

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

## Cullen-Logie Head-Crannoch Wood Circular (Moray)

### Route Summary

With lots of ups and downs, this is an energetic hike that takes in the picturesque charm of an historic coastal village, wonderful coastal scenery, farmland sweeping down to the cliff-tops, and mature pine woodland. A couple of sections are steep, and may not suit all walkers.

Duration: 3 hours.



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 3.5 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** Stagecoach buses from Aberdeen and Elgin pass through Cullen. Check timetables. Free on-street parking at walk start/end point.

**Length:** 8.850 km / 5.53 mi

**Height Gain:** 244 meter.

**Height Loss:** 244 meter.

**Max Height:** 103 meter.

**Min Height:** 5 meter.

**Surface:** Moderate. Mostly good surfaces. However, take extreme care on the cliff-side path near Waypoint 8 which is fairly precipitous at times. The steep path just after Waypoint 10 is slippery and uneven due to landslip.

**Child Friendly:** Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance and overall ascent. Take extreme care on cliff-side path near Waypoint 8 and after Waypoint 10.

**Difficulty:** Medium/Hard.

**Dog Friendly:** Yes. On lead on public roads and near to any farm livestock.

**Refreshments:** Options in Cullen.



### Description

This very enjoyable walk provides an unusual and interesting mix of coastal walking, combined with rolling farmland, pine woodland, and scenic open countryside. Cullen is an attractive large village with a long history, the original settlement having been made a royal burgh around the end of the 12thC. Nowadays, there is a clear distinction between picturesque and colourful Seatown of Cullen, the old fishing quarter, nestled into the broad bay, and the grander "New Cullen" rising uphill and inland. These were planned settlements, built in the 1820's, as was the fine harbour, built by Thomas Telford to take advantage of the opportunities for trade and the booming herring industry. The impressive railway viaducts featuring near the end of the walk served the Great North of Scotland coastal line. Climbing to cliff-top level from the harbour and beach, the route first visits Port Long Hythe viewpoint where local features and the faraway hills in Caithness, across the Moray Firth, are identified. Dipping down to the coastal path along a sweeping rocky shoreline, we then take the slightly precipitous path over the shoulder of Logie Head where you are likely to meet rock climbers tackling the sheer faces of the rock stacks below you. Descending "The Giant's Steps", built, single-handedly, by a Cullen resident, we then progress along the coastal path to "Charlie's Cave". 100 years ago, the shallow recess in the rock was home to a French Navy deserter. The ultimately sad and unjust story of 'Charlie' is told on the info board. Leaving the coastline, our route then ascends through farmland, with great views of the Bin of Cullen hill, to a pretty little loch in a pine wood before returning to the village and, visiting the old "motte" at Castle Hill, with its commanding view over Seatown of Cullen, and the bay.



## Waypoints

### (1) Start walk at Cullen Harbour

(57.69257; -2.82363)

Start the walk at Cullen Harbour on Port Long Road. There are two information boards there, and fine views of the harbour, the beach and Seatown of Cullen. With your back to the sea, go left along Port Long Road as it gently starts to climb above the harbour on your left. Soon you arrive at a sharp right-hand junction with Seafield Street. Go right and uphill at this junction for a short distance, with your back to the sea.



### (2) Sharp left up path off Seafield Street

(57.69311; -2.82213)

In about 120 m, climbing up Seafield Street, away from the harbour, go sharp left to take the footpath rising up to the cliff-top level. There are great views to enjoy as you make the short ascent. (118 m)



### (3) Continue on cliff-top path

(57.69349; -2.82099)

In 100 m, or so, as the path meets the bottom of Lower Blantyre Street, continue walking in an easterly direction on the cliff-top path. In about 80 m the path meets the bottom of Campbell Street. Go right and up Campbell Street then left up Albert Terrace at the end of Campbell Street. (242 m)



### (4) Veer left onto path off Albert Terrace

(57.69350; -2.81677)

In 280 m, as Albert Terrace takes a sharp turn right, go straight ahead onto the footpath. Follow this path to the gates of the caravan site, where you follow the path left, then around the northerly (sea side) of the caravan park, starting to leave the village behind you. (519 m)



## (5) Divert left to Port Long Hythe viewpoint

(57.69518; -2.80818)

In 600 m, at a walks signpost, divert left to the cliff-top viewpoint at Port Long Hythe ('Hythe' means harbour or haven). (1.1 km)



## (6) Port Long Hythe Viewpoint

(57.69599; -2.80717)

In about 100 m, there is a simple viewfinder to help you interpret the marvellous sea and coastal views. Look out, in particular for the conical shape of the hill, Morven, in Caithness, far away across the Moray Firth. When you are ready, return along the viewpoint path then turn left to follow the coastal path as it starts to descend. (1.2 km)



## (7) Right to follow coastal path east

(57.69548; -2.80631)

In 300 m, after a partial descent to shore level, turn right through an open gate to follow the coastal path down to the shoreline, in an easterly direction. Eventually the path starts to rise again, becoming slightly precipitous as you approach the cliffs and rocky stacks at Logie Head. Take care on the rocky path, particularly in bad or windy weather. (1.5 km)



## (8) The Giant's Steps

(57.69976; -2.79329)

In 1.1 km, at the highest point on the path at Logie Head, you now descend on the stone steps known as 'The Giant's Steps\*'. The rock stacks to your left are popular with rock climbers. Descend the steps to the memorial to the man who built them then veer right to carry on taking the coastal path in an easterly direction. (2.6 km)

*\*Note: The Giant's Steps were built, single-handedly, by Tony Heatherington in 1987. Sadly he died in a canoing accident in Austria in 1993.*



## (9) Charlie's Cave

(57.69723; -2.78994)

In another 600 m, or so, you arrive at an information board for Charlie's Cave. The cave (more like a shallow recess in the rock) and associated structure (long gone) was home, for a time, to a French Navy deserter called 'Charlie'. The ultimately sad story of 'Charlie' is told on the info board. When you are ready to move on, carry on walking along the coastal path in an easterly direction. (3.1 km)



## (10) Sharp right to take path to cliff-top

(57.69636; -2.78908)

In about 100 m, a green ravine opens up on your right side, with a small burn running down through it. Leave the coastal path here and take the indistinct and slightly overgrown path on your right as it ascends the right side of the grassy ravine to the cliff-top level above. Although quite safe, the path is steep and slippery in places as it has suffered from landslips over time. (3.2 km)



## (11) Well

(57.69537; -2.78987)

In about 100 m, nearing the top of the path, look out for a very short diversion on your right to check out an old well, then carry on to the cliff-top level where there is an old metal gate. (3.3 km)



## (12) Through gate and left along field edge

(57.69492; -2.78982)

In 60 m, or so, from the well you will arrive at an old metal pedestrian gate. Go through the gate and turn left, in a southerly direction, to follow the indistinct path along the field edge, with the field on your right side. The route turns in a more south-westerly direction as it gradually ascends, amongst fields, up the gentle hillside, making for a ruined house ahead of you. (3.4 km)



### (13) Ruins of Logie House

(57.69242; -2.79590)

In 500 m you will pass the ruins of buildings that are shown on the modern OS map as 'Logie House\*'. (3.9 km)

*\*Note: The 19th Century map shows the buildings as 'Logie Cottage'. The Valuation Rolls for the period indicate both a 'Logie Farm' and 'Logie Cottage', owned by the Earl of Seafield within his Findlater Estate, in Fordyce Parish. The last record of a Logie Cottage (and gardens) in the Valuation Roll is in 1895, occupied by a Georgina Gordon, who was aged 76 at the time (from the 1891 Census). On that basis, we think it is fair to assume that the buildings have been unused (and become derelict) for over 100 years.*



### (14) Sharp left up farm track

(57.69122; -2.79820)

In 200 m from the Logie ruins you will arrive at a y-junction of farm roads. Take a sharp left here and follow the field access road for just over 100 m, where, at the entrance to fields, the rough road takes a sharp turn to the right and gently ascends the hillside, with good views down to Cullen opening up on your right side at various points. (4.1 km)



### (15) Carry straight on through gate onto green road

(57.68943; -2.79984)

In 400 m, where the field access rough road swings left, go straight ahead past a walks signpost and through a pedestrian gate onto a green grassy track that continue to ascend gently up the hillside, with the Howe of Gillyfurry below you on your right side. As you go over the brow of the hill great views open up, particularly to the Bin of Cullen in the SW aspect. (4.5 km)



### (16) Sharp left into Crannoch Wood

(57.68637; -2.80441)

In 400 m, at a walks signpost, go left and steeply uphill into the Crannoch Hill woods. Continue following the main path, ignoring any smaller paths leading off. Look out for little Crannoch hiding in the trees on your left in about 200-300 m. (4.9 km)



## (17) Crannoch Loch

(57.68475; -2.80177)

In 300 m, take a little diversion to your left to check out tranquil and pretty Crannoch Loch before carrying on taking the main Crannoch Wood path as it gradually winds its way downhill through the woodland (with large cleared areas), broadly in the direction of Cullen and the main A98 road. (5.2 km)



## (18) Left across old railway bridge

(57.68301; -2.80714)

In 600 m from the little loch you will arrive at a t-junction where there is a walks signpost. Go left here to cross an old railway bridge and follow the track as it descends to an old disused section of tarred road where you turn right to head back towards Cullen. Soon you are on a path by the side of the A98 road which eventually becomes a pavement as you walk into Cullen. Keep walking into the village, down Seafield Street, until you reach the Square. (5.8 km)



## (19) Left at Square up Grant Street

(57.69129; -2.81954)

In 1.4 km, at the Square in Cullen, carefully cross the road and go around the Square onto Grant Street. Passing the Grant Arms Hotel on your left side and the Co-op Supermarket on your right, proceed up Grant Street and through the grand ornamental gates onto the tree-lined access drive for Seafield House. (7.2 km)



## (20) Right for Castle Hill

(57.68800; -2.82717)

In 600 m, or so, from the Square, take a sharp right at the signposted access road to Cullen's Castle Hill. (7.8 km)



## (21) Castle Hill

(57.69038; -2.82554)

In 300 m you will have arrived at the top of Castle Hill\* where there are superb views over Cullen, the nearby coastline, the Bin Hill, and surrounding woodland and farmland. At the walled summit viewpoint there are some very old engraved stones (gravestones?). When you are ready, follow the path down and inland on the easterly side which then turns towards the sea in order to reach the footpath on the old railway line under Castle Hill, looking over Seatown of Cullen. ( 8.1 km)

*\*Note: Castle Hill is believed to be the site of a mediaeval castle motte. The site has recently been improved for public access following a community project. To quote from the project website: 'The Castle Hill in the Royal Burgh of Cullen has been standing guard above the town since the Iron Age. The hill has witnessed key moments in British history, such as the Battle of the Bards in 962 AD, the death of Robert the Bruce's wife and the Duke of Cumberland's army, massing in the fields around it before they marched to crush the Jacobite rebellion. It has witnessed the coming of the steam age, the arrival of the great herring fishing fleets ...'*



## (22) Right along old railway line

(57.69088; -2.82496)

Upon descending on the path from Castle Hill to the old railway line path overlooking Seatown of Cullen, turn right to walk along the path and cross a viaduct. After crossing the viaduct, take the signed path down to North Deskford Street and immediately turn sharp right to follow the path down onto the pavement of the A98 road at Bayview Street where you turn left. (8.4 km)



## (23) Right and down to Seatown of Cullen

(57.69121; -2.82468)

In 200 m from joining the old railway line path, and about 40 m, from emerging under the viaduct, cross the main A98 road with care in order to take the path down into the distinctive area of Cullen know as Seatown\*. Go right initially, and then find your way through the old fishermen's cottages back to your walk start point at the harbour. (8.6 km)

*\*Note: from Undiscovered Scotland: '...This is a unique collection of a couple of a hundred small stone fishermen's cottages. At the seaward side they turn their ends to the sea, which on this north-facing coast can be much less placid than implied by the images on this page. Wandering around Seatown is a slightly other-worldly experience. It was obviously a planned community; but the plans were interpreted in any number of slightly different ways as individual cottages were built. One fascinating feature is the brightly-coloured appearance of the render applied over the joins between the stones forming many of the cottages, but not over the faces of the stones themselves, producing an odd patchwork effect. There are other examples of similar cottages elsewhere along this coast, and other settlements with their own 'Seatown', but nowhere else have we found the effect to be quite so complete as here ...' See: <https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/cullen/cullen/index.html>*



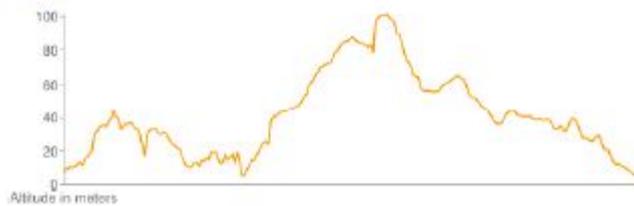
## (24) Finish walk back at Cullen Harbour

(57.69256; -2.82371)

In 300 m (depending how much leisurely wandering around you have had amongst the old cottages in Seatown of Cullen!), you will have arrived back at the harbour where you started the walk. (8.9 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](#)