

## 2 Back Walk and Gowan Hill

Distance: 2 miles/3.3 kms/1 1/2 hours

A fantastic walk around the old town walls of Stirling, passing through woods, scrub and grasslands leading to views from the top of Gowanhill and passing many historic buildings along the way.

The route follows mostly pavements and well surfaced paths, however there are some steps and steep sections of path.

Start from the Tourist Information Centre in Dumbarton Road. Cross the road and go up to the library. Join the Back Walk opposite this and follow the old town walls uphill towards Stirling Castle.

The Town Walls held off several attacks during the 16th and 17th Centuries. They are up to 5 feet thick and over 20 feet high.

Bear left at the fork which is by some steps at the graveyard and follow this path which skirts the outside of the Castle.

There has been a castle in Stirling since at least the 12th Century. The castle was a favourite residence of the early Stewart kings and is built on a natural defensive site, dominating the town and surrounding countryside. The rock formation is a volcanic plug and is called a 'crag and tail' feature.

At Ballengeich Pass cross the road onto Gowanhill and follow the surfaced path to the first junction.

Gowanhill has a patchwork of woods, grassy areas and scrub. It is rich in biodiversity and a peaceful place to enjoy the wildlife living in the centre of Stirling.

A short detour to the Beheading Stone and the old cannons can be made at this point by bearing left and left again to this small hill top, then retracing your steps.

The beheading stone was used in numerous executions during the 15th Century, most notably that of Murdoch, Duke of Albany in 1425.

To continue, take the right hand fork and follow the path leading uphill to the cemetery. Cross over the cemetery and down some steps to a grassy track and follow this to the road.

Cross the road and take the path and steps leading to the esplanade in front of the castle. Descend along Castle Wynd passing the statue of Robert the Bruce, War Memorials and through the Old Town with its many historic buildings. Turn right onto Corn Exchange Road, go past the library and back to the Tourist Information Centre.



**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
All of nature for all of Scotland

Source: Stirling, Bannockburn and  
Cambusbarron: Community Paths

Stirling Council, East of Scotland European  
Partnership and Scottish Natural Heritage