

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Newburgh Circular (Fife)

Route Summary

This is an easy walk alongside the wide and impressive estuary of the River Tay. The walk takes in an early section of the Fife Coastal Path, passing the old berthing areas for fishing and cargo boats. The return route uses an old right of way to circle back to the rear of the town.

Duration: 2 hours



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Stagecoach #36 bus service from Perth. Check timetables. Easy on-road parking on the main street in Newburgh.

Length: 5.460 km / 3.41 mi

Height Gain: 77 meter

Height Loss: 77 meter

Max Height: 37 meter

Min Height: 1 meter

Surface: Moderate. Mostly hard paved and grassy paths. Some pavement and road walking. See Waypoint 7 for note on how to open a locked gate.

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

Difficulty: Easy.

Dog Friendly: Yes, on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

Refreshments: Options in Newburgh.



Description

This is a pleasant little walk around and about the small Fife town of Newburgh, with its attractive miscellany of old buildings running along the main street. It sits on the south bank of the River Tay opposite the reed-covered Mugdrum Island, where a navigable channel runs alongside the town. The land behind Newburgh rises quickly at the eastern end of the Ochil Hills. As an established burgh, Newburgh dates back to 1266, but it had started to grow in importance after Lindores Abbey was founded as an offshoot of Kelso Abbey in about 1191 by David, Earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion. The Abbey church was 59 m long, with transepts 34 m long. Edward I of England, John Balliol, David II, and James III were among the monarchs who visited Lindores at different times. The earliest record of whisky production there, cited by the royal exchequer roll for 1494, is a commission from King James IV to Friar John Cor of Lindores Abbey to make 'eight bols of malt'. During the Protestant Reformation, the abbey was sacked by a mob from Dundee in 1543, and again by John Knox and his supporters in 1559. In the following years the Abbey buildings were quarried as a source of building stone for Newburgh. During the walk, you may wish to visit the new Lindores Distillery, just across the road from the main ruins of the Abbey (visited, on the route). It opened very recently, in 2017. To quote from their website - "*After a break of 523 years, spirit is once again flowing from the copper stills at Lindores Abbey.*" See: <https://lindoresabbeydistillery.com/> In modern times, Newburgh's main industries revolved around linen, linoleum, oilskins, and quarrying. The harbour area was used for boatbuilding and the transfer of cargoes to smaller vessels bound for Perth. A salmon net and coble industry also thrived at one time.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk outside Laing's Library

(56.35083; -3.24140)

Start the walk outside Laing's Library (now base for the Newburgh Ancestry and History Society) in the middle of Newburgh's High Street. Looking at the building, turn left and walk along the High Street for about 500 m to the outskirts of the town.



(2) Right and down to park at Fife Coastal Path start

(56.34918; -3.24901)

In just over 500 m, veer off the pavement on Abernethy Road into a public car-park where there is a plaque marking the start of the Fife Coastal Path. Take the steps down to the park and follow the Coastal Path as it goes right and gently downhill, around the edge of the park.



(3) Left to waterfront

(56.35189; -3.24579)

In 400 m, just after leaving the park, go left down a lane, off Gardens Road towards the banks of the River Tay. Once you reach a grassy area on the banks of the river, head straight ahead towards the river's edge (the bank is built up with a stone wall). Turn right here to follow the riverbank, passing a number of sheltered mooring areas for boats, and some houses on your right. Keep going along the Fife Coastal Trail as it passes the premises of Newburgh Sailing Club. Leaving the town behind, keep walking downstream, with the river, and riverside reeds and rushes on your left side, and fields on your right. The path is hard surfaced now. Eventually the path turns inland, heading in the direction of group of houses and apartments based on an old mill building, with the Lindores Burn on your left side. (933 m)



(4) Divert right to Lindores Abbey-Distillery

(56.35312; -3.22294)

Eventually, after 1.8 km, the path meets the C46 Abbey Road. Turn right here to walk along the edge of the road, heading towards the Lindores Abbey ruins on your right side and the Lindores Distillery on your left side. (2.7 km)



(5) Right into grounds of ruined abbey

(56.35203; -3.22555)

In 200 m you will arrive at the Lindores Distillery* on your left and a wall with an arched entrance to the Lindores Abbey** ruins on your right. Go through the entrance and explore the former abbey area. When you are ready, re-trace your steps along Abbey Road to pass Waypoint 4 and the old mill wheel on your left. (2.9 km)

**Note: you may wish to visit the Lindores Distillery, opened in 2018. To quote from their website - 'After a break of 523 years, spirit is once again flowing from the copper stills at Lindores Abbey.'* See: <https://lindoresabbeydistillery.com/>

***Note: Lindores Abbey was founded as a daughter house of Kelso Abbey in about 1191 by David, Earl of*

Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion. The first abbot was Guido, Prior of Kelso, under whom the buildings were mostly completed. The church, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. Andrew, was 59 m long, with transepts 34 m long. Edward I of England, John Balliol, David II, and James III were among the monarchs who visited Lindores at different times. The earliest record of whisky, cited by the exchequer roll for 1494 is a commission from King James IV to Friar John Cor of Lindores Abbey to make about 'eight bols of malt' or 580 kg of aquavita. During the Protestant Reformation, the abbey was sacked by a mob from Dundee in 1543, and again by John Knox and his supporters in 1559. In the following years the Abbey buildings were quarried as a source of building stone for Newburgh, and a number of architectural fragments are visible built into later structures in the town.



(6) Right off road opposite mill development

(56.35329; -3.22191)

After re-tracing your steps from the ruins of Lindores Abbey, and passing Waypoint 4, the mill wheel and mill housing development on your left, go right onto a rough road, signposted for the Fife Coastal Path, and passing a small mill-pond on your left. Keep going along this track for about 700 m, ignoring a signed path for the Fife Coastal route going left and uphill after about 350 m. (3.3 km)



(7) Right onto Cupar Road

(56.34741; -3.22184)

In 700 m, go through the pedestrian gate onto the verge of the A913 Cupar Road, and turn right. In about 50 m, at a house on your right, cross the road with care and walk off the main road up an access road past houses on both sides. Follow this rough road as it swings right, then left, away from the houses towards open fields. You will see the main railway line above you, on your left, on an embankment. Go through a steel pedestrian gate* and follow an old right of way across the fields, taking an obvious, worn path. (4.0 km)

**Note: we understand from reports by walkers that access to the right of way through the fields between Waypoint 7 and Waypoint 9 is now by a keypad-locked code. A telephone number is advertised at the gate which provides a code to unlock the gate. We understand this works satisfactorily.*



(8) Through gate between fields

(56.34876; -3.23055)

In 600 m, go through a steel pedestrian gate and keep following the right of way path towards Newburgh. Pass through another gate, then turn right and downhill to follow the path towards houses on the edge of Newburgh. (4.6 km)



(9) Sharp right and downhill after path

(56.34952; -3.23484)

In 300 m, after passing the back of some houses, the right of way path emerges onto a lane called Guthrie Gardens. Turn right to follow the lane as it swings left and downhill. Near the end of the lane, turn right onto a narrower passage that takes you onto another, wider lane (not named on the map) which leads down to Newburgh High Street. (4.9 km)



(10) Left onto High Street

(56.35100; -3.23522)

In 200 m, you will arrive at Newburgh High Street, where the ornate stone Livingstone Fountain, from 1887, is on your immediate right. Across the road is an hotel, the Abbey Inn. After checking out the fountain, turn left to walk along Newburgh High Street, to return to your start point. (5.1 km)



(11) Finish walk back at Laing's Library

(56.35083; -3.24116)

In 400 m, after passing many interesting old buildings, and an impressive clock tower, you will have returned to your start point, outside Laing's Library. (5.5 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](#)