This walk, in a compact figure of eight, around the periphery of the scenic Deeside village of Kincardine O'Neil, provides a range of attractive countryside and riverside views. Starting and finishing at the Village Hall, the route at first heads out on a section of the Old Military Road before going west along the Deeside Way path. Before too long, however, we head south through a belt of mature trees to cross the A93 and descend to the banks of the River Dee for a very pleasant mid-section enjoying satisfying vistas up and down river.

The walk then takes a turn up a grassy track that leads back to Dee Street in the centre of the village. This section is part of an old cattle droving road, crossing the river where it could be forded. This was,

for centuries, an important river crossing place on the ancient route over the Cairn O'Mount. King David the 1st of Scotland forded the Dee here with his army in 1150, and in 1296, the 35,000 strong army of Edward 1st of England crossed here, and camped nearby. Later, the ford was the direct drove route for cattle moving from Aberdeenshire to the markets at Crieff and Falkirk. In more modern times, a row-boat ferry operated (until 1937) a little way upstream. Now heading east, the route takes in a short diversion to the historic ruin of the Church of St Mary. The present structure of the "Auld Kirk" dates back to the 14thC but it is believed to have been a place of Christian worship from the 6thC. Leaving the churchyard, we now gently ascend towards a grassy section of the Old Deeside Road overlooking the settlement, the oldest village on Deeside. Here, there are fine views towards the hills in the west. For more information about the history of Kincardine O'Neil, see: <http://www.kincardineoneil.co.uk/>



## Waypoints

### (1) Start the walk from the Village Hall

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We suggest that you start the walk from the car-park, on The Spailings road, behind the Village Hall in Kincardine O'Neil. From there, walk onto the main street and go left to pass the Village Hall\*, public toilets and Bowling Green.

*\* Note: on the east-facing wall of the Hall there is an interesting information board about local walks around and about Kincardine O'Neil. You may also wish to search for "Kincardine" on our Mack Walks website.*



### (2) Right up Pitmurchie Road

In 130 m, cross the busy A93 road with care and walk up Pitmurchie Road (a section of the Old Military Road between Fochabers and Fettercairn), passing the Episcopal Church on your right side. (130 m)



### (3) Left onto Deeside Way path

In 280 m, go left onto the Deeside Way path. If you are using an off-road mobility scooter, we suggest going left in about 300 m to take a diversion which avoids a narrow path between bushes after Waypoint 4, re-joining the route at the A93 road before Waypoint 5. (410 m)



### (4) Left onto path through belt of trees

In 620 m, leave the Deeside Way to go left onto a path through a belt of mature trees. Follow the path as it gently descends through the wood to a t-junction, facing the back gardens of some houses. Turn right here for a short 40 m section\* which takes you to the verge of the A93 road. Turn left at the road to pass the entrance to the houses then keep going for a short distance until you are opposite a field gate on the other side of the road. (1.03 km)

*\* Note: this short grassy section is actually part of the Old Deeside Turnpike Road that preceded the modern A93).*



### (5) Cross A93 and through gate

In 450 m from the last waypoint, cross the very busy main road with care, then go through the field gate facing you (closing it carefully behind you). Now walk down this grassy vehicle track with good views of the River Dee opening up as you descend. You may wish to divert right to a narrow riverbank path after the fencing on your right ends. Soon you will pass a fishermen's bothy as you continue on (or re-join) the rough vehicle access track. (1.48 km)



### (6) Go right then left to continue along riverbank

In 760 m, as the track veers left, leaving the river to go towards the village, go right at a junction to face the river, then sharp left to join a riverside path. At this point, in times past, a boat used to cross the river ferrying passengers to the south side. Continue along the riverside path for about 270 m, passing a couple of inviting benches where you can take a break to enjoy the scenic views. The path then turns left to join an old grassy road\* heading back to the village. When you reach the main road, turn right to walk along the pavement for 20 m until you reach the ruin of the Auld Kirk on your right side. (2.24 km)



*\* Note: this is an old drover's road. Cattle were driven along here to where the river is wide and shallow in order to cross on their way to markets in Crieff and Falkirk.*

### (7) Check out the Auld Kirk

In 680 m from Waypoint 6, go right off the pavement to check out the graveyard and ruins of the "Auld Kirk". There is a helpful information board. When you are ready, return to the pavement, turn right and carry on along the pavement of the A93 road.

*\* Note: The remains of the former parish church dedicated to St Erchard and the Virgin Mary. St Erchard is said to have been a local disciple of St Ternan (late 6th century) and to be buried in the church. The ruin, of small stones and run lime was repaired and stripped of ivy etc in 1931 to reveal possible 14th century detail including a fine walled-up north door and lancet windows. The granite belfry probably dates from about 1640. For more information, see: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/35241/kincardine-oneil-north-deesideroad-old-parish-church>*



**(8) Left up drive for Kincardine Castle**

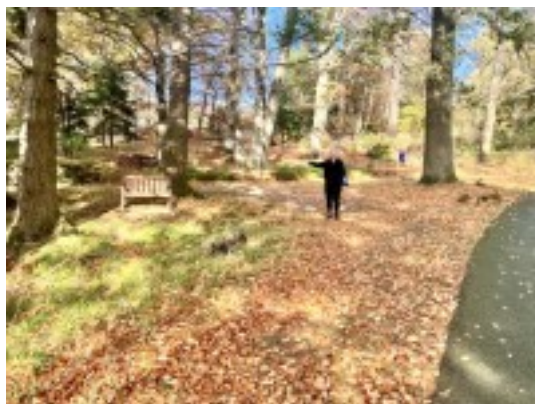
In 280 m from the old church ruin, cross the busy A93 with care to walk up the tree-lined avenue forming the access road to Kincardine Castle\*, which now provides luxury accommodation to guests. (3.2 km)

\* Note: See: <https://www.kincardinecastle.com/>



**(9) Sharp left at bench**

In 580 m, after ascending gently on the quiet access drive, and before reaching the grounds of the mansion house, go sharp left where there is a bench on your left, to take the rough grassy road\* which now descends on a gentle incline back towards the village. In about 185 m, you will cross a narrow tarred access road, then, in another 175 m, follow the old road as it bends onto Gallowhill Road which soon takes you back to the main road in the village, passing the disused curling pond on your right side along the way. At the junction with the main road, check out the historic drinking fountain\* on your left, Turn right and proceed along the main street of the village, crossing the road by the Old Smithy, to finish the walk in the car-park behind the Village Hall.



\* Note: dated AD1835. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert stopped here to water their horses on their first visit to Deeside in 1847.

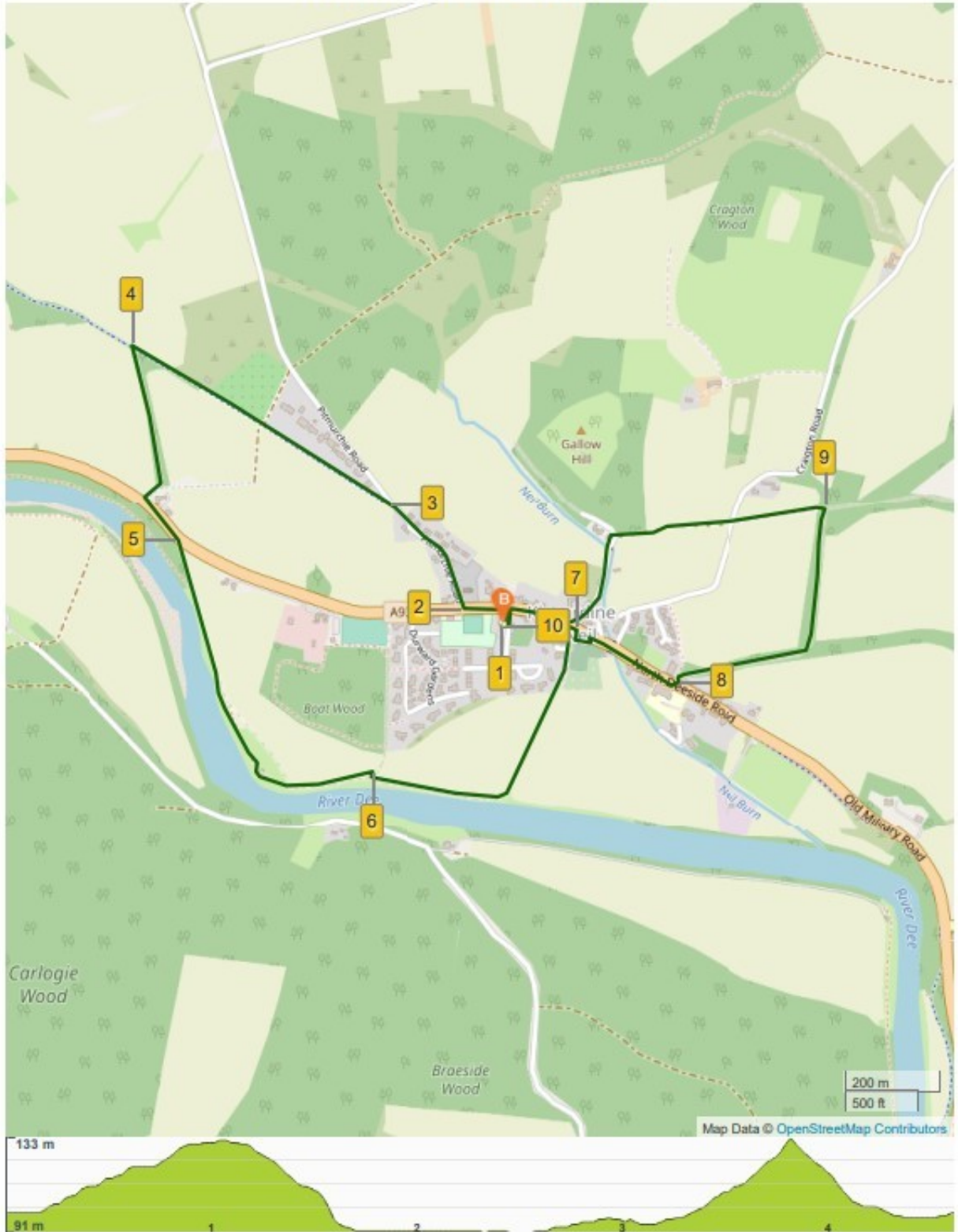
**(10) Finish walk back at the Village Hall**

In 830 m from Waypoint 9, you will finish the walk at the car-park behind the Village Hall. (4.61 km)

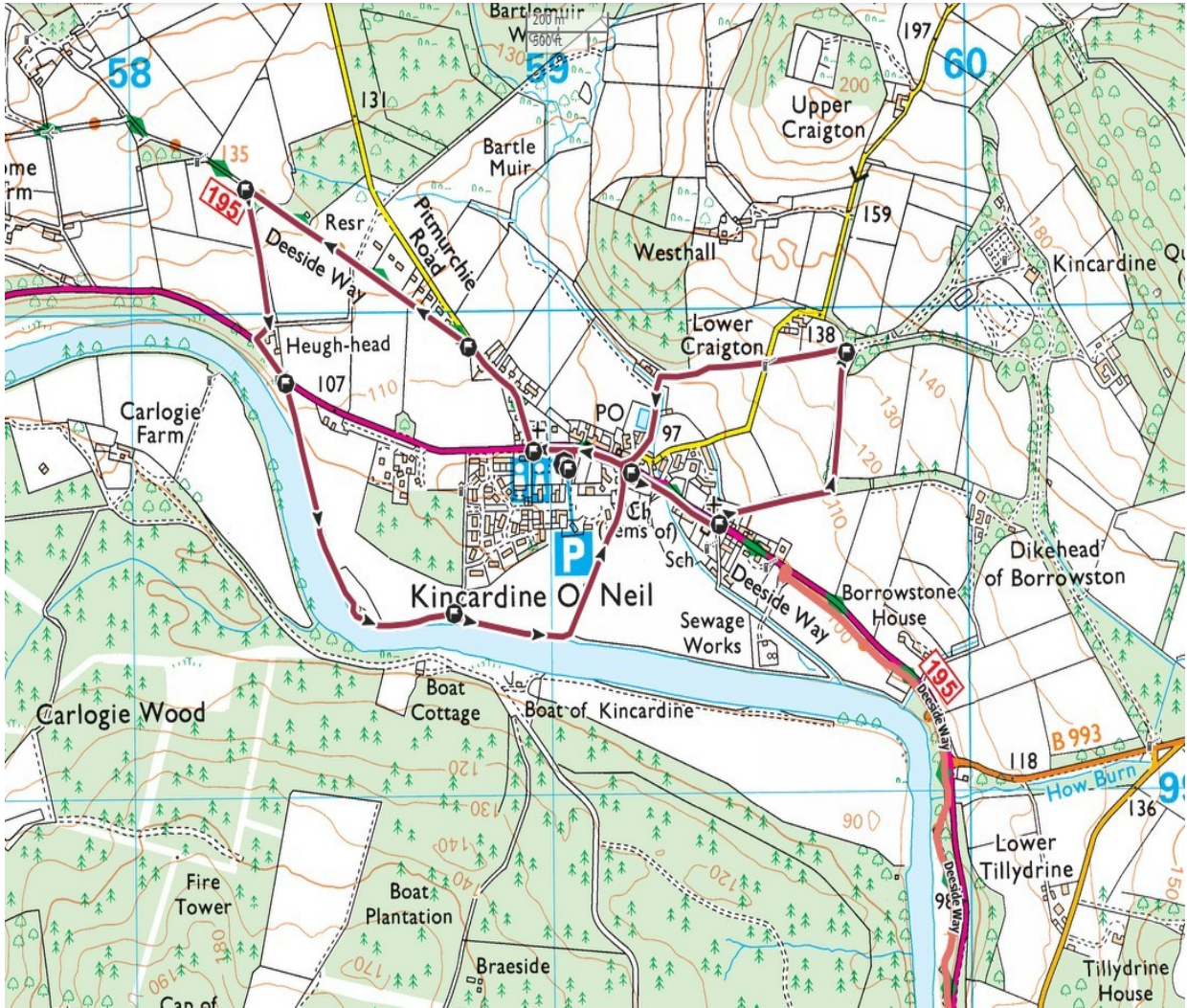


# Route Map (with waypoints)

## 221-Kincardine O'Neil Village Ramble



## 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](#)