

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Hopeman-Clashach Cove-Duffus Circuit (Moray)

Route Summary

One of our longer walks, but with mostly gentle gradients, save for the short diversion to a pretty cove. Overall, this is a nice combination of coast and country, with a pretty harbour to linger by, and a sprinkling of medieval history at Old Duffus kirkyard thrown into the mix.

Duration: 3.5 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent Stagecoach bus service to/from Elgin. Check timetables. Small free car-park at Hopeman harbour where the walk starts/ends.

Length: 10.500 km / 6.56 mi

Height Gain: 144 meter. **Height Loss:** 144 meter.

Max Height: 59 meter. **Min Height:** 3 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Good signposted paths. Long section on return leg on hard-surfaced cycle-way.

Difficulty: Medium.

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

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

Refreshments: Options in Hopeman and Duffus.



Description

This is a varied circular walk, heading out from Hopeman along the attractive Moray coast before diverting inland to visit the historic St Peter's Kirk at Duffus. Hopeman is situated in a sheltered position, with excellent views across the Moray Firth to northern Scotland and the hills of Caithness. It was established in 1805 to house people forcibly displaced during the Highland Clearances. The harbour was built in 1838 to support the expanding fishing industry and the export of sandstone from nearby quarries. The harbour now boasts a busy little marina for leisure craft and a "sea-school" for the nearby Gordonstoun private school. Hopeman has two sandy beaches split by the harbour with the larger East Beach backed by grassy sand dunes set off by unusual and colourful beach huts overlooking rocky areas on the foreshore with excellent rock-pools for paddling in and exploring. Further east on the route, Clashach Cove and beach sits within a sheltered bowl open to the sea. It is a deservedly pretty spot for a summer picnic and a paddle, and to explore the large cave and stone arch through the cliff. Leaving the coast, our route heads inland for the small village of Duffus and the ruin of St Peter's Kirk. Duffus is a grid plan village established as a planned settlement in 1811. It replaced an earlier medieval settlement which lay a little to the east where only the ruined parish church and market cross remain, at the turning point on our route. Thanks to Historic Environment Scotland for the following: "*The 'Church of the Blessed Peter at Duffus' is first mentioned in a charter from 1190 The church was probably built by Freskin de Moray, who also constructed the mighty Duffus Castle nearby. The church was badly damaged in the early 1300s during the Wars of Independence. It is situated in an idyllic location among mature trees. A rare medieval 'mercat' cross survives among the grave stones.*" See <http://bit.ly/38ukr36> and <http://bit.ly/2ldyejT>. From the old churchyard, the walk returns to explore Hopeman, with much of the route following a new hard-surfaced cycle-way path. We suggest a visit to Duffus Castle after the walk (*pics included in our Photos link*).



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Hopeman harbour

(57.71016; -3.43687) <https://w3w.co/inhales.defender.gobbles>
From the west end of Hopeman harbour walk up past the red-painted old harbour crane (now a decorative street feature) onto Beach Terrace, going east. At a junction, follow the pavement as it veers slightly left to pass Hopeman East Beach, and then onto the Coastal Path for Lossiemouth. Veer left soon to take the path closest to the sea-front, under and on the left side of a viewpoint shelter above you. This short section of path heads towards the front side of the Hopeman beach huts.



(2) Pass beach huts

(57.71063; -3.43071) <https://w3w.co/promotes.scribbled.playful>
After 400 m you will arrive at the first of a line of brightly painted wooden beach huts. Keep going, passing the huts on your right side. After the last beach hut, keep taking the coastal path going east, looking out for a short side path going right for the Braemou Well in about 140 m. (405 m)



(3) Divert to Braemou Well

(57.71113; -3.42469) <https://w3w.co/matchbox.invite.captions>
After about 350 m, divert onto a path on your right taking you, in 40 m or so, to the Braemou Well which was once of practical importance to the small fisher community in Hopeman. The water was also attributed curative powers. After checking out the well, return to the Coastal Path and continue walking east, away from Hopeman. Eventually you will pass sections of Hopeman Golf Course close on your right side (watch out for flying golf balls and stop to allow players to play their shot as appropriate). (789 m)



(4) Left down path to Clashach Cove

(57.71270; -3.41400) <https://w3w.co/claps.should.correct>
After 1.1 km, with the Coastal Path now ascending, go sharp left onto a narrow path descending to Clashach Cove. (1.9 km)



(5) Clashach Cove

(57.71331; -3.41164) <https://w3w.co/space.froth.harmlessly>

In 200 m you will have descended to the attractive sandy beach and cove, an understandably popular picnic spot with interesting geological features. There is a large cave here, and a rock arch through the cliff to check out. When you are ready, re-trace your steps (avoiding a dangerous path to the clifftop on your left). Part way up the path you descended on there is an option on your left to take a slightly steeper short-cut to the Coastal Path above you. Upon ascending to the Coastal path, go left to continue walking East. Soon you will pass a section of Hopeman Golf Course where there is also an information board about Clashach Cove. (2.1 km)



(6) Veer right to follow coastal path

(57.71208; -3.41051) <https://w3w.co/blackbird.stub.coasted>

In 400 m, follow the Coastal Path as it veers right away from a rough access road to Clashach Quarry. Pass the quarry below you on your left side. (2.5 km)



(7) Sharp right at signpost for path to Duffus

(57.71309; -3.40419) <https://w3w.co/strategy.oxidation.sketches>

In 400 m, at a walks signpost, leave the Coastal Path to go right, signed for Duffus. Follow the path through a series of pedestrian gates, crossing a section of mature conifer woodland and a narrow section of a field where there may be farm livestock. Take care to close all gates carefully behind you. (2.9 km)



(8) Straight across B9040 road and carry on

(57.70806; -3.40000) <https://w3w.co/proposes.stunner.duties>

In 600 m the path gently descends to the busy B9040 road between Lossiemouth and Hopeman. Cross the road with care and carry on walking South on a grassy track to Duffus. When you arrive at the village, keep straight on, following the track as it descends between houses and streets. (3.5 km)



(9) Left along minor Gordonstoun road at Duffus

(57.70010; -3.39290) <https://w3w.co/mermaids.bluntly.jumbled>
After 1 km, emerging onto Gordonstoun Road just past the Duffus Village Shop on your right, go left along the minor Gordonstoun Road, at first passing houses on your left and a recreation park on your right side. (4.5 km)



(10) Right for St Peter's Kirk

(57.70066; -3.38637) <https://w3w.co/diver.fruit.flood>
In 400 m, at a brown sign for St Peter's Kirk, turn right off Gordonstoun Road onto the short access track to St Peter's Kirk and Parish Cross. (4.9 km)



(11) St Peter's Kirk

(57.70025; -3.38621) <https://w3w.co/sketches.touched.forge>
In less than 100 m, you will arrive at the gates to St Peter's Kirk* and church-yard. Enter the gate to explore the old graveyard and church ruins. (5.0 km)

**Note: Thanks to Historic Environment Scotland for the following: "The 'Church of the Blessed Peter at Duffus' is first mentioned in a charter from 1190 The church was probably built by Freskin de Moray, who also constructed the mighty Duffus Castle nearby. The church was badly damaged in the early 1300s during the Wars of Independence. It is situated in an idyllic location among mature trees. A rare medieval 'mercat' cross survives among the grave stones." See <http://bit.ly/38ukr36> and <http://bit.ly/2ldyejT>. From the old churchyard, the walk returns to explore Hopeman, with much of the route following a new hard-surfaced cycle-way path.*



(12) Exit graveyard at East side then follow path right

(57.69996; -3.38488) <https://w3w.co/rebel.sweeping.famines>
When you are ready to move on, exit the graveyard at the East side through a gap in the wall beside the little stone guard-house building. Now, follow the narrow path right then right again at the corner of the graveyard to pass behind a long former farm building on your left side. Carry on past the building where the narrow path soon joins a rough road heading West through the trees, returning in the general direction of Duffus and passing the old walled garden for Duffus House on your left side. (5.1 km)



(13) Veer right through trees to cross Duffus recreation park

(57.69912; -3.38933) <https://w3w.co/rapid.times.lengthen>

In 400 m, veer right through trees to cross Duffus recreation park. Following the eastern edge of the park you will emerge back onto Gordonstoun Road where you turn left to return to Duffus, continuing to walk along the pavement on Hopeman Road, passing the Duffus Inn on your right side. (5.5 km)



(14) Right up Church Road

(57.69926; -3.39625) <https://w3w.co/ground.spent.adjuster>

In 500 m, facing Duffus Kirk ahead of you, turn right up Church Road. At the end of Church Road turn left onto Northfield street. Where the street/road ends, join the cycle-way path for Hopeman. Follow this path for 2.3 km, including crossing the B9012 road, until you emerge onto the B9040 East Road (Hopeman to Lossiemouth). Cross the road here and go left to walk back along the pavement/cycle-way to the outskirts of Hopeman. (6.0 km)



(15) Right down Lodge Road

(57.70594; -3.42279) <https://w3w.co/wonderful.piglets.fetching>

In 2.3 km from Duffus, on the outskirts of Hopeman, go right down Lodge Road. (8.3 km)



(16) Left up Golf Road

(57.70847; -3.42453) <https://w3w.co/luxury.schematic.pastime>

In 300 m, after passing the entrance to Hopeman Golf Club on your right and following Lodge Road as it bends left, go left up Golf Road, which is a rough-surfaced road for a short section. Continue straight on as Golf Road becomes Dunbar Street and descends gently to Harbour Street. (8.6 km)



(17) Left up Harbour Street then right onto Farquhar Street

(57.70666; -3.43433) <https://w3w.co/founders.shortens.orders>

In 600 m, emerging onto Harbour Street, turn left and gently uphill for a short section, soon turning right onto Farquhar Street. Carry on walking along this street, passing Hopeman Parish Church on your left side. (9.2 km)



(18) Right down path at end of Farquhar Street

(57.70552; -3.43884) <https://w3w.co/bspoke.husky.wound>

In 400 m, at the end of Farquhar Street, now in a cul-de-sac, go right down the footpath between houses. Almost immediately, turn right again to follow the path gently downhill between houses, and carrying on after crossing Cooper Street. (9.6 km)



(19) Cross Duff Street onto path to Coastal Path

(57.70715; -3.44110)

<https://w3w.co/decorator.discouraged.gourmet>

In 200 m, cross Duff Street onto a path that continues gently downhill towards the sea-front, crossing an old bridge before joining the Coastal Path within the West Beach caravan park. With the sea now on your left side and mobile homes on your right side follow the narrow road back to Hopeman Harbour where you started the walk. (9.8 km)



(20) Finish walk back at Hopeman Harbour

(57.71010; -3.43678) <https://w3w.co/inhales.defender.gobbles>

In 700 m from crossing Duff Street you will have returned to your start-point at the little car-park by Hopeman Harbour. (10.5 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](#)