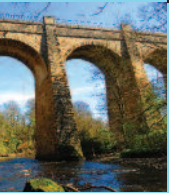




Discover the paths in and around
The Braes area of Falkirk



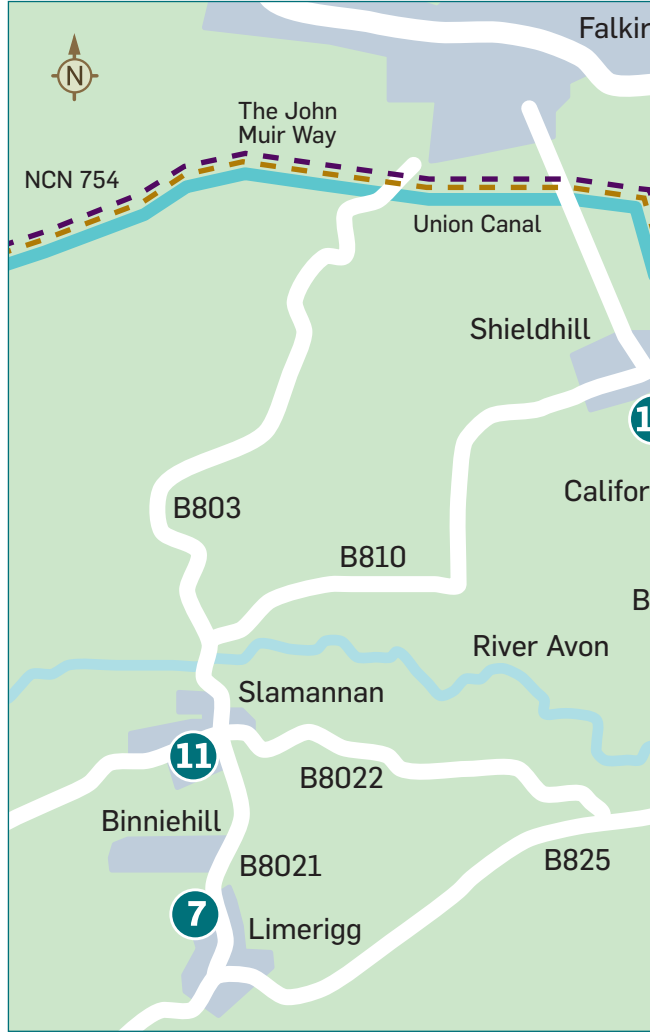
Includes easy to
use map and eleven
suggested locations
something for everyone



A brief history

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Slamannan Clock Tower



This leaflet covers walks in and around the villages of Westquarter, Polmont, Brightons, Maddiston, Standburn, Wallacestone, Whitecross, Limerigg, Avonbridge, Slamannan and Shieldhill to California. The villages are mainly of mining origin providing employment for local people especially during the 18th-19th centuries when demand for coal was at its highest. Today none of the pits are in use but evidence of the industrial past can still be seen.



Small scale coal mining has existed in Scotland since the 12th Century. Between the 17th & 19th Century the demand for coal increased greatly. Events such as the opening of Carron Iron Foundry in 1759, the invention of the steam engine by James Watt and the development of the railway network all contributed greatly to this increased demand.



Slamannan Parish Church

Discover the paths in and around The Braes area of Falkirk

Up until the late 1700's all colliers working in the mines were called Serfs which meant they were bound to the coal mine owner. Once bound to a pit they and their family could not leave to look elsewhere for work. If anyone dared to leave they were returned and severely punished. The children born to a collier were bought in effect by the coal mine owner and they too were bound to the pit and owner.

As the demand for coal increased, so did the demand for a workforce. People did not want a life of serfdom so with reluctance the owners granted workers their freedom.

This happened around the same time as the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Falkirk 1292 led by William Wallace and the colliers adopted his name to create the Sir William Wallace Grand Lodge of Scotland Free Colliers.

To mark this historic battle the Free Colliers began an annual march between the coal mining villages. This tradition still carries on today on the first Saturday in August, starting at the Reddingmuirhead Lodgerooms at 12 noon. Colliers march linking pinkies visiting Redding, Westquarter, Laurieston & Reddingmuirhead a total of 10 miles. This march demonstrates their forefathers rights as free men. At the end of the day they walk to the monument in Wallacestone known as "Wallace's Stone".



Union Canal

Finding your way

Take a close look at the map for each route. This should be all you need to find the start point and get you on your way. OS Explorer map 349 covers the area.

Signs

Look out for sign posts and interpretation boards giving more information along the way.

It's up to you!

This leaflet gives you details of eleven walks with information on green transport options, parking and facilities. Just choose a route that suits your interest and ability to enjoy the paths in and around The Braes area.

There are plenty of interesting things to see and do in the The Braes area. Choose a walk and discover the countryside, wildlife, fantastic views and the wealth of history waiting to be discovered on your doorstep.

Which site should I visit?

Simply read through the suggested routes and choose one that suits your interests, needs and abilities. Many walks have options for further exploration and the paths lead on to other areas in The Braes.

Where else can I visit?

See the full list and details of key places of interest to see and visit while on the routes.

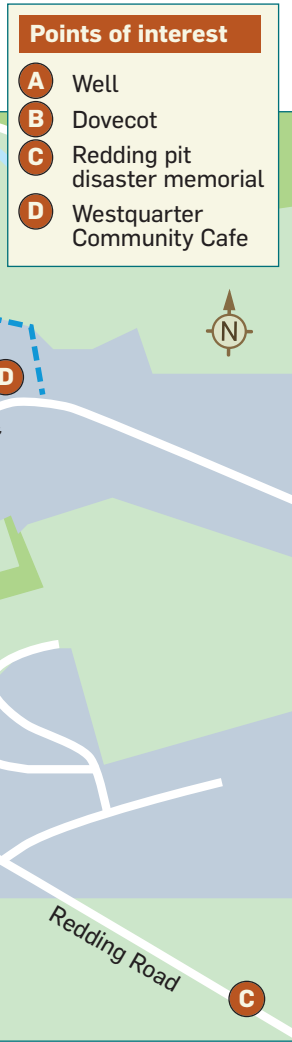


**KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO**
outdooraccess-scotland.com

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- take responsibility for your own actions
- respect the interests of other people
- care for the environment.

1. A wee shortie: Westquarter Glen circular



Westquarter Dovecot



The village of Westquarter

The lands of Westquarter belonged to the Livingstone family from the mid 16th century until the early 20th century.

They were related to the Livingstone family of Callendar estate.

The first known house to be associated with the estate

was built in the early 17th century. This was subsequently demolished in 1884 and all that remains today is the lectern style dovecot with a date 1647 and the initials of Sir William Livingstone and his wife Dame Henemore Livingstone. The style of the dovecot suggests it was built in the 18th century and constructed of rubble with walls 3 feet thick.



A new baronial mansion was built by Thomas F Livingstone and served until the 1930's. It was sold to James Nimmo a coal merchant. He and his family settled in the area and subsequently leased and worked the mines in the local area. This included Redding Pit no;23 in which 40 men lost their lives in September 1923. This was seen as one of the worst coal mining tragedies in Britain.

In 1934 the estate was sold and bought by Stirling County Council. Plans were set to build a model village containing 450 houses shops and school for the people of Westquarter and Standburn who were living in squalid conditions.

Westquarter Glen is a broadleaved woodland with an extensive path network. Local community groups have been working to improve this important local space by eradicating laurels and other non native species; this will be evident as you walk around the site. Opening up the glen will allow re growth of native flowers and shrubs. Local

Access Information

Bus: Number 1 & F16 bus to Westquarter for bus timetable information contact. Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: Polmont Station 2.1km following the canal towpath and downhill walk on the Redding Road.

Parking: A small layby on the main Redding Road.

Cycle: No NCN network nearby

Distance:

■ ■ 1.12 miles (1.8km)

Path information:

This route follows the contours of the glen which is easily accessible using surfaced paths. However there are some small sections where the inclines are very steep. There is no formal seating except at the picnic area next to the waterfall

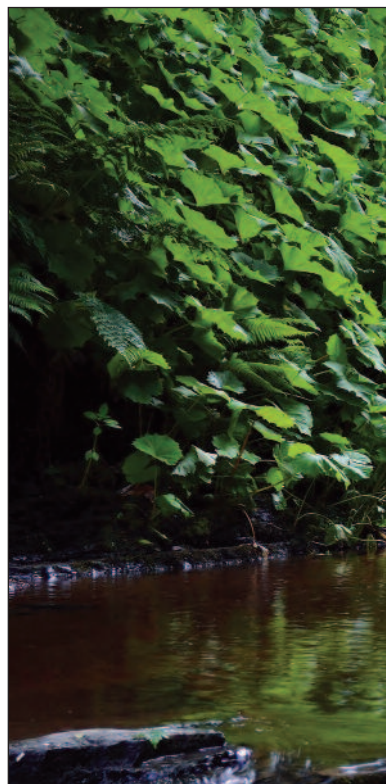
Facilities:

There are no public facilities however there is the Westquarter Community Wing attached to Westquarter Primary School where they sell hot drinks and food with welfare facilities open daily until 1.00pm.

schools also use the site as an outdoor classroom.

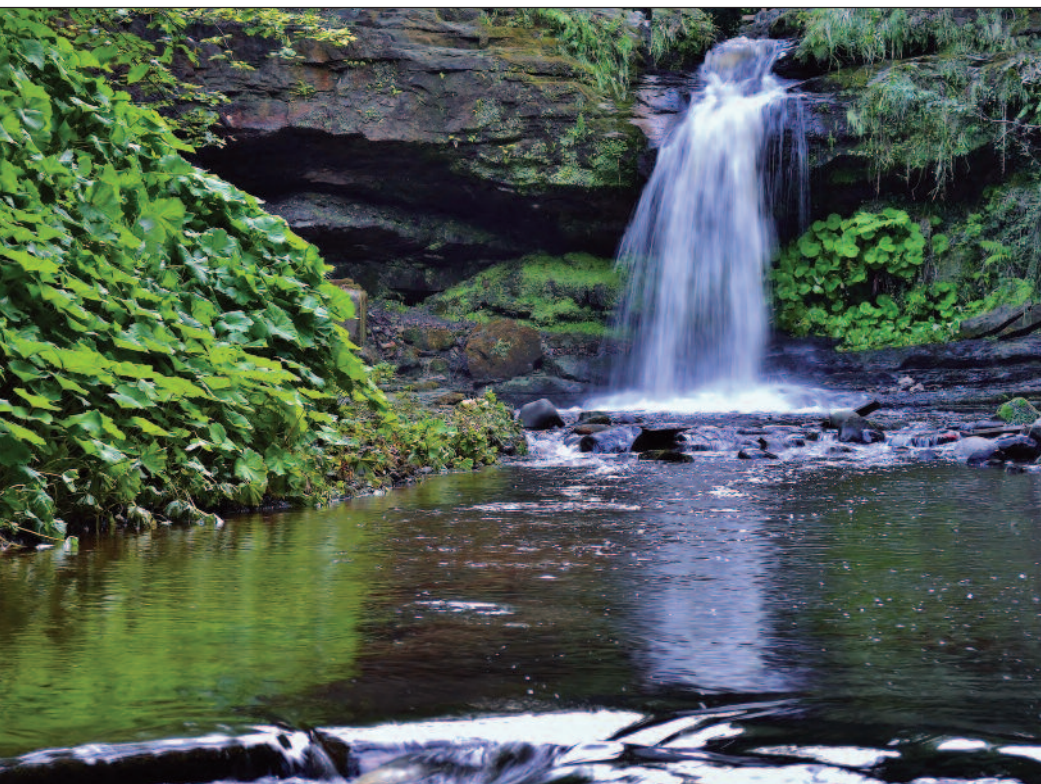
Finding your way

- 1 Start at the car park on Redding Road. From the layby enter Westquarter Glen through the opening in the wall, walking down the tarmac ramp access into the



glen. You should hear the roar coming from the water fall depending on the time for year. The picnic tables you see in front of you are the only seating in the glen. Head towards the waterfall on your left and cross the bridge, taking in the ambiance of the waterfall. Once over the bridge turn right and follow the steps onto the lower path.

- 2 Continue along the surfaced path as it starts to climb up into the glen where the waterfall again dominates. Once up and around the corner, the noise of the waterfall fades, and you may start to hear more of the bird



Westquarter Glen Waterfall

Redding pit disaster memorial



calls in the glen. Continue to follow the burn until you come to a junction in the path.

3 At the junction turn right over another bridge crossing the Westquarter Burn. Once over the burn turn right and follow the burn back along on the opposite bank.

3 Take the steps leading you back uphill and turn right at the top. You are at a much higher point in the glen and the noise of the waterfall will return.

4 Keep following this path around the glen and at this point you will see the old well (uncovered during rhododendron removal) down near the water's edge. Cross over the small metal bridge which will bring you back to the picnic area.

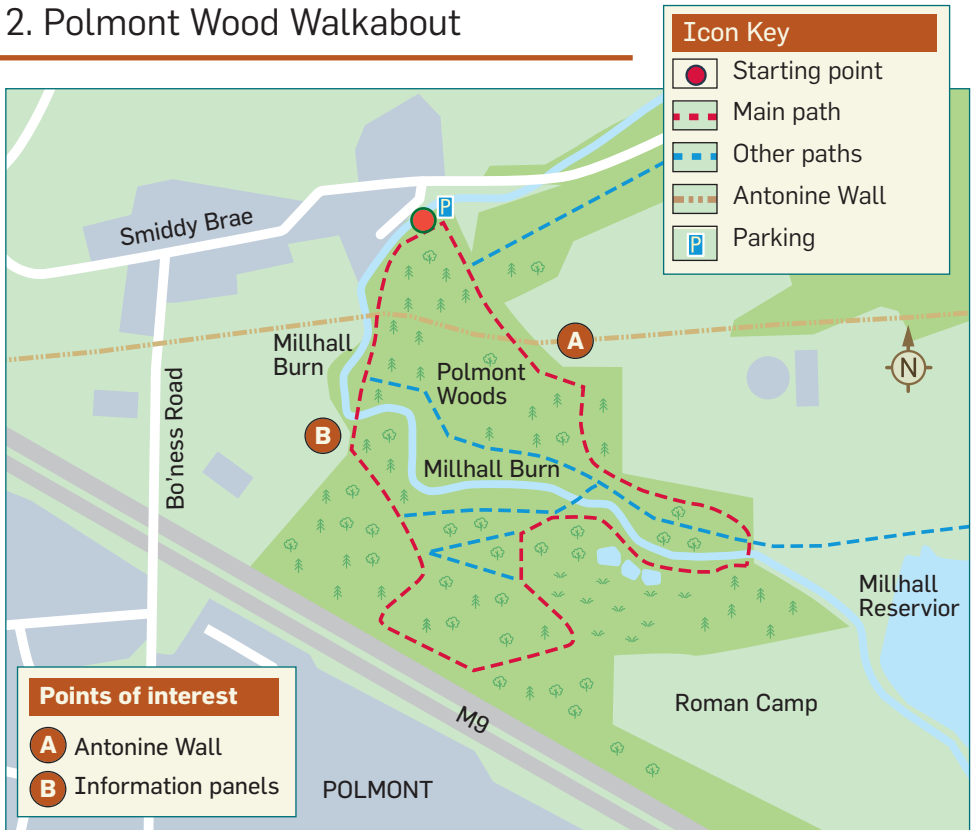
5 Before you return to the start, it's well worth a short visit to the dovecot associated with the original Westquarter estate. Turn left just

before the ramp access to the car park and follow the main drive of the original estate back out of Westquarter Glen. At this point you will pass the original gate posts.

6 Once past the gate posts you are now on Garden Terrace. Follow the road round to the left then cross over onto Westquarter Avenue. Turn to the right and walk uphill a very short distance to Dovecot Road. Turn left and walk a very short distance crossing the road to the dovecot.

7 Retrace your steps to return to the start.

2. Polmont Wood Walkabout



The village of Polmont

The lands of Abbotskerse were broken up after the reformation and much of The Braes came into the hands of the Earls and later the Dukes of Hamilton. For nearly two centuries the area was exploited for its coal until the people persuaded the church authorities to separate them from Falkirk in 1724 thus creating a new parish of Polmont.

"Old Polmont" consisted of a few cottages perhaps a school, mills and smiddy on the sloping escarpment leading to the Forth.

The wealth generated by the industrial successes brought many fine mansions to Polmont for example Parkhill, Millfield, Polmont House and Polmont Bank. All, except Parkhill, have since been demolished to make way for housing and commercial development. Parkhill has been converted into flats.

Polmont Woods was part of the Millhall estate which took its name from the Baronial Mill which stood where the car park is situated now. The Antonine Wall runs

through the woods. The Wall is a World Heritage Site and formed the North West frontier of the Roman Empire from AD142 – AD160. The wall is 37 miles in length and was built on the order of Emperor Antoninus Pius. For more information about the Antonine Wall you will find an information panel next to the path as you begin your walk. Polmont Woods consists mainly of conifer woodland surrounding the Antonine Wall however the southern site, planted around 20 years ago, is mainly broadleaved.



Finding your way

- 1 Starting at the car park there is a panel which explains the local history of the area, follow the tarmac path around to the right hand side of the wood. Continue uphill until you come to the barrier and junction. This road leads to Millhall fishery. Cross the road, keeping to the left and continue uphill. After a short distance you will come to a self closing gate which will lead you into the community woodland signposted "Polmont Woods".
- 2 The path surface changes at this point to surfaced track. Keeping to the right follow the track straight up to the top where you will start to become aware of the noise of motorway traffic.
- 3 Once at the top, turn left and follow the track parallel to the motorway. After a short distance the path will start to head back downhill.
- 4 At the bottom of the hill turn right at the "T" junction.
- 5 Continue through the self closing gate where you will return onto the tarmac road. Turn right and continue along the roadside passing the settling ponds on your right.
- 6 Once you cross the bridge over Millhall Burn turn left, which takes you into the mature conifer woodland. Follow this path as it starts to climb. You will come to a junction where you can either walk straight ahead following the burn or turn right and follow


Access Information

Bus: Number 38x to Edinburgh passes through Polmont. For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: Polmont train Station 1.8km following the main road down to Polmont then onwards to Old Polmont.

Cycle: Polmont Woods is situated next to the NCN 76 network.

Parking: Car park on Smiddy Brae.

Distance:
 0.86 miles (1.4km).

Path information:

The paths within the wood are mostly surfaced, starting with a tarmac path it is a moderate walk with a gradual climb and on return it can be steep with steps. There are other paths you can take if it's not suitable (see map)

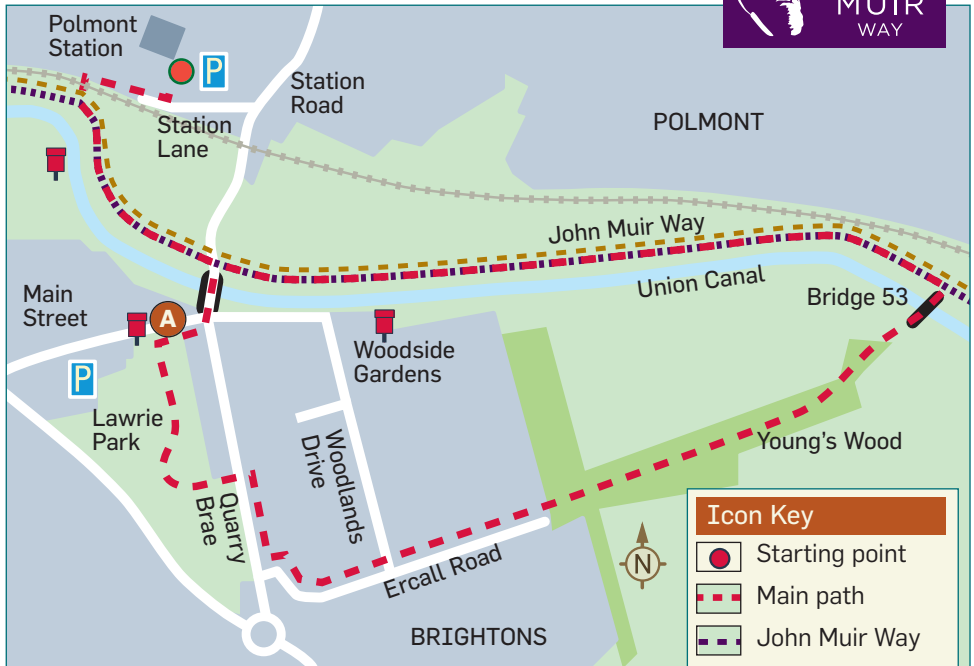
Facilities:

There are no public facilities.

the path uphill. Here you will see some steps leading you upwards.

- 7 Once at the top turn left and continue to follow the path keeping to the woodland edge. There are several sets of steps on this section as you make your way back down.
- 8 The last steep section of steps with handrail will lead you back to the car park.

3. Brightons Wander



The village of Brightons

The village of Brightons was built up around a sandstone quarry which was in operation from the 17th Century. The Union Canal was built to the North of the village in 1822 and connected the village with the two main cities in Scotland. Some of the stone from the quarry was used to help build Edinburgh's new town in the 1830's and Falkirk's public buildings in the 1850's.

The village church was built in 1846 - 47 from stone quarried in the village which was donated by the quarry owner, Alexander Lawrie. The site of the quarry is now a public space and was named

Lawrie Park in the quarry owner's honour although it is also known as Quarry Park.

Finding your way

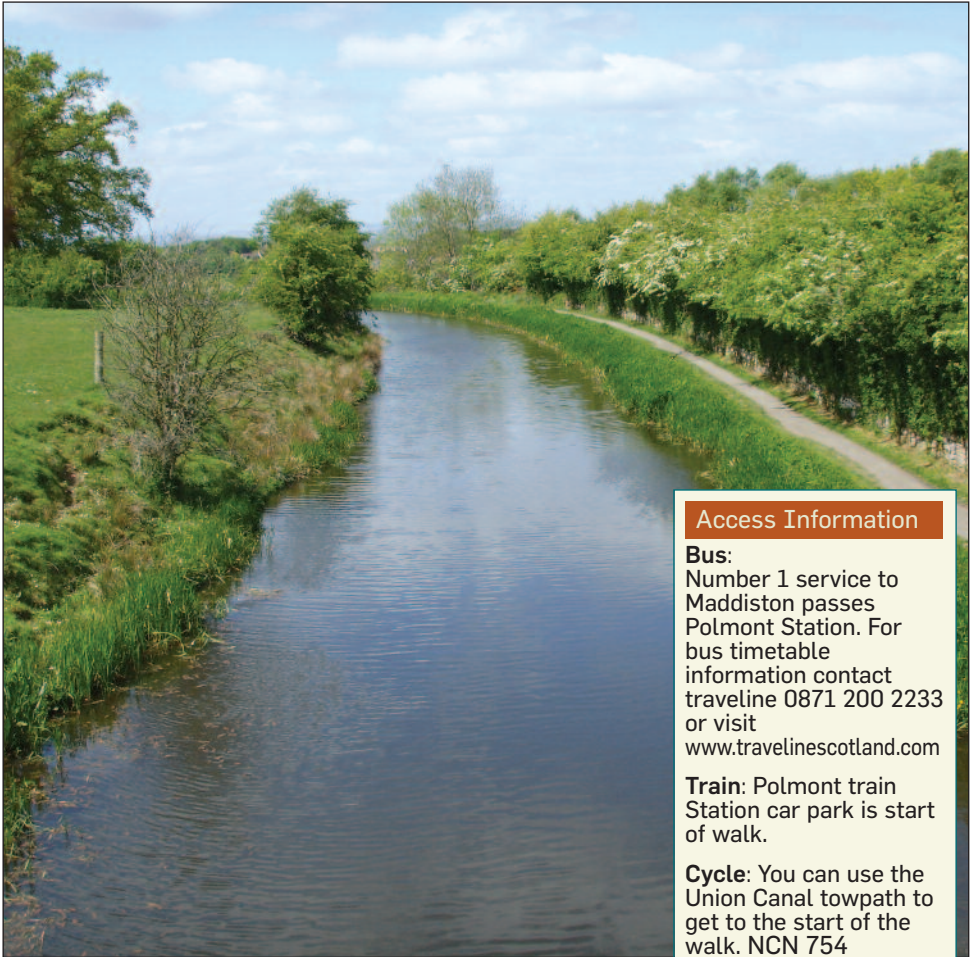
- 1 This walk starts at any of the car parks situated on Station Lane at Polmont Station. As you walk onto the roadside turn right walking away from the train station. You will come to a bridge on your left crossing over the railway onto the Union Canal Towpath. It is signposted.
- 2 Once on the towpath turn left and follow the canal for 0.8 miles (1.4km).
- 3 Leave the towpath at Bridge no.53.

Icon Key

- Starting point
- Main path
- John Muir Way
- Other paths
- Parking
- Dog Fouling Bin
- Cycle NCN 754
- Railway

Points of interest

- Interpretation panel
- 4 Pass under the bridge and walk a few metres before you turn left onto a track. Head uphill and over the bridge.
 - 5 Once you pass the field gates on either side of the path it begins to narrow. Follow the unsurfaced path to the left of the woodland.



Access Information

Bus:


Number 1 service to Maddiston passes Polmont Station. For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: Polmont train Station car park is start of walk.

Cycle: You can use the Union Canal towpath to get to the start of the walk. NCN 754

Parking: There are several large car parks however these can be especially busy during the week.

Distance:

 2.3 miles (3.7km)

Path information:

The paths are in good condition. The walk takes in the canal towpath natural woodland floor (can be muddy in the winter months), and pavements.

- 6 This will take you into Young's Wood. There are a few unsurfaced tracks going through this woodland and they can be muddy in the winter months. Follow the main path up through the woodland crossing two boardwalks, until you reach Ercall Road.
- 7 Follow the road to the end bringing you onto Quarry Brae. Turn right and head downhill after a short distance cross over the road into Lawrie/Quarry Park. Once past the building on your right take the path downhill to a stone interpretation plaque.
- 8 Turn right and walk to the pedestrian crossing island. Cross over and follow the pedestrian walkway over the canal then turn left. At the bottom of the road turn left again bringing you back onto the canal towpath. Retrace your steps back to Polmont station.

4. Maddiston to Rumford Loop



Points of interest

A War memorial

The village of Maddiston

The village of Maddiston has a long history, the area was first mentioned in a charter relating to the barony of Haining in 1424.

Coal was mined in the parish as early as 1501 and the evidence first recorded was a "coal hewer" Allan Hill in 1581.





With the coming of the industrial revolution the demand for coal increased dramatically and as a result Carron Company leased most of the mines in the area.

Coal mining continued to be an important part of life in the village providing employment throughout the Victorian era and it wasn't until after the Second World War that mining declined.

Finding your way

- 1 Starting at Maddiston fire station turn right following the pavement. Take a right at the gap in the fence and follow the tarmac path.
- 2 Continue along the tarmac path until you come to a junction. Take

Icon Key

-  Starting point
-  Main path
-  Other path
-  Dog Fouling Bin

the unsurfaced path on your left, which was originally a mineral railway line.

- 3 Continue following the path until you come to a T junction. Turn right at the sign and walk uphill.



4 Pass through the metal gate which will bring you out onto the California Road. Cross over onto the other side pass through the metal gate and continue downhill.

5 This section of path will bring you out onto Wallacelea. Follow this road east to the end where you turn right and follow the Main Road (B805) back up to the fire station. Alternatively you can take the bus back.


Access Information

Bus: Number 1 Maddiston to Linlithgow passes the fire station. For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: Nearest train Station is Polmont 1.2miles (1.9km) however there is a good bus service from the train station to Maddiston.

Parking: Street parking.

Cycle: No NCN network nearby

Distance:
 2.08 miles (3.3km)

Path information
 This route is a good surfaced path and pavement.

Facilities: None.

5. Standburn Meander



The village of Standburn
Drumbowie Community Woodland was mined for coal from the 1890's - 1930's and had a mineral railway running through it to transport the coal. At this time Standburn was a thriving community with a population of over 1,000 people. When the mining ceased Stirling County Council moved most of the tenants to the new model village of Westquarter commonly known as "the valley" as conditions in the village were very poor.

Today the population sits at around 150 residents.

When the mining had gone the area was used for grazing cattle. Working in



partnership with the landowner and community, Central Scotland Countryside Trust created a community woodland in 1995. Local residents formed Drumbowie Environment Action Group to protect the site. Many people have come to this area to study the site and have discovered that the pond is a breeding site for Great Crested Newts, which are protected by law. The local Primary School



also uses the site as an outdoor classroom.

Finding your way

- 1 Starting at the entrance next to the school, walk through the green barrier. Walk a short distance then turn to your right following the path until you come to the pond. Take time to enjoy the pond and see what's about. Different sights and sounds are seen at different times of the year.
- 2 Continue along the path on a circular route around the back of the pond.
- 3 This path will eventually bring you back to the start so before you come

to that take the path to your right.

- 4 This unsurfaced path will take you on a circular route back to the starting point.



Access Information

Bus:

E20 bus passes through Standburn. For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train:

Nearest train Station is Polmont 3.1 miles (5 km).

Parking: Street parking.

Cycle: No NCN network nearby

Distance:

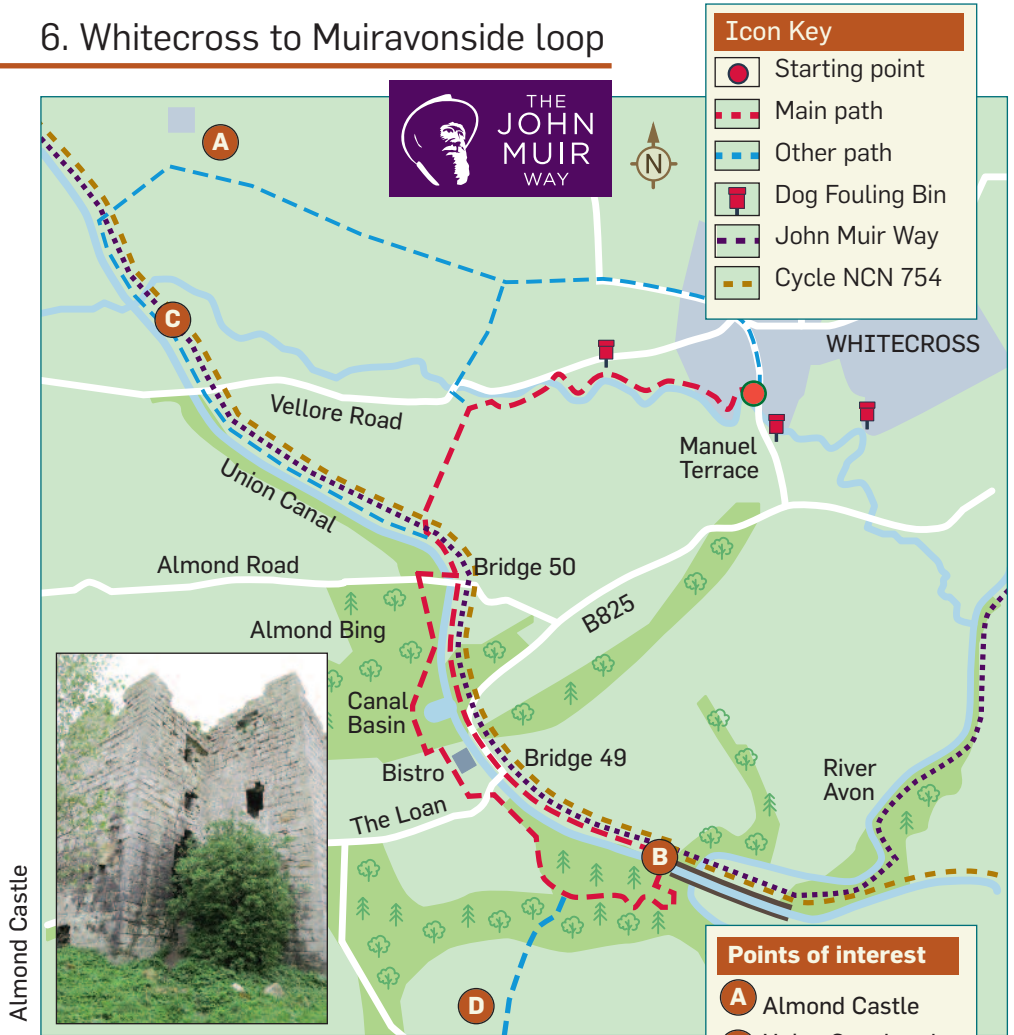
 1.2 miles (1.94km)

Path information

This route is split in two the first section is good surfaced path and the second section is grass which in winter can be muddy in places.

Facilities: none.

6. Whitecross to Muiravonside loop



Almond Castle



The village of Whitecross

The village of Whitecross is small and relatively new in comparison to other villages in the Braes area, probably built to house employees of Stein Manuel Firebrick and Refractory Works (1928). This was the second largest brickwork in the world employing up to 1,200 people in the 1970's before it closed down in

2001. Firebricks were sent from this factory all over the world.

Standing in the former brickwork site is Almond or Haining Castle, first built as a tower house in the 15th Century by the Crawford family. The remains you see today are the original house, the additions made in the 16th century have disappeared. It is hoped

redevelopment of the site will secure the future of this castle. It is advisable not to enter this building.

Muiravonside Country



Park covers an area of 170 acres of woodland, parkland and gardens with standing and running water. The area is very rich in history, industry and biodiversity. Part of the River Avon Heritage Trail passes through the park. Once home of the influential Stirling family (founders of the SAS) the estate was bought by Falkirk Council in the 1970's. The house was demolished because of vandalism; however the foundations can still be seen today. The estate was at one time self sufficient employing many local people from the surrounding villages of Whitecross and Maddiston.

The park is open all year round and boasts a children's farm, picnic areas, play area and café run to help young people to gain valuable experience into employment.

Finding your way

- 1 From Whitecross take the path between the medical centre and houses on Manuel Terrace which follows Manuel Burn.
- 2 Keep following the path along the back of the housing until you come out onto the playing fields.
- 3 Continue along this path and cross over the burn using the bridge onto the field edge.
- 4 Turn left at the junction and continue uphill towards the Union Canal. There is a short steep incline onto Almond Road.
- 5 Once at the road turn right and cross over the bridge where you will see a metal gate. Go through the gate and walk to the bottom of the slope.
- 6 Turn left and pass under the bridge taking you into Almond Bing.
- 7 Follow the path adjacent to the canal bringing you out onto the basin. Take the ramp down to the basin and continue following the path towards the gap in the wall. This will bring you out onto the car park of Bridge 49, Bistro car park.
- 8 Walk straight up through the car park onto the main road.
- 9 Cross the road and take the track down to the left and into Muiravonside Country Park which is well worth a visit.
- 10 Keep following the track downhill until you come to the River Avon.
- 11 To your left is a boardwalk and steps. Follow this taking you under Avon Aqueduct and up onto the Union Canal.
- 12 Once at the Union Canal turn right and follow the towpath.
- 13 After following this for a distance you will pass under two bridges. On passing under the latter Bridge 50, turn immediately right onto some steps keeping right up onto the Almond Road and Fairview Cottage. From here you can retrace your steps back to Whitecross.

Access Information

Bus: For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com
Train: Nearest train Station is Polmont 3.1 miles (5 km).
Parking: Street car parking.
Cycle: National Cycle Network (NCN) 754 nearby.

Distance:

 2.5 miles (3.1 km)

Path information:

This route is a combination of surfaced and unsurfaced paths with a steep section of steps up onto the Avon Aqueduct.

Facilities: Cafe in Muiravonside Country Park and Bridge 49, Bistro.

7. Big Limerigg Loop



The village of Limerigg

The village of Limerigg like most villages in the Braes, was a mining village, which also saw the pit closures after the Second World War. Once the pits closed the local minister and

Councillor Rev Alexander Cameron used his influence to have the miner's row cottages demolished, and new council houses built. He was also responsible for encouraging the Forestry Commission to plant large blocks of conifer plantation over the moorland on the village outskirts.

Finding your way

- 1 Begin your walk at the small park in Binniehill. Behind the swings there is a path following a disused railway line. The railway line once served the many coal pits in the area. Follow this path until you come to a set of steps. Walk down the



steps and across the country road towards another set of steps that lead up onto the railway path again.

- 2 Continue on this path until you come to a pond. Walk up the embankment on your right and follow the path until you come to a junction. Take the path that heads uphill to your left into plantation woodland. Depending on the time of year the woodland straight ahead is worth taking a look at as it is carpeted in Pink Purslane which flowers in Spring/early Summer.
- 3 The path leads upwards through the woodland and can be muddy in places. Continue following this woodland path until you come to a kissing gate on the Binniehill Road. Cross the road and enter Lodge Farm Woodland Walk through the kissing gate.
- 4 Follow the path downhill turn right and

continue following the burn for some distance. Cross over the burn at the bridge.

- 5 You can extend this walk by turning right at the main road and continuing up hill to High Limerigg and take a short circular walk alongside the Black Loch.
 - 6 When you reach the T junction at High Limerigg turn left following the pavement for approx 350m then look for the green barrier on the opposite side of the road. This will take you on a short 10min loop bringing you back out onto High Limerigg.
 - 7 When you come back onto the road cross over, turn left then right back downhill.
 - 8 Take the forestry track on your right just before you get to the houses opposite the park.
 - 9 At the end of this track pass through the metal gate and walk
- 10 When you come to a T junction walk straight ahead. This path changes from surfaced to unsurfaced and can be very wet in places.
 - 11 Turn left following the pipeline and continue up and through the woodland plantation. You will cross a small burn and eventually rejoin Station Road at the entrance to Salterhill Farm.
 - 12 Take care walking along the country road and use the pavements wherever possible.
 - 13 Follow the road back to Binniehill.

Access Information

Bus:

For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: Caldercruix 3.4m

Parking:

Street car parking.

Cycle: No NCN network nearby.

Distance:

 4 miles (6 km)

Path information This route is a combination of surfaced and unsurfaced paths with steep inclines and steps in places.

Facilities: None.

8. Wallacestone Wander



The village of Wallacestone

The village of Wallacestone was a mining village. It is said that its name was taken from the stone which was used to mark the spot where William Wallace stood in July 1298 and watched the English army advance from Linlithgow. A stone was laid to mark the spot but was replaced in 1810 by a stone monument. Wallacestone pipe band is one of the oldest surviving civilian pipe bands in

the world. It was at one time supported financially by the miners who gave a percentage of their wages. Today, thankfully the pipe band is self financing.

Finding your way

- 1 The starting point for this walk is in the car park where the views of Forth Valley are spectacular. It is also the location of the Wallace's Stone (see map). Once you have taken in the view follow

the path to your left behind the children's play area.

- 2 This will take you onto a grass path and bring you out onto a track. Continue to follow the track on your left and walk uphill. Once at the top take the path to your right next to the metal chicane and dog bin.
- 3 This surfaced path will take you through



Burnside Community Woodland. Again you will get to enjoy the fantastic views of Forth Valley as you make your way along.

- 4 When you come to the junction keep to the left



and follow the path downhill. This will loop round the community woodland.

- 5 At the last junction keep to your left and follow the path bringing you out into the village of California.
- 6 Once through the wooden gate turn right and head towards the road. Cross over the driveway entrance and continue down hill towards Reddingmuirhead, enjoying the view as you go.
- 7 You will pass Sunbeam Cottage on your right. Shortly afterwards you will come to a sign posted junction on a bend. Take the path to your right passing through the metal gate.
- 8 This path will bring you out onto Wallacestone Brae where you will turn

right and walk uphill. Turn right at the top taking you back to the start.

Access Information

Bus:

For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train:

The nearest train station is Polmont at a distance of 1 mile (1.6 km).

Cycle: There is no NCN near.

Parking:

Street parking.

Distance:

■ 1.2 miles (1.84 km)

Path information:

This route is a combination of surfaced and un-surfaced paths, some sections are steep.

Facilities: None.

9. Avonbridge Walk



Avonbridge Church

The village of Avonbridge

The village has been in existence for several centuries, a record in 1699 referred to this place as Avonbridgend. As late as 1839 it was little more than a few houses where milling and agriculture was the main source of income. The arrival of the railway probably brought more people to the area and this opened up the opportunity for small scale open cast coal mining.

There are no records to say when the bridge over the River Avon at Avonbridge was built. This allowed drovers from the South to cross the river on their way to the Tryst and Avonbridge would have been an overnight stop for them.

Avonbridge brickworks created further employment in the village from 1952 to 1977.

Avonbridge is also the starting point for the River Avon Heritage Trail which is a stunning nine mile gorge walk to Linlithgow. It can also be a challenging walk with mainly unsurfaced paths.

Today Avonbridge is mainly a residential community.

Finding your way

- 1 Start at Avonbridge Primary School.
- 2 Immediately beyond the main entrance to the school and housing turn right onto the tarmac path.
- 3 Follow this path towards the play area.
- 4 This will take you out onto Slamannan Road. Turn right and head back towards the Main Street.
- 5 At the junction is the war memorial.
- 6 Cross the road, turn left and walk over the bridge on the River Avon.
- 7 Once over the river turn right and head down Blackston Road. Be aware there is no



River Avon

pavement on this section of the walk.

- 8 Follow the country road for approx 0.3 miles (0.5 km).
- 9 Opposite Sunnybrae Cottage is a small wooden bridge sign posted River Avon Heritage Trail, cross over the bridge and walk along the field edge.
- 10 When you come to two cottages turn right and follow the wide track back towards the village.
- 11 The track will bring you out onto Bridgend Road. Keep left and follow the road back to the Main Street.

Access Information


Bus: For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: The nearest train station is Polmont at a distance of 5.1 miles (8.2 km).

Cycle: There is no NCN near Avonbridge.

Parking: Street parking.

Distance

 1.2 miles (1.84 km)

Path information:

This route is a combination of surfaced and un-surfaced paths.

Facilities: None.

10. Shieldhill to California and back again



The villages of Shieldhill and California

The lands of Shieldhill and California served as an important resource for the people of Polmont parish. The land formed part of a large common muir.

Livestock were brought here during the summer months to graze, away from the fertile arable fields.

They also had other privileges such as removing turf and stone from the site. The name Shieldhill is found in areas where common grazing was practised, the name

California is an introduced name.

In the 18th Century drovers brought their cattle to the Falkirk Trysts and one focal point was the field just south of Shieldhill Main Street near the cross.

In the 19th Century came the Industrial Revolution and Carron Works required vast amounts of coal, by 1885 Carron Company owned and worked the coal mines in Shieldhill.

Like many of the villages in The Braes, Shieldhill and California appeared on the map around 1860 as clusters of miners

Points of interest

A War memorial

Icon Key

- Starting point
- Main path
- Parking
- Dog Fouling Bin

cottages.

Coal mining came to an end around the mid 20th Century.

Access Information

Bus: For timetable information contact traveline on 08712002233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: The nearest station is Polmont.

Cycle: No NCN network nearby.

Parking: You can park on the main street in Shieldhill or the car park in California.

Distance

From Shieldhill 2 miles (3 km), from California 1.1 miles (1.8 km)

Path information:

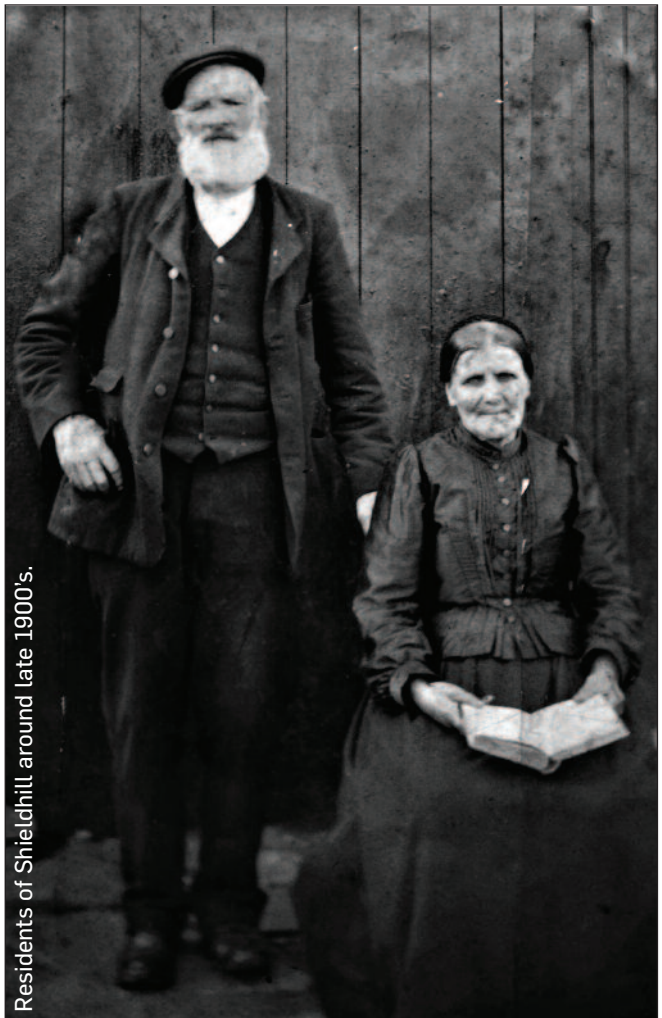
This route is mainly surfaced with small sections where the path inclines the paths are narrow in places. There are several seats along the route.

Facilities: There is one shop in Shieldhill.

Finding your way

For the purposes of the leaflet Shieldhill has been chosen as the main starting point.

- 1 Take the path next to the shop, following it over a bridge.
2. When you come to a T junction turn left then take a right turn.
3. This will take you uphill for a distance.



Residents of Shieldhill around late 1900's.

4. Once at the top turn left this will take you to California.
5. Turn left and follow the path alongside the play area, bringing you out at the school.
6. Turn left and this will take you back into the community woodland.
7. As you head back downhill the views of Forth Valley can be spectacular. Seating is situated along this part of the walk, you can relax and take in the view.
8. When you reach the bottom of the hill turn right and retrace your steps back to Shieldhill.

11. Slamannan Walkabout



Icon Key

- Starting point
- Main path
- Dog Fouling Bin

Points of interest

- A** Slamannan Parish Church
- B** Clocktower
- C** War Memorial

The village of Slamannan

Slamannan is one of the original parishes created in the early 12th Century. The original church of 1176 lay at a River Avon crossing point protected by a small wooden fort built on a motte. In the 13th Century

the Malherbe family were recorded as the barons of Slamannan after changing hands a few times the Sandilands became the barons in the early 14th Century and remained in this position for centuries.

Slamannan was a small dispersed farming community until the beginning of the 19th Century when part of the population was displaced by the enclosure system. This led to an increase in demand for blacksmiths, carpenters and masons they settled in the village near the church.

Coal was required to fuel Carron Iron Works and, as with many of the villages in the Braes, mining was important. The railway opened in 1840 to transport the coal to the Carron Works, the village population increased as miners came looking for work. Slamannan became a thriving village, miners rows sprouted up, shops,



Slamannan War Memorial

pubs and hotels all appeared in the mid 1850s at the height of prosperity.

By the end of the century coal became harder to extract and less profitable. By WWII mining had scaled down dramatically. Many people left the village, shops closed and the population declined. Today Slamannan is a commuter village.

Finding your way

1. Park on the High Street, head SW uphill through the village passing the community education building on your left then the Primary School on your right. Just beyond on your right you will come to a play park where you will find seating and bins. You can take a detour and walk around the park taking in the views across the countryside all around or keep on walking on the pavement.
2. Continue walking along Bank Street take the first road turning on your left with a sign Sandilands. Cross the road and make your way down the country lane. Be aware of oncoming traffic.
3. Follow the bend in the road and when you come to a line of trees on your left look for a green/white metal Right of Way sign and walk through the kissing gate.
4. This field contains livestock please keep your dog on a lead.
5. Keeping to the field edge continue downhill and pass through the kissing gate at the bottom. Cross the narrow bridge over the Culloch Burn walk along the grass path then head back uphill.
6. You will come to a track at the top turn left towards Binniehill Road. At the road end look to your right and take the wooden steps up onto the disused railway path.
7. Follow this path to the play area. Then turn left and walk towards the road.
8. Keeping on the pavement turn right towards Station Road.
9. Cross over to the pavement and head back downhill to Slamannan.
10. At the War memorial, cross over the road and return to your car.


Access Information

Bus: Number 2 service to Slamannan. For bus timetable information contact traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

Train: No services to Slamannan

Cycle: No NCN network nearby.

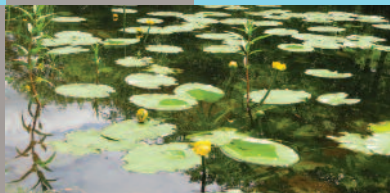
Parking: Street parking

Distance:
 2.14 miles (4.5km)

Path information:
 The paths are mostly surfaced, at points walking on country roads. Walking through fields can be muddy in places. A moderate walk with gentle ascents and descents. .

Facilities: Local shop, pub, library and community education centre.

Discover the paths in and around
The Braes area of Falkirk



Getting There:

Get your copy of the Green Travel Map call 01324 504950.

By Foot:

If you live nearby.

By Cycle:

Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 76 and 754. Cycle route information available from www.sustrans.org.uk 0845 1130065.

By Rail:

Polmont station is the nearest. Caldercruix in the nearest station to Limerigg and Slamannan.

By Bus:

For further information on bus times, numbers, routes etc, call Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.travelinescotland.com

By Car:

The Braes are well connected by the M9 and local A roads.

Thank you

Geoff Bailey of Falkirk Community Trust for his help finding material. Much of this material was also found in Falkirk Local History Society.



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Suggested Walks

Walking is easy. You don't need any special equipment and what ever your age or level of fitness your health and well being will benefit from this natural, gentle form of exercise. So get your boots on and go explore the Braes at your own pace.

Many of the paths in this guide can be linked up to give a range of circular walks of varying length. It's simply up to you to choose the routes that suit you. There is as much variety of surface conditions underfoot as there is scenery.

For more information about the history and local facilities in The Braes contact:

www.falkirk.gov.uk/

www.historicenvironment.scot

www.visitscotland.com

www.antoninewall.org

www.scottishcanals.co.uk/
falkirkwheel

www.falkirklocalhistorysociety.co.uk

www.facebook.com/falkirkexplored

www.johnmuirway.org

www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org

For more information about paths www.falkirk.gov.uk/paths