

# Markinch Heritage Group

## Balbirnie Circular - Route 3 via Stone Circle

A beautiful woodland walk with picnic sites and taking in former stable block, Balbirnie House and Stone Circle.

Route follows well made wide surfaces with some short steep sections. Narrow access at a locked gate.

No stiles.

Suitable for cycling.



2 ½ miles/  
3.7 km  
Allow  
1¼ hour

[Link to Map My Walk](#)



**Start at car park, KY7 6NP, NO 292 018, near Main Entrance, off Balbirnie Street**  
(summertime toilet 9am-6pm may be available)

1. Left out of car park and follow tarmac road, then first right to a junction at the top of the hill. A very short way down the track to your right lies a former walled garden from the mid 1780s, now community allotments. Just beyond the junction and to the right is the Craft Centre, though now mostly converted to dwellings. This was once the Balbirnie House stable block dating from around 1780.



2. Just beyond the arch to the Craft Centre courtyard bear left down a path to the award winning A-listed Balbirnie House Hotel, a grand neoclassical mansion, once the Balfour residence. The grassed area to the left of the house and adjacent to the road was once a croquet lawn and is marked with a large 'H' as it is sometimes used to helicopter guests to golf championships.



3. Continue past front of hotel and then on your left an 18<sup>th</sup> century yew tree whose branches sweep to the ground, to the Golf Shop ahead.

4. Pass the Golf Shop on your right towards the wide gate at a bridge over the Balbirnie Burn and stay on tarmac road for another approx. ½ mile to the Balbirnie Stone Circle dating from around 3000BC. (It was excavated in 1883 by John Balfour then in 1970-1 by Historic Scotland before being moved 125 m from the northwest to allow road widening. An onsite panel gives more information). Retrace your steps to the Golf Shop.



# Markinch Heritage Group

5. Turn left and as you start to pass front of Golf Club note Balfour marriage stone dated 1675 in entrance wall to golf course next to car park.
6. Proceed on to path into woods soon coming to a picnic area next to the burn. Follow the path keeping burn on left. Stay on this path and it eventually emerges briefly from the trees close to a field edge with a steep rhododendron covered incline to your right and a view to the railway and Markinch Hill over the field to your left.
7. Remain on the path until you reach a wide cross road at a track. You may wish to turn right to make a very short detour to reach a lovely, small sheltered clearing on the right with picnic table surrounded by beautiful trees and rhododendrons, particularly in May. Alternatively go straight ahead and take next right and follow path to a narrow stone sided bridge. Cross and shortly emerge to a large grassy area leading back to the car park.
8. As you reach the road at the car park you may wish to go left for approximately 50m towards the old Balbirnie estate gates and South Lodge. Built in 1861 it is likely that this entry point was created due to the arrival of the railway. Its alignment and high architectural status design was intended to impress guests as well as clearly differentiate the estate owners from the inhabitants and the built character of the adjacent burgh.



# Markinch Heritage Group

## Route 3 Map

Car park-Craft Centre-Balbirnie House-Balbirnie Stone Circle-Balbirnie Burn-Woodland-Car park 2.31 miles/3.7km

