

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

## Pennan Circular (Aberdeenshire)

### Route Summary

#### !!! DO NOT ATTEMPT THE FULL CIRCUIT !!!

This route is currently impassable due to a dense section of fallen trees between Waypoints 8 and 9. It is possible to take a shorter (5 km) route, turning right at Waypoint 6 to return to Pennan. However, this means walking on the B9031 road for 1.7 km.

This walk combines the scenic charm of a world-famous little fishing village on the Banffshire coast, almost hidden under low cliffs, with wild ravines, rolling hills, farmland and a conifer woodland. The return section on a quiet minor tarred road offers great wide-open views.

Duration: 3 hours



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 3 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** Stagecoach #273 from/to Fraserburgh on Saturdays only. Check timetable. Parking at the public car-park at the west-end of Pennan village.

**Length:** 8.130 km / 5.08 mi

**Height Gain:** 228 meter **Height Loss:** 228 meter

**Max Height:** 204 meter **Min Height:** 12 meter

**Surface:** Moderate. A mix of field paths, farm roads and tarred minor roads.

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

**Difficulty:** Medium.

**Dog Friendly:** Yes, but keep dogs on lead near to any livestock, and on public roads and streets. You are VERY likely to encounter sheep and cattle in fields on the route.

**Refreshments:** If open, the Coastal Cuppie kiosk at the harbour offers coffees and soft drinks. Excellent home bakes too! Otherwise, Fraserburgh is your best bet.



### Description

This is an enjoyable circular walk from the iconic seaside village of Pennan, nestling under the low cliffs on the Banffshire coast. The route ascends through the rolling farmland along the coastal strip, with fine views all around and back towards the sea in particular. On the early outward stages of the walk, the path passes above the steep-sloped and narrow Den of Auchmedden, and on the returning descent, on a very quiet minor road, there are great views of the much wider valley called the Tore of Troup, with dens running off at various points from the valley floor. Dens are a notable feature of the coastal landscape in this area. The old Scots word "den" refers to a narrow ravine or valley, usually wooded, and, nowadays a marvellous haven for plants, and wild birds and animals. The village of Pennan, with its white-washed old fisher cottages, gable-end to the sea, is a pretty place, although it can be austere and wind-blown on a stormy day. The little settlement is world-famous as the fictional village of "Ferness" in the 1983 film *Local Hero*, starring Burt Lancaster, and directed by Bill Forsyth. The film gave Pennan one of the best known (and photographed) red telephone boxes in the world, sitting on the quayside opposite the Pennan Inn, and attracting visitors from across the globe ever since. You should note, however, that the scenes in the film on sweeping white-sand beaches were filmed on the west coast of Scotland at Arisaig!



## Waypoints

### (1) Start from the car-park in Pennan

(57.67912; -2.26307) <https://w3w.co/traps.bill.convey>

The walk starts from the car-park at the west end of Pennan village. From here, walk back through the village or along the sea-front towards the harbour, passing on the way, the red telephone box made famous in the film 'Local Hero'.



### (2) Veer right and up behind harbour

(57.67898; -2.25890) <https://w3w.co/employers.villager.mush>

In just under 300 m, approaching the harbour area, veer right, passing houses on your right, to ascend a path above the harbour on your left. Soon, after turning inland under a low cliff, you will pass a 'Public Footpath' sign. Continue walking up the path through gorse bushes\*, eventually passing through a gate into a field. Continue up through the field\*\*, with a fence on your right, heading for a stile and the disused farm buildings at the top of the hill. (282 m)

*\* Note: we have seen reports indicating that this section of the path can be overgrown and difficult. Our experience, in September, 2018, is that the path now seems to be maintained. We had no problems.*

*\*\* Note: there may be farm livestock in this and other field areas encountered on this walk. Please ensure you close all gates securely behind you.*



### (3) Over stile and up at Pennan Farm

(57.67697; -2.24570) <https://w3w.co/visions.origin.dorms>

In another 900 m, having ascended through a field, you will arrive at a stile beside the disused Pennan Farm buildings. Cross the stile and continue uphill, veering slightly right as you pass a more modern barn on your right. Leaving the ruined farm-house and the farm buildings behind, continue through a steel gate on the rough farm road. (1.2 km)



### (4) Through gate and continue on footpath

(57.67202; -2.23890) <https://w3w.co/clown.hazelnuts.united>

In 800 m, keeping to the farm road through the field, at a right-hand bend in the road go through the steel gate at the Public Footpath sign slightly to your left. Carry on walking inland. (2.0 km)



### (5) Left at tarred road

(57.66919; -2.24023) <https://w3w.co/herbs.flickers.products>  
In 300 m, the footpath meets a narrow tarred farm access road. Go left here along the road, continuing to head inland. In about 150 m you will pass a Public Footpath sign on your left, where the path to New Aberdour right-of-way turns sharply to the left. Ignore this turn-off and continue on the tarred farm access road towards the main B9031 road. (2.3 km)



### (6) Left along verge of main road

(57.66691; -2.24296) <https://w3w.co/reclining.receiving.pocket>  
In 400 m, arriving at a t-junction with the main B9031 road, cross the road with care and go left along the verge, looking for a farm road-opening on your right within 100 m, or so. (2.7 km)



### (7) Veer right onto farm road

(57.66628; -2.24165)  
<https://w3w.co/ombudsman.begins.elevates>  
In about 100 m from joining the B9031, veer right and down onto a farm road. Keep following this rough road with fields on either side. (2.8 km)



### (8) Carry on towards trees

(57.65799; -2.24755) <https://w3w.co/crackles.flask.bond>  
After a 1 km, or so, the rough road becomes less well-used, passing the last field entrance. Keep going on the grassy road towards the trees. As the road passes through the trees you may have to negotiate some low-hanging branches over the road. Mid-way through the forestry plantation you will pass the site of a former military camp (?) on your left. At a clearing, follow the rough road as it veers slightly right. (1.0 km)



### (9) Right and down minor road

(57.65285; -2.25527) <https://w3w.co/ecologist.fulfilled.coherent>  
In 800 m, arriving at a t-junction with a minor public road opposite a site for off-road motor-biking, go right to follow this tarred road as it slowly descends for almost 3 km towards the coast. Take care to walk on the correct side of the road, facing oncoming traffic on their side of the road (however, on our walk, only one vehicle passed us) At various points there are great views in all directions. (4.6 km)



### (10) Downhill to Pennan through x-roads

(57.67650; -2.26181) <https://w3w.co/noting.applied.bleaching>  
After 2.9 km, go through the x-roads with the B9031, downhill to Pennan. Obviously, the village is popular with visitors, so take care to walk on the correct side of the road. Clearly, you may want to explore Pennan and its harbour at your leisure on the way back to your start-point. (7.5 km)



### (11) Finish walk back at Pennan car-park

(57.67911; -2.26301) <https://w3w.co/traps.bill.convey>  
In 600 m, you will have arrived back at the walk start-point in the car-park. Note that the village hall building on your left at the car-park contains public toilets maintained by the little community - donations are invited to help with the upkeep. (8.1 km)



## 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](#)