

6 Ways to connect with nature

1 TAKE A MOMENT

Life is busy and it can feel like there is constant pressure to do more. One of the best ways to connect with nature and improve your wellbeing is to take a moment to slow down. That can be as simple as taking a few minutes to listen to the trees in the breeze while waiting at the bus stop, to look out the window at the birds flying past, or to notice the seasonal changes while on your regular dog walk.



This guide was created with input from local people. Here are some of the things they said about spending time outside in Torry:

"Being in nature makes me feel like myself"

"I love walking around the coastline, listening to the waves, watching nature and just love the views"

"I remember coming across a deer quietly lying in St Fitticks park"

"My favourite memory was being up to my waist in the huge variety of plants in the wetlands of Torry"

"I feel connected by walking and taking in the beautiful nature – beach, birds, allotments..."

2 SHARE WHAT YOU SEE

Torry has lots to explore from wetlands and woodlands to rocky shores and sandy bays. Share what you spot with your neighbours and friends – maybe you'll encourage them to get out and enjoy Torry's nature too! You can also do your bit for local nature by recording what you see on a nature identification app, like iRecord, or by sending your sightings to the local nature recording centre at <https://nesbrec.org.uk/>. This information can help nature conservation efforts locally and nationally.

3 CARE FOR LOCAL GREEN AREAS

Our green areas have so much to offer and it's our duty to protect them as best we can, for the health of residents – people and wildlife.

If you see a piece of litter, pick it up and dispose of it correctly. This is a simple action that makes an immediate and visible difference and helps protect wildlife from the dangers of eating it or getting tangled up.

Advocate for your green spaces – whether it's signing environmental petitions or even getting out there with your placards, use your voice to protect your local area. Join a local environment group or a 'Friends of Group' such as Friends of St Fittick's Park.

4 JOIN A COMMUNITY GARDEN

Torry is home to several beautiful community gardens including Tullos Crescent Allotments, Bruce Gardens, and St Fittick's Edible Garden. Volunteering at a local green space is a brilliant way to benefit local nature, to get outside, stay active, and connect with other people.

5 LET NATURE DO ITS THING!

Sometimes a little inaction can also help nature thrive. Mow less frequently to help a variety of grasses and wildflowers to grow. In the Autumn, resist immediately tidying up piles of leaves and fallen branches, they're the perfect habitats for hedgehogs, worms and blackbirds.

6 ATTEND LOCAL NATURE EVENTS

Torry is home to lots of small groups and organisations focused on nature conservation and education. Throughout the year they host free events such as surveys, talks and walks. Find out what is happening locally at <https://connectedaberdeen.org/torry/whats-on/>.

This guide has been created to highlight nature spots in Torry and to encourage positive action which will improve well-being through nature connections.

It was shaped by local voices; with community members sharing their favourite places to go and things to do. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

With thanks to Aberdeen based artist Rosa Eisenberg for beautifully illustrating this guide. Rosa is inspired by local landscapes and the creatures which frequent them. See more of her work here: <https://www.rosaeisenbergillustration.com>

This project was led by the Torry-based charity Greyhope Bay, and was funded by the Health Improvement Fund.

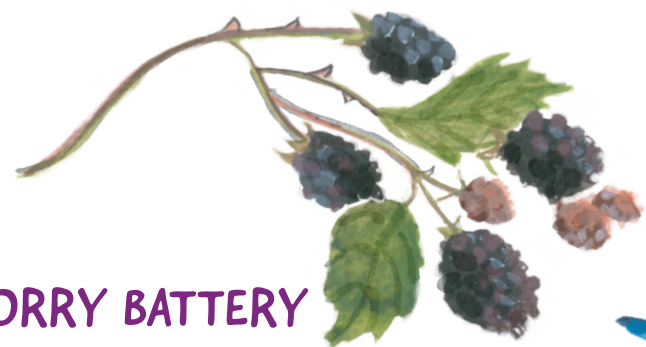
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THIS IS YOUR SPACE TO REFLECT
WITH SOME WORDS OR A SKETCH.



1 RIVER DEE

From ducks paddling in the shallows to rabbits and foxes resting on the riverbanks, walks along the River Dee offer countless chances to connect with nature. Look down on the water from Victoria Bridge to spot seals and cormorants hunting for fish. Further upstream, watch rowers glide past, sending ripples through the reflections of leafy trees on the still surface. And take time to notice the small things too, like the buddleia pushing up through the cracks in the bridge.



4 TORRY BATTERY

This historic monument offers panoramic views of the coast, providing some calm away from the hustle and bustle of the city. From the big boisterous bottlenose dolphins which play at the river mouth, or the wee curious wagtails wandering around, there is lots to see. From Spring through to Autumn, watch swallows soar overhead and swoop into the ruins where they have built their mud nests. Smell the coconutty bright yellow gorse flowers or snack on blackberries from the bountiful brambles surrounding the Battery. On still sunny days, take time to look at the wildflowers and butterflies they attract. When stormy and windswept, watch the wild waves as you shelter in your car.



2 BRUCE GARDEN

This secluded little gem sits just off the busy Victoria Road. Sheltered by tall ash and alder trees, Bruce Garden offers a peaceful escape and plenty of shady benches for warm summer days. This community-run garden is full of gentle motion, with robins, blue tits, and wrens darting between branches and skimming low over the garden beds. A colourful "What can you spot?" nature mosaic makes it an inviting place for children to explore.

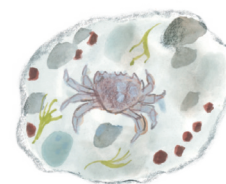


5 SOUTH PIER BEACH

This sandy shore is often a surprisingly quiet spot where, aside from the odd dog walker or picnicking family, you may have much of the beach to yourself. Here you can explore rockpools or follow the tideline in search of small treasures like sea glass and shells. It's an easy spot to pause and unwind – listen to the waves, or watch the boats sail by.



For a bit more excitement, look out to sea, where Sandwich terns and gannets dive for their dinner. From late spring onwards, the steep slope leading down to the beach becomes a sweep of purple, bright with northern marsh orchids, bloody crane's-bill, common dog-violet and heather.



3 ST FITTICKS PARK

This well-loved park has a bit of everything, from wetland to woodland. Follow one of the many pathways and enjoy a chorus of birdsong and flourishing plant life. If you have youngsters with you, see what you can spot on the pond – dragonflies darting over the water, or moorhens rustling in the reeds. At dawn or dusk, keep an eye out for the deer that become more active at this time.

6 TULLOS WOODS

Locally known as the Gramps, this mature scrub and woodland is a hot spot for small birds singing as they claim their nesting territories. Among the large beech trees are visiting migratory birds like chiffchaffs, blackcaps and willow warblers and resident birds like blackbirds, song thrushes, great and blue tits. Listen out for the distinct drumming sound of great spotted woodpeckers clinging to tree trunks.

