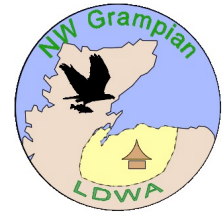




Heldon Hill Sunset Walk Challenge & Beach BBQ

15th June 2019



1. Elgin Library to Torrieston (CP1) Section length 6.6 miles

Library to Quarrywood (1.3 mile long)

From the Elgin Library, go NW along the west side of the big pond towards a footbridge across the river Lossie. Turn left (W) before the just footbridge and go along the cycle path next to the river that goes under the main road and is next to the river. Follow this until it meets a public road near a vehicle bridge over the river. Turn right (W) over the bridge and follow the wide tarmac path (Cycle Route 1). The tarmac path continues in a westerly direction and comes out onto Morrision Road. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) Cross the road carefully, turn left (W) and walk down to the start of Brumley Brae. Take the road on the right up the Brae (WNW). Keep to the footpath on the right but look out for a small path after about 150yds on the LH side. Cross the road carefully and take the path parallel to the road between large trees on the left and the ‘steps to nowhere’ on the right. After a short distance turn left (W) into the Quarry Wood at the last concrete post. This is a good path that traverses the slope in a westerly direction.

Quarrywood (2.1 miles)

The key to navigating the Quarrywood as you go through it, is to keep the high ground on the right and the sounds of the busy A96 on your left, though this may be quieter during the night hours. Don't worry if you get a bit lost in this bit, because heading west will still bring you out onto the same minor road – just at a different place.

For the first mile, the traverse is mostly level then slightly up hill on wide trod paths. At the path junction by the 2nd bench, keep right on the higher traversing path (SW then W). Shortly after another bench, keep right (NW) at the path crossroad junction, which takes you on an uphill path that passes a fallen tree further up. When you get to the forestry vehicle track, go left between the 2 blue markers either side of the wide forestry track and follow this wide forestry track SW and then in a westerly direction that trends downhill for a mile, until a minor road is reached (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go left down the minor road to where it meets the busy A96. (**MAJOR ROAD – TAKE CARE**).

Quarrywood to Torrieston CP1 (3.2 miles)

Go straight across this major trunk road at the junction, following the instructions of the marshals for your safety, and go over the low embankment. On the other side of the embankment you will find a mossy disused tarmac road, which used to be a continuation of the minor road when it was a crossroads. Follow the disused tarmac road south for about ¼ mile to a locked gate near a cottage. Go over, or around the gate and continue SW for about 200yds, until a minor road is reached. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go south along this road for about 1.2 miles. Look out for a golden cockerel on the RHS and just after the house called Whiteoaks at the top of a rise, turn right (WSW) onto a single track road with a weight limit sign. Walk west and turn left after about 400yds onto a forestry track next to a house.

Go SW along and up the wide forestry track for about 550yds, following green way marker posts and go half left at a track Y junction just after the 5th post. Look out for the green way markers as you go left onto a wide grassy path – if you don't see another green post, you have missed the turn. Follow these on the wide forestry paths - do not go along the narrow paths, unless you want to do some extra miles. When you reach a t-junction with markers going both ways go W (unless you want to go round in circles). This path will take you to the Torrieston car park, picnic area and fun tent, which is **Checkpoint 1** at 6.1 mile point (NJ164588). Make sure you energize yourself here for the coming uphill section through the forest.

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2. Torrieston (CP1) to Dallas Dhu (CP2) Section length 10.9 miles.

Torrieston to Califerhill Viewpoint (6.2 miles)

From the Torrieston checkpoint, head NW back towards the forest path and forest and turn SW to walk 1/3 mile along a wide path along the edge of the forest until it meets a public road access point. From here, go westerly up the steep forestry track for about 1.5 miles until a y-junction and take the uphill track to the right (W) for a further half mile up hill until it meets a very long straight track at a t-junction. Head SW on this wide vehicle track for just over 1 mile and then turn right downhill (N), then next left after about 350yds and go SW, still on a wide vehicle track.

The forestry track ends after 1 mile where it meets a single-track public road. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Turn right here (NNW) and go down hill to a T-junction, then left up the gentle sloping public road to the Califerhill Viewpoint access point. Go into the small car park and continue walking the short distance to the viewpoint (**Tally Clipper Point**) for a fantastic panorama over the Moray Firth(NJ084571).

Califerhill VP to Dallas Dhu (4.7 miles)

Go back to the Califerhill Viewpoint access point, turn right (SW) and go down the road for about 350yds and take the sharp left turning onto a farm track signed Laverock Height and Burnside. Keep right and follow this to a junction and take the R fork south, leading to the converted steading at Burnside. Go straight on past the house and then after a short distance and before you go through the gate, follow the woodland path SW down the hill that has a fingerpost signed Sourbank.

This path can be a bit rough and overgrown in places, but after about half a mile, it comes to a gate at a public road end. Continue down hill on the road for a short way, to where the road bends sharply to the left. Go slightly right here, down a rough track/driveway (Parkview) that goes in front of the house, to a rough trod path, heading west. Follow this meandering path and turn right (WNW) where it eventually meets a wide farm track.

Keep to the right at all junctions on this track and go over the Rafford burn wooden bridge, then eventually downhill to the Rafford Church (NJ060563). Directly opposite the church door a narrow dirt path leads onto a track that goes south to a road junction (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Cross the road junction to the old road and walk about 200yds SSE down this quiet village road that runs parallel to the B9010 road. Where the road bends to the left, take the second turn right at the end of a tall hedge and a lamppost. It looks more like a private driveway, but it does lead onto a wide grassy track at a big acorn shaped bush.

Go south then SW to woodland and keep to the main track without turning off until you come to the gates of a house with a high boundary wall. **Please be very quiet as you go around this house!** Follow the boundary wall to the left, which will take you to a track on the SW side of the house. Follow this track westerly until it comes to a parking and bin area junction and another vehicle track.

Go diagonally right across this junction then turn left onto a wide footpath just before the tarmac road and houses start. Follow this path SW for about 350yds until it meets the Dava Way, indicated by a fingerpost pointing to the right. Follow the Dava Way for 1.5 miles towards Forres, until you get to the Dallas Dhu Distillery turn off. This is the last checkpoint before Findhorn, so go down the ramp to the car park for a rest and some refreshments.

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3. Dallas Dhu (CP2) to Findhorn Beach (Section length 7.5 miles)

This section goes through the parks and woodlands to the south and east of Forres, which are a very beautiful, tranquil part of Forres. The tour around the outskirts of the town is to avoid its built up areas.

Dallas Dhu to Flood Alleviation Dam (1.1 miles)

From the distillery car park, go back onto the Dava Way path and head north towards forres. After about 1/3 of a mile turn right (E) up some steps just after a bridge over the Dava Way and then head easterly on a wide vehicle track that follows the edge of the Sanquhar woodlands. Be careful not to head south towards Sanquhar Farm at the first junction. Keep the open fields to the right and woodland to the left until the Chapleton flood alleviation dam area. Just before wooden bridge over Mosset Burn go up trod path to top of dam and a short flight of concrete steps that take you onto the dam wall.

Flood Alleviation Dam to Sueno's Stone (1.6 mile long)

Go down the grassy dam embankment to the gravel parking area and then go along the vehicle track(NNE). After about 130m go left (N) onto a path that goes down to the Mosset Burn. Go over the wooden bridge and up hill (NW) over 3 long steps then carry straight on up over 3 more long steps. Go right (N) on the wide path with the burn down to right side. Pass a bench area to the right and keep on the wide path, then at a path junction at the top of a rise, go right here (NNE) onto a narrower path past the big tree in the middle of the junction. After a short distance, step down onto a wide path to the right (N) and follow this winding path up then down hill on some more long steps until it brings you down to the burn. The path follows the burn down to another wooden bridge.

Go over the bridge and along the wide dusted path (W) until you get to a stepped path cutting back to the right (NE). Go up this and follow it to housing estate road and bear right onto the green way marked path past a tall hedge and down a rough driveway to a road crossing (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**).

Cross straight over this busy road (B9010) and go up the cemetery road. At the top of the avenue of trees there is a cross road of tracks, go straight on which is actually more like half left (NW) and follow the wide path/roadway to the corner of the old cemetery then turn right (N) up a wide path to Nelson Tower at the top of the hill (**Tally Clipper Point**). Take a moment to admire the views across the Moray Firth from the tower, then head NE between two big oak trees along a ridge on a rough trod path until it meets a wide traversing path when get steep. Cross straight over the wide traversing path and continue down a rough trod path (SE) to the minor public road.

Turn left (N) onto the road and then almost immediately right (E) into the entrance of Drumduan School. Go into the grounds and follow the main track until you come to a right hand bend just past the play area. On the bend go straight on, down a grassy path between two fields. This will take you down to a road where you need to turn left and follow the street signs to Sueno's Stone and Kinloss. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**)

Sueno's Stone to Findhorn Beach (5 miles long)

From Sueno's Stone, take the tarmac cycleway and footpath over the A96 to Kinloss then left (NW) and continue to Findhorn. At Findhorn, keep the shoreline of the bay to your left until the first harbour pier, where you will see a small clock tower which is part of the Milne's Institute building (NJ038644). From the Milne's Institute building, keep to the shoreline until you get to a fingerpost, turn right here and take the road past the Royal Yacht Club, then left at a crossroads junction. Follow the public road NW to the Ice House, then onto the beach car park where the beach is accessed via wooden steps. Look for the NW Grampian LDWA flags and our volunteers cooking your midnight feast. Well done, this is the end of the challenge and time to tuck into a well deserved BBQ treat.