

The Coul Burn Walk

via Balfarg Henge

Markinch, once surrounded by marshes, takes its name from Scottish Gaelic Marc Innis, meaning "horse island". Until recently paper-making, textiles and whisky bottling contributed to the wealth of the town.

Our route starts at the **railway station (1)** and heads north to **St Drostan's Church (2)**. The patrons of the 12th tower and church were the MacDuff Earls of Fife. Recent archaeological work has revealed carved stonework and around 800 stonemasons' marks inside the tower. The rest of the church seen today was built after the Reformation.

Continue north past **Markinch Hill (3)**. On the north face five or six clearly defined steps or terraces have been cut, their origins still a mystery.

Across the road from the hill is the **Stob Cross (4)**. It may once have had Pictish decorations but seems to have been recut during the Reformation. On the west side there is a plain tapered cross, but on the side facing the hill is another cross much more roughly cut.



Re-connecting people with the hills





Follow the waymarked path through Balbirnie Park. A short detour takes you past the elegant **Balbirnie House (5)** and continues up the track to **the Stone Circle (6)**. This was once closer to the Balfarg henge complex. It comprises eight reset stones in a partial circle 15m in diameter. A jet button, beads and pottery vessels were found during excavation.

Follow the route and cross the A92 to **Balfarg Henge (7)**, an important Neolithic and later Bronze Age site dating back 6000 years. The wooden and later stone circle was once surrounded by a high earth bank and a massive ditch. What may have been a cremation area, closer to the main road, is marked with modern poles and is worth a short detour.

The waymarked route continues to **Coul Den (8)**, up into the Lomond Hills or to Rhind Hill.

Scottish Outdoor Access Code

While out enjoying the local countryside please follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Terrain: Mostly wide surfaced paths, with short moderate slopes. Some sections may be muddy after heavy rain. Includes bridges and crossings of busy roads.



moderate

3 miles/4.81km one way
6 miles/9.6km return
Allow two hours one way

Care should be taken
crossing roads.

