

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Keith-Tarnash Falls-Dunnyduff Wood (Moray)

Route Summary

A relatively easy walk on good paths and surfaced roads, mostly in very pleasant mature woodland. The focal point on the route is the pretty and evocative Tarnash Waterfall. There is a good view over the town of Keith from the highest point in Dunnyduff Wood.

Duration: 1.75 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent Stagecoach bus and Scotrail train services pass through Keith. Check timetables. Free parking in Reidhaven Square at the start/end of the walk.

Length: 5.420 km / 3.39 m

Height Gain: 104 meter. **Height Loss:** 104 meter.

Max Height: 186 meter. **Min Height:** 135 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Mostly good paths or tarred roads. May be occasional muddy spots. Not suitable for off-road mobility vehicles due to stepped paths.

Difficulty: Easy.

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 Keith.



Description

This is an enjoyable little circuit on good way-marked paths, mostly in the shade and shelter of attractive mature woodlands – both deciduous and coniferous. The focal point on the walk is the leafy grove where the Burn of Tarnash tumbles over a narrow rocky face into a pot-like little gorge. Small and perfectly formed, the Falls of Tarnash waterfall makes for a very photogenic spot, with sunlight stippled by the branches overhead, and bordered by patches of green moss and ferns. During our walk, a fellow walker suggested that this special place is at its most scenic when the surrounding trees are in their autumn colours. These days, Keith is best known for its whisky distilleries, but the settlement has a varied and interesting history. The town, itself, can be divided into three parts,



from east to west: New Keith, Old Keith and Fife Keith. This walk starts and finishes at Reidhaven Square on the eastern side of “New Keith”, established in 1750 by the Earl of Findlater. The Square is at the heart of four parallel streets with linking lanes that are laid out in a ‘grid iron’ plan, the first of many such arrangements in the NE of Scotland to accompany the growth of the weaving industry, and the first great period of agricultural improvement. “Old Keith” was established around 700 AD by the Irish monks of St. Maelrubha who undertook missionary expeditions from Applecross, and built a chapel here by the River Isla, called Kethmal Ruf. Today, a latinised version of the name lives on in the Church of St Rufus. The River Isla could be forded by cattle at Old Keith and this gave rise to the “Great Simmareve Fair”, predecessor of today’s Keith Show, when traders from Glasgow to Orkney gathered in Keith for the sale of “black cattle” and horses. “Fife-Keith”, on the western side of the River Isla was established by the Earl of Fife as a “new town” in 1817 to support a growing local economy based around agriculture and textiles. It was also set out in a formal grid, with patriotic street names, around a central point at Regent Square.

See: <http://kadhg.org.uk/history/history-of-keith-by-bill-ettes/>

Waypoints

(1) Start walk at info boards - Reidhaven Square

(57.53832; -2.94897) <https://w3w.co/homeward.reform.decanter>
Start the walk at the northern entrance to Reidhaven Square in Keith, behind the toilet block. just off the main A96 road. There are some interesting information boards here. Walk in a southerly direction to the roundabout in the middle of the square.



(2) Left along Mid Street

(57.53832; -2.95046) <https://w3w.co/quicksand.printing.fans>
In about 100 m, at the roundabout in the middle of Reidhaven Square, turn left along Mid Street, walking towards the green space on the outskirts of the town that hosts the Keith Show each year. Turn left at the end of Mid Street to walk down Seafield Park Street, towards the A96 road again. (93 m)



(3) Cross A96 main road and follow access road to right

(57.53600; -2.94921) <https://w3w.co/monk.conned.bulbs>
In about 350 m, cross the A96 main road with care and follow the access road to right, with houses on your left side. (436 m)



(4) Left and up path after last house

(57.53504; -2.94652) <https://w3w.co/duet.orange.used>
After 200 m, after the last house on your left (named 'Innisfree'), take the path veering left and uphill onto a low wooded hillside. Keep going on the main path, ignoring any paths off to the left towards a housing development. Continue on this path through mature woodland, with the A96 road quite close, at times, below you on your right side. (631 m)



(5) Right and down towards bridge

(57.53028; -2.93486) <https://w3w.co/affords.objecting.window>

After 1.1 km, with the path now veering north and uphill, at a waymarked junction, take the option to go right and downhill towards a green bridge. Cross the bridge and carry on taking this path into woodland, with Burn of Tarnash now on your right side. (1.7 km)



(6) Right and over bridge for Falls of Tarnash

(57.52916; -2.93004) <https://w3w.co/arose.limp.nozzle>

In 300 m, at a waymarked junction, go right for Falls of Tarnash, which you can see, a short distance away. Cross a green-painted metal bridge over the Herricks Burn. (2.0 km)



(7) Falls of Tarnash

(57.52880; -2.93015) <https://w3w.co/parade.roost.dignify>

The best view for photos of the Falls, is down at the level of the stream, but take care if making the short but steep and slippery descent. Follow the hard-surfaced path and steps to the area at the top of the waterfall, where it is also possible to get good photos. When you are ready, re-trace your steps back to the waymarked junction at Waypoint 6 to take the path veering uphill and right, signed for Dunnyduff Wood. Follow this path as it initially zig-zags up the wooded slope. (2.1 km)



(8) Left along path at walks post

(57.52991; -2.92985) <https://w3w.co/embedded.hides.tacky>

After ascending for 200 m, at a t-junction, by an arrowed walks post, go left along the main path. Continue on this path as it makes its way through Dunnyduff Wood, ignoring any paths going off left or right. (2.3 km)



(9) Left along forest road

(57.53600; -2.92580) <https://w3w.co/good.scrubbing.artichoke>
After 1 km, the path meets a forest road. Turn left to follow the forest road which soon reaches gates at an entrance to Dunnyduff Wood. Go through the pedestrian gate and walk gently downhill toward a minor tarred public road, passing a car-parking area for the Wood on your right. Go left at the tarred road and walk along the right-side verge towards a left-turning bend just ahead of you. (3.3 km)



(10) Veer right and down onto woodland path

(57.53738; -2.92834) <https://w3w.co/removable.proof.hats>
In 200 m from meeting the forest road at Waypoint 9, where the tarred minor road bends sharp left, veer slightly right and downhill onto a path into the woods. Follow this path as it proceeds, in parallel with the tarred road above you, back in a southerly direction towards Keith. Views soon open up of a wide grassy ravine with farmland on your right, and the Burn of Drum below you. (3.5 km)



(11) Right across bridge and follow minor road

(57.53347; -2.93423)
<https://w3w.co/invested.sharpened.snooty>
After 600 m, the path ascends to meet the minor tarred road again at a waymarked signpost. Go right, signed for Keith Square, and follow the road as it crosses the Drum Burn then ascends up the hillside in a northerly direction. At the top of the hillside the road bends back in a southerly direction towards Keith. (4.1 km)



(12) Right to follow road - signed for Keith Square

(57.53352; -2.93915) <https://w3w.co/midfield.inventors.captive>
In 500 m, at a waymarked junction, follow the tarred road as it goes sharp right, signed for Keith Square. Now follow Edindiach Road into the outskirts of Keith, eventually bending left and becoming Bridge Street as you approach the A96 road (and Reidhaven Square) again (4.6 km)



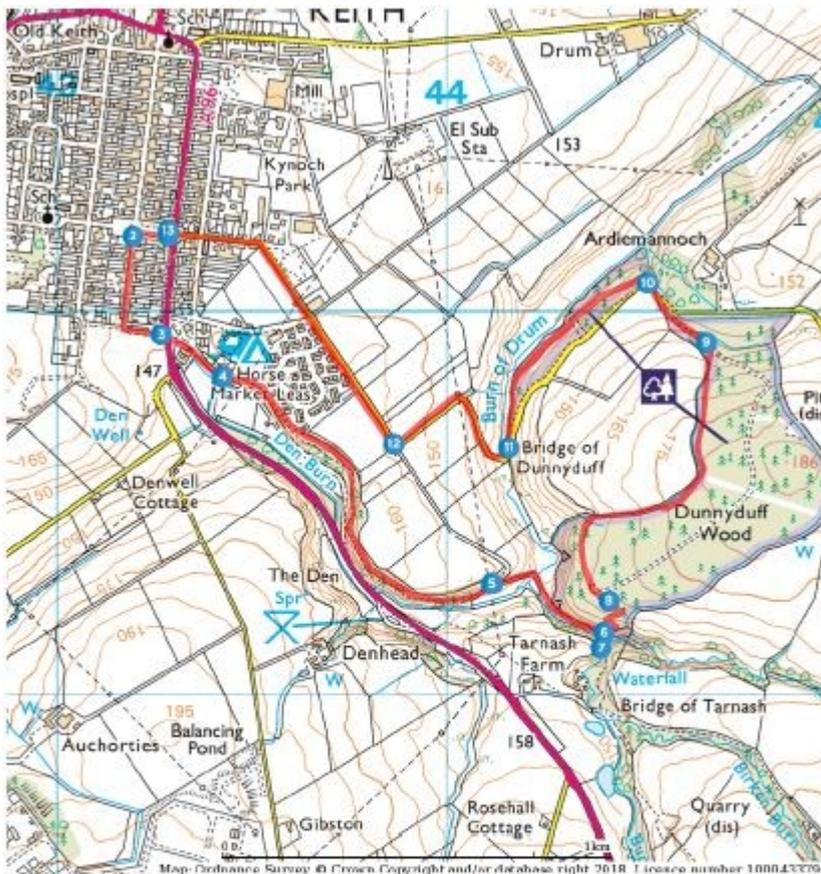
(13) Finish walk back at Reidhaven Square

(57.53845; -2.94897) <https://w3w.co/homeward.reform.decanter>

In 800 m, where Bridge Street meets the A96, cross the busy road with care to finish the walk where you started at the information boards in Reidhaven Square. (5.4 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](#)