

## Walk 12. Cults Burn and Rocklands Road

A circular walk from Cults Hotel, up the Cults Burn to Friarsfield, then along roads to Rocklands Road, essentially a track rather than a road with some woodland and open fields to the north and the Marcliffe Hotel on the south side, as far as the International School. Return via the Deeside Way.

### Walk Details

Grade: Easy.

Terrain: Footpaths, road and surfaced footpath.

Distance: 2.8 miles; 4.5 km.

Time: Allow 1 hour.

Waymarked: No.

From Cults Hotel go up the narrow road leading past the public bar and the old Water Pumping Station (1865) to a small parking area. At the end take a path leading to the right up beside Cults Burn towards Friarsfield Road. Look out on your way up for a heron that can sometimes be seen fishing in the burn. At the top turn right and walk along Friarsfield Road a few yards and take first right into Abbotshall Drive and then first left (Abbotshall Crescent). When you reach Abbotshall Road, cross and enter Rocklands Road. Initially tarmacked, it then turns in a rural lane. From this point on the area is part of the Pitfodels Conservation Area.

The estate at Pitfodels was the seat of the Menzies' family for over 300 years. This started with Gilbert Menzies in 1408, Provost of Aberdeen from 1423 until 1435. The estate extended over both sides of the Dee from the Bridge of Dee to the Burn of Cults and was sold upon the death of John Menzies, the last Laird of Pitfodels. The Pitfodels estate was feued into 20 plots, providing sites for large Victorian villas. The only plot remaining as originally split is the Marcliffe of Pitfodels.

The first large plot on the right includes Wellwood house (1840) which in 1931 became a private psychiatric nursing home. In 1964 it was adapted as a rehabilitation centre for mentally handicapped patients. It is now privately owned.



After crossing Bairds Brae there is initially open fields on the left and then a wooded area with the remains of a walled garden, probably belonging to Airy Hall. There are a number of footpaths around this area which can be explored as a diversion.



On the right is Woodbank, Shell's own hotel, conference and leisure facility and then the Marcliffe Hotel. On reaching the boundary between the Marcliffe and the International School take the tarmacked path along the boundary down to the North Deeside Road. Turn left, cross over and take the path down to the Deeside Way on the west side of Deeside Gardens. Turn right (west) and follow the Deeside Way to Cults Station. Leave the Deeside Way here, walk through the station yard and up along Station Road to the North Deeside Road and Cults Hotel.

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