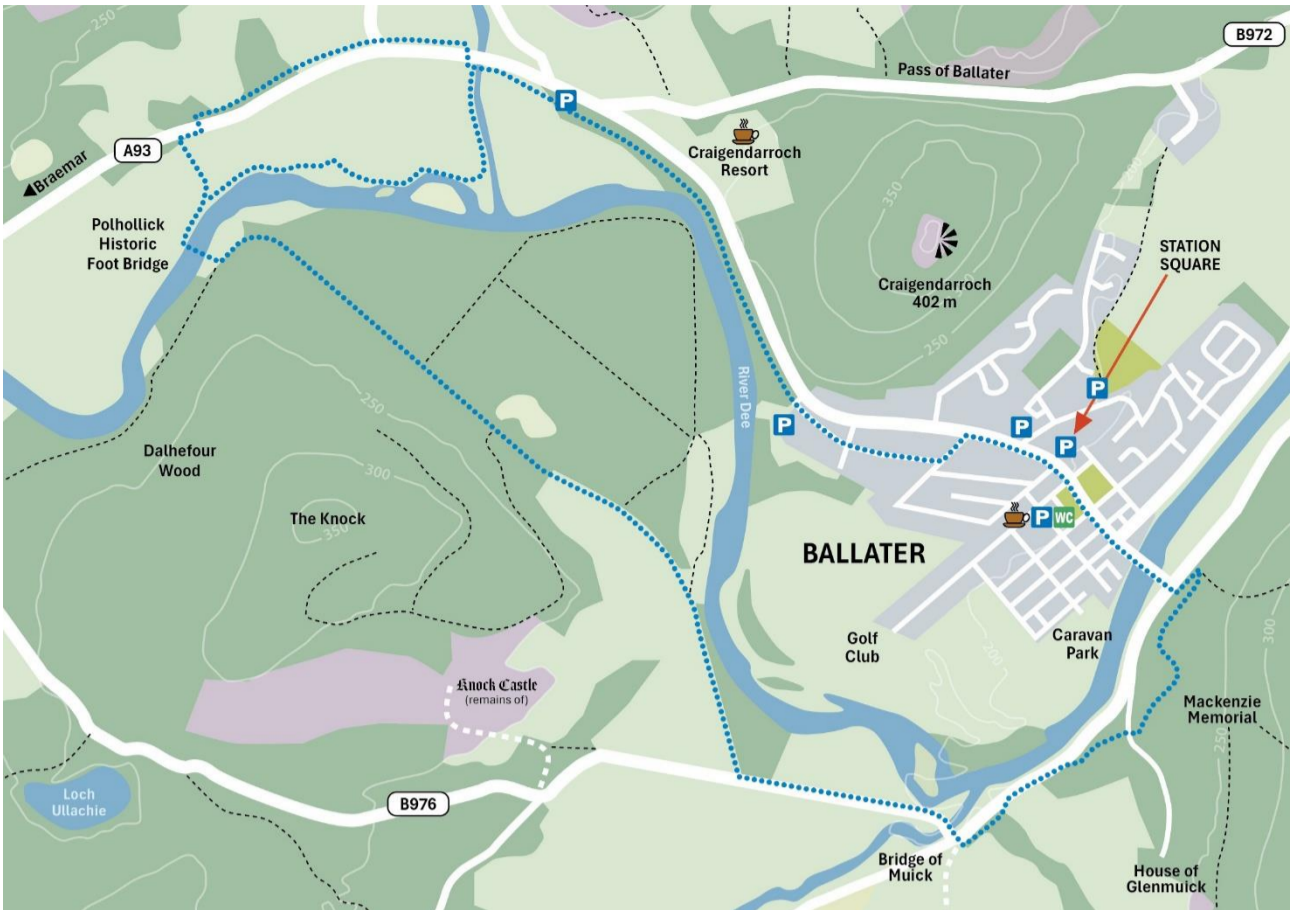


Seven Bridges Walk

5.5 miles/9 km (Allow 3.25 hours). Waymarking colour: **BLUE**



1. Starting in Station Square, head west along the main road (Braemar Road, A93) for 300m, then turn left (south) into Invercauld Road at the fingerpost in front of the Auld Kirk hotel.
2. In 150m take the first turning on the right (fingerpost) into Dundarroch Road.
3. Continue straight along Dundarroch Road which narrows to a footpath before joining Old Line Road after about 300m.
4. Continue straight on (west) along Old Line Road for about 200m and when the road (now a track) splits at a fingerpost, veer right for the Seven Bridges Walk.
5. Continue on the track (which follows the bed of an old railway line) for 1.25km until a waymarking post directs you to veer uphill to the right on a narrower path.
6. Follow this path for 250m until you reach the main A93 road. At this point, you have a choice of two alternative routes to take you to Polhollick Bridge (see map). As the fingerpost shows, one route is 'by the High Route' and initially travels west above the A93 road; the other route is 'by the river' and follows the River Gairn and then the River Dee. Both join up before reaching Polhollick Bridge.

Option (a) 'by the High Route'.

7. Turn left (west) along the A93, crossing the road bridge over the River Gairn on its pavement, then immediately cross the road to its north side where a waymarking post will direct you up a short path heading up the bank.
8. Continue to follow waymarking posts as the path runs above, and parallel to, the main road. After about 100m it dips down to cross a driveway leading to a private house before climbing up the bank again. After a further 160m it once more drops down, this time to cross the A939 before climbing up the bank again. Eventually, after a further 620m, it descends to the north side of the main A93 road.
9. Cross the A93 and carefully walk to the right (west) along its south verge for 80m before turning left down a good farm track leading towards the river. In 260m continue past a fingerpost where the 'by the river' option joins your route, and after a further 140m you will reach the white Polhollick Bridge.

Option (b) 'by the river'

7. Veer left, taking the steep farm road that winds down from the A93 and skirts round farm buildings. After just 110m turn right onto a footbridge crossing the River Gairn.
8. Immediately after crossing the footbridge the path turns left, down the Gairn. Continue on this path, following occasional waymarking posts, as it follows first the Gairn and then the Dee for a total of 1.25km before rising up to meet the 'by the High Route' variant at a fingerpost.
9. At the fingerpost, turn left onto a track and in 140 m you will reach the white Polhollick Bridge.

Combined route after Polhollick Bridge

10. Cross the bridge over the River Dee and veer left, away from the buildings, to join a track which enters woodland in about 100m.
11. Continue on the track through the woods for 3.3km until you meet the South Deeside Road (B976).
12. Turn left onto the road and walk carefully along it for 650m, until you reach a bridge where it crosses the River Muick. At this point, head straight ahead onto a path which veers left (north-east), and continues parallel to the road for just over 100m before dropping down to the South Deeside Road again.
13. Turn right onto the South Deeside Road and follow it carefully for 100m, crossing a bridge and passing a house. At this point a fingerpost and waymarking post direct you to the right, leaving the road for a path that runs parallel to the road for 240m before dropping down to join the driveway to Glenmuick House.
14. Turn right up the drive and when you reach a T-junction after 180m go straight ahead onto a path which runs through woodland for 260m to reach a path junction with a waymarking post.
15. Turn left, downhill, and continue on the path for 350m until it reaches a junction and fingerpost. At this point take a sharp left turn and descend 80m to join the South Deeside Road.
16. Cross the South Deeside Road and continue straight ahead towards the Royal Bridge over the Dee (70m).
17. Once across the bridge, continue straight ahead along Ballater's main street, Bridge Street, for 370m to return to your starting point at Station Square.