

# Markinch Heritage Group

Prestonhall – Balbirnie – South Lodge

A circular route skirting the town by way of a former railway line, old coach road and part of Balbirnie parkland.

Follows pavements and tarmac footpaths. One short, steep stepped section. Busy road crossing.  
Can be cycled.



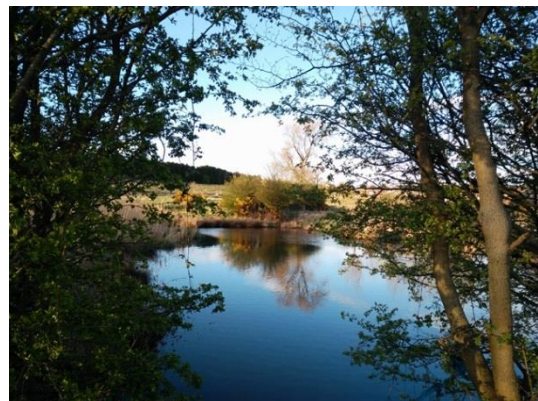
2 ¼ miles/  
3.6km  
Allow  
1 hour

[Link to Map My Walk](#)



## Start at Glass Street free car park – NO 297 018, KY7 6DP

1. Turn right out of car park, keep to this side and cross straight over to High Street. At top of High Street cross to station, opposite Balgonie Road. Follow access road to large station car park beyond station and bear right at its entrance. This is the former branch railway to the paper mills and Leslie and a siding into the former site of the famous Haig whisky plant you see on your right that operated for over a century until 1983 before moving to modern premises. The Markinch-Leslie line opened in 1861 at a cost of £35,000.
2. Shortly, looking back to your left you will see the ten arch mainline viaduct built across the River Leven in the 1840s. It was one of the greatest engineering feats of its time, involving hundreds of workmen including Italian stonemasons. Down in the valley ahead the pan tiled roof of Middle Mill can be seen, one of some 31 mills that lay along the River Leven in 1828.
3. You will soon pass under a stone bridge that carries a path to Woodside (the subject of other **Woodside** walks). Pass first left hand junction just beyond the bridge and go straight ahead at next junction - signposted Prestonhall.
4. Pass a duck pond on the right, the result of old mine works on the lands of Sweetbank. Nearby, the rails used to cross the adjacent road to a former paper mill closed in 2001 (originally a barley mill), now a housing estate.



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5. The path then reaches where a road where a [level crossing](#) allowed trains to take china clay and coal to Tullis Russell paper mills that operated for over 200 years until 2015. (More Tullis Russell history [here](#))
6. Turn right here and head up a stepped path, part of the old Burntisland-Cupar coach road through Fife. Cross a road and head towards a metal barrier. At the barrier the road to the right goes to Markinch. On your left a row of thatched roof cottages sat until the early 1900s followed by a joiner's house for the Balbirnie Estate.
7. Carefully cross straight over to Mount Frost Drive. This point was a continuation of the coach road mentioned that would have passed Balbirnie House before the road was re-routed to the west so as to skirt the estate. Go past entrances to Mount Frost Place and Mount Frost Gardens and as the road sweeps up to the left the route turns into a path across Balbirnie Golf Course. Cross with care.
8. At the tarmac road (the subject of various **Balbirnie** walks) turn right and follow this road all the way to the caravan site 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.
9. Exit at large estate gates across from converted Balbirnie Church and John Dixon Park. Keep left to the cross roads. Go straight across to foot of High Street, then take a left back to starting car park at Glass Street.



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Glass Street-Station-Prestonhall-Balbirnie-South Lodge 2 ¼ miles/3.6km

