

Old Village Ruins - Morell

Distance: 6 miles (10 km)
Time: Allow 3 hours
Grade: Moderate
Colour Code: Yellow

A very pleasant walk, gently climbing up through Glentarken Wood to the ruins of the old village, Morell, with lovely views over Loch Earn and the surrounding hills, returning via the Glentarken Track and the Loch Earn Railway Path.

This walk climbs to a height of 200 metres, at first on a vehicle track and then on narrow, muddy and uneven paths. Keeping at this height, the path faintly weaves its way across open moorland and then descends via another track to the railway path that leads back to St Fillans. Look out for red squirrels, deer and woodpeckers. Osprey can sometimes be seen searching for food over the waters of Loch Earn.

Starting at the Village Information Point by the footbridge (near the Village Store and opposite the Arran Brewery Hotel), walk west along the main road to The Four Seasons Hotel. Just beyond the hotel, fork right, up a 'tarmac' track that leads past the Hydro Electric Power Station.

Keep on this track past two concrete railway arches, climbing all the time, until you come level with the disused railway line on your right. Pass through the opening, join the railway path and continue west for about 300 metres. Take a narrow path (signposted to Glentarken) that forks right off the railway path and angle up the slope through Glentarken Wood. Continue gently climbing and you will cross a burn by the small wooden Allt An Fhionn Bridge, built in 1996 by the 127 Field Squadron, 78 Engineers Regiment.

Keep to this path and where it meets the forestry track, continue uphill. *(The forestry track forking left downhill meets the disused railway path, and this can be used as a short cut back.)* Follow the track uphill, which gradually narrows to a single path and levels out. Eventually go through a deer fence gate that's almost at the brow of the hill. The stone ruins of the old village of Morell can be seen on your left. *This is a lovely spot to stop for refreshments and enjoy the views over Loch Earn to Ben Vorlich, Stuc a' Chroin and beyond.*

Continue following the faint path, heading towards a cottage in the distance. Pass between the cottage and a ruined building (this old croft is known as Jerusalem) and pick up a track that descends down to an old wooden bridge that crosses the Glentarken Burn. This track then rises and bears left & right to join the main Glentarken track. Turn left and follow the track zig-zagging down towards Loch Earn. At the junction with the railway path, turn left and head back towards St Fillans. Leave the old railway path by the access on your right (used on the way up) and join the parallel track. Follow this track down, passing the Hydro Electric Power Station again and retracing your steps along the main road to the start.