

Xpert Xplorer

ROUTE - 2.1 miles / 3.4km
(approx. 40 minutes at an average walking pace)

Park at Crawford Hall and walk past the community garden. Turn left along Millhall Road and safely cross the railway at the gates.

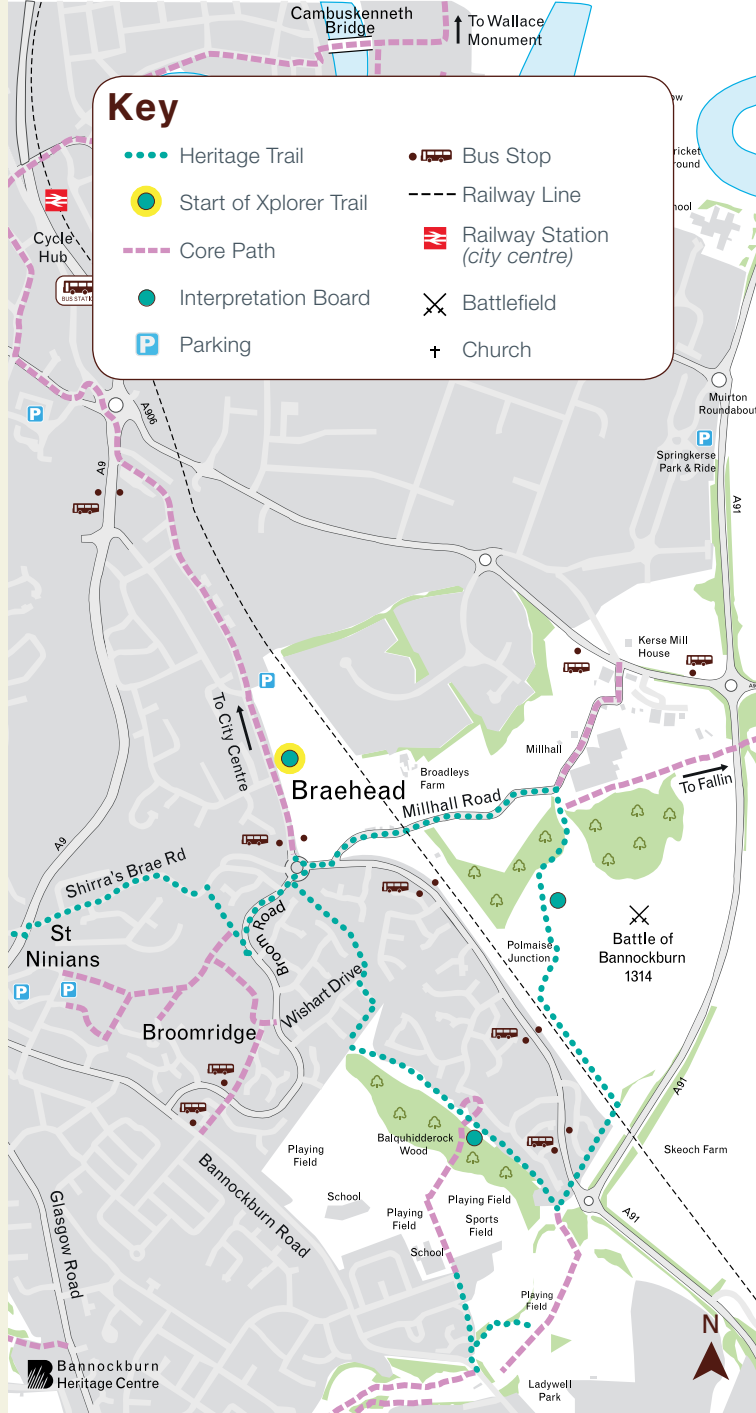
Follow the road until it bends sharply to the left; at that point turn right down the path. Head straight on to the miners' path (NOT the path marked for Fallin / NCN 76) and keep going until you come to the Bannockburn and pass under the bridge which carries the railway above you. Be careful, the boardwalk under the bridge can flood after heavy rain.

At the top of the ramp you should turn to your left and walk until you come to some steps. Be careful, at the top of the steps is the main road.

Cross over the road and continue down the steps then follow the path by the burn until you reach a junction at the edge of Balquhidderoch Wood.

Turn right and follow the path between the woods and the houses all the way along to the end (the path is only surfaced for half of the distance). You'll come to a small car park. Turn right through the car park and follow the pavement until you come to the end.

There is a few metres of grass to cross before you come to a path. Turn left and keep walking until you come to Broom Road. Then turn right and you're soon back at the community garden where you started.



This leaflet is intended to help you explore Stirling Heritage Trails and enjoy Stirling as a "Walkable City".

The trails on the map allow you to enjoy and plan circular routes. The pink core paths are additional routes to enjoy the area.

Visit travelinescotland.com to help you plan your journey to, in and around Stirling.



Visit walkit.com to help you plan your way around Stirling on foot.

Remember to follow the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code** while exploring the Stirling Heritage Trails.

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- take responsibility for your own actions
- respect the interests of other people
- care for the environment.



This leaflet is one of many produced in partnership with Stirling's communities to help you explore the rich and varied heritage of our wonderful city. You'll find them at www.stirlingheritagetrails.co.uk

For led walks in the area see the Stirling Walking Network at www.activestirling.org.uk

Braehead & Broomridge Heritage Trail

Xplore Stirling HERITAGE TRAILS

www.stirlingheritagetrails.co.uk



Welcome to the Braehead & Broomridge Heritage Trail

Braehead stretches from the city centre to the Pelstream, while Broomridge stretches from the Pelstream to the Bannockburn. Braehead was mostly farmland until the early 1970s when Stirling Council constructed a large number of houses and a school to replace the aging tenements of the nearby Craigs area of the city. Broomridge was a private housing development in the early 1980s and the present day community was completed with the development of houses adjacent to the railway in the early 2000s.



- 1] Millhall Colliery, circa 1900s, © Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum
- 2] Jessica Kinross, Braehead Primary School, P4
- 3] Jenna Laird, Braehead Primary School, P2
- 4] Dumyat, courtesy of John McPake
- 5] Meghan Reid, Braehead Primary School, P6

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23rd June 1314

On 23rd June 1314, an army of 20,000 men led by the English King Edward II marched on Stirling Castle. The Scottish forces of Robert the Bruce lay in waiting along the old Roman Road, the only way into the Royal Burgh and close to the current National Trust Heritage Centre. After some initial fighting, Edward led his army onto the carse to camp for the night. A carse is a Scottish word for the low lying lands found next to a river. Although we cannot be certain, it is probable that Edward's army camped on the other side of the

present day railway line, within a few dozen metres of the Balquhiderock Wood. The thousands of soldiers, servants, cooks, armourers, stable boys and horses would have been spread out over a wide area. Despite this, not a single archaeological artefact has been found to confirm that the army were here.



6| Katie Kane, Braehead Primary School, P2
7| Joseph Moffat, Braehead Primary School, P3

24th June 1314

English morale in the camp was low after the first day of battle, with the army exhausted from its long march north and concerned that the Scots were more formidable than first thought. Sir Alexander Seton, a Scots noble in the English army, defected to Bruce to tell him this. Bruce decided to risk all to defeat the English and at dawn on 24th June, his forces emerged from the Balquhiderock Wood to take the fight to the English. Within hours, Bruce was victorious and Edward II galloped from the battlefield and on to Dunbar where a ship was waiting to take him home.

Most historians now agree that all of this action either took place on the carse, where the homes of Wallace Park are now built, or on the dryfield above the present day woods, in the grounds of what is now Bannockburn High School.



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Scots Wa Hae

Before advancing onto the field of battle, the Abbott of Inchaffray is said to have blessed the Scots with water taken from the nearby Holy Well at Cambusbarron. Bruce also addressed his men with a rousing speech. In 1793, Robert Burns wrote the famous poem "Scots Wha Hae"; The lines imagine what Bruce might have said in that speech:

Now's the day and now's the hour
See the front o battle lour
See approach proud Edward's Power
Chains and Slaverie
Wha will be a traitor knave
Wha will fill a coward's grave
What sae base as be a slave
Let him turn and flee

Balquhiderock Wood

Balquhiderock Wood is all that remains of a much larger ancient woodland that was once more extensive in this area. It is a nationally recognised site of special scientific interest. The woodland

10| Robert Burns Statue, Dumbarton Road
11| Small Copper, © E Baillie

is privately owned and was once part of the Balquhiderock Farm, part of the larger Polmaise and Touchadam Estate. It is today managed by Stirling Council as a local nature reserve. The wood is known locally as "Bluebell Wood" due to the stunning spring blanket of blue flowers that carpet the area every year. Blue is just one of the many colours you'll see in the wood. In early spring you'll see the whites of the Wood Anemone and the bright yellow colour of the Lesser Celandine flowers. Almost all of the trees are deciduous, including oak, ash, alder and sycamore. Some of the oak trees could be 300 years old or more. The site supports a large number of birds, rabbits, grey squirrels and roe deer which have been sighted here. Roe deer are the smallest wild deer in Scotland and are very shy and spend much of the day hiding among the undergrowth.

You can access the wood via a mix of surfaced paths and more natural trails - but these can become very muddy! Look out for the recently created ponds within the wood which are home to newts and frogs.

12| Bluebells in Bluebell Wood, courtesy of D Balsillie

Mining

There is a small wooded rise at Millhall, which is all that remains of the Bing that once stood there. Bing is a Scottish word meaning to heap or pile up. In this case it refers to the material removed while digging a coal mine. The bing once towered over the landscape, as did the 37 metre chimney stack at the entrance to the pit. In 1902, Archibald Russell Ltd began sinking shafts into the ground and the mine was operational by 1904. There are two pits at Millhall and a further two at Fallin two miles away; all four on the Polmaise and Touchadam Estate, hence the mine here was officially "Polmaise 1 and 2 Colliery (Millhall)". The mine shafts are 87 fathoms, or nearly 160 meters, beneath your feet. The coal produced was household coal and anthracite - the latter being very rare, accounting for just 1% of the worldwide coal reserves. This "miners' path" linked the colliery with their homes in Bannockburn. Polmaise 1 and 2 closed in 1958; Polmaise 3 and 4 at Fallin closed in 1987.

13| Millhall Bing, circa 1950s, courtesy of J Lauchlan

Railway

Cutting across the middle of Braehead and Broomridge is the railway linking the city with Perth to the north and Edinburgh and Glasgow to the south. An Act of Parliament in 1845 allowed for the construction of a railway to Stirling, with the first trains rolling into the town in 1848. Until the Forth Rail Bridge opened in 1890, Stirling was the primary rail crossing point on the River Forth and as such, much of the country's freight and passenger traffic converged in the city. There was once a railway link from the Polmaise pits which joined up with the mainline next to Millhall Road. The railway is no more, but its route is now a cycle and walking path to Fallin. Until the early 1990s, there was a freight marshalling yard between the railway and Pike Road. The miners' path that links Millhall with Bannockburn passes under the railway at what is known locally as the "Thunder Bridge", from the reverberations and sounds of the trains that cross there.

14| Train leaving Stirling Station, circa 1850s, courtesy of Stirling Council Archives