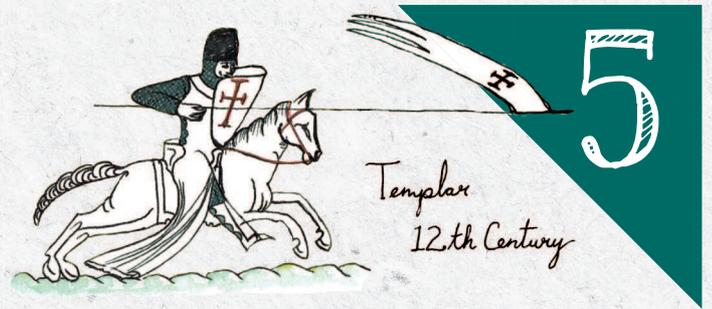


Mounth, Post and Templar

North Kincardine has a network of interesting routes both very old and new. Just a few metres away from the A90, the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and the railway line, you step back in time to stories of highway men, ghosts, knights, kings and the church. Take time to look more closely at the landscape and see signs of earlier communities – cairns, hut circles, stone circles, field systems and more recently to ‘improvements’ in land management and features such as Bridge of Dee and Boswell’s Monument. The changing priorities and status of land owners has shaped this area as it passed through the hands of the people, kinships, clans, kings, queens, church, estate owners, communities and individuals. To get the full effect of how your predecessors discovered the landscape, these routes are better appreciated on foot, by bicycle or on horseback.

The several large mosses in North Kincardine are treacherous, meaning that direct routes were difficult to engineer. The Romans moved north from Raedykes camp towards Normandykes, near Culter, thus avoiding getting bogged down in the Portlethen Moss, Red Moss and Hare Moss, instead of moving directly towards Aberdeen. The mounths were man-made, raised routes that were created to navigate through inhospitable moss and heath terrain. Between Braemar and Aberdeen there are ten mounth passes that cut through the eastern Grampians. North Kincardine has the furthest east of the mounths: Causey, Cowie and Elsick.

There are references to the Causey Mounth in William the Lion’s Charter of Aberdeen in 1179 which went on to connect Aberdeen to Edinburgh. By the 18th century, people were travelling up and



down the mounth and making use of staging posts, stores and trading points. Aberdeen was one of the earliest cities to have its own postal service. The blue uniforms with silver town crests were first recorded in 1590. The first mail coach ran between Aberdeen and Edinburgh along the Causey Mounth in 1787.

Connecting the Causey Mounth to the South Deeside Road is an interesting route crossing the inner countryside of North Kincardine which was the route of the Knights Templar running between Cammachmore and Templars, near Maryculter. This 12th century religious order of fighting knights, protected pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land.

The South Deeside Road follows the meandering of the Dee which takes you past the impressive and distinctive architecture of Ardoe House Hotel, Blairs College and Maryculter House Hotel. Exploring these sites touches on stories of the Knights Templar, the power of Royalty, the Church and industrialisation of the North East.

The mounths run between the hills of North Kincardine which provide amazing views and vistas. From Tollohill, on the Causey Mounth, enjoy the vista of Aberdeen with the Bridge of Dee in the foreground. On a clear day Clochandighter is the place to see up to the Buchan Ness lighthouse near Peterhead and to Dunnottar Castle south of Stonehaven. Curlethney has views up to Lochnagar and to the iron age hill forts of Mither Tap on Bennachie and Tap o’Noth.

Level of Walk

Depending on the stage of the walk or cycle and the terrain, the route varies from easy to strenuous.

Terrain

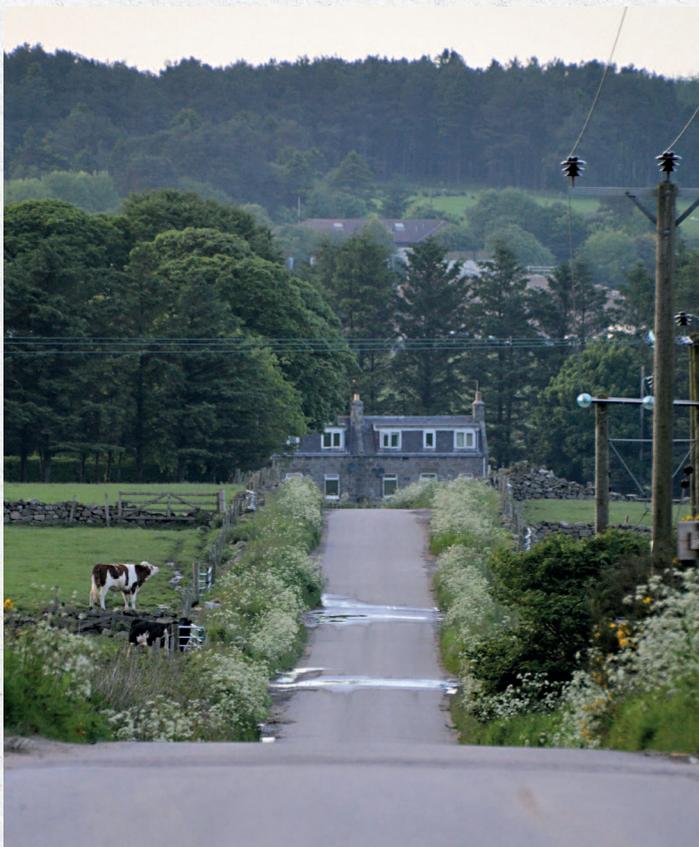
The route is mainly along B and country roads, old farm routes and village tracks. OS maps should be referred to in planning a route. Walking, cycling, riding or running are dependent on the stage of the route. Make sure you are visible to traffic both during the day and night.

Distance

The whole route is approximately 26½ miles (42 km) which can be completed in parts or as a whole.

Map

Refer to the Discover North Kincardine illustrated map (available from www.discovernorthkincardine.org.uk) for points, features and viewpoints.



Map References

For more detailed routes and information refer to the following maps:

38 Landranger: Aberdeen; Inverurie & Pitmedden
406 Explorer: Aberdeen & Banchory

Getting There

Various buses run to Portlethen (7, 7A, 7B, 7C) as well as between Aberdeen and Peterculter (19, 119, 201, 202) - check www.stagecoachbus.com and www.travelinescotland.com

Trains run regularly between Aberdeen and Stonehaven, however, they stop infrequently at Portlethen. Check www.nationalrail.co.uk for up to date timings and stations.



Parking and Starting Point

Parking can be found in the villages and at various points along the trail. Please do not park in passing places.

Places on the route such as Ardoe House, Lairhillock, Blairs, Maryculter House Hotel, Crynoch Burn, Clochandighter, Maryculter Woods could be visited as a day out in themselves.



**KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO**
SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE outdooraccess-scotland.com

www.discovernorthkincardine.org.uk

Produced by Anne Murray for North Kincardine Public Arts Group.

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Planning Your Walk

Go prepared with suitable clothing, shoes, water and provisions. Due to the proximity to the sea, haar and mist can come in quickly, causing reduced visibility and sudden drops in temperatures. Equally, within any one day, it is possible to have sun, rain, sleet and snow.

Care should be taken whilst walking, cycling or riding along the roads as they are used for heavy farm machinery at certain times of the day. Make sure you are visible to traffic both during the day and night.

Mobile phones do not always pick up a service in the area.

Further Information

Blairs Museum

www.blairsmuseum.com

Archaeology Service Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

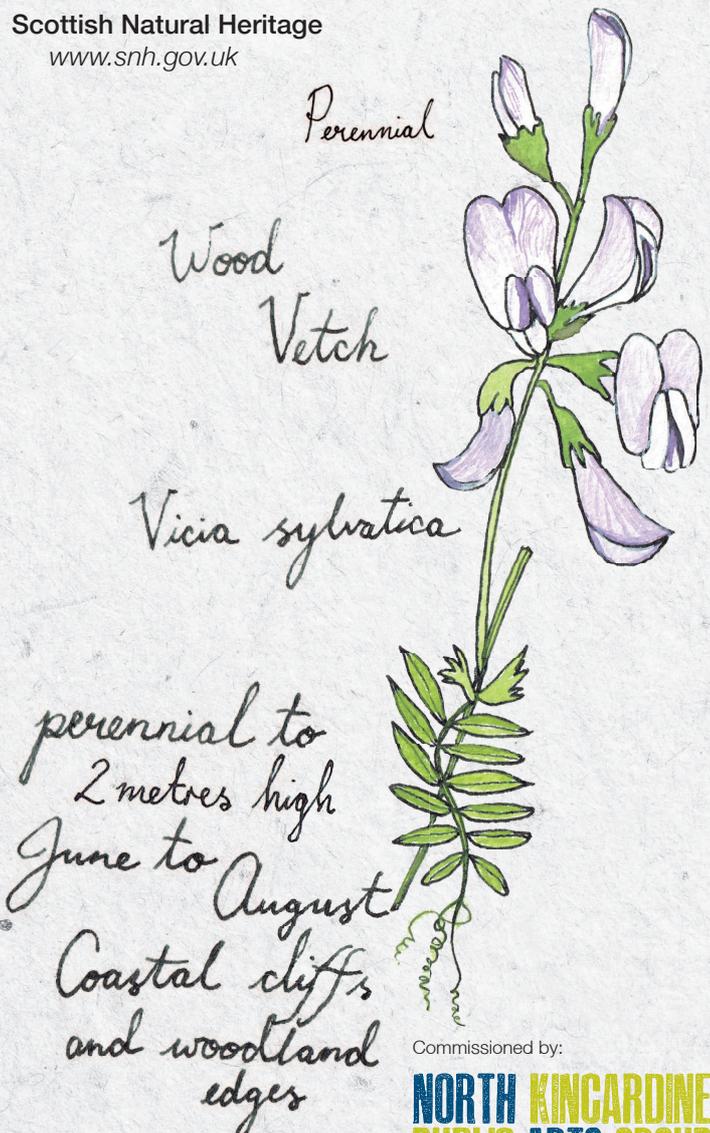
www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/leisure-sport-and-culture/archaeology/

Aberdeenshire Council - Paths & Outdoor Access

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/paths-and-outdoor-access

Scottish Natural Heritage

www.snh.gov.uk



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