

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Pitmedden House-Udny Green-Mort House Circular (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

This is an easy, mostly woodland, walk from the grounds of Pitmedden House to the pretty hamlet of Udny Green. There is historical interest along the way, and a visit to Pitmedden Garden and Museum of Farming Life is not to be missed.

Duration: 2 hrs.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: There is an infrequent Stagecoach bus service from Ellon to Pitmedden. Check timetables. Pitmedden House NTS car-park (charges apply for non-members).

Length: 7.1 km / 4.41 mi. **Height Gain/Loss:** 73 meter.

Max Height: 86 meter. **Min Height:** 59 meter.

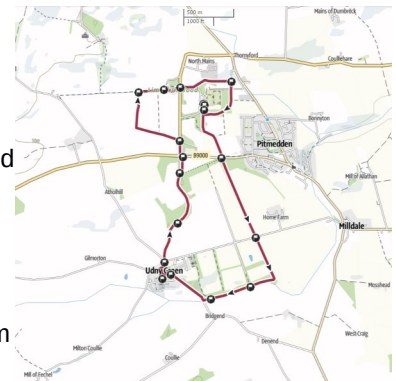
Surface: Moderate. A mix of rough woodland paths, estate roads and tarred public roads. The circuit is not suitable for off-road mobility scooters due to steps at various points and narrow gaps between trees with high exposed roots.

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 to farm animals.

Refreshments: Excellent cafe in Pitmedden House. A fine dining experience at Eat on the Green in Udny Green.



Description

This is an appealing walk in the gently rolling Formartine countryside. The route is mostly though mature broadleaf woodland but there are also open sections, and some fine views. The mid-point is the attractive little village of Udny Green, where we visit the Mort House in the old kirkyard. Built in 1832, the B-listed building housed corpses until they started to decompose, so their graves would not be desecrated by body-snatchers who sold the cadavers for medical dissection. Soon after, there is a view, through the trees, of Udny Castle. Still occupied as a private residence, it is built in the familiar style of a Scottish tower house, and its foundations probably date from the late 14th or early 15th C. The castle is popularly associated with Jamie Fleeman (d. 1778), known as "the Laird of Udny's Feel". He had a reputation for his witticisms, and there are many local tales about him. He was probably the last family jester in Scotland. The walk starts and finishes in the NTS car-park for Pitmedden Gardens where there is a tea-room in a wing of Pitmedden House. This attractive building has its known origins in the 17th C, with later changes and additions. It is not open to the public. A visit to the Garden is highly recommended as it is one of the most visually appealing and distinctive gardens in Scotland. It was re-modeled in the 1950's as a bold recreation of the spectacular "Great Garden" created in 1675 by Sir Alexander Seton. This representation of a Scottish Renaissance walled garden is complemented by a "newly planted naturalistic and sustainably designed 21st C twist on a traditional garden, designed by celebrity gardener Chris Beardshaw." The associated Museum of Farming Life is a fascinating window on the area's agricultural past. For more information, see:

<https://bit.ly/44jAxqk>



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Pitmedden House car-park

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Start the walk at the information board in the Pitmedden House car-park*, where there are toilets, heading south, away from the house and gardens towards the trees.

**Note: there is a charge for car-parking if you are not a National Trust member.*



(2) Take path into trees at south end of car-park

In 50 m, or so, take the path into the woods, passing a wooden building on your right. Almost immediately cross a footbridge and then cross a rough road, veering slightly right on a path uphill, after you have crossed the road. Very soon the path meets another rough road. Turn left here and keep walking along this road through the trees until it meets a tarred public road. (50 m)



(3) Cross B9000 road

In 550 m, cross the busy B9000 road with care and carry straight on, ignoring a path going off to your right and taking a path through the trees, with fields fairly close by on your left side. (600 m)



(4) Cross minor road to re-join path

In 840 m, the path emerges through a gap in a stone wall onto a minor public road. Cross the road with care and re-join the path on the other side, crossing over the stone step. Carry on taking the woodland path, with fields close by on your left side. In about 440 m, at the corner of the wood, the path bends right, with a small burn now on your left side. Keep going on this path. (1.44 km)



(5) Carry straight on ignoring path to right

In 690 m from crossing the minor road at Waypoint 4, and 250 m from the corner of the wood when the path turned to the right, ignore a path going right and carry on as before. (2.13 km)



(6) Carry straight on ignoring path veering to right

In 400 m, ignore a path veering to right and carry straight on. In about 70 m, the path emerges onto a minor public road. Turn right here and head gently uphill towards the hamlet of Udney Green, ahead of you. (2.54 km)



(7) Arrive at Udney Green

In 490 m, you will have arrived at Udney Green. Turn left here to walk along the pavement, admiring the view over the Green towards the church. On a wall on your left side, check out the (now somewhat faded) information board about the history of the place, before passing the Eat at the Green restaurant. In a very short distance after the restaurant, turn left to enter the old cemetery. (3.03 km)



(8) Mort House

In 110 m, near the entrance to the cemetery, you will arrive at a round stone building, the Mort House*, where there is a board with some information. When you are ready, re-trace your steps back to the Square and Green. Walk uphill, passing houses on your left before turning right at the top of the Green to pass the church on your left side. Then, turn left and cross the road junction with care, heading towards a lodge house and access road to Udney Castle. (3.14 km)

** Note: Built in 1832, the B-listed building housed corpses until they started to decompose, so their graves would not be desecrated by body-snatchers who sold the cadavers for medical dissection.*



(9) Go through gates at South Lodge

In 240 m from the Mort House, go through the gates at South Lodge to enter the access road for Udney Castle. Walk along the narrow road, through woodland, looking out for glimpses of Udney Castle on your right as you proceed. (3.38 km)



(10) Pass Udney Castle

In about 420 m, you will pass Udney Castle* a little distance away on your right. Keep going, passing a junction where a private road leads to the castle car-park. Continue taking the estate access road going straight on in a broadly northerly direction, away from the castle, as advised by the Aberdeenshire Council access sign. DO NOT TAKE THE ACCESS DRIVE TO YOUR RIGHT THAT LEADS UP TO THE CASTLE AND PARKING AREA. (3.8 km)



**Note: Udney Castle is built in the familiar style of a Scottish tower house. Its exact construction date is unknown, but its foundations probably date from the late 14th or early 15th century. The castle is popularly associated with Jamie Fleeman (1713–1778), known as "the Laird of Udney's Fool".*

Although described as a fool, he had a reputation for his witticisms and there are many, possibly, anecdotal tales about him. He was probably the last family jester in Scotland.

*** Note: Please take account of the fact that the castle is a private residence. Access rights do not apply. Do not, under any circumstances, approach the castle or castle car-park.*

(11) Right off access drive then left

In 550 m from the South Lodge, just before a no entry sign ahead of you, go right off the access drive onto a hard-surfaced path. Within 20 m, or so, and before a stone bridge, go sharp left to follow a path that heads towards the B9000 public road. (4.35 km)



(12) Cross B9000 road - left then right

In 190 m, cross the busy B9000 road with care, then go left along the grassy verge. Very soon, you will turn right when you meet the junction with the A920 road, and continue walking along the verge, soon passing the Formartine FC football ground and car-park on your right side. (4.54 km)



(13) Cross A920 road onto rough road

In 170 m, just after passing the football ground, cross the busy A920 road with care and enter a rough field access road. Keep going on this rough track, which becomes grass-covered after the first field on the right is passed. In just over 200 m, after passing the first field on your right, ignore a path going right into a belt of trees. In about 440 m, your route turns right onto a path along a belt of trees, with the adjacent field still on your right side. (4.71 km)



(14) Go sharp right onto Fishers' Path

In 800 m from crossing the A920 road, at a t-junction just after crossing a narrow open footbridge over a ditch, go sharp right onto a path named as the "Fishers' Path". You are now heading back in the direction of Pitmedden House. (5.51 km)



(15) Veer right - then right to go around pond

In 250 m, at a paths y-junction, take the right fork. In about 20 m, take a narrow path on your right which gradually gains a little height as it goes around a pond on your left side. before re-joining the path you left just before the exit from the woodland upon meeting the A920 road. (5.76 km)



(16) Cross A920 road onto path

In 190 m, cross the busy A920 road with care, to enter a woodland path on the other side of the road, to the left of the main access road and marketing signs for Pitmedden House. Keep going on this woodland path, soon passing a "behind the scenes" section of Pitmedden Garden on your right, and then small grassy fields on right and left. (5.97 km)



(17) Right onto rough road at t-junction

In 520 m, when the path you are on meets a rough estate road at a t-junction, go right onto the rough road. Keep following this road. In about 250 m, the rough road starts to bend right and you pass a couple of ponds on your right side. Eventually, in about 520 m from joining the rough road, as described above, you will have arrived at the little footbridge you crossed very close to the start of the walk. Turn right here to cross the footbridge and soon emerge into the car-park where you started the walk. (6.49 km)



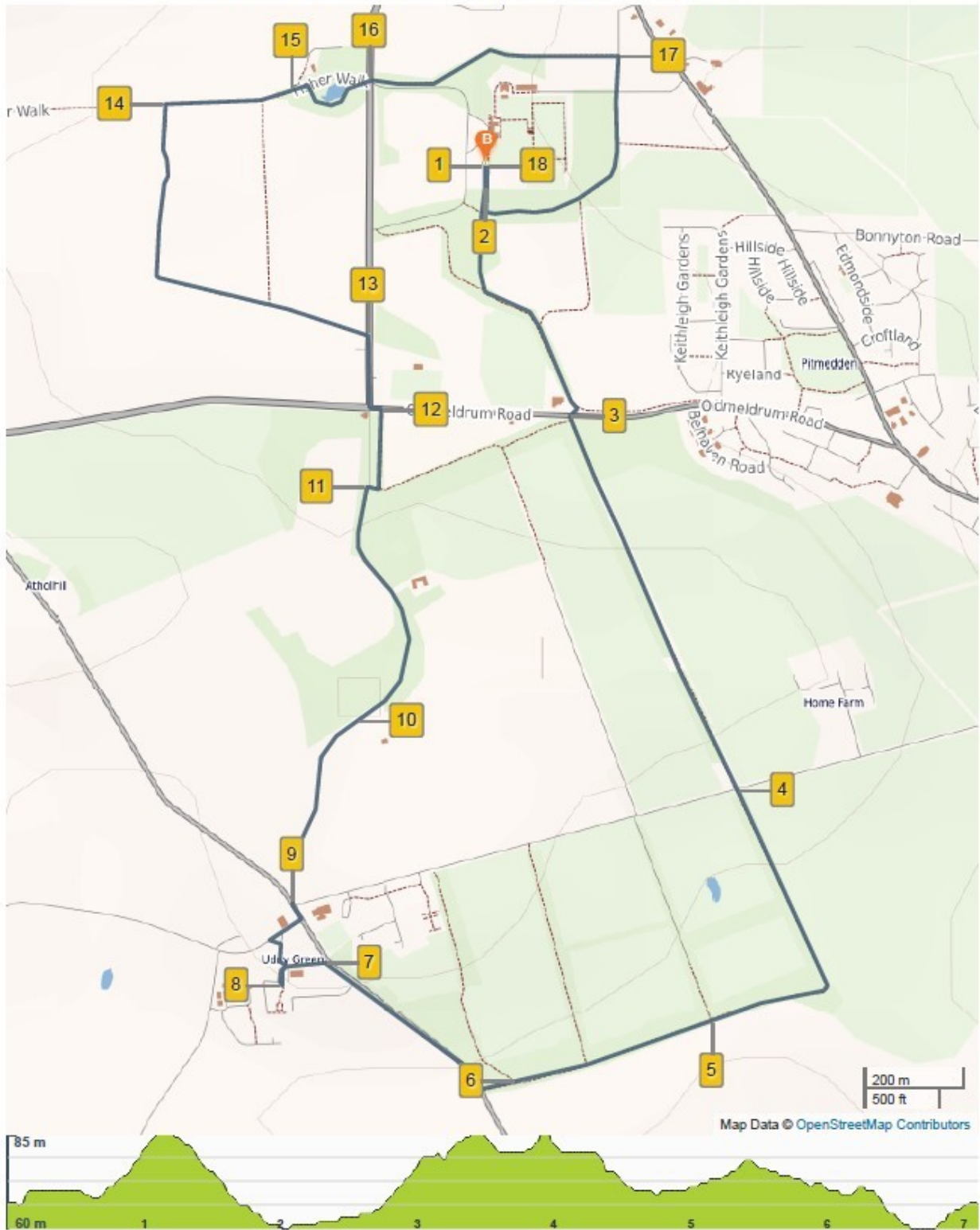
(18) Finish walk back at car-park

In 610 m from Waypoint 17, finish the walk back at the information board in the Pitmedden House car-park. 7.1 km)

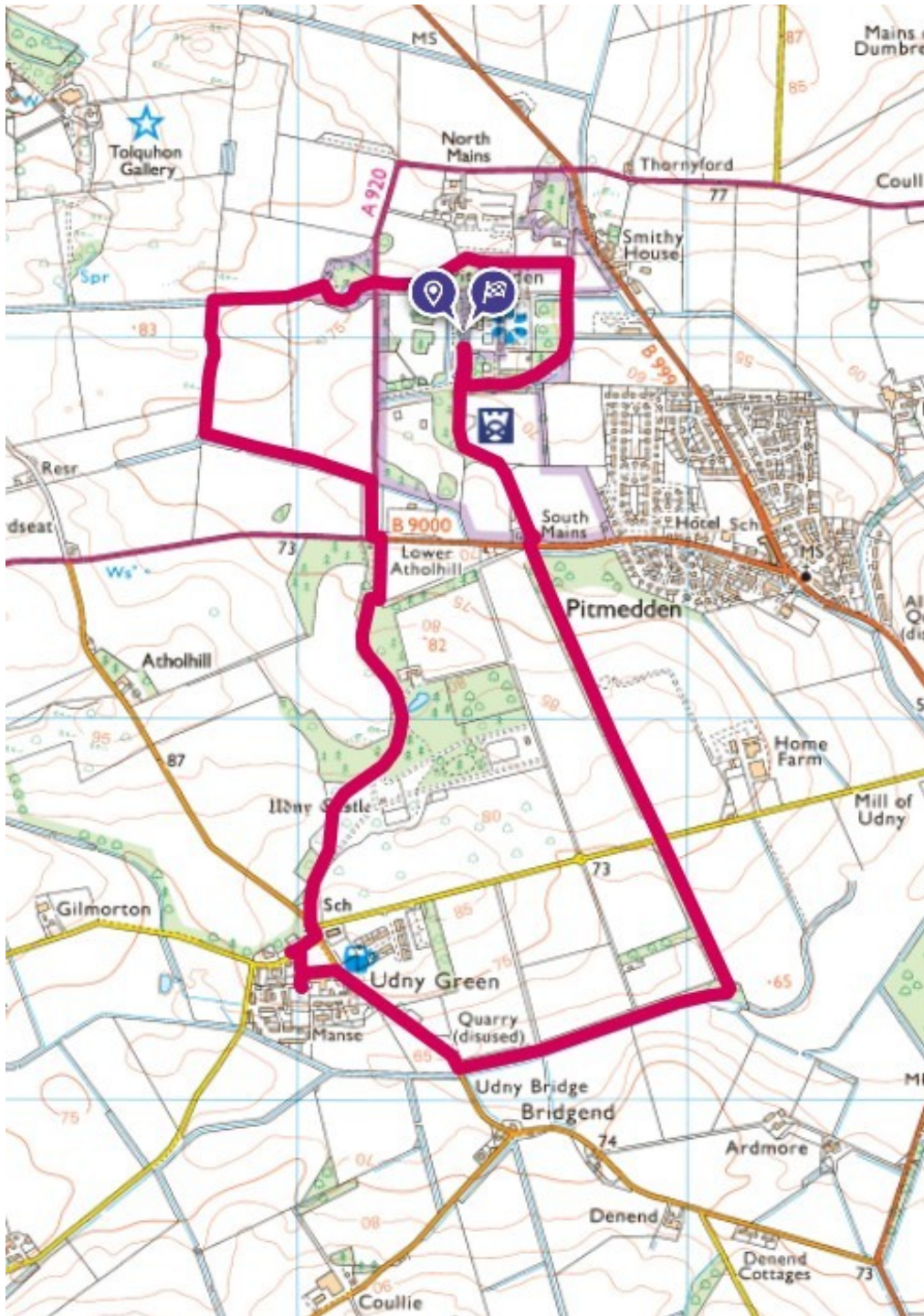


Route Map (with waypoints)

203-Pitmedden House-Udny Green-Mort House Circular



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](#)