**Paths To Health**

Walking is an excellent way of helping you improve your health. It is the simplest and most natural form of exercise there is.

- **30 minutes brisk walking each day can make a big difference.**
- You don’t have to do this all at once: it could be two 15-minute walks.
- **Lower stress levels and blood pressure**
- **Strengthen bones and muscles**
- **Maintain flexible joints**
- **Improve your fitness**
- **Reduce your risk of developing diabetes**
- **It could also be a lifesaver.**

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**What are the benefits of keeping active?**

- **Taking regular exercise will not only make you feel better, it could also be a lifesaver.**
- Research has shown that exercise can help to:
  - Lower stress levels and blood pressure
  - Reduce the risk of heart disease and strokes
  - Strengthen bones and muscles
  - Maintain flexible joints
  - Control weight

If you want to improve your fitness, why not try out some of the paths on the map. Try starting with short walks, and build up to longer walks as your fitness improves.

**Other Paths**

In addition to the listed routes there is a network of paths around the town. These have not been listed individually but are shown on the map. They are also generally signposted on the ground if you are not familiar with the area.
Kirriemuir - 'Gateway to the Glens'

Long before the Roman Legions camped in Caddam Wood, the area was a settlement for Stone, Bronze and Iron Age dwellers. Relics of their existence can be found in the ‘Stannin Stane’ on Kirrie Hill and in the Pictish Stones from the old Parish Churchyard now on display in the Meffan in Forfar.

Kirriemuir church dates to Pictish times, and was probably founded in the early 9th century, and dedicated to Mary, which survives in the street name Marywell Brae. The Earls of Angus, and their celtic predecessors, the Mormaers of Angus, had the right of burial in the church. It was an important Pictish church which also had judicial powers, giving the Kirriemuir the status of a burgh of barony. The Court hill just above the Den was where this justice was dispensed, probably until the building of the town house in 1604.

The ‘Kirkton of Kirriemuir’ became a ‘free burgh in barony’ in 1459 with a population of 124, but did not become a significant town until the mid 18th century when the weaving boom brought great prosperity. By the mid 19th century the population of the ‘Wee Red Toon’ had risen to 3000 and the demand for housing saw the establishment of Southmuir, Westmuir and Northmuir villages.

Wilkie’s factory at the south end of the ‘Den’ continues the textile tradition although it has progressed considerably from the early machinery powered by the water from the adjacent Garrie Burn.

Kirriemuir is perhaps best known for its famous son, J M Barrie the creator of Peter Pan. His birthplace is now a museum run by the National Trust for Scotland. Son of a weaver he was the ninth of ten children. He became a journalist before he moved on to his now well known novels and plays. In his books he used Kirriemuir as his imaginary town of ‘Thrums’. This is its local name and is the local pronunciation for threads presumably from the weaving trade.