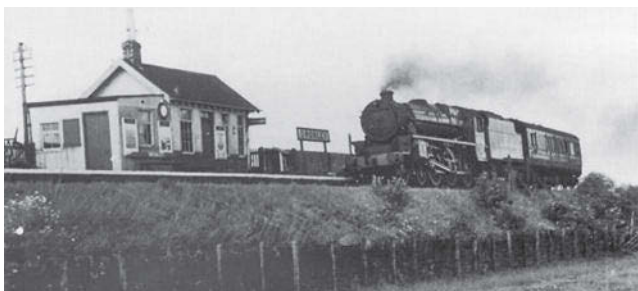


Sidlaw Path Network

Get on track around Muirhead

Four walks around Muirhead, Angus





Get on Track at Dronley Station – The Railway Path (Angus Core Path 218)

Distance:	Total Railway Walk 3.4km/2.1 miles (one way)
Time guide:	Total Railway Walk - 1¼ hours (one way) To Rosemill - 2.4km/55 minutes or to North Dronley - 1km/20 minutes
Start & finish:	Car park near Dronley Station
Surface:	Constructed track
Gradient:	Level

How to get there: In Birkhill, turn north into Dronley Road (signed Birkhill Primary School). Turn right at Dronley Farm (where Grewar's Farm Shop sells refreshments and local produce) and immediately left. The car park is 0.5km on left hand side.

The Walk

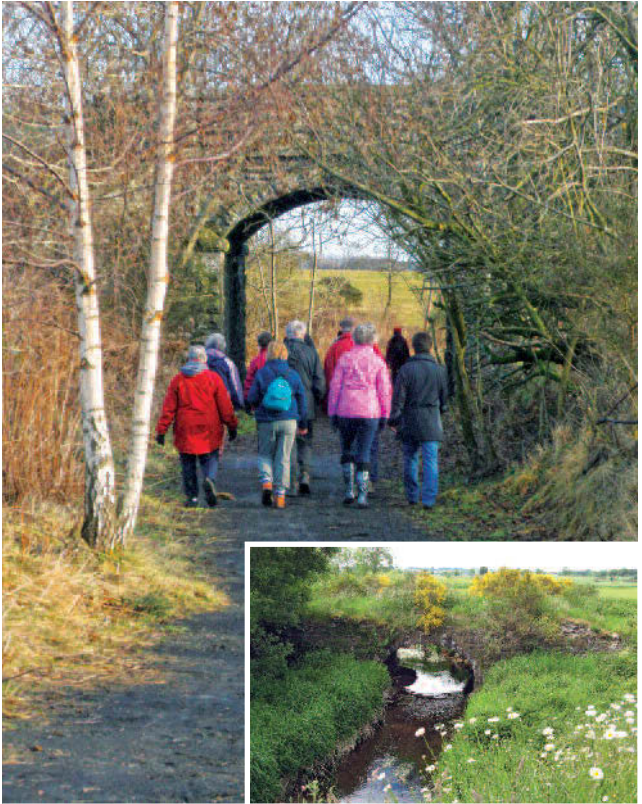
This section of the old Dundee and Newtyle Railway has been turned into a superb path, suitable for all users, providing splendid views. In summer you may spot birds like whitethroats and willow warblers. Autumn fruits like brambles and rowans feed thrushes and blackbirds. The track provides a chalky well drained microhabitat for plants like field scabious, knapweed and lady's bedstraw. Their flowers attract bees and butterflies and nettles feed the caterpillars of the Peacock butterfly. Also look for wall rue, a small fern, on the remains of the station platform and areas covered with ox-eye daisies.

Dronley to Rosemill - Leave the car park, cross the road and rejoin the path, passing the platform of Dronley Station, once a busy agricultural produce depot. Further along you will see two bridges, one carrying a road over the path, the



other allowing the path to bridge the Dighty Burn.

Dronley to North Dronley – Head westwards from the car park through a cutting, where a derailed train was stranded for several days during the 1947 snow storm, to North Dronley where a ramp descends smoothly to a road. Extend your walk to Dronley Wood, see Explore Further, or cross the road to follow Core Path 217 to the site of Auchterhouse Station and on to Kirkton of Auchterhouse.



The Story of the Railway: Dundee and Newtyle Railway created the first railway between Dundee and Newtyle (1830s) with three sections where trains were drawn up hills by stationary engines, one up the Law in Dundee and hence through a tunnel, one up to Balbeuchley Farm from Rosemill and one up Hatton incline from Newtyle. These were abandoned in the 1860s and the Railway Path occupies the new section of line, created to avoid Balbeuchley incline. Under British Railways, Dundee and Newtyle Railway was closed in the 1960s, the present path being created in 2008-9.



Get on Track at Birkhill - Blairfield Road (Angus Core Path 223)

Distance:	2.4km/1.5 miles
Time guide:	55 minutes (excluding time to explore Templeton Woods)
Start & finish:	Parking at Muirhead and Birkhill Millennium Hall in Birkhill Stagecoach Strathtay service 57 and 59, and Xplore Dundee service 30/31/51
Surface:	Tarred
Gradient:	Level then slopes gradually

The Walk

If exiting from Millennium Hall car park, cross the road with care and turn right on Coupar Angus Road. Walk approximately 400m to reach the Birkhill Inn on your left, a good stop for refreshments at the end of your walk. Turn left into Blairfield Road. Initially this road is an access road with a pavement and then becomes a path. Where the path starts to descend, a signpost points to Templeton Woods and from here you can pick up an easy access path to explore this attractive woodland. Templeton Woods are managed by Dundee City Council Countryside Ranger Service and are home to roe deer, red squirrels and woodpeckers (Visitor Centre, toilets).

Continue down Blairfield Road to a T-junction and take the left hand track to Dronley Road. Once there turn left again towards Coupar Angus Road. For a longer walk a right turn at the T-junction takes you to Templeton Road. From here, quiet roads lead back to Templeton Woods and Clatto Country Park or on to the Railway Path at Rosemill (perhaps with a pause in passing at the Pine Cone Café).



Get on Track at Piperdam – The Check Bar Road (Angus Core Path 215)

Distance: 2.8km/1.75miles (one way) (Circuit option adds 3.5km/2.2miles approx.)

Time guide: 1 hour (Circuit adds 1¼ hours)

Start & finish: Parking possible off A923, Coupar Angus Road, almost opposite road to Lundie Castle Farm. Please keep gates clear

Stagecoach Strathtay service 59 (not Sundays) and Xplore Dundee 51 (Sundays only)

Piperdam Golf and Leisure Resort offer refreshments and there is ample parking with access to the Check Bar Road

Surface: Constructed and earth/grass track

Gradient: Two moderate uphill sections with fairly steep descent at end

Please show courtesy towards golfers. NB agricultural vehicles use parts of this track.

The Walk

The Check Bar Road gets its name from a tollhouse which stood near its junction with the Coupar Angus turnpike (now A923). Centuries ago it was the main 'road' from Lundie to Fowls.

Head off through a farm style gate. At the bottom of the hill, bear right alongside a massive ditch, dug in the 1780s to drain Piperdam Loch so its lime-rich sediment, marl, could be used as fertiliser. The reinstated loch is now popular with anglers and sometimes ospreys. After 120m, before the sheds, turn sharp left up a gradual ascent. On your right note the loch and country park with its backdrop of Blacklaw Hill. Who the Piperdam piper was is unknown!

This path rises gently between golf courses, then fields. A farm road joins from the right but you continue straight on. After the final rise, the path snakes left then right to drop down a fairly steep descent. A magnificent view of the upper Tay estuary and Fife stretches before you.

Where the track meets Berryhill Road either retrace your steps or extend the walk and do a circuit (**NB country roads - no pavements**).

Turn left to Fowlis where you turn left again at the T-junction on to Benvie Road. Pass the village green on your right and Fowlis Easter Village Hall on your left before climbing the brae out of Fowlis. Follow this road until Muirloch cottages and take the farm road. Bear left up past a farmyard and houses on your left. Note the lovely little pond or stank ('No Swimming!'). Continue with trees on your right and 9-hole golf course on your left, back to the point where you crossed the ditch earlier. Retrace your steps to the start.



Get on Track at Backmuir Wood and the Drovers' Road (Angus Core Paths 230, 228 & 227)

Distance:	Whole circuit 4.8km / 3.0 miles
Time guide:	Allow 1½ to 2½ hours to explore the paths in this area
Start & finish:	Car park at Woodland Trust's Backmuir Wood on road from Muirhead to Liff Stagecoach Strathtay service 57/59 and Explore Dundee service 30/31/51
Surface:	Mainly earth/grass track (beware tree roots). Road walk to complete circuit
Gradient:	Gradual

The Walk

This is best as a circular walk. (Woodland Trust leaflets available from dispenser beside gate opposite car park entrance)

Go through the gate to the left and walk north, skirting the left-hand edge of the wood. Pass through a gap in a dry stane dyke and follow the path as it bends to the left and rises. Notice stands of oak, birch, beech and Scots pine. Keep an eye out for red squirrels. After 1.2km pause and enjoy the view from a carved seat.

The path emerges at the highest point of the walk and from Old Alex's or Tom's seats look over the Carse of Gowrie. As the path progresses, you'll have magnificent views over the Dighty Valley toward the Sidlaws or over the River Tay to Fife. Notable in the Sidlaws are Lundie Craigs and Craigowl, with its masts. Towards the Tay spot the rail bridge, Dundee Law, Cox's Chimney Stack and Lomond Hills of Fife. Beyond Tom's seat join the Drovers' Road, coming up from the A923. Cattle were in the past driven on this track from country districts to market. Walk west between high dry stane dykes forming a cattle 'raik', which kept cattle from straying. The path turns south and descends towards Liff. Turn left at the houses towards Loch of Liff Road and walk down it passing the playing field, formerly a common for resting cattle.

At the crossroads turn left and walk about 0.75km to the car park.



Explore Further



Check Bar Road

By turning right on reaching Berryhill Road you can walk 0.5km to Balruddery Sustainable Farm run by the James Hutton Institute (information boards, wildlife pond).

Information is available on www.hutton.ac.uk/csc

Backmuir Wood & Drovers' Road

An interesting way to the Drovers' Road is from the Millennium Hall car park. Take Stoneygroves Path (Angus Core Path 232) and head towards Backmuir Wood via two stone 'kissing gates' (**NB tree roots and narrow gates**). Cross the road to the Wood and follow Core Path 228 to the Drovers' Road. There are 9km of paths, including 1.5km of hard surface in the Woodland Trust Scotland managed Backmuir Wood. Look out for jays, great spotted woodpeckers, tree creepers and wrens, with buzzards and kestrels out over the fields. Fungi can be plentiful in spring and autumn. Information is available on

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Railway Path

A short walk from North Dronley brings you to Dronley Wood. The Forestry Commission Scotland manages this mainly Scots pine wood in association with Auchterhouse Community Woodland Action Group. There are paths in the wood and parking is available. Information is available on

www.auchterhouse.com/societies/woodland.htm

www.forestry.gov.uk

For led walks along Newtyle Railway Nature Trail contact ANGUSalve Ranger Service on 01241 860360 (leaflet available).

Blairfield Road

As well as Templeton Woods, Dundee City Council Countryside Ranger Service manage Clatto and Camperdown Country Parks. Entrance to the latter through the north wall, 200m from the Birkhill Inn. Information is available on

www.camperdownpark.com/woods.htm

Also The Roundie, reached by a path alongside the petrol station, is worth a visit.



General information

Scottish Outdoor Access Code

Know the Code! When using the paths please:

- Take responsibility for your own actions.
- Respect the interests of others.
- Care for the environment – take only memories, leave only footprints.

Further information

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

www.angus.gov.uk/corepathsplan

Where appropriate, these paths are accessible to all. Wheelchair-users, families with young children, cyclists, dog walkers and horse-riders all enjoy using parts of this network.

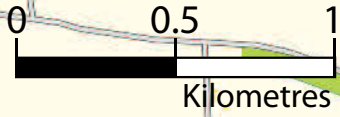
Please feel free to help keep the paths clear of brambles, broom, gorse etc. by taking a pair of secateurs on your walk to cut them back where necessary. Dogs can harm wildlife and, as many of these paths are adjacent to farmland, please keep your dog under control at all times, do not let it stray among livestock or into arable crops and please clean up after it.

We gratefully acknowledge the photographs which were contributed by various walking group members, Angus Council Community Learning and Development, Newtyle, Andrew Llanwarne www.walkingstories.com Jimmie Reid www.red-squirrels.co.uk and Tom Mahoney.

Leaflet produced by Sidlaw Path Network, a volunteer community group which encourages access for all by promoting, upgrading and signposting local paths. For further information contact Gill on 01382 581152.

Sidlaw Path Network Walks around Muirhead

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Featured Walks

Extensions

Area covered by Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 380

Lundie
Castle Farm

P Piperdam

Muirloch

Fowlis

Balruddery
Farm
The Sir James
Hutton
Institute

Liff

North Dronley

B954

A923

Backmuir Wood

WOODLAND
TRUST

Millennium
Hall P

Muirhead

The Roundie

Birkhill

Camperdown
Park

Templeton Woods
Visitor Centre

Clatto Park

Rosemill

Dronley Wood

Forestry Commission
Scotland

P Dronley Station

Auchterhouse Station (links to Kirkton of Auchterhouse)