

# Off to the Races

## Irvine Walks



**Length 2.8 miles. This walk is on surfaced paths with no steps.**

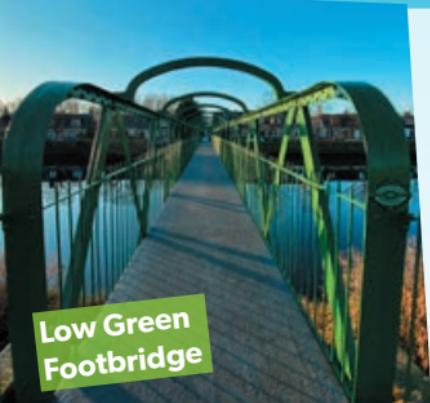


**1.** From the Trinity go down the slope or steps and turn left into the Rivergate shopping centre. After passing the first few shops on your left exit the centre by the door on the left - the Trinity will be up the grassy slope on your left. Follow the slope down-hill or take the steps to the river edge.



**2.** Turn right to follow the river underneath the shopping centre. Continue to the grassed area this is Low Green. one, take the narrow





The stone monument here commemorates the various tradespeople once working in Irvine. From the monument bear left and follow the path beside the river.

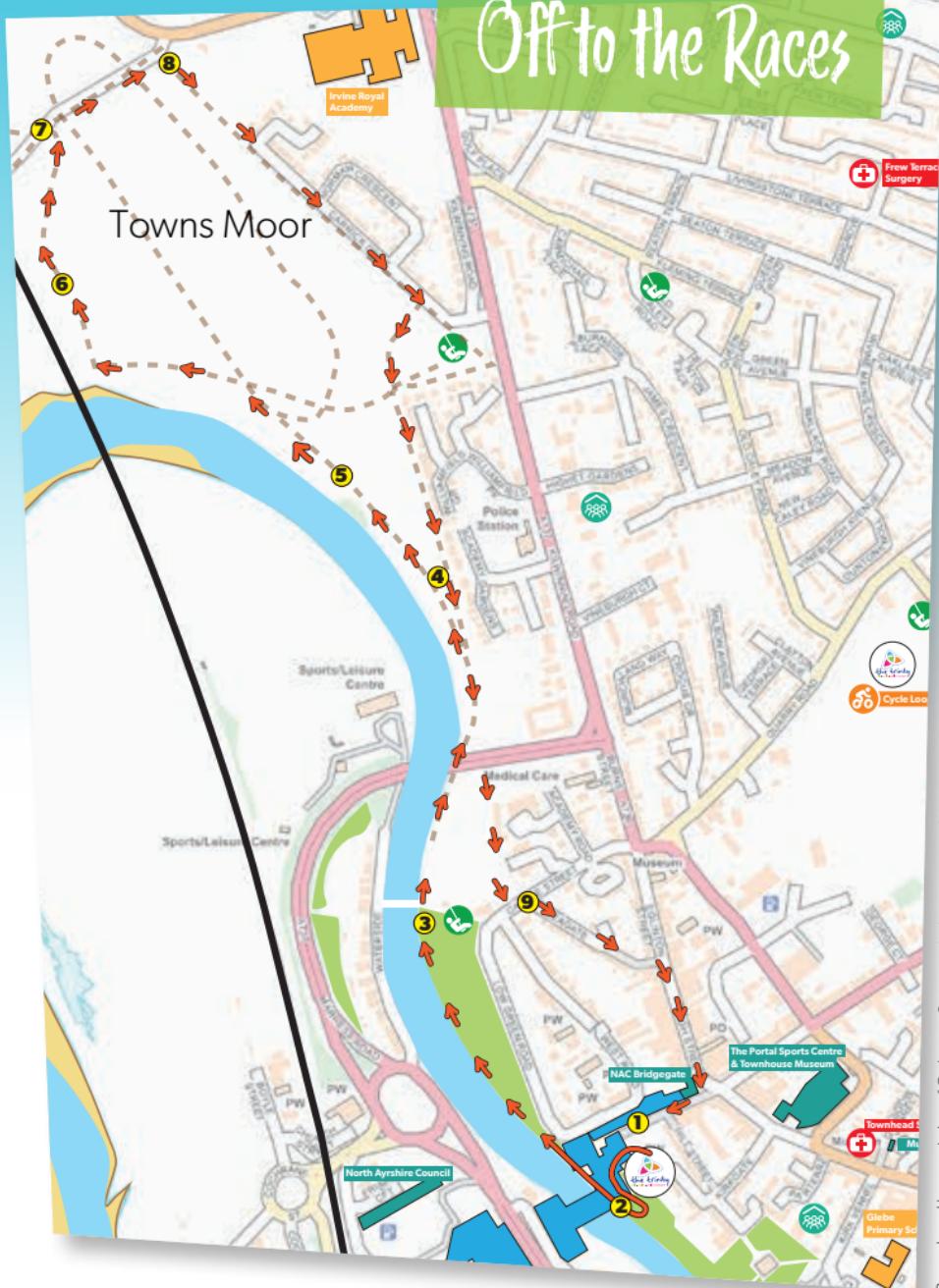
- 3.** Continue straight along the path passing the Low

Green footbridge on your left and then passing under the A737 road bridge. Watch out for cyclists as the path here is part of the National Cycle Network Route 7. Once at the top of the slope you have reached **Gallows Knowe**. A small hill once stood here where public executions were carried out although there is now no trace of this grisly spot.

- 4.** Continue towards the statue of Robert Burns, at the path junction stay left on the path closest to the river. Robert Burns was 21 when he came to stay in Irvine in 1781. At that time the government supported the growth of flax, used to make linen, and Robert Burns' family grew it at their farm in Tarbolton. Robert came to Irvine to learn



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the process of straightening the fibres out, known as heckling. However an unfortunate incident with a candle destroyed the heckling shop and Burns left the town in 1782.

**5.** From the Burns statue carry on the path to the left of the enclosure. Carry straight on ignoring a path coming in from your right.

**6.** At various points along the path you can see the 'race course' clearly delineated through the rough grass to your right. Known as **Cadgers racecourse**, heavy horse racing took place here from medieval times until the 19th century. Although not used now for regular racing it still is the venue for the horse racing and festivities of the Marymass Traditions Day held each August. Originally a religious festival, Marymass also commemorates the supposed visit of Mary Queen of Scots to the area in the 16th century.

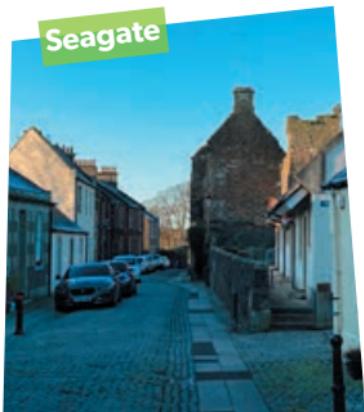
**7.** Continue along the same path until you eventually reach a minor road. As you walk through the moorland keep your eyes peeled for the numerous small birds that flit amongst the thorny gorse scrub and around the pine trees.

**8.** At the minor road turn right and carefully walk along the road keeping to the right-hand side. Just before the road bends to the left to join another one, take the



narrow path to your right and walk behind Irvine Royal Academy. At the end of the path join the footway in front of the houses. When the road swings round to the left near the play park, bear right across the road and re-enter the race course area. After passing the play area take the first path to the left continuing back to the Robert Burns statue. Retrace your steps under the road bridge and then take the path on your left. Follow this around to the right in front of the flats. Follow this to a small car park close to the footbridge you passed earlier. Continue towards the road and cross carefully towards another statue. This is David Boyle, former attorney general for Scotland. He famously sent the notorious Burke (of Burke and Hare, body snatchers, fame) to the gallows.

- 9.** From the statue turn left and then turn right into Seagate, one of the oldest parts of Irvine. The sea used to come much further into the town



**Marymass at  
Seagate Castle**

and this was the road that led to the sea, giving it its name. The road is cobbled but still open to traffic so take care. At the top of the road turn right into High Street. Go down the High Street, then turn right into the pedestrian Bridgegate and return to the Trinity.



# the trinity

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Here at the Trinity, we aim to encourage and support people to be more active by:

- walking and cycling at home, school or work
- walking, cycling or using public transport for everyday journeys and everyday lives

The Trinity has been realised with support from European Regional Development funds under Transport Scotland's Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge Fund and North Ayrshire Council.

## Come in and see us:

Trinity Church, Bridgegate, Irvine

## Contact us:

t: 01294 204800

e: [thetrinity@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:thetrinity@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

[www.thetrinity.org.uk](http://www.thetrinity.org.uk)



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