

THE  
VILLAGE  
HUG



WALKING , RUNNING &  
CYCLING ROUTES, 2020

Connecting Community Creatively

## FOREWORD



The people of Torrance can be rightly proud of the youngsters on the team at *The Village Hug* -what a great thing they've done over lockdown. The newsletters are fantastic.

Where else can you find walks, film reviews, interviews and Covid advice? I'm impressed.

They represent a wave of community spirit that has swept across Scotland. We have examples of people cooking for neighbours, visiting the housebound and just generally being kinder.

Pandemics are not good things but if anything good can come from this one it will be about community and kindness. I am thankful for their example.

Now, I'm off to make some caramel shortbread....

*Professor Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director  
September 2020*

You can travel short distances for outdoor recreation, but stay local – roughly 5 miles is a sensible guide – and where possible get there by foot or bike.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

Physical distancing is crucial when outdoors.

Try to avoid busy paths or places. Be prepared to slow down or stop to help keep your distance.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code when you are out and about. Keep your dog under proper control, especially on farmland.

Don't let your dog approach people, livestock or wildlife.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

Social distancing is crucial when outdoors.

Avoid touching gates as much as possible – plan a route without them if you can.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

Take extra care to follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code when you are out and about.

Avoid fields with young calves or lambs. Keep your dog under control, especially on farmland.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code when you are out and about.

Please respect others as you enjoy our outdoors and nature – take away all your litter and leave gates as you find them.



COVID-19

KNOW THE CODE  
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

## MY FAVOURITE RUNNING ROUTE *by Niall Macdonald*

This leisurely 5K route is suitable for runners, walkers, and cyclists. To achieve the target of 10,000 steps a day this route is perfect and roughly adds 6,000 steps towards your goal.



The route starts by following the Forth and Clyde Canal along to Cadder Church and then you will pass Cadder Golf Course and finish the route walking alongside the River Kelvin.

The circuit gives you great opportunities to spot wildlife such as ducks and robins. Try and spot the grey heron stalking on banks of the River Kelvin.



*\*Warning, Contains Hills!\**

*I love running and feel so fortunate to live in Torrance where there are lots of beautiful routes straight from my front door.*

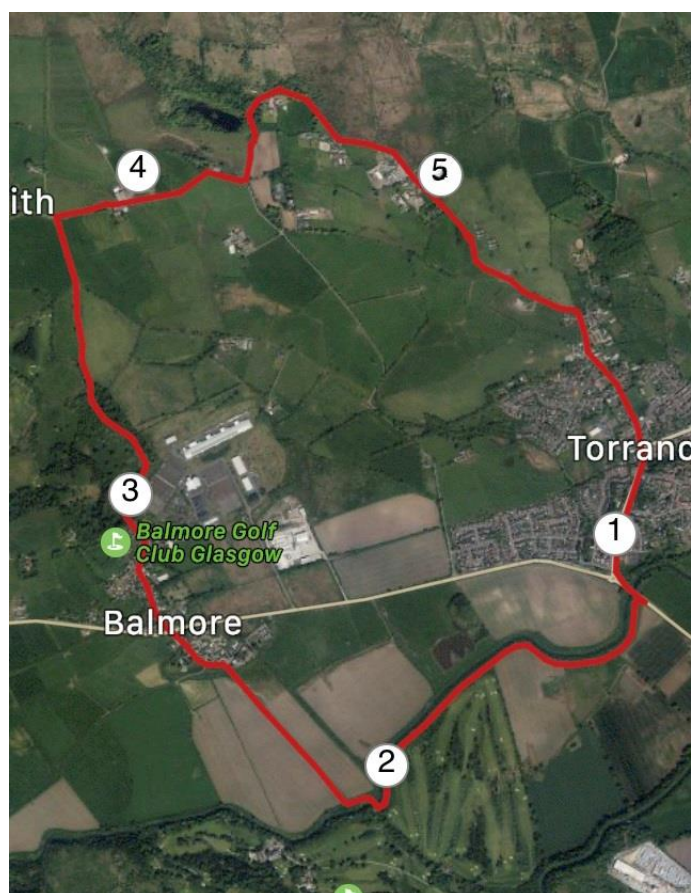
*Whether running is your thing or you prefer walking, then this is a perfect time to get out and explore the countryside round about you.*

The route I'd like to share with you today is around 5 miles long. Starting from the village, head along the Kelvin path, passing Cadder Golf Course on your left. At the end of the path veer right over the bridge and head towards Balmore. Once you reach the main road take care and cross over and up the first of the hills.

Feel free to take the opportunity for a wee breather and walk up this hill. At the top of the hill follow the corner right, taking you back out into the countryside. After half a mile you will start to climb again. This is a longer hill but hopefully you'll be distracted by the lambs and not notice that your legs are sore!

At the top of the hill, turn right and enjoy the gentle downhill. At the end of the road turn left (you can turn right and make the run a bit shorter if you want).

You will then go up the last of the hills. This is the shortest but sharpest of the hills (sometimes known as Oscars Hill). Once at the top you can delight in knowing that's the hard work over! The last mile or so is fairly flat then a lovely downhill back into the village.



*Some tips for countryside running / walking:*

*1. Walk / run on the right-hand side of the road. This way you are facing the oncoming traffic so can see and hear the traffic.*

*2. If using earphones, leave one out. Again, this enables you to hear traffic coming.*

*3. Lastly, take some time to notice and appreciate the beauty that's around you.*

## Five mile walk/run/cycle from Woodmill Park to the Canal and back to Woodmill Park

This route is about 5 miles and is mainly away from the road on paths and the Canal (and is much flatter than last weeks' route!).

Its starts and ends at Woodmill Park - remember to look out for the two wood carvings and the fabulous Fairy trail there maintained by volunteers which has lots of decorations for all ages to enjoy.

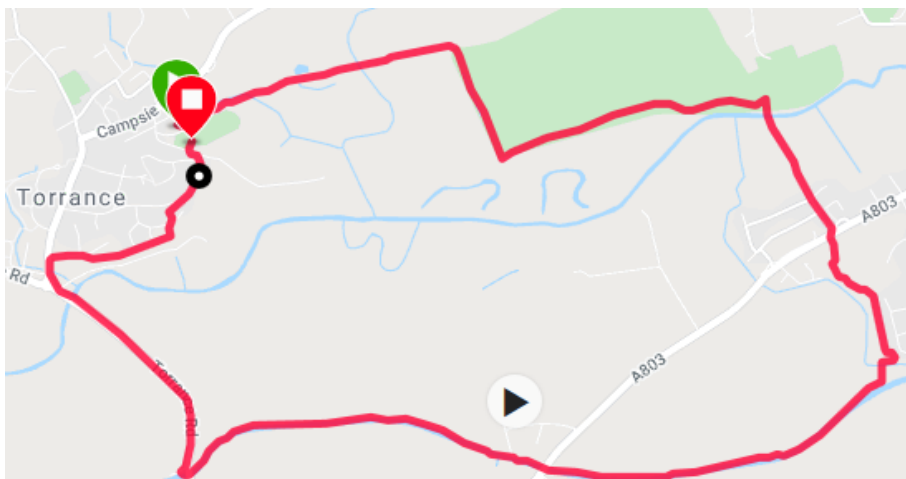
Start on the old railway line heading away from the village and after going through a gate, the path then turns to the right and then to the left following the edge of Hayston Golf course.

Go over the metal bridge at the end of the course which goes over the River Kelvin and now you are in the outskirts of Kirkintilloch.

Go straight ahead onto Hayston Road through the Adamslie housing estate and then once you have reached the main Kirkintilloch Road, cross over at the traffic lights and go through the car park of the Rob Roy Gardens flats development. Look for the path at the end which is to the right of No 10, and follow this path which winds round slightly uphill towards the canal. Take the right fork and the steep hill up and then you will be on the Forth and Clyde Canal . Go right towards Torrance, passing the Stables until you get to the Hungryside Bridge where you turn sharp right to come off the canal.

Turn down Torrance Road to head back into Torrance (this is the only stretch of road /pavement) and then turn right into Torrance and first right again into Firbank. There is a relatively new path there which starts to your right on the grass past the tennis courts. Follow this round and this will take you out onto Kelvin View, where you can cross over to take the short path through the bungalows and turn right onto Rosehill Road. At the end of Rosehill Rd there is an opening through a metal fence, turn left and then you will be on the path at the side of Woodmill Park.

It's a great circular route – hope you can enjoy it!



**This scenic walk is approximately 5 km and took me about 90 minutes at a leisurely pace, frequently stopping to admire the views and listen to the sounds.**

Start at the end of Tower Road where it meets with Balmore Road. You can get there by leaving Torrance near the garage. Walk towards Balmore, with the Comben estate on your right. Tower Road is at the end of the houses.

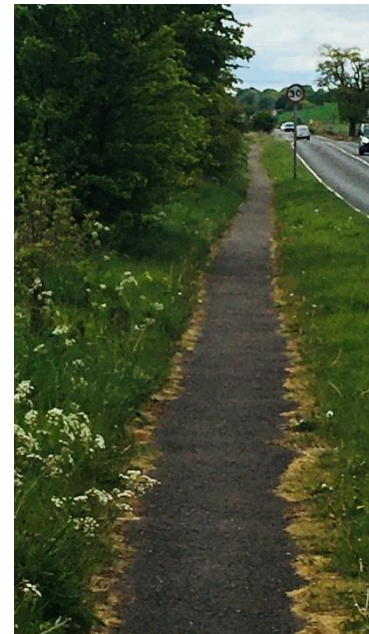
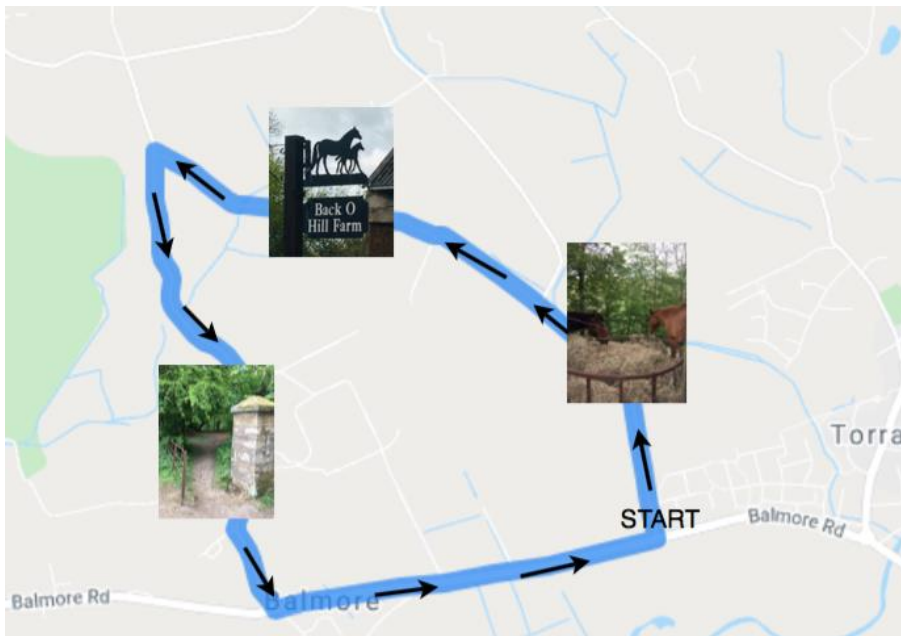
Turn right and walk uphill, cross over an old bridge and then pass the house on the left. You'll pass the end of Fairy Glen on your right. Keep walking until you come to the fork in the road. Take the left hand, narrower road known as Back o' Hill Road.

Steady incline passing Back o' Hill Farm on your left where you can stop and admire the views over the fields.

Continue on a decline until you come to a T junction.

Turn left into Glenorchard Road and follow it all the way to Balmore. It twists and turns but stay on it until you meet the Balmore Road at Baldernock Church Hall.

Turn left and walk alongside the Balmore Road back into Torrance.



## NATURE WALK *by The Thomson Family*

If you're looking for a walk or cycle route with some beautiful nature, then head to the Forth and Clyde Canal just now! There are cygnets and ducklings to see in the spring sunshine.

Head out of the village up Torrance Road and join the canal pathway. It's a steep climb, but at least you can take comfort from the fact that it will be downhill on the return journey.

Follow the canal pathway towards Kirkintilloch and walk all the way to the new V-shaped pedestrian bridge.



Cross the bridge. From the 'point' of the bridge you'll see the swans' nest beside the new primary school building. It's worth looking at the marina which is located on the south side of the bridge while you are here.

If the swans are not near their nest, then return to the path on the north side of the canal and keep going east. You may find them near St Mary's church or even as far as Hillhead Basin, but it will be well worth the search. There are nine cygnets with the adult pair of swans and a similar number of ducklings with lots of excitable ducks!

*Always remember, please don't be tempted to feed the ducks or the swans and stay safe near the water's edge.*





## WALKING ROUTE by Sheila Traynor

This is just under 4 miles so would make for a short run or a good walk of about 1 hour 20 minutes (depending on your walking speed of course!)

Starting in Kings Park, go to the end of the street and into the field at the end. Take the path right through the middle (you will see a bench at the far right but you could save sitting on it until returning to this field at the end!).

Head for the small opening at the end of the field which goes through a shady area and past a long white cottage on your left and onto Glen Orchard Road. Turn left and then cross over West Balgrochan Rd and look for the Wardend Road sign . Go along this tarmacked road which has houses either side and then the road narrows, becoming a path and this is the start of the Fairy Glen.

Follow the path and go through a kissing gate and then over the bridge; still following the path you will come to another kissing gate which leads to Tower Road. Turn right here and follow uphill, don't take the sign to Barraston but go straight onto Back o'Hill Rd. Follow this road passing two farms and at the end of the road turn right onto Glen Orchard Rd. This goes uphill and then at the top where there is a sign for Mealy Brae House turn right onto Barraston Road.

Follow this road until the end and then turn left and continue to follow the road as it takes a sharp incline and then flattens again. Keep following the road until comes back into Torrance and take first left into Acre Valley Road and go back onto the right of way signposted for School Road past the long white cottage on your right. Go though the shady area and then you will be back in the field at the end of Kings Park and can head for the bench on the left to enjoy a well earned sit down!



# CIRCULAR WALK VIA THE STEPS OF KELVIN *by Dora Black*

This walk starts at the roundabout next to the garage on Main Street. Turn left to where the walk alongside the river Kelvin begins. Cross the road and enter the path via the walkway.

Follow the course of the river until you come to the bridge. There hasn't always been a bridge here. There used to be stepping stones, but as the river was prone to flooding the stones were vulnerable to displacement during storms and were often covered in water.

My father remembers carrying his bike across the river via the stones back in the 1930s. In 1809 William Muir wrote a poem inspired by the losses farmers suffered at seed and harvest times when the river would flood. The first verse is shown below.

Once across the bridge follow the path until you come to the houses on the Old Balmore Road. Turn right until you come to Balmore Road. Turn right and head back towards Torrance.



## **KELVIN KEEP LOW.**

An invocation to that River, wrote during a heavy fall of Rain.

13th August, 1809.

**THE** rain pours in torrents, the soil is afloat,  
A rapid stream runs ev'ry rill,  
Its ancient limits the brook has forgot,  
A liquid sheet covers the hill.  
The crops in the vallies dejectedly weep,  
A deluge seems working their woe,  
Already the furrows brimful are, and deep,  
Then **Kelvin**, I pray thee **keep low**.



For those of you looking to expand your cycling horizons there are a few options around, although I anticipate many less experienced cyclists would like to avoid the road.

So my suggestion for a straightforward ride is to follow the Forth and Clyde Canal. There are two options for getting to the canal from Torrance: enter via the river path at the traffic lights or head up Torrance Road to the bridge over the canal. I prefer up the road as the river path is quite tight and is popular with walkers. You'll find the actual canal path in good order for cycling. It's also wider for passing others; please ring a bell to alert walkers and cyclists going in the same direction that you will be passing them shortly. It's also courteous to alert them to which side you are passing from.

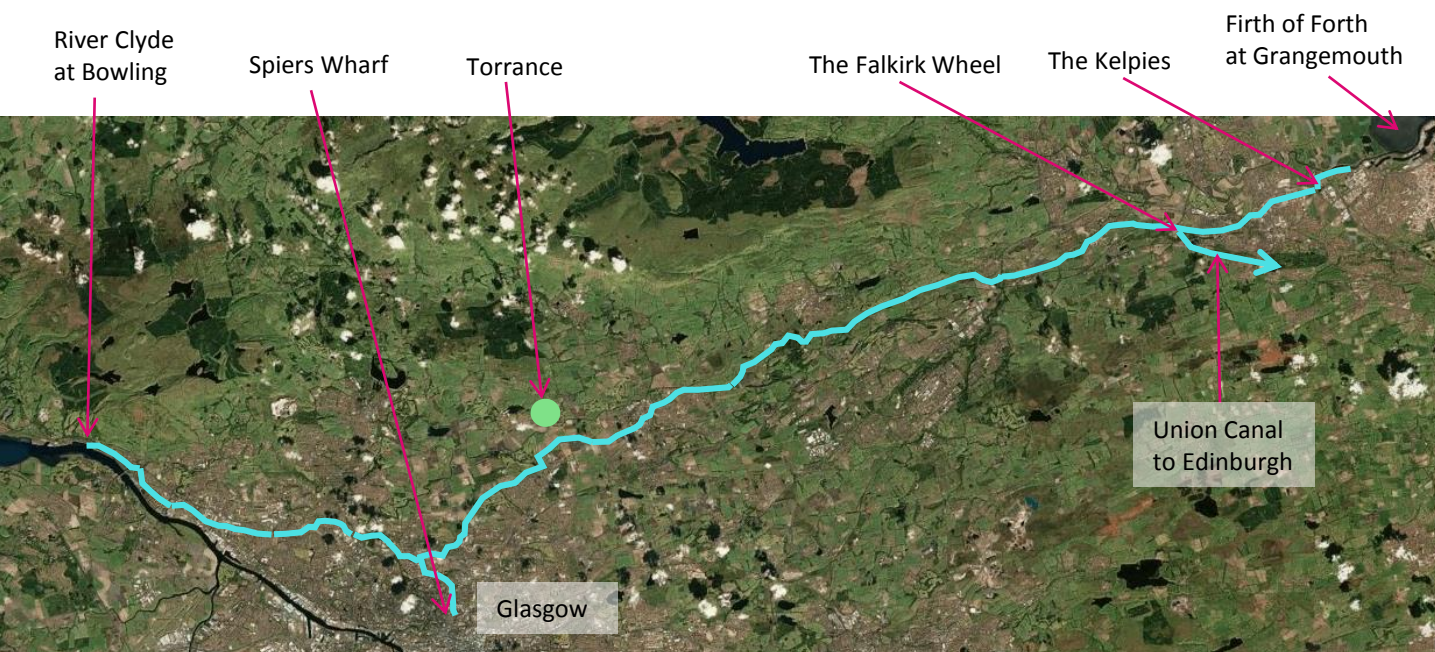
The canal is an enjoyable route as it is flat and a pleasant cycle. Although do consider that it's a fairly straight line, which means if it's windy you'll either get an easier or a harder ride! That might seem obvious but it's worth thinking about if you are cycling along thinking this is easy and go further than you planned, because when you turn around you'll notice the wind!

How far you go on the Canal depends on your ability and how much time you have! Turning right/west you can cycle all the way to Bowling (15 miles each way) and turning left/ east you can go to the Falkirk Wheel, which is about 18 miles each way. Indeed you can also join the Union Canal which will take you to Edinburgh.

So those are the "limits" of the canal ride but you can easily choose other attractions to cycle to for shorter journeys. Going west you can head into Glasgow and perhaps explore Spiers Wharf where they have signs showing historical aspects of the area. It's about 6 or 7 miles to get there. Look out for oncoming "traffic" when you go under the bridges. You will also pass Partick Thistle FC.

Heading east, you get to Kirkintilloch in a few miles and can obviously have a cycle around the town too if you wish. Further on you get to Auchinstarry Marina. Both these options would normally give you café access, but for now take snacks and drink with you. At Kirkintilloch you also have the option of heading off the canal and joining the old railway line to Milton of Campsie and going all the way to Strathblane.

If you need anything for your bike, including servicing, use local business Solid Rock Cycles in Balmore and help support our local community.



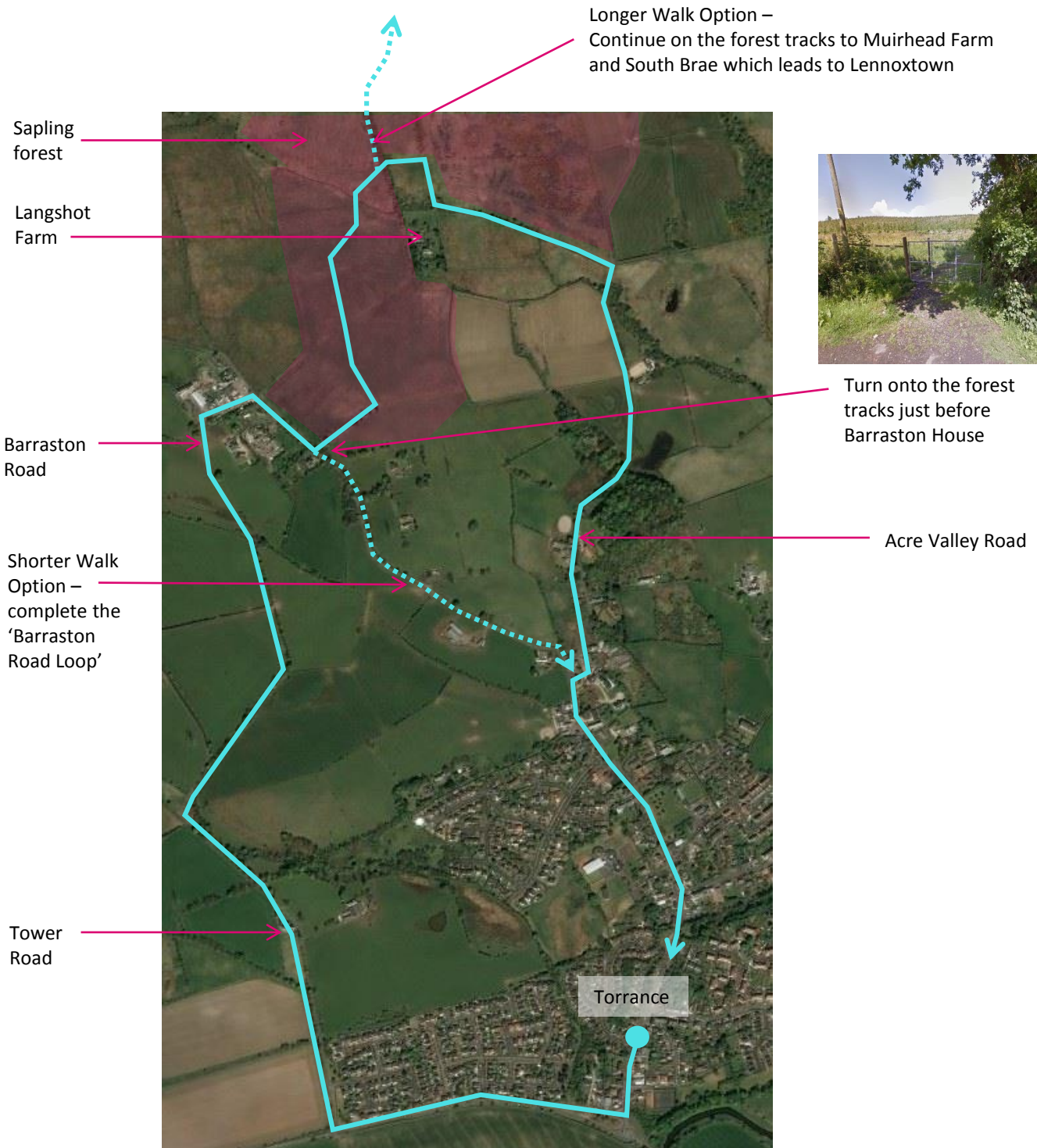
# WALKING ROUTE *by David & Janice Russell*

We have been going on brisk walks since lockdown, Monday to Friday. All the walks are very local and average one to three hours.

The walk we do most is Tower Road, Barriston, then at Barriston House go up the walking tracks through 'Langshot Woodland', follow road past Langshot Farm onto Acre Valley and back into Torrance.

If you're looking for a longer walk you could continue going north through the woodland at Langshot until you reach Muirhead Farm on South Brae. This road then leads all the way to Lennoxtown!

If you'd prefer a shorter version then simply keep following Barraston Road to complete the loop.





## Take a walk in the wild side!

If like me you prefer a walk or run away from the tarmac then this route is for you.

From the church head down the Main Street to the roundabout and follow the path along the Kelvin. At the moment the path along the side of the golf course is flooded but if you want a wee adventure you can clamber along the high path among the brambles! As an alternative you can follow the main road and join the canal at Hungryside.

Either way, follow the path past Cadder church and head along the canal towards The Leisuredrome. Come off the canal, turn left and then re-join on the top side of the canal (see photo below the map).

To me, this side of the canal is much more interesting! Continue to follow the path, crossing the road, walking in front of Bridge Cottage (see photo below the map).

The path gives you a high or low trail option but both join up again further on. The trail opens into a field and back onto the main road at Hungryside. Follow the road back down the hill and into Torrance.

This circular route is about 5.5 miles and will take around 2 hours to walk

# WALKING ROUTE *by David & Janice Russell*

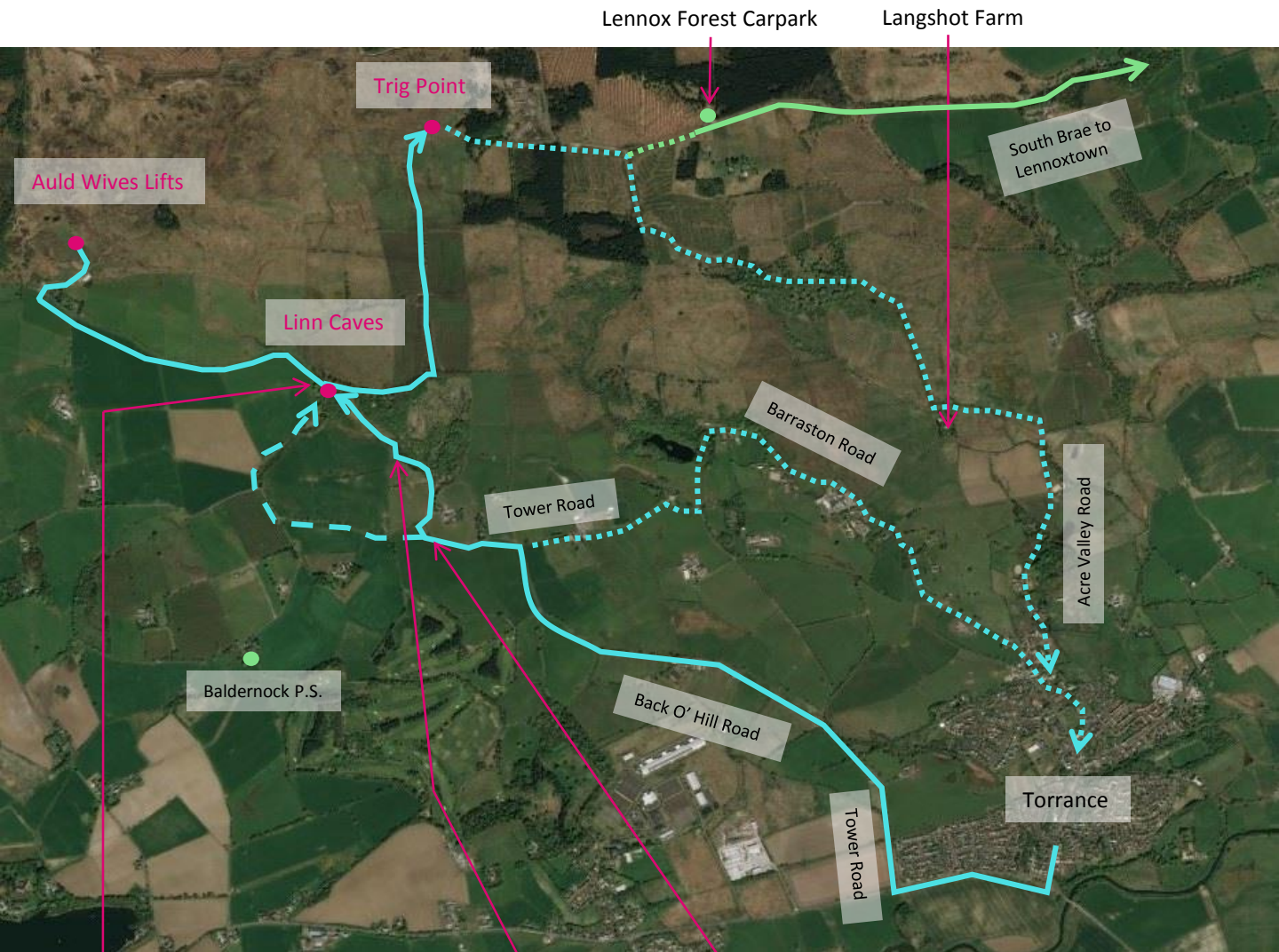
We have been in Torrance 35 years and often heard of the Linn caves, Trig Point and the Auld Wives Lifts but we've never been to any of them until now!

Turn off Tower Road at East Blairskaitth Farm (the one with the horses). Go through the quarry, it's a good road until you come to junction. A small path leads to The Linn caves about 200yards to left.

To go to the Auld Wives Lifts continue along the single track road from the caves. Pass two houses on your right and turn right up the track in front of the third house. The stones are located further up the track on the left after the farm buildings.

To go to the Trig Point, from the caves go east along a road with a sign post for Lennox Forest; follow this road north through about four gates and it will take you to Trig Point.

You can chose to return to Torrance by the route you came, or by completing the 'Barraston Loop' or by following the tracks through the sapling forest to Acre Valley Road.



The caves are located in these trees



Follow the path past this old quarry

Turn off Tower Road at the East Blairskaitth Farm or follow the blue dashed line option on single track



## The Auld Wives Lifts

The Auld Wives Lifts are rock formations in a natural amphitheatre.

The stones bear graffiti going back to the Victorian era and carvings that are possibly Celtic and Iron Age in origin.

Their name is thought to be from a centuries-old local myth involving 'witches' throwing the stones into place.

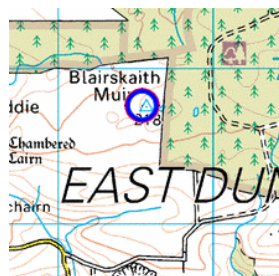


## The Linn Caves



The Linn Caves are former man-made lime mines behind a natural waterfall.

## The Trig Point Near Torrance



Trig points are typically concrete pillars and were erected by the Ordnance Survey.

The process of placing trig points on top of prominent hills and mountains began in 1935 to assist in the accurate re-triangulation of Great Britain.

The pillar at Blairkaith Muir was completed in February 1946 costing £10.17s.0d.

There are wonderful views all around, including South over Glasgow and North as far as Loch Lomond on a clear day.

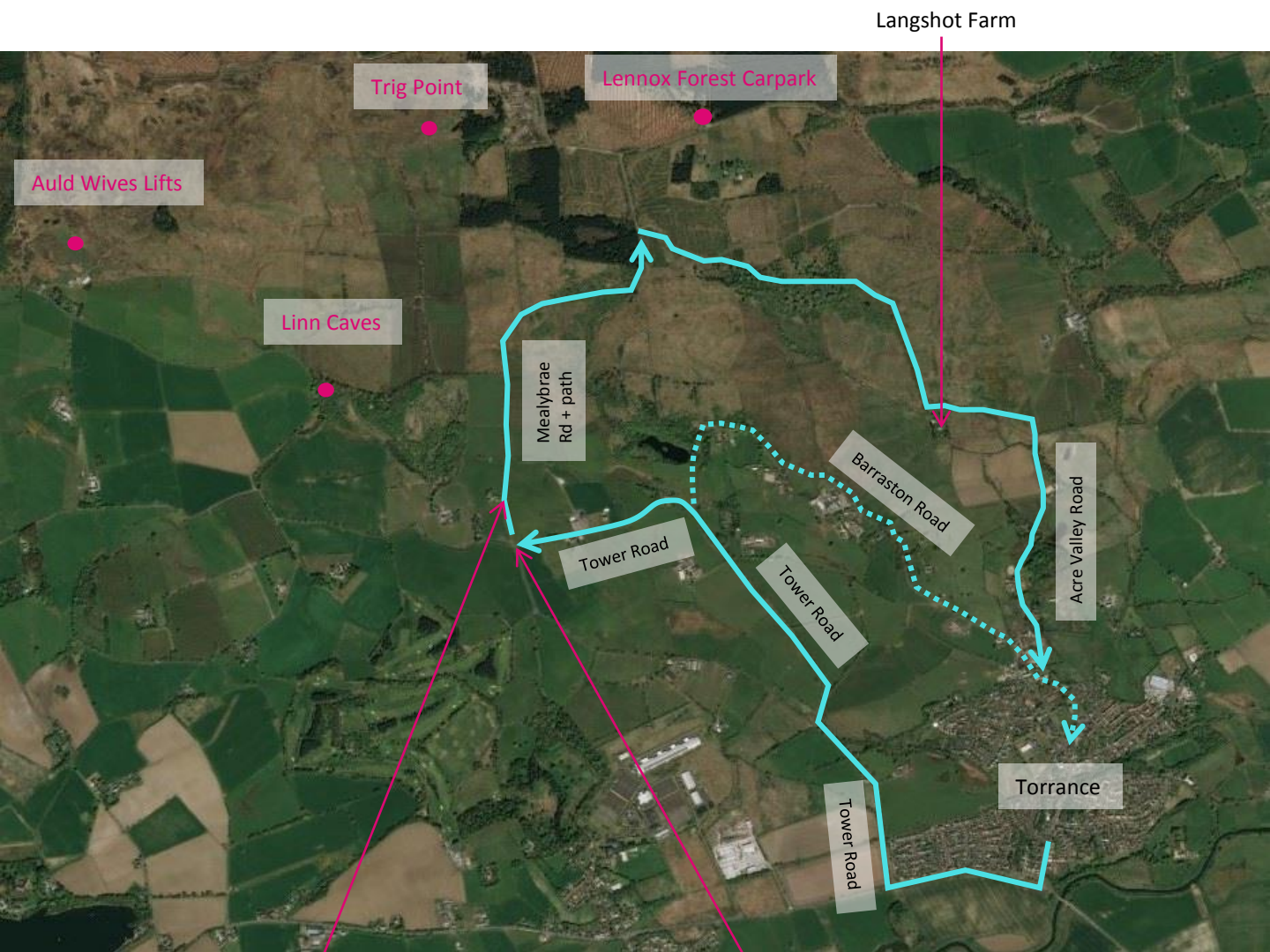
This walk is a longer variant of the 'Tower Road / Barraston Road loop'.

Follow Tower Road out of Torrance but stay on it when it forks to become Barraston Road.

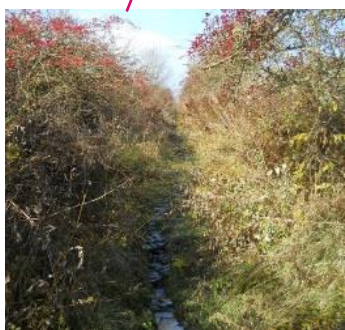
Take a right turn before Blairiskaith House – signed for 'Mealybrae House'.

Follow the Tarmac road and continue past Mealybrae House onto the (sometimes overgrown) path.

Once you've followed this ancient path up the hill and enjoyed the view use the paths through the newly planted forest areas to find your way to Acre Valley Road passing Langshot Farm.



Continue past Mealybrae House up the track.



Turn off Tower Road at sign for Mealybrae House.



For all of *The Village Hug* back issues please visit:  
<https://www.torranceparishchurch.org.uk/resources/the-village-hug/>



**Connecting Community Creatively**