

## The Ramblers - St Andrews & N.E. Fife Group

In mid-April eight members of St Andrews & North East Fife Ramblers, together with a guest and two visitors from other Ramblers groups, met in the village of Ardler in Perthshire for an 8-mile circular walk via Newtyle. Our route followed a network of old rail lines around the village of Newtyle. The Dundee to Newtyle line opened in 1831 and was the first railway north of the Tay. We headed out from Ardler along the line of the old



railway track, and after 1.5 miles turned onto a couple of quiet minor roads and then across fields towards the next railbed, where we stopped for our refreshment break. There followed an uphill section along a field edge before we reached a forestry track in the grounds of Kinpurnie Castle. As with many woodlands we have encountered since Storm Arwen, we had to clamber around or over a number of fallen trees

as we made our way along the track. Our well-chosen lunch destination at a surprisingly spacious wooden bench provided lovely views over Kirkton and Newtyle, and the countryside beyond. The path then led us down into Newtyle where we joined another pleasant wooded railway track. The intriguing A-shaped gates at its entrance and exit gave rise (all too predictably) to implausible suggestions as to their purpose and, as one wag remarked, they must be effective since there was no sign of elephants on the path. On reaching the end of this path we retraced our steps along the track leading back to Ardler. Tea and scones in a friendly café in Newtyle concluded an excellent day's walking before we headed back to Fife.



The following Wednesday a group of six, including one visitor, enjoyed a pleasant 3-mile walk in the Lomond Hills Regional Park taking in Rhind Hill and Coul Den. One prospective walker, having forgotten the date, joined the select club of the 'calendar-confused' founded a couple of years ago by your correspondent. We set out from the Pitcairn Centre at a leisurely pace on the gently ascending path, stopping to identify wild flowers and admire the totem pole and wooden sound sculptures along the way. At the trig point at Rhind Hill we had a somewhat hazy view towards the Forth and agreed unanimously to descend to a

more sheltered spot for our coffee break. We then continued to the picturesque Coul Den followed by Coul Reservoir, glittering in the sunshine, before making our way back to the car park. Our outing was rounded off with a light lunch, and the usual repartee, at a nearby garden centre on our way home.



Our next walk is on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April, a scenic 8-mile circuit at Blairgowrie, taking in Cargill's Leap, Knockie Path, Ardblair Trail and bluebell woods on good footpaths, with one short steep ascent. All of our walks are open to guests who would like to try out The Ramblers, and full details can be found on our website [www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com](http://www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com)