

Walk, Ride and Cycle in and around

Airth Parish



easy to use
map and eight
suggested locations
something for everyone

Discover the path networks in and around Airth Parish



**Know the code before you go....
Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly.**

The Parish of Airth incorporates the villages of Airth, Dunmore, Letham and South Alloa set amongst productive agricultural land. It wasn't always like this. Before land reclamation it was an industrial area with mining, salt pans and a busy port. The area is steeped in history and records can be found dating back to the medieval village of Airth founded by William the Lion circa 1188.

As you wander along the paths you will see some fantastic views, wildlife and splendid architecture which will give you a glimpse of what it once looked like and it's all waiting to be discovered.

Which site should I visit?

Take a look through the suggested routes and choose one to suit your needs,

interests and abilities. Some sites have options for further exploration or you could combine several routes to broaden your experience.

Finding your way. A map

Take a close look at the map for each route. This should be all you need to find the start point and get on your way. OS explorer 349 map covers most of the area and explorer OS 58 for South Alloa.

Signs

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



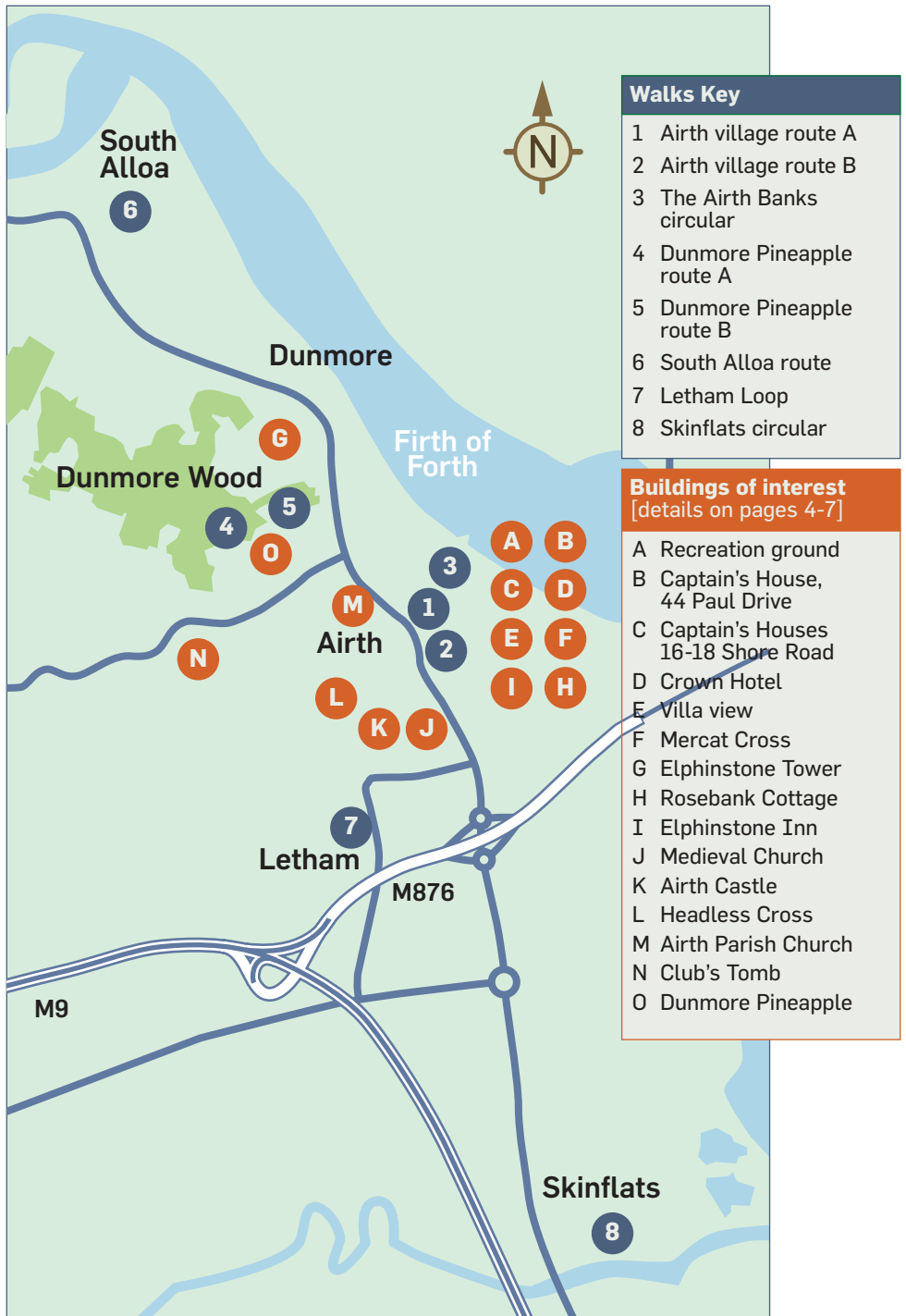
©Crown Copyright and database right 2011.
All rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number
100023384.
For reference purposes only. No further
copies may be made.

Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water providing they act responsibly. Your access rights and responsibilities are fully explained in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Whether you're in the outdoors or managing the outdoors, the key things are to:

*take responsibility for your own actions;
respect the interests of other people; and
Care for the environment.*

Find out more by visiting www.outdooraccess-scotland.com or contact your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.



Places of interest to visit

The village of Airth

Records show circa 1248 Adam De Erth owned the lands of Erth and Elphinstone, the Erth family is very ancient.

Erth means hill and there are two hills in Airth where Airth Castle and Elphinstone Castle stand today. The original village of Airth sat on the hill protected by Airth Castle which at that time would have been a wooden building.

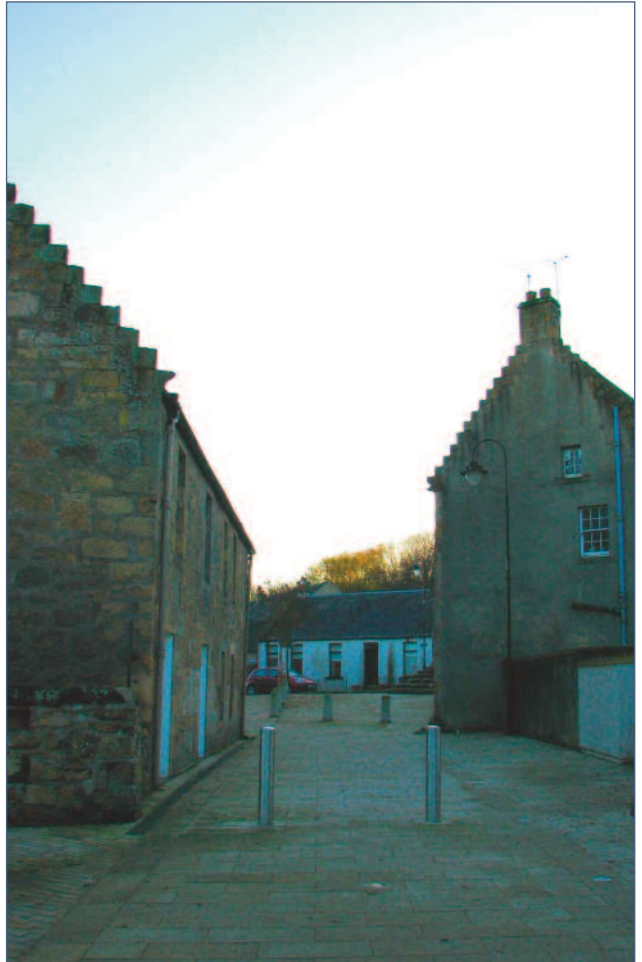
Airth was one of the most important villages in the area and King James IV founded a royal dockyard at the mouth of the Pow Burn.

The main commercial trade of the area was coal mining and the salt trade. There were several salt pans and many coal pits in the area making the landowners very prosperous and influential.

Salmon fishing was also an important commercial concern which survived until the mid 20th century, when pollution is believed to have caused its decline. Thankfully, due to environmental laws, this is reversing and salmon are returning to the river.

Airth village was designated a Conservation Area by Stirling County Council in 1974 which was updated in 2006 and 2010.

As you walk around Airth it is still possible to see some houses with coats of arms, symbols, initials of past owners and dates.



Buildings and sites of interest

Recreation ground

This is the site of the original harbour before land was reclaimed in the 1700's. However, the royal dockyard of King James IV lay half a mile to the south at the mouth of the Pow Burn. This was felt to be safer being further upstream, whereas Leith port was seen as more

vulnerable to attack. The mighty warship "The Great Michael" was fitted out at Airth dockyard as it was considered the ideal place without any threats from the English. The Royal Forest of Torwood was close by and provided the timber required. The Royal Dockyard was thought to be built around 1506 and ceased being used from around 1513 when King James IV fell at Flodden.

Captain's House, 44 Paul Drive

A two storey building, crow stepped and similar to the houses in Shore Road with five windows along the top and three on the ground floor.

Captain's Houses 16-18 Shore Road

Both are Listed Buildings and built in the 1700s. They were known as the Captain's Houses as they were used by captains and senior merchants at that time.



Crown Hotel

This dates back to the early 1900s and sits on the corner of Shore Road which was one of the first roads built in the new Airth of the late 17th century and went down to the old harbour.

Villa view

Once known as "The Market or Blue House", this was said to be the former council chambers, and dates from 1722.

Mercat Cross

Is one of the oldest structures in the village today, dating from 1697. If you look closely you can see the coat of arms and the initials of the Elphinstone family plus two sundials.

The initials C.E. are thought to be Charles Elphinstone who died after a duel with a relative Captain William Bruce of Auchinbowie, and R.B. in memory of his parents Sir Richard Elphinstone and Jane Bruce. It has recently been restored and is an Scheduled Ancient Monument.



Places of interest to visit



Elphinstone Inn

A two storey building dating back to the early 19th Century. The original river shoreline came up to the back of the Inn before land was reclaimed.

Rosebank

Now a private house this was known as "The Penny School" so called as it cost one penny for a child's education. It was built at the same time as Airth Parish Church around 1820 and is a listed building. Opposite you can see a headstone from the original graveyard reused in the retaining wall.

Airth Castle

The original castle was a timber construction owned

by the de Erth family and came into the hands of the Bruce family around 1450. The castle was garrisoned by the English during the Wars of Independence and Wallace is said to have burnt it to the ground. When the large tower house was built in 1488 it was called Wallace's Tower - it now forms the west end of the present building.

Through marriages within the local nobility the castle passed over to the Elphinstone family and again through marriage passed over to the Dundas family. William Dundas was forced to sell the castle and Judge Graham bought it in 1717 and it remained in his family until 1920. Early in the 19th century, to

encourage the population to move away from the castle and into the new or lower town, the Graham family helped to build a replacement church at the north end of the present village. The Forrester family were the last to live in the castle until it was bought and turned into a hotel in 1971.

Airth Castle is now an award winning 125 bedroom hotel and spa, part of the Aurora Hotel Collection and is a great base to explore the local countryside.

Medieval Church

The church adjacent to Airth Castle dates back to the 12th Century and records reveal that the



church was about 80ft long with three family aisles. The Erth, The Elphinstone and The Bruce aisle. During the 12th Century the wealthy families buried their dead beneath the stone floors of the church. However this practise was eventually outlawed. The church was used until the present church was built in 1820.

It is a ruin now and it is not advisable to enter the church or graveyard for your own safety.

Airth Parish Church

The Graham family, once owners of Airth Castle, paid £2,000 for the new



Airth Parish church and school to be built of local quarried yellow sandstone.

Plans by local architect William Stirling of Dunblane were put forward in 1806, but building did not take place until 1818 and was completed two years later.

Headless Cross

Known as the "Headless Cross" since at least the late 17th century this mercat cross once stood in the centre of the 'high toon' of Airth. It demonstrated that the burgh had a right to hold markets - an important source of wealth. The cube on the top is a worn sundial. It was replaced in 1697 by the "new" cross in the 'low toon'. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

1. Airth Village: Route A



Route A Access Information

Bus:

For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Parking: Car park Netherby Road.

Distance: 0.7 miles [1.1km]

Path information: Surfaced pavements

Facilities:

There are no public toilet facilities, but there are shops, pubs and take away bakers in Airth.

Route A: Finding your way

- 1 The car park was the original site of the harbour before land reclamation in the 1700s. As you leave the car park walk straight down Netherby Road to the Main Street and turn left. Cross the road to Airth Parish Church and explore the graveyard and memorial. During construction of the A905 in 1817 the skeleton of a 75ft long whale was discovered.
- 2 As you approach the local shops in the village you will see the Crown Hotel dating back to the early 19th Century.
- 3 When you come to the bakers turn right onto the high street which has been



pedestrianised. In front of you is the Mercat Cross, on your left is the Elphinstone Inn, and to your right is Villa View or "Blue House".

- 4 Continue down the High Street and after a short walk you will return to the Main Street with the Airth



Community Hall on the corner. Turn left along the Main Street until you come to the zebra crossing.

- 5 Cross the road and head down Shore Road. The houses 16 - 18 on the east side of the road are listed buildings built in the 1700's and known as the Captain's Houses. There is a story that at the end of Shore Road there was a

large thorny tree where King James IV would sit and watch the workers and merchants without their knowledge.

- 6 At the end of Shore Road the Captain's House at 44 Paul Drive is opposite you.
- 7 Turn left at the end of Shore Road and walk along The Wilderness taking you back to the car park.

Buildings of interest
[details on pages 4-7]

- A Recreation ground
- B Airth Parish Church
- C Crown Hotel
- D Mercat Cross
- E Villa View
- F Elphinstone Inn
- G Captain's Houses, 16 - 18 Shore Road
- H Captain's House, 44 Paul Drive

2. Airth Village: Route B



Route B Access Information

Bus:

For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No**Parking:**

Car park Netherby Road

Distance:

1.6 miles [2.7km]

Path information:

Mainly surfaced pavements, quiet road and a small section of muddy track.

Facilities:

There are no public toilet facilities, but there are shops, pubs and take away bakers in Airth.

Finding your way

START: Car park at top of Netherby Road

- 1 As you leave the car park turn left and walk along The Wilderness turning right onto Shore Road. As you walk down the road the houses to the left are known as the Captain's Houses 16 - 18. Shore Road was one of the first roads built in the "new Airth" which took people down to the original harbour.
- 2 At the top of Shore Road lies the Crown Hotel. At this point turn left and use the zebra crossing to reach the pedestrianised area of the village. Here you will find the Mercat Cross.
- 3 Turn right and head uphill
- 4 At the junction turn left and head towards Airth Castle admiring the view as you go. The road will bring you out onto Castle View a prestigious new housing development. This was the original site of Airth village protected by the then wooden constructed Airth Castle. As you walk along keep an eye out for the Headless Cross. Continue walking down Castle View and you will see the very impressive Airth Castle hotel and spa.

on Cemetery Brae. As you walk uphill you will pass the private house Rosebank. From here the view over the Forth can be spectacular with the impressive Airth Parish Church in the foreground.



5 The medieval church can be seen from the road side.

It is a ruin now and it is not advisable to enter the church or graveyard for your own safety.

6 Continue down hill until you come to the main road. The path to the right takes you along below Airth Castle

and the Medieval Church ruin and rejoins the route near the Main Street.

7 Retrace your steps back to the Main Street where you turn left and head back to the village.

8 When get back to the village cross at the zebra crossing and retrace your steps back to the car park.

3. Airth “The Banks” circular



Access Information

Bus: For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: On road Sustrans route 76 nearby

Parking: Car park Netherby Road

Distance: 2.8 miles [4.5km]

Path information: Surfaced path, quiet road and a long section of grassy track with a kissing gate at either end.

Facilities:

There are no public toilet facilities in any of the villages there are however shops, pubs and a take away bakers in Airth.

Finding your way

START: Car park at top of Netherby Road

- 1 As you leave the car park turn left and walk along The Wilderness where you will come to a crossroads. Turn left and head towards the River Forth estuary. It is an easy tarmac road until you reach 'The Banks'. Walk up onto the bank, turn right at the sign post and walk in a South Easterly direction.
- 2 As you walk along look out for the variety of wildfowl you will find on the estuary as it supports large numbers of different species especially in the winter months. Raptors such as

Key

- Starting point
- Main path
- Other path
- Bench
- Parking
- Bridge

Buildings of interest [details on pages 4-7]

- A Captain's house
44 Paul Drive
- B Captain's houses
16 - 18 Shore Road

Peregrine and Sea Eagle have been seen hunting over the estuary. 'The Banks' is 1.3km in length.

- 3 Towards the end you will come to a large pylon and Kissing Gate near the Pow Burn, where cattle graze so if you have a dog keep it under close control.



- 4 Pass through the kissing gate, turn right and walk down the country road which brings you out at a golf driving range and car park.
- 5 When you get to the main road turn right and walk back to the village. As you walk along the

Main Street look above the doors to see some interesting initials and dates.

- 6 Pass the zebra crossing and turn right down Shore Road and then left onto the Wilderness and retrace your steps back to the car park.

The Village of Dunmore



Access Information

Bus:

For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: On road
Sustrans route 76 nearby

Parking:

Car park at Dunmore
Pineapple

Distance:
1 miles [1.6 km]

Path information:

Mainly unsurfaced paths, muddy track in places

Facilities:

None

The village of Dunmore

In 1296 John de Elphinstone was the feudal landlord of what is now Dunmore estate and the family remained in control until John Murray purchased the estate in 1754 for £16,000 and earned the title 4th Earl of Dunmore.

The original village of Dunmore was called Elphinstone Pans which consisted of three rows of cottages which housed the workers of the estate who worked the salt pans then later the mines. The village also had at one time a thriving salmon fishing industry until the mid 20th Century when fish numbers decreased dramatically

thought to be due to pollution from industry and agriculture. Dunmore got its name from John Murray's family estates in Perthshire.

In the 19th century the widow of the 6th Earl, Catherine, Countess of Dunmore felt the village looked a miserable place to live so had the village rebuilt, in 1879, in an English style with the village green in the centre and houses on three sides. It included a school, blacksmith and village well.

Dunmore pottery was produced on Dunmore Estate by the Gardener family from the 18th Century where coal and clay were abundant and the moss from Dunmore was



was responsible for the Dunmore you see today. ***It is a ruin now and it is not advisable to enter the church or graveyard for your own safety.***

Dunmore Park

Built between 1820 and 1822 and designed by William Wilkins. Dunmore Park was the home of the Murray family.

It is a ruin now and it is not advisable to enter the house for your own safety.

The house was occupied by the family until 1911 and remained the private home of the Jones family, co owners of Jones & Campbell. For a brief period between 1961 and 1964 it served as a girl's school. Substantial sections of the mansion have been demolished but you can still the grandeur it once had. There are plans for the house to be turned into luxury flats which may help to retain what is left of this beautiful building. The stables have fared better and are still used for agricultural purposes.



used for packing. The pottery produced bricks and tiles for building repairs and domestic pots for local use. It wasn't until the third generation of The Gardner family did Dunmore Pottery become world famous. There are exhibits of Dunmore pottery in Callendar House Museum, Falkirk.

In 1971 the village was designated a Conservation Area and contains many fine listed buildings.

Dunmore Pineapple

The Dunmore Pineapple was built around 1777 by the 4th earl of Dunmore as a birthday present for his wife. It is not known why he chose a pineapple but it was seen as an exotic fruit and highly prized delicacy. They became symbols of power, wealth and hospitality.

The stone vases along the top of the wall conceal the chimneys for the heating system within the wall which allowed exotic specimens including pineapples to grow within the green houses.

By the 1970's the buildings

and gardens fell into disrepair. The Countess of Perth gifted the estate to The National Trust for Scotland who restored it to what you see today. The buildings can now be rented out as a holiday home.

The buildings are set amongst mature woodlands which support a diverse range of wildlife, none more important than the pond which is home to Great Crested Newts.

Elphinstone Tower

Built around 1510 Elphinstone Tower was the family home of the Elphinstones until it and the estates were bought over by the Murray family in 1754. Elphinstone Tower lay empty until the barrel vaulted lower room was converted into a family mausoleum around 1836. Just beyond the tower lies the footprint where the family church was situated, built around 1845 and demolished in the 1950's as it was reported to be in a dangerous state. In the graveyard lies the gravestone of the 6th Earl of Dunmore whose wife

4. Dunmore Pineapple



Access Information

Bus: For further information on bus times, numbers, routes, etc call Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No.

Parking: small car park available at Dunmore Pineapple. See map.

Distance:
1.5 miles [2.3km]

Path information: Grassy leading to wide woodland track very muddy in places, several steps leading from the walled garden area into the woodland.

Facilities: None.





Dunmore Pineapple is owned and managed by The National Trust for Scotland. Tel: 0844 493 2100 or visit www.nts.org.uk

Finding your way

START: At the Dunmore Pineapple car park.

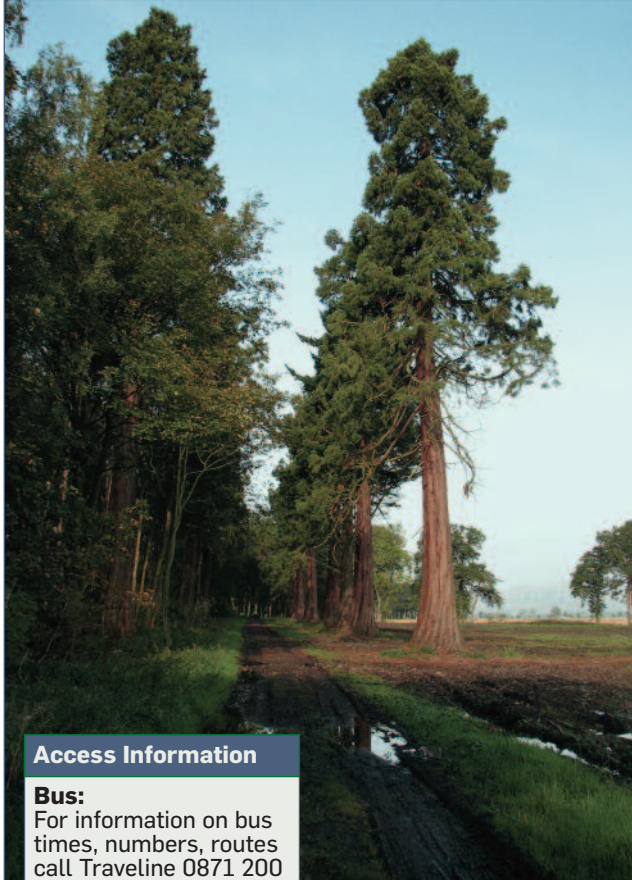
- 1 From the car park enter the walled garden through the large gates.
- 2 As you pass the orchard uphill towards the Dunmore Pineapple you can admire the sheer brilliance of the structure and its ingenious design.
- 3 Continue past the Pineapple and exit up some steps and through a small doorway in the wall.
- 4 Follow the path down to the left through the woodland until you reach a wider forest track.
- 5 At the junction turn left and continue along the track.
- 6 Continue to follow the sign posted track across the fields until you come to the road.
- 7 Turn left and follow the road back to the car park.
- 8 When you return to the car park you can take a short walk to the pond where the Great Crested Newts breed by following a narrow path around to the left of the walled garden and along the woodland. Retrace your steps back to the car park.

Key

-  Starting point
-  Main path
-  Other path
-  Parking



5. Dunmore loop



Access Information

Bus:

For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: On road Sustrans route 76 nearby.

Parking: Car park at pineapple

Distance: 2.8 miles [4.5 km]

Path information: Mainly unsurfaced paths, muddy and grass tracks in places

Facilities: None.

Finding your way

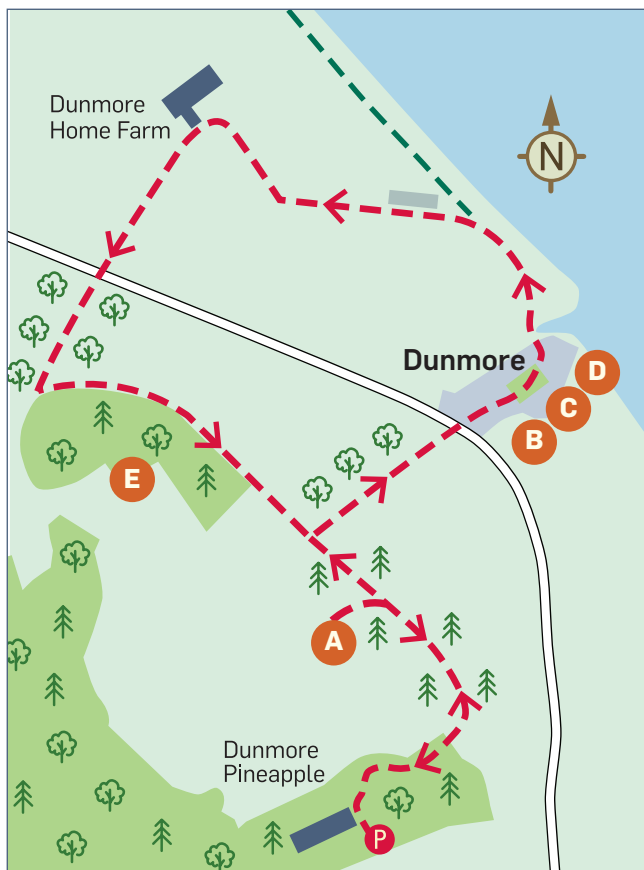
START: Car park at Dunmore Pineapple

- 1 As you leave the car park walk alongside the walled garden heading north passing the large entrance gates.
- 2 When you come to an opening in the wall follow the sign post through another enclosed walled area towards large red doors in the wall opening. Continue through the gate and onto a red ash track.





- 3 Turn right and follow the path downhill until you come to the next sign post where you turn right and pass in-between two sections of wooden fencing taking you through mature woodland. This section is muddy in places. Follow the path through the woodland until you come out to an avenue of impressive large Giant Redwood trees.
4. Take the track on the left which leads off uphill on a detour from this path to see Elphinstone Tower.

It is a ruin now and it is not advisable to enter the tower for your own safety.

- 5 Retrace your steps and continue along the farm track until you come to a T junction. Turn right and walk along the avenue of much smaller trees towards Dunmore village.
- 6 Cross the main road and continue into the Conserative Area of Dunmore village. The house immediately to your right was the schoolhouse built in 1875. There is no pavement going into the village.
- 7 As you come into the centre of the village you will see the Village Well which was brought from London by Catherine the Countess of Dunmore. It has now been restored to its former glory.
- 8 At the northern end of the village and behind the bowling hut the original pier still exists. To your



Key

-  Starting point
-  Main path
-  Other path
-  Parking

Buildings of interest [details on pages 4-7]

- A Elphinstone Tower
- B Old schoolhouse
- C Village Well
- D The Smiddy
- E Dunmore Park

continues to the left passing Dunmore Home Farm. Continue along the tarmac road until you come to the main road.

- 12 Cross the road and continue along the track opposite with its avenue of trees. When you come to the junction turn left.
- 13 Alternatively you can take a slight detour and continue along the track to see Dunmore Park. Retrace your steps back to the junction and turn right and follow the track to the T junction. Continue on the track taking you back to the car park.

right is the unusual horse shoe doorway of a private house which was once the blacksmith known as "The Smiddy".

- 9 At the bowling hut turn left and follow the track round to the right continuing past Pyetree Cottages. This is a very flat hard surface taking you to Dunmore Home Farm.
- 10 If you look to the left you can see stands of mature woodland. They are known as roundels which were used during the shooting season. Visitors to the farm would stand out in the

open field and the birds would be flushed out of the trees and shot. To your right and across the water you can see Clackmannan Church and Tower.

- 11 Keep on the track as it



The village of South Alloa



Access Information

Bus: For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: On road Sustrans route 76 nearby

Parking: Car park Netherby Road Airth

Distance: 3.6 miles [5.8 km]

Path information: Surfaced pavements, long section of grass bank muddy in places. It is recommended to return to Airth from South Alloa by bus as there are no pavements on the A905 between South Alloa and Dunmore. Journey by bus is an additional 2.4 miles [4km].

Facilities: There are no public toilet facilities in any of the villages there are however shops, pubs and a take away bakers in Airth.

South Alloa or Kersie is situated on the Northern boundary of Airth Parish and also has a long history. Records date as far back as 1145 when King David of Cambuskenneth Abbey was given the lands of Kersie as part of a gift. At that time the land was farmed by tenant farmers.

According to records in 1608 James Abercrombie was listed as the laird of Carsye until it was purchased by Hendry Elphinstone of Calderhill in 1645 this included the lairds house Kersie Mains. Today Kersie Mains, a listed building, is still in use as a farm.

In the lead up to the Battle of Falkirk in 1746 government troops were sent from Leith docks to capture and return to

Edinburgh Lord David Elcho who was a Jacobite leader and residing in Kersie Mains. The troops took a smaller boat ashore to surprise him but he had fled several hours before they arrived.

The troops returned to their boat empty handed only to get stuck in the mud banks. As one member of crew sounded an alarm the Jacobites heard and responded with muskets. The troops had to free their boat and row back to the awaiting ship and return to Leith.

The village sits on what was a railway spur opened in 1850 which connected to the ferry crossing over the Forth to Alloa. Drivers used the ferry to bring their cattle to the Tryst market.



6. South Alloa



Finding your way

START: Netherby Road car park, Airth

- 1 As you leave the car park walk down Netherby road to the Main Road and turn right follow the pavement passing the sign post for Airth Pineapple until you come to the village of Dunmore.
- 2 Turn right into the village and walk through the village. There is no pavement in the village and please respect the privacy of the villagers. Walk past the village green then turn left just before the bowling hut down a rough track.
- 3 At the sub station turn right at the wooden sign post which will take you round the back of Pyetree Cottages. Crossing a wooden bridge will bring you out onto a farmland edge. *(Take care to avoid damage of crops)*
- 4 From here you follow the Firth of Forth. There are sign posts along the route and one small section of steps. The sea wall section is rough underfoot. There are

three kissing gates situated as various points along this route.

- 5 From the path you can see Clackmannan Church and Tower with great views of the Ochil Hills. There is also lots of wildlife associated with the estuary and surrounding farmland in particular wildfowl.



- 6 Eventually you reach South Alloa via a kissing gate. When you reach the road turn right and diagonally opposite is another kissing gate which continues along the coastline. From this path there are great views of Stirling Castle and Wallace Monument.
- 7 The island you also see is Alloa Inch. At one time it was a 42.5 acre grazing salt marsh until a one mile long embankment encircling the island was

built converting it into a 77 acre rich arable land. In 1806 a farmhouse and steadings were built and the island was continuously farmed for 170 years. In 1983 a breach in the embankment occurred and led to the abandonment of the farm. In 1996 Scottish Wildlife Trust purchased the

island and now manage it as a salt marsh reserve and it is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

- 8 When you come to a kissing gate to your left head out onto the road, continue along the pavement to the end of the village. When you come to the main road turn left and you will see the bus stop where the bus will take you back to Airth village.



7. Letham Cycle Loop



Access Information

Bus: For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: On road SUSTRANS route 76 nearby

Parking:
Car park Letham cottages

Distance:
5.5 miles [8.6 km]

Path information:
Surfaced pavements, road side and field edges.

Facilities: None.

The village of Letham

Letham has played its part in the history and development of the parish. The layout of the village today is set out as two parts Letham Terrace and Letham Cottages. The cottages are set out in three rows encompassing a green space in the middle and were homes for miners in

the early 20th Century.

Club's tomb

It is said that Club's tomb was built by a local farmer James Club of Westfield Airth who wanted to be buried alongside his dog in this mausoleum. He died in 1757, but there is no record to say he was buried there. This is a listed building.

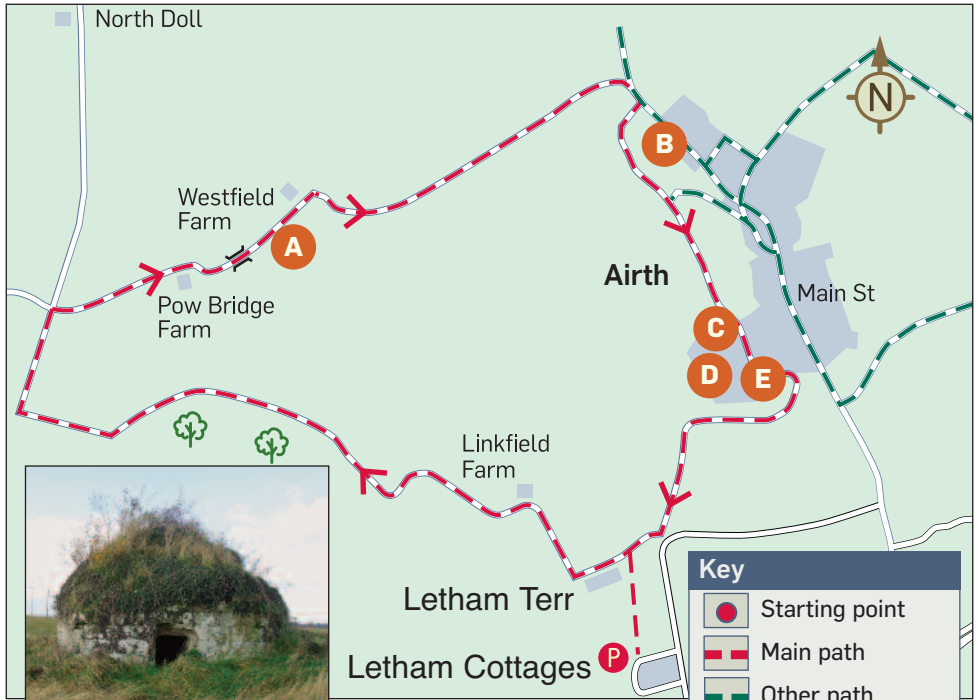
Finding your way

START: Car park situated on the North West corner of Letham Cottages.

- 1 Leave the car park and follow the metal sign to Letham terraces. When you reach the end of the path turn left and follow the pavement alongside the houses.
- 2 When you reach the end of the row take the road to the right which is sign posted to Moss Road.
- 3 Continue along the country road until you come to Linkfield Farm.

Take care as this is a working farm. Keep to the track and follow the wooden sign posts along a stone track.

- 4 The track curves alongside a strip of woodland and when you come to a junction turn right which will take you to Moss Road.
- 5 When you reach Moss Road turn right and head along the country road towards North Doll. Take care as this road is quite a fast road for cars with no footpath. Follow the road for approximately 400m until you come to the crossroads turn right signposted Airth. Follow this flat country road watch out for Club's Tomb which is situated close to the field edge on the right hand side just beyond the small bridge. In the summer months it can be difficult to spot with the vegetation that grows on the roof of the



tomb. Continue along the road until you come out onto the A905 which passes through Airth.

6 Turn right then right again at the old weigh bridge. This will take you uphill with some amazing views of the Firth of Forth as you go. At the top of the hill to your left you can see the Airth Parish Church. Continue your walk on along the top of the hill.

10 The track is a concreted driveway to Agricola's House. From this point the track becomes muddy and pot holed.

11 You will pass the Game Keepers Cottage and come out into a prestigious estate on the original site of




the old Airth Village. Continue along Castle View towards Airth Castle.

12 Approximately half way along this road on the right hand side is the original Mercat Cross, known as the Headless Cross. Follow the road down past Airth Castle and the ruin of the Medieval Church and just before the main entrance from the A905 turn right. Follow the whin path along the bottom of Airth Castle. From here you will be able to see the original structure, later additions and parts of the old church.

13 Follow this community woodland path to the very end and this will bring you on to a private road where you turn left.

14 The bridge crossing

Key

-  Starting point
-  Main path
-  Other path
-  Parking
-  Bridge

Buildings of interest [details on pages 4-7]

- A Club's Tomb
- B Airth Parish Church
- C Headless Cross
- D Airth Castle
- E Medieval Church

the Pow Burn is called Abbeytown Bridge. It was the original link between Falkirk and Airth until 1723.

15 Follow the road to the end and turn right at the junction walking towards Letham Terraces. Just before the first house on your left is the path which will take you back to the car park at Letham Cottages.

8. Skinflats circular



Access Information

Bus: For information on bus times, numbers, routes call Traveline 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk

Train: No

Cycle: on road
Sustrans route 76 nearby

Parking: Limited car parking on Newton Road. (Keep access clear at all times.)

Distance:
3.6 miles [5.8 km]

Path information:
The first and last section is tarmac road with woodland and farm vehicle tracks which can be muddy in sections.

Facilities: None.

The village of Skinflats lies on the A905 and is situated in the original parish of Bothkennar whose boundary lay between the River Carron to the South and Pow Burn to the North. The original village built between 1817 - 1861 consisted of two rows of miner's cottages, two pubs, a smiddy and school which was situated at the Northern end of the village where the existing school is today.

A prominent family of that time were the Bruce of Newton who were related to the Bruce family of Airth. Bothkennar Church displays a stone showing a date 1654, initials WB (William Bruce) and Bruce of Newton arms.

Skinflats foreshore has some of the rarest habitats in the UK namely that of

the saline lagoons. There are two areas of lagoons in the Falkirk area; Skinflats and Kinneil Kerse.

The River Carron was canalised 1767 - 1770 to allow boats to reach Quarrel shore, now Carronshore.

The lagoons at Skinflats are associated with meanders of the River Carron and have been vulnerable to change through human activity.





The saline lagoons are one of the rarest habitats in the UK and support a large range of specialist plants, invertebrates and animals which are able to cope with fluctuations of salinity and changing water levels. The margins also support songbirds during the winter months, and the lagoons provide a valuable roosting site for wildfowl at high tide when they are unable to feed on the neighbouring rich mudflats.

For these reasons Skinflats Foreshore is protected by the Firth of Forth Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Firth of Forth Special Protected Area (SPA).

Finding your way

START: at small lay-by barrier on Newton Road.

- 1 Pass by the road barrier and follow the road which

runs adjacent to the River Carron.

- 2 When you approach the conifer woodland, turn left and follow the sign along the woodland edge. Alternatively you can continue along the road which will bring you out near the mud flats, a very rich feeding area for resident and wintering wildfowl.
- 3 Re trace your steps back to the woodland and pass through the kissing gate. As you walk along the pine woodland edge look out for the brackish ponds on your right. The pine woodland has been planted on top of the slag heaps from the area's mining past.
- 4 At the end of the woodland continue through the kissing gate

Key	
	Starting point
	Main path
	Other path
	Parking

crossing an open area of grazing for cattle. You can still see the parallel tracks made by the mineral railway.

- 5 Continue along the track between hawthorn hedges and exit through the kissing gate where you then turn left.
- 6 Continue along the farm track. From the track and to your left look out for a small orchard of apples and pears.
- 7 At the end of the track you will come to a field gate. Turn left and continue long the roadside until you return to the start.

Walk, Ride and Cycle in and around Airth Parish

Getting There

Access the Green Travel map at www.falkirk.gov.uk or call 01324 504950.

By Foot: If you live nearby.

By Cycle: Sustrans National Cycle Network route 76 passes nearby. Cycle route information available from www.sustrans.org.uk or call 0845 113 0065.

By Rail: There are no direct rail links to Airth. Nearest train stations are at Camelon, Larbert, Falkirk or Stirling.

By Bus: For further information on bus times, numbers, routes etc, call the Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit www.traveline.org.uk.

By Car: Airth is in the heart of Central Scotland, to the North of Falkirk and South East of Stirling. It is well connected to both local A roads and the nearby motorways M876 and M9.

Suggested Walks

Walking is easy. You don't need any special equipment and what ever your age or level of fitness your health will benefit from this natural, gentle form of exercise. So get your boots on and explore the countryside around Airth Parish 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.

Thank you to all organisations, landowners and local communities for their cooperation and support. Special thanks to Robert Smith of Airth Community Council for his help and assistance.

This booklet has been produced by Falkirk Council. For further information please contact Falkirk Council's Outdoor Access Team Tel.01324 504950.

Some photos were donated by Gerry McGleave and Fiona Wishart.



Falkirk Council
Development Services