

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Alford-Haughton Country Park Ramble (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

This is an easy circular walk with modest overall ascent. Starting and finishing at Alford, an attractive Donside village situated in its own wide and fertile Howe (or Vale), the route passes through parkland, woodland, riverside and farming country, with extensive rural views.

Duration: 2.5 hours



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent Stagecoach #248 service from Aberdeen. Check timetable. Parking spaces at start/end of walk outside Alford Valley Railway, or nearby.

Length: 7.570 km / 4.73 mi

Height Gain: 93 meter

Height Loss: 93 meter

Max Height: 186 meter

Min Height: 131 meter

Surface: Moderate. Mostly on good paths and paved surfaces. A fair amount of walking on pavements and quiet minor roads.

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

Difficulty: Easy.

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead near to livestock, and on public roads.

Refreshments: Options in Alford.



Description

This is a gentle ramble around and about the attractive large village of Alford, taking in the pleasant environs of Haughton Country Park, a section along the banks of the River Don, and the Murray Park mixed woodland, before circling around to descend into the centre again from woodland above the Dry Ski Slope. Alford lies within the Vale of Alford, tracing the middle reaches of the River Don. In the summer season, the Alford Valley (Narrow-Gauge) Railway, Grampian Transport Museum, Alford Heritage Centre and Craigievar Castle are popular attractions to visit when in the area. Haughton Country Park is a mature parkland environment with a popular caravan park and woodland walks. On the route, we pass Haughton House, formerly the home of the Farquharson lairds, who, from the late 17th century, owned most of the surrounding parish. The current house wasn't completed until 1854. In the 20th Century it had a chequered history – as a country sports hotel, a Carmelite convent, and a Catholic boys school. In 1972, having been purchased by Aberdeen County Council, it was converted into the base for a caravan site. A little further along the tumbling Don river is the Montgarrie Bridge where there is an interesting information board about its history. Moving on, the route takes in the mixed woodland known as Murray Park. It was gifted to the village by local man, Charles Murray, famous for the anthology of poems, "Hamewith", written in the Doric dialect of Scots. Links to local attractions:

Alford Valley Railway – <https://www.facebook.com/AlfordValleyRailway/>

Grampian Transport Museum – <http://www.gtm.org.uk/>

Alford Heritage Centre – <https://www.facebook.com/AlfordHeritageMuseum/>

Craigievar Castle – <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/craigievar>



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Alford Valley Railway Station

(57.23173; -2.69823)

Start the walk at the Alford Valley Railway Station and Millenium Sculpture Garden, close to, and signposted from, the Main Street. Looking at the Railway Station building, turn to your left and walk in a westerly direction, passing the railway sheds building on your right.



(2) Right down Watchmaker's Lane

(57.23204; -2.70015)

In about 130 m, upon meeting Watchmaker's Lane, go right and follow the pavement as it passes a children's nursery. Keep going past the Transport Museum and then the Golf Club. (130 m)



(3) Right down Montgarrie Road

(57.23393; -2.70361)

In another 370 m, soon after passing the Alford Golf Club building and car-park on your right, go right down Montgarrie Road. (502 m)



(4) Veer right through gates into Haughton Park

(57.23767; -2.70234)

In 425 m, veer right through the gates into Haughton Park. Carry on walking along the access drive. (925 m)



(5) Approach Haughton House and go around clockwise

(57.24075; -2.69263)

In 675 m, you will arrive at the Haughton House building. Pass the front door, going anti-clockwise around the building. (1.6 km)



(6) Right through caravan park down to river

(57.24125; -2.69245)

In 100 m, or so, at the back of Haughton House, go past the metal gate into the caravan park, veering slightly right initially as you head down towards the banks of the River Don about 200 m away. (1.7 km)



(7) Left to riverside walk gates

(57.24227; -2.69328)

In 200 m, passing an old stone building on your left, go left along the path by the fence. In a very short distance you arrive at wooden gates on your right. Go through the gates and follow the path down to the riverside. Continue following the riverside path in a westerly direction for about 700 m as you approach Montgarrie Bridge. (1.9 km)



(8) Up steps onto Montgarrie Bridge

(57.24566; -2.70177)

In 700 m, go up the steps beside an information board onto Montgarrie Road. You will probably want to check out the views from the bridge, up and down river. When you are ready, head along the road, away from Montgarrie and in the direction of Alford. Take great care to walk on the right-hand side of the road, facing oncoming traffic. Walk on the verge when oncoming traffic are approaching. Look out for the first junction on your right, in about 400 m. (2.6 km)



(9) Right onto minor road marked for Roads Depot

(57.24251; -2.70177)

In 400 m from the bridge, turn right down the minor road marked for the Roads Depot. (3.0 km)



(10) Left onto narrow path into woods by house

(57.24134; -2.71467)

In 800 m, at a house on your right, turn left onto a narrow indistinct path leading into the trees. (3.8 km)



(11) Right onto surfaced path

(57.24094; -2.71443)

In less than 100 m, turn right onto a surfaced path through woods. Soon, you reach a section with a boardwalk over boggy ground and the path then starts to ascend gently. (3.9 km)



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(12) Right onto Murray Park access road

(57.23910; -2.71529)

In 200 m, upon meeting a hard-surfaced road, turn right along road. This is the original access road to Murray Park. Soon you pass through the gates. Keep walking in a westerly direction at the side of the former main road into Alford from west. (4.1 km)



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(13) Cross road at Lumphanan junction

(57.23824; -2.72422)

In 600 m you will have arrived at the edge of the new main road into Alford from the west. Cross the road at the marked pedestrian area and head around to the junction with a minor road signposted for Kingsford. Start walking up this road, marked on the map as the Old Military Road. Take great care walk on the right-hand side of the road, facing oncoming traffic. Walk on the verge when oncoming traffic are approaching. Look out for a junction on your left in about 800 m. (4.7 km)



(14) Left down minor road towards Alford Community School

(57.23210; -2.72318)

In 800 m, turn left down a minor road towards Alford Community School and nearby new housing estates. (5.5 km)



(15) Right up old track towards trees

(57.23289; -2.71939)

In 200 m, turn right up an old farm track towards trees. (5.7 km)



(16) Left onto path at edge of trees

(57.22992; -2.71758)

In 400 m, as you enter into a belt of trees, go left onto a narrow path. This soon joins a more established marked path running close to the edge of the belt of trees, looking down on your left towards the new Alford Community School complex. (6.1 km)



(17) Left then right onto surfaced path

(57.23017; -2.71175)

In about 300 m, go left and down to pass a metal structure before joining a hard-surfaced path that passes around the back of playing fields and the Alford Dry-Ski Slope. Keep following this path as it bends left and down towards houses. (6.4 km)



(18) Right onto Greystone Road

(57.23219; -2.70866)

In 500 m, go right onto Greystone Road, heading towards the centre of Alford. (6.9 km)



(19) Onto Main Street at ornamental water fountain

(57.23199; -2.70225)

In 400 m, at a y-junction, Greystone Road meets the Main Street in Alford. Check out the Farquharson commemorative ornamental water fountain before proceeding down Main Street, past the Bistro Cafe and other shop fronts. (7.3 km)



(20) Cross Main Street at Great Wall restaurant and down lane

(57.23131; -2.69898)

In 200 m, cross the Main Street at the Great Wall restaurant and walk down the lane opposite towards your walk start point. (7.5 km)



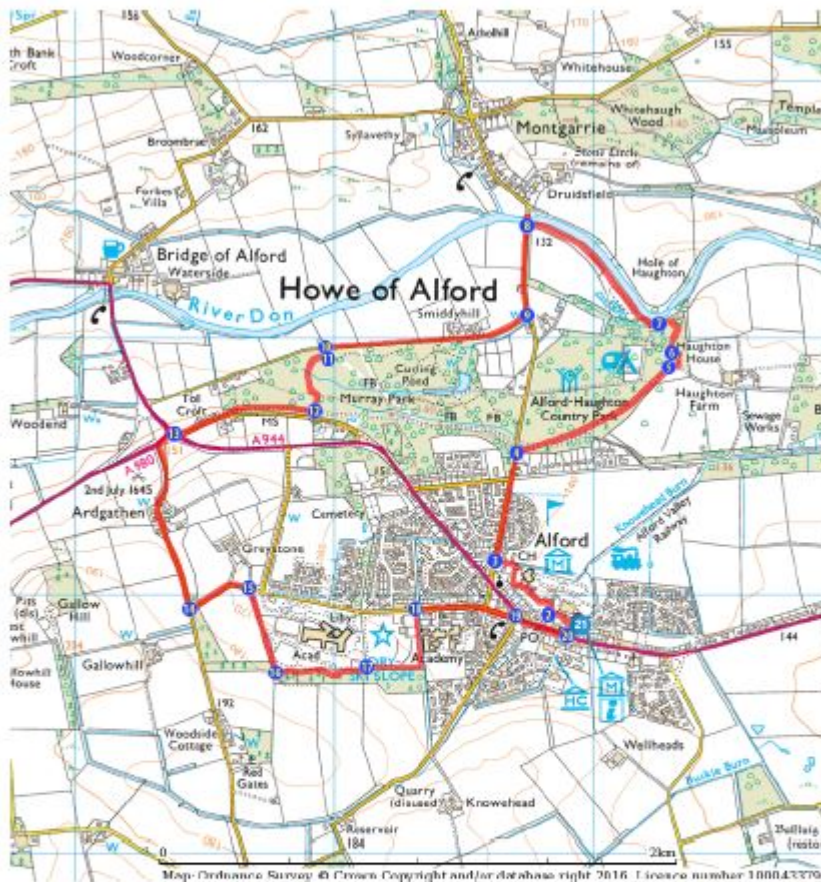
(21) Finish walk back at Railway Station-Sculpture Garden

(57.23171; -2.69816)

In 100 m you have returned to your walk start-point at the Alford Valley Railway Station and Millennium Sculpture Garden.



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](#)