



Royal
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From Scotland to the Sierra Nevada

A self-guided walk around Dunbar



Find out how Dunbar's landscape influenced conservationist John Muir
Visit Muir's childhood home and the places that shaped his youth
Explore a spectacular coastline home to a variety of wildlife
Discover how Muir's work in the United States is celebrated in Scotland

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the stories of our landscapes
discovered through walks





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From Scotland to the Sierra Nevada

Discover how Dunbar influenced the life and work of conservationist John Muir

Walker, explorer and author. Botanist, geologist and naturalist. John Muir was a remarkable man. In the nineteenth century he fought to protect nature and today he is often considered as the founder of the modern conservation movement.

Though he travelled the world, Muir is most famous for helping to protect the American wilderness. While the United States was developing rapidly, Muir's campaigns and writings preserved remarkable natural landscapes, including Yosemite Valley and Mount Rainier. He helped to establish National Parks and the Sierra Club environmental organisation.



Muir's interest in nature however stemmed from the other side of the Atlantic. Muir was born and grew up in Dunbar on the east coast of Scotland.



This walk explores the landscape around Dunbar that inspired Muir's early life.

Visit Muir's childhood home and the places that shaped his youth. Follow in his footsteps along a spectacular coastline home to a variety of wildlife.

Also discover how Muir is celebrated in Scotland and how Dunbar inspired his work in the United States.

Practical information

Location	Dunbar, East Lothian, Scotland
Getting there	<p>Car - Dunbar is located on the A1 / A1(M) between Edinburgh and London. Parking is available at the Leisure Pool (charges apply). Free parking on Dunbar High Street is restricted to 1 hour stay.</p> <p>Train - Dunbar station is on the East Coast Main Line between Edinburgh Waverley and Berwick-upon-Tweed. Most services are provided by CrossCountry between Plymouth and Edinburgh. Some local services link with Musselburgh.</p> <p>Bus - Regular services run to Dunbar from Edinburgh, Berwick-upon-Tweed and North Berwick. The nearest stops to the start of the route are on the High Street.</p> <p>Bicycle - Dunbar is on National Cycle Route 76 (Kirkcaldy to Berwick-upon-Tweed)</p>
Start point	John Muir Birthplace Museum, EH42 1JJ
Finish point	Shore Road car park, The John Muir Country Park, EH42 1NX
Directions from railway station to start	From the station bear left down Station Road. At the end carefully cross over and bear left onto Abbey Road, following signs for the town centre. This road merges with the end of the High Street. Continue along the left hand side of the High Street for about 300 metres to reach the John Muir Birthplace.
Walk distance	2½ miles
Level	Moderate - The coastal section can be very blustery, some uneven paths
Terrain	The first part of the walk is on town pavements. The rest follows cliff top paths along the coastline. These are mostly on gentle gradients but with several twists and turns. There are a couple of flights of steps to follow.

Conditions

Ensure you wear sturdy shoes. The coast path can be blustery so wrap up warm! Do not attempt the coastal section in strong winds or heavy rain - though the paths are generally in good condition there are several sheer drops.

Suitable for

Families - Children will enjoy the views and exploring the rock pools. They must be supervised by adults along the coast path.

Only the town section of the route (Stops 1 to 9 up to Victoria Harbour) is suitable for pushchairs / wheelchairs.

Refreshments

There are plenty of cafés and shops on Dunbar High Street. Dunbar Leisure Pool café (between Stops 9 and 10) serves hot meals and packed lunches.

There are no places that serve food on the coast path so you may like to prepare / buy provisions beforehand.

Toilets

Toilets, including disabled facilities, are available at the museums. Further toilets are available at Dunbar Leisure Pool.

Places to visit

John Muir Birthplace Museum is open daily from April to September. Open times are 10am-5pm Monday to Saturday, 1-5pm Sundays. From 1st October to 31st March it is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Free admission. Tel: 01368 865899 Email: info@jmbt.org.uk

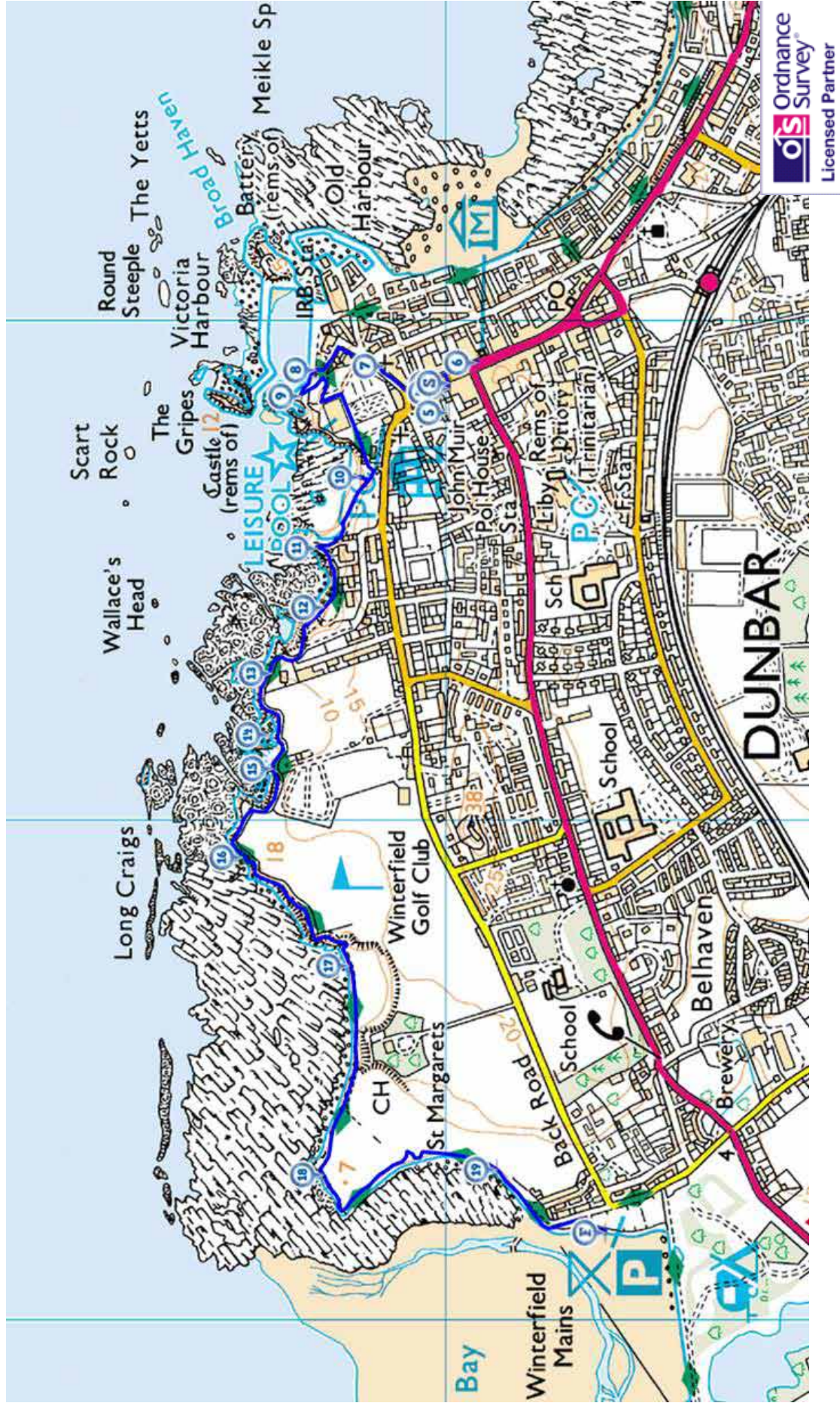
Dunbar Town House Museum and Art Gallery is open daily 1pm-5pm from April to September. Guided tours including the Council Chamber are usually available on request. Free admission. Tel: 01368 866030 Email: museumseast@eastlothian.gov.uk

Other information

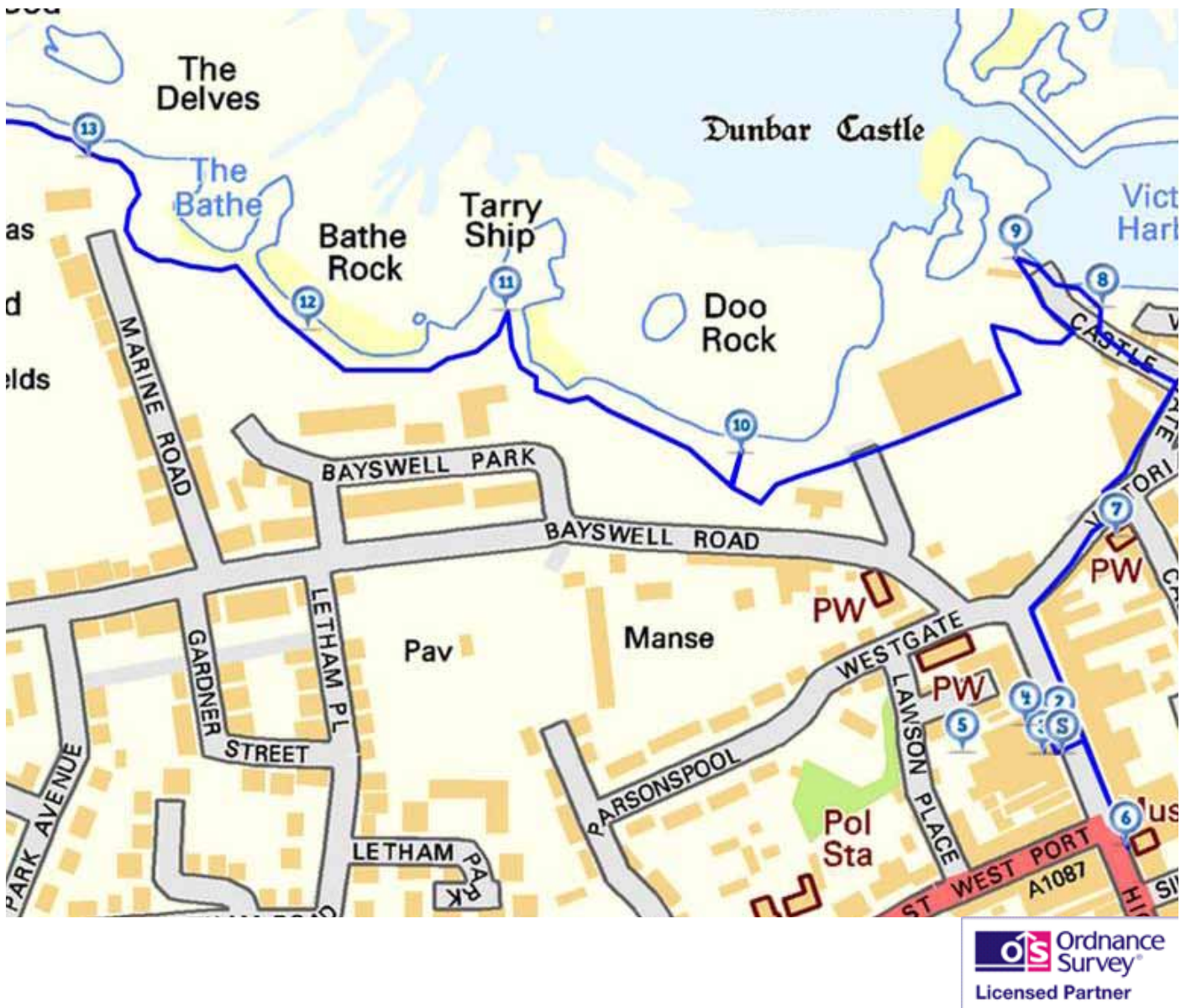
You may like to bring binoculars for bird watching along the coast path

The Scottish Book Trust have created a free to download graphic novel about John Muir. Available at:
<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/teachers-librarians/teaching-resources-cpd/john-muir/>

Route overview



First section of the route



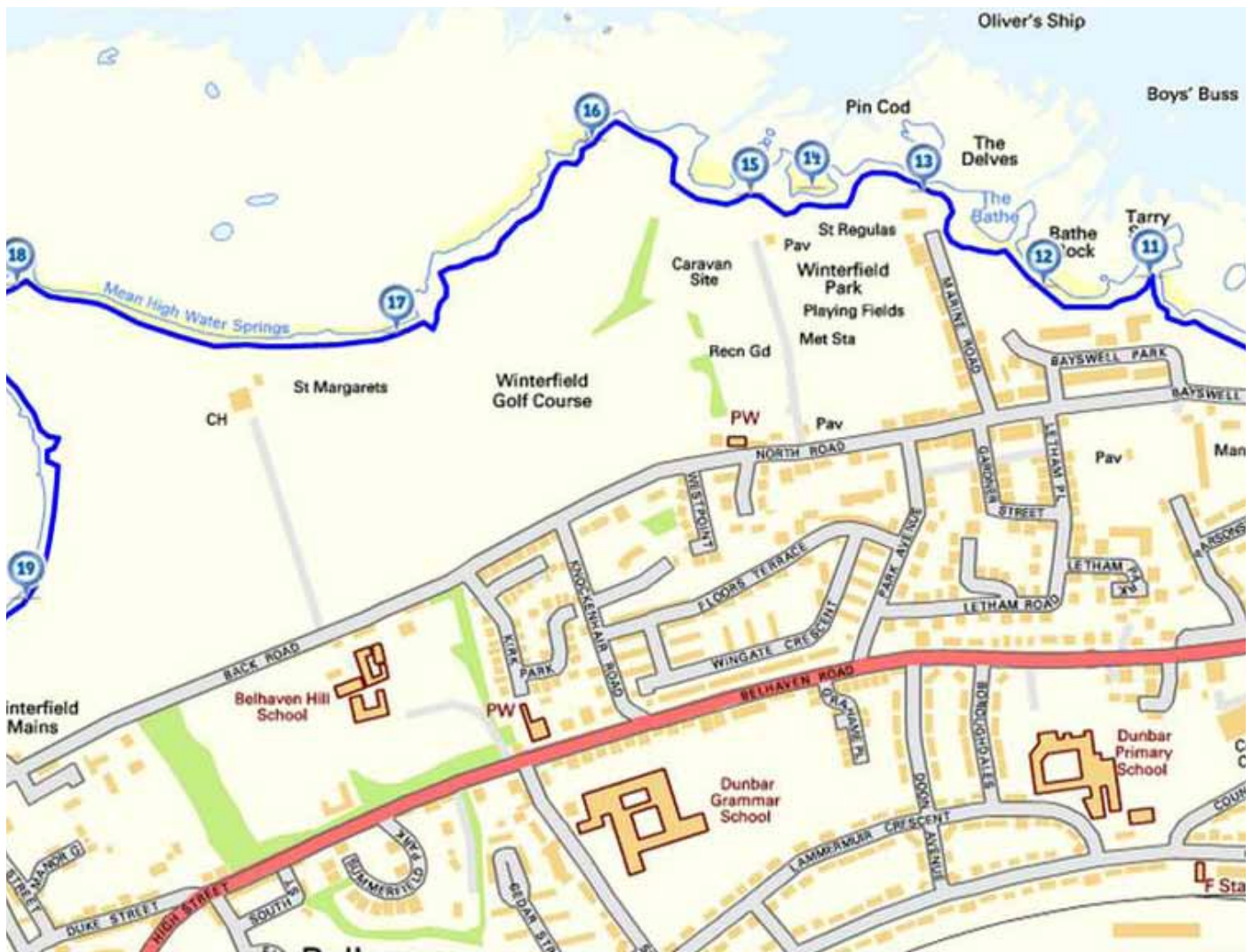
Stopping points

- Start** High Street outside the John Muir Birthplace Museum
- 2.** View along Dunbar High Street
 - 3.** The John Muir Birthplace Museum, 126 High Street
 - 4.** 130-134 High Street
 - 5.** Garden of 130-134 High Street
 - 6.** Dunbar Town House Museum and Art Gallery
 - 7.** Wesleyan Chapel, Victoria Street
 - 8.** Bench overlooking Victoria Harbour
 - 9.** View of Dunbar Castle
 - 10.** Foreshore west of Dunbar Castle

Grid references

NT 67687 79161

Second section of the route



Stopping points

- 11.** Path on Tarry Ship headland
- 12.** Centre of Bathe Rock bay
- 13.** First bench with a view of the Bass Rock
- 14.** Bench overlooking narrow bay
- 15.** Bench opposite navigation marker
- 16.** Bench facing North Berwick Law and the Bass Rock
- 17.** Coastline at the edge of Winterfield Golf Course
- 18.** Bench near Hole 15 of Winterfield Golf Course
- 19.** Benches overlooking Belhaven Bay
- Finish** Shore Road car park, The John Muir Country Park

Grid references

NT 67548 79262

NT 67308 79340
NT 67220 79332
NT 67115 79334
NT 66887 79355
NT 66493 79176
NT 66220 79209
NT 66261 78852
NT 66187 78689

Directions

These directions are for use with the audio commentary. Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

1. Welcome to Dunbar

High Street outside the John Muir Birthplace Museum

Directions 1

From the John Muir Birthplace Museum look to the right along the length of the High Street. Listen to Track 2.

2. The attraction of Dunbar

View along Dunbar High Street

Directions 2

Stay outside John Muir Birthplace Museum and listen to Track 3.

3. A very modest birthplace

The John Muir Birthplace Museum, 126 High Street

Directions 3

With the Birthplace Museum behind you turn left and go to the building next door, in the direction of the red stone building across the end of the street. Listen to Track 4.

4. Happy childhood memories

130-134 High Street

Directions 4

Stay where you are for the next stop and listen to Track 5.

5. A life-long interest in nature

Garden of 130-134 High Street

Directions 5

Retrace your steps, keeping the John Muir Birthplace Museum to your right. Cross over the road at the pedestrian crossing and turn right. Continue along the High Street to the tall building with a clock tower. Stop next to the sculpture outside. Listen to Track 6.

6. A respected family

Dunbar Town House Museum and Art Gallery

Directions 6

Return along the High Street, with the John Muir Birthplace Museum across the road on your left. At the red stone building across the end of the street, turn right into Victoria Street. Stop when you are outside the Wesleyan Chapel. Listen to Track 7.

7. School days

Wesleyan Chapel, Victoria Street

Directions 7

With the Chapel behind you cross over the road and turn right keep the high wall on your left and continue downhill into Castle Gate. Where the road forks, take the left fork and pass some houses. Stop when you reach a bench overlooking a harbour. Listen to Track 8.

8. A busy harbour

Bench overlooking Victoria Harbour

Directions 8

Proceed towards the stone ruins above the far end of the harbour. Stop at the side of the harbour when you have a good view of them. Listen to Track 9.

9. Exciting ruins

View of Dunbar Castle

Directions 9

With the castle behind you bear right and join the path towards the leisure centre. Turn left at the information board, then turn right following the 'John Muir Link' signpost. Pass the front of Dunbar Leisure Pool on your right and continue past a low stone building on the left. Go down the sets of steps all the way to the foreshore and stop in the bay. Listen here to Track 10.

10. A chance to explore

Foreshore west of Dunbar Castle (NT 67687 79161)

Directions 10

Leave the foreshore using the steps then turn right at the path lined with railings. Follow this path, keeping the sea on your right, to start along the John Muir Way. Ignore the set of steps and path to the left and carefully continue onto the headland. The harbour will be visible to the right. Look out to sea. Listen to Track 11.

11. Scotland's loss

Path on Tarry Ship headland (NT 67548 79262)

Directions 11

Retrace your steps and take the first footpath up the steps to the right. Go through the stone arch and stop on the path at the centre of the next bay. Listen to Track 12.

12. A very hard life

Centre of Bathe Rock bay

Directions 12

Continue along the path around the bay. Go up the steps – take your time as they are quite steep - and pass the war memorial on your left. Continue along the path onto the headland. Stop when you reach a bench facing out to sea. Look to the left for a view of the Bass Rock. Listen to Track 13.

13. Leaving home

First bench with a view of the Bass Rock (NT 67308 79340)

Directions 13

Continue along the coast path. Pass the next bench and the entrance to a playing field on the left. Keep the field on your left and follow the coast path as it bends to the left. Stop at the next bench overlooking a narrow bay. Listen to Track 14.

14. Wandering in the Sierra

Bench overlooking narrow bay (NT 67220 79332)

Directions 14

Continue along the coast path as it zigzags around the shore. Stop when you reach a bench set in the wall with a stone plaque above. It is opposite a small green space with a stone navigation marker in the middle. Listen here to Track 15.



15. An unsuitable travel companion

Bench on coast path opposite navigation marker (NT 67115 79334)

Directions 15

Continue along the coast path. Take care as the next section can be very blustery. Shortly after the path bends to the left, stop at a bench facing a distinctive hill on the horizon (North Berwick Law). The Bass Rock should still be visible to the right. Listen to Track 16.

16. Different views of National Parks

Bench facing North Berwick Law and the Bass Rock (NT 66887 79355)

Directions 16

Continue along the coast path until it stops at a set of railings. Turn left and carefully descend the set of stone steps. Again take care as the steps are exposed and can be breezy. At the bottom turn right. Keep the sea on your right and stop after a short distance before the edge of a golf course. Listen to Track 17.

17. A Scotchman at home again

Coastline at the edge of Winterfield Golf Course (NT 66493 79176)

Directions 17

With the beach on your right continue along the edge of the golf course. The path is lined with wooden stakes – take care as one section passes close to the foreshore. Stop when you reach a bench facing out to sea, it is located close to Hole 15 of the golf course. Listen here to Stop 18.

18. Thank you, Mr President!

Bench near Hole 15 of Winterfield Golf Course (NT 66220 79209)

Directions 18

Keep the sea on your right and continue following the path around the golf course. The path has some ascents and descents so watch your footing. Follow the path as it bears right around a metal bridge set off the coast – at low tide it stands in the middle of a sandy beach, at high tide it is cut off by the sea. Stop when you reach a row of benches facing the bridge. Listen here to Stop 19.

19. At last, time to write!

Benches overlooking Belhaven Bay (NT 66261 78852)

Directions 19

With Belhaven Bay on your right, pass the benches and join the footpath beside the road. Follow it past a row of houses. Soon a car park will appear on the right. Carefully go into the car park and stop after a short distance at the information board for John Muir Country Park. Listen here to Stop 20.

20. John Muir's legacy

Shore Road Car Park, The John Muir Country Park (NT 66187 78689)

Directions 20

You can return to Dunbar town centre by following the route back along the cliffs. Alternatively follow Back Road and North Road from the car park. If you follow this route you have the opportunity to make a brief excursion to Lauderdale Garden, another of John Muir's childhood haunts. To do so follow the next set of directions.

Optional excursion: Just a saunter

Lauderdale Garden

Directions to Dunbar High Street via Lauderdale Garden

From the car park entrance turn right. Follow the pavement up to the Stop sign. Carefully cross the road here and continue ahead into Back Road. Take care as the first section (past the other side of Winterfield golf course) has no pavement. Pass the tennis courts on the left and the entrance to Lauderdale Garden will soon appear across the road on the right.

To return to Dunbar High Street from here, continue ahead following Back Road. If you visit Lauderdale Garden, turn right when you leave and rejoin Back Road. You will meet the High Street at Lauderdale House.

Further information

John Muir Birthplace Museum

www.jmbt.org.uk

The John Muir Trust

www.jmt.org

The John Muir Way

<http://johnmuirway.org>

Dunbar Harbour Trust

www.dunbarharbourtrust.co.uk

Discover Dunbar

www.dunbar.org.uk

Dunbar Town House Museum and Art Gallery

www.eastlothianmuseums.org/content/pages/visit-our-museums/dunbar-town-house.php

Dunbar Castle

www.visiteastlothian.org/heritarch-castle-dunbar.asp

John Muir Country Park

www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/john-muir-country-park-p252991

Visit Scotland

www.visitscotland.com

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people for their assistance in producing this Discovering Britain walk:

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