

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Brechin Cathedral-Rough Moss-Burghill Wood Circuit (Angus)

Route Summary

For the most part, this is an undemanding rural walk, on the southern side of the River South Esk at Brechin. The route also takes in the old part of the town (some would say, city!), which has a long history, rooted in the Mediaeval cathedral where the walk starts and ends.

Duration: 2.75 hours.



Route Overview

Duration: 3.5 hours.

Transport/Parking: There are frequent Stagecoach bus services to Brechin. Check timetables. Church Street car-park is near to the walk start/end point.

Length: 8.650 km / 5.41 mi

Height Gain: 163 meter. **Height Loss:** 163 meter.

Max Height: 129 meter. **Min Height:** 21 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Outwith the town there are large sections on good paths and tracks. Between Waypoint 3 and 5 there is a 1.4 km section along the B9134 road, the last 400 m on the road itself.

Difficulty: Medium.

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

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead on public roads.

Refreshments: Options in Brechin. We can recommend the The Auld Bakehouse on the High Street.



Description

This is a pleasant walk from the Cathedral at the centre of Brechin into the countryside on the southern side of the River South Esk where the way-marked route links a number of paths and minor roads around the slopes of Burghill, passing through farmland and mature woodland. At its highest points the route provides far-reaching views over Brechin and the hills to the North, with glimpses, too, of the Montrose Basin to the East. The walk takes in two important bridges over the South Esk: early on the route, the elegant Stannochty Bridge, completed in 1826, which, at 100 ft, has one of the largest masonry spans in Scotland; and, on returning to the town, Brechin Bridge, one of the oldest in Scotland, with the south arch dating back to the mid 15th C. Although there were ups



and downs in its fortunes during Mediaeval times, Brechin held huge importance as the pre-Reformation ecclesiastical centre for Angus and the Mearns. In later centuries, the textile industry was to dominate the town's economy, alongside brewing and distilling, assisted by the arrival of the Caledonian railway.

Nowadays, with an attractive town centre for residents and visitors, Brechin functions as a residential, employment, commercial and service centre for north Angus, with good links to Aberdeen and Dundee.

Before or after the walk, we recommend that you explore the fascinating environs of the Cathedral, dating back to the Middle Ages. Thanks to the "[Undiscovered Scotland](https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/)" website for the following information: "...At the heart of Brechin is the Cathedral itself. The warren of old streets to the north and east form a highly attractive "Old Town" and is well worth exploring ... It seems likely that Christianity arrived in Brechin with St Dubhoc or Duthoc some time around 600 AD. By the late 800s a religious order known as the Céli Dé (or Culdees) had set up a church in Brechin, possibly on the site of an earlier Pictish establishment. This first enters recorded history in 972 when King Kenneth II endowed lands and property to the religious community here. Brechin Cathedral's highly unusual round tower was built in about 1100, but the rest of the building only took on recognisable form in the first half of the 1200s ...". There are a number of short walking routes around and about Brechin. See: <https://tinyurl.com/yxdkvxzm>

Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Brechin Cathedral

(56.73101; -2.66149) <https://w3w.co/earplugs.trustees.release>

Start the walk from the gates of Brechin Cathedral*, at the intersection of Church Lane and Chanonry Wynd in the centre of Brechin, off Church Street. With your back to the cathedral, turn left along Chanonry Wynd and follow it as it bends right towards Church Street.

**Note: Thanks to the "[Undiscovered Scotland](https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/)" website for the following information: "...At the heart of Brechin is the Cathedral itself. The warren of old streets to the north and east form a highly attractive 'Old Town' and is well worth exploring. The Town House is home to a museum reflecting the history and culture of Brechin. ... It seems likely that Christianity arrived in Brechin with St Dubhoc or Duthoc some time around 600AD. By the late 800s a religious order known as the Céli Dé (or Culdees) had set up a church in Brechin, possibly on the site of an earlier Pictish establishment. This first enters recorded history in 972 when King Kenneth II endowed lands and property to the religious community here. Brechin Cathedral's highly unusual round tower was built in about 1100, but the rest of the building only took on recognisable form in the first half of the 1200s ...". See also: <https://brechincathedral.org.uk/about/history/>*



(2) Left out of Chanonry Wynd onto Castle Street

(56.73134; -2.66376) <https://w3w.co/wharfs.standing.segregate>

In about 200 m, turn left out of Chanonry Wynd onto Castle Street (A935). Eventually, after passing the final entrance to Brechin Castle, the pavement ends. You will have to cross the road to the other side (with care) to continue walking along the pavement on that side in a westerly direction, out of the town. (216 m)



(3) Left across A935 onto B9134 - signposted Rough Moss

(56.73005; -2.67397) <https://w3w.co/verge.slacker.wager>

After 650 m, at the junction with the B9134 road where there is a walks signpost for Stannochoy Bridge/Rough Moss, cross the road again (with care) and walk along the rough pathway by the right side of the B9134 road. (868 m)



(4) Stannochoy Bridge

(56.72179; -2.68181) <https://w3w.co/pleaser.directive.mass>
After 1 km you will cross over the Stannochoy Bridge* (with one of the largest masonry spans in Scotland). Just over the bridge there is a field access road which will give you a good view of the bridge. Now, carry on walking along the B9134 road. Soon the rough path on the verge disappears so you must walk on the road, facing oncoming traffic. The flooded Stannochoy sand pit comes into view on your right side, now an attractive feature of the landscape and a haven for wild birds. (1.9 km)

**Note: '... This bridge, about 1 mile west of Brechin, crosses the South Esk with a single segmental arch of 100 ft span, one of the largest masonry spans in Scotland. It was built in 1826 by James Smith ... It is a handsome and neatly detailed bridge that deserves to be better known ...' See: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/165953/stannochoy-south-esk-bridge>*



(5) Left off B9134 for footpath to Rough Moss

(56.71908; -2.68473) <https://w3w.co/obstruct.once.laws>
In 400 m, go left to cross over the B9134 road (with care), and walk up the path signposted for Rough Moss. Soon, the path meets a minor road. Cross over the minor road and continue on the path. (2.3 km)



(6) Left onto Auldbar Road - signed for Rough Moss

(56.71542; -2.68398) <https://w3w.co/frost.closer.warthog>
In about 400 m, the path meets another tarred road, the Auldbar Road. Turn left to walk along the road in the direction signposted for Rough Moss. (2.7 km)



(7) Sharp left off Auldbar Road - signed for Rough Moss

(56.71441; -2.68239) <https://w3w.co/baths.stated.revived>
In 200 m, where the tarred Auldbar Road bends sharply to the right, go left off the road onto a farm track, signposted for Rough Moss. In about 150 m you will arrive at a belt of trees, where you turn right to follow a path in the trees, in a southerly direction. (2.9 km)



(8) The Rough Moss road

(56.71314; -2.67971) <https://w3w.co/tram.pays.seagull>
Soon, in about 300 m from leaving the tarred road, the track leaves the trees and takes a sharp turn left onto the Rough Moss grassy road, with young trees on your left initially and fields on your right. Close by at this point, on your right, is the Brechin Satellite Earth Station*. Carry on walking along the Rough Moss track, with some fine views opening up on your left, to the North, over Brechin, before the track continues along the edge of the mature woodland of Burghill Wood. (3.2 km)

**Note: the towers and dishes of the Brechin Satellite Earth Station are a part of the national telecommunications network. The three satellite dishes apparently connect to North Sea oil platforms, mainland Europe, Africa and South America.*



(9) Exit onto Burghill Road and carry straight on

(56.71483; -2.66270) <https://w3w.co/irritated.exits.prepped>
After 1.1 km, you reach the end of the rough track at a gate. Pass the gate and carry straight on, now walking on the tarred surface of the Burghill road. There are open views to your right, including some glimpses of the Montrose Basin. (4.3 km)



(10) Right at t-junction - signed for Dalgety

(56.71632; -2.64487) <https://w3w.co/hairspray.occupiers.jogging>
After 1.1 km, at a t-junction, go right, in the direction sign-posted for Dalgety. (5.4 km)



(11) Left off road onto Dalgety path

(56.71463; -2.64338) <https://w3w.co/vision.carbon.motivator>
After 200 m, leave the tarred road to go left onto a path through the trees, sign-posted for Dalgety. Follow the path as descends through the wood to the A933 main road. Cross the busy road with care, and continue down the Dalgety access road towards some houses and the South Esk river. (5.6 km)



(12) Left at post to pass house - and onto riverside path

(56.72315; -2.63974) <https://w3w.co/apartment.just.winners>
After 1.1 km from Waypoint 11, and 300 m from crossing the A933 road, you will have reached the end of the access road where there is a walks post (unsigned). Walk past the post then go left along the grassy path, with a house on your left side and the river, a little distance away, on your right side. Follow this riverside path back to Brechin as it enters trees along the riverbank. Where the path meets the busy A933 road at the Brechin Bridge*, cross the bridge with care. (6.7 km)

**Note: The bridge is one of the oldest in Scotland, with the south arch dating back to the mid 15th Century. There is a plaque on the bridge with the following information: "A wooden bridge existed here by 1220. Records show that by 1469 it was a stone-built bridge of two arches. The south arch dates from the time of Bishop Crannach (1426-59). The north arch was rebuilt in 1787..." See: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/35778/brechin-brechin-bridge>*



(13) Over Brechin Bridge and left down River Street

(56.72362; -2.64808) <https://w3w.co/maple.toasters.meatballs>
In 600 m, after crossing the Brechin Bridge, turn left down River Street where there is some interesting artwork. (7.3 km)



(14) Veer left onto path through park at flooding improvements memorial

(56.72570; -2.65239) <https://w3w.co/legwork.birdcage.harsh>
In 300 m, after passing a memorial to flooding improvements made in the late 19th C which transformed the lives of the poor people who lived in this area, veer left onto a path through the riverside park. Follow the path until it joins the very old Ladeside Road (no longer a public road for vehicles), and turn left. Brechin Castle is now on your left side but is largely obscured by trees, Carry on along Ladeside Road for about 200 m. (7.6 km)



(15) Go right and up to steps onto High Street

(56.72992; -2.65861) <https://w3w.co/plan.simulator.above>
In 700 m from the flood improvements memorial, at a small park, leave Ladeside Road to ascend on a path to the High Street. Go left to walk along the High Street. (8.3 km)



(16) Follow High Street onto Church Street

(56.73140; -2.65986) <https://w3w.co/against.heeding.preheated>
In 200 m from Waypoint 15, follow the road as it bends left onto Church Street. In about 90 m, go left down Church Lane to return to your start-point at Brechin Cathedral. (8.5 km)



(17) Finish walk back at Brechin Cathedral

(56.73099; -2.66137) <https://w3w.co/earplugs.trustees.release>
In 200 m you will have arrived back at your start-point at Brechin Cathedral. (8.7 km)



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

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

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

[Access Walk on Viewranger](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)