

# A Guide to the Stirling Area

## TRANSPORT

### Buses

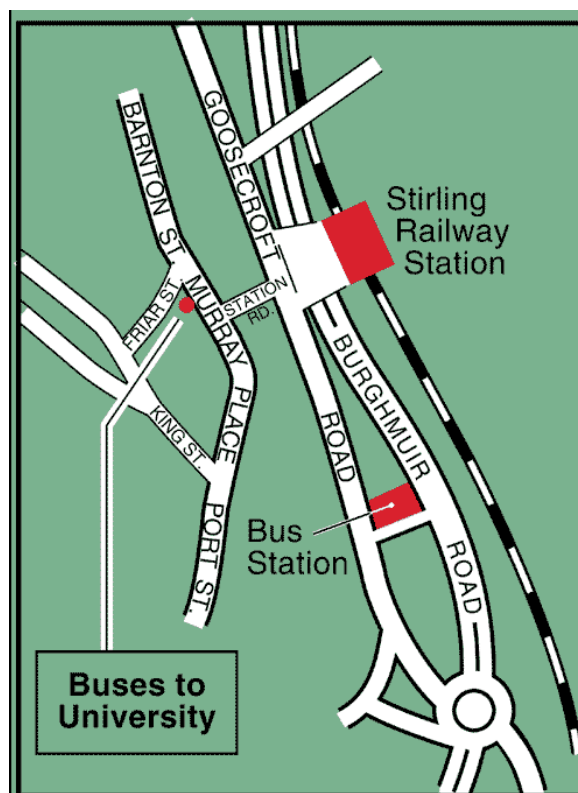
The university is served by excellent bus links from Stirling city centre. Most bus services to the campus run from either just outside Stirling's Rail Station or a two-minute walk away, in Murray Place.

The map adjacent shows the location of the nearest bus stop to the railway station, from where you can catch a bus to university.

Leave the station by the main entrance and cross the taxi rank to the pelican crossing on Goosecroft Road. Turn left along Goosecroft Road for a few yards, and then right onto Station Road. Walk up Station road to Murray Place and cross at the traffic island. The bus stop (red circle on the map) is just to your right.

Buses 54, 54A, 62, 63 and 153 serve this route, but always ask the driver if the bus is going where you need to be. (It is possible to catch these buses in Stirling just *after* they've been to campus, when they're on their way to far-flung towns before returning to campus.)

The full fare is £1.90 (£3.70 return), but there are discounts for students with ID.



### Taxis

The fare for the short drive from Stirling to the university should be approximately £5-6. (Be sure to specify the building you need.) If you're stuck for a phone, the porters in the office at the main Pathfoot entrance can order taxis for you.

Rab's Taxis	01786 812909
Albion Taxis	01786 811111
Goosecroft Taxis	01786 472220 or 480222
Castle Cabs Ltd	01786 811111
Forth Taxis	01786 449244
Bannockburn Taxis Ltd	01786 812812
JJF Taxis	01786 818111
Albion Taxis	01786 811111

## RESTAURANTS

Here is a brief listing of nearby restaurants, in order of distance from campus.

**The Med** (pub/restaurant) – a 2-minute walk from Pathfoot, immediately west. Standard pub-grub (burgers, pasta, fajitas etc), and popular with students. Convenient and reasonably priced, with a good patio when the weather co-operates.

**Corrieri's** – traditional Scots-Italian café, serving pizza, pasta and ice-cream. An unpretentious family restaurant, 10-minutes east of the main campus gates on foot (turn left, in the direction of Stirling).

If you walk into **Bridge of Allan** (15 minutes, west along the A9 – turn right on exiting the university), a large number of pubs and restaurants serve good food (particularly the hotels). A brief selection, roughly in order of prices (low-high):

**a. Allan Water Café** – excellent fish and chips (and ice-cream).

*15 Henderson St., Bridge of Allan, Tel: 01786 833060*

**b. Clive Ramsay** – varied menu, good quality, next door to an upmarket delicatessen.

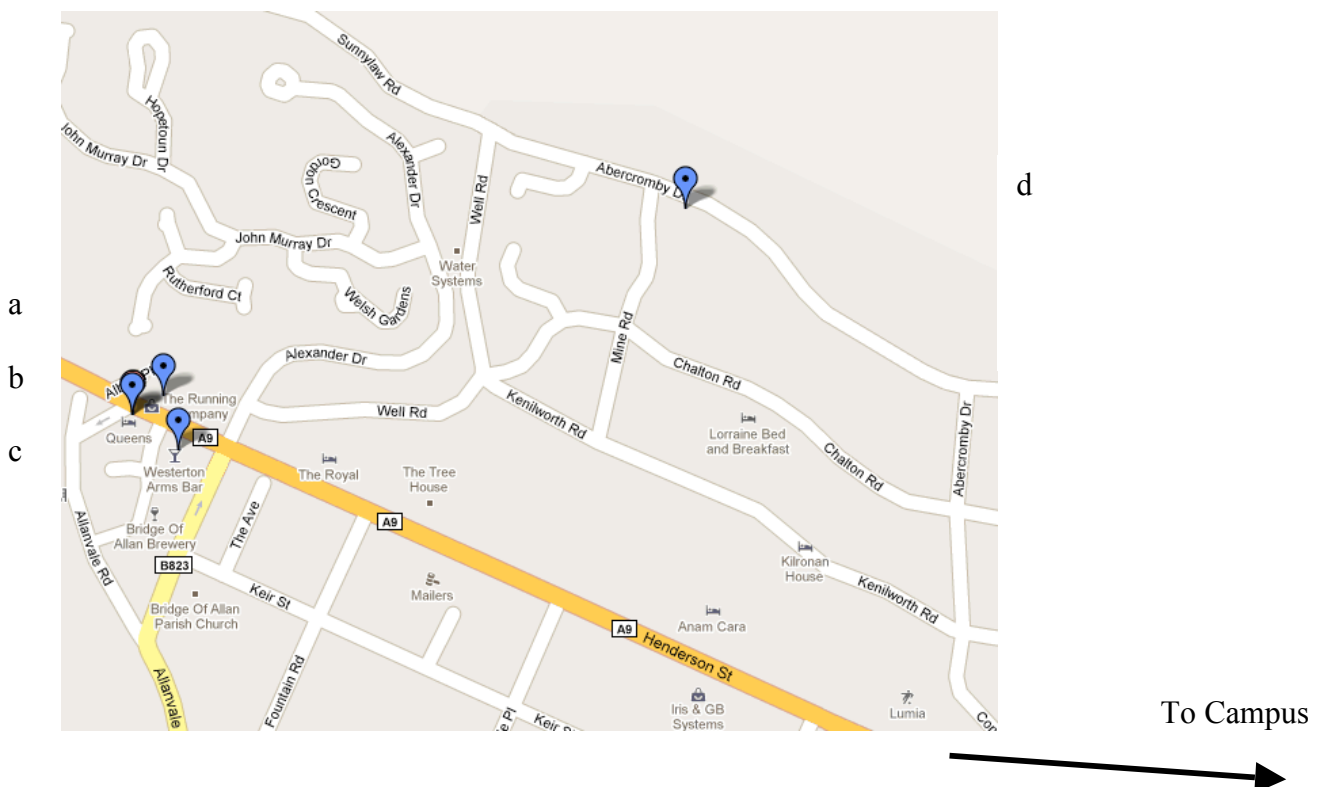
*26 Henderson St., Bridge of Allan, Tel: 01786 831 616*

**c. Queen's Hotel** (Adamo Bridge of Allan) – attractive hotel restaurant, with two fine bars (named 'Jekyll's' and 'Hyde's' under the previous management).

*24 Henderson St., Bridge of Allan, Tel: 01786 831335*

**d. Vecchia Bologna** – fine Italian dining; beautiful location and building. (Up the hill, into the posh part of the village.)

*Mine Road, Upper Bridge of Allan, Tel: 01786 833617*



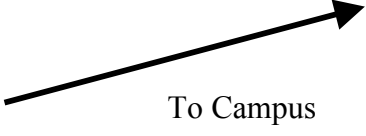
**Stirling** is full of busy restaurants and pubs. Much of it is forgettable pub grub and tourist food, but the following are decent or better (again, roughly in order of price):

**a. The Bank** (Adamo Stirling) – impressive food in an attractive building, very reasonably priced. Excellent cocktail bar attached.  
 78 Upper Craigs, Stirling, Tel: 01786 430 890

**b. Mediterranea** – as the name suggests, a blend of Spanish, French, Greek, Italian.  
 4 Viewfield Terrace, Stirling, Tel: 01786 478 534

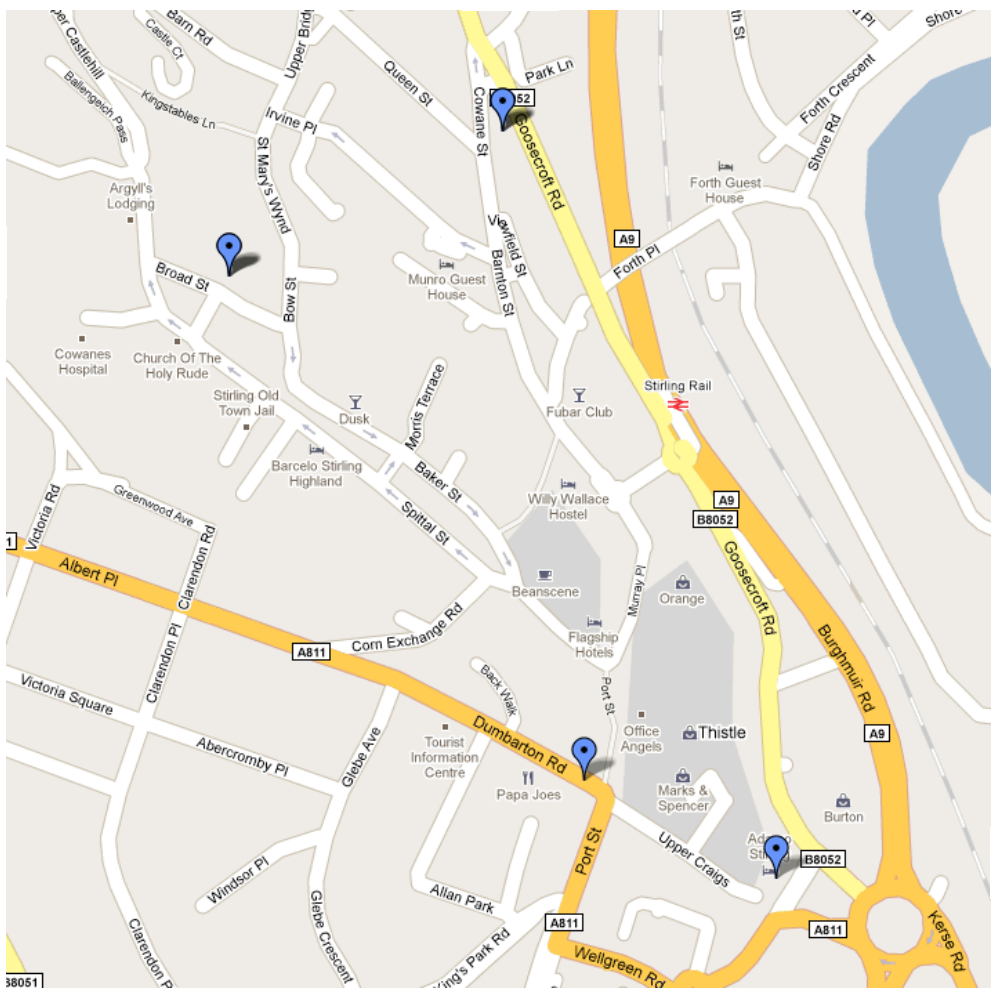
**c. Indian Cottage** – excellent upmarket curry-house.  
 11 Dumbarton Road, Stirling, Tel: 01786 464 615

**d. Hermann's** – Austrian; the prime location (adjacent the Castle) and fine food are reflected in the prices.  
 58 Broad St., Stirling, Tel: 01786 450 632



STIRLING  
 CASTLE

d



b

c

a

## **ATTRACTIONS**

Those of you spending the entire weekend in Stirling may find time to enjoy some local attractions.

### **Stirling Castle**

*Castle Wynd, Stirling*  
*Tel: 01786 450 000*

Well worth a look, and often compared favourably by tourists with Edinburgh Castle.

The castle 'esplanade' (parking lot) often plays host to traditional music (pipe-band displays) and dancing on summer evenings; this is a public area, and there's no charge to come and watch.

From the castle website:

*Stirling Castle is one of Scotland's great days out – it was created by kings and queens as a great royal residence. But at times of war it was also a formidable fortress. From the Chapel Royal and the Great Kitchens, to Argyll's Lodging and the Tapestry Studio, there is plenty for all the family to enjoy.*

The Great Hall ('by far the largest banqueting hall ever built in medieval Scotland') has been restored to its original colour, and is visible for many miles around. It houses some incredible tapestry work, and is architecturally interesting in its own right. Argyll's Lodging ('Scotland's most splendid and complete example of a 17<sup>th</sup>-century townhouse') and the Regimental Museum are also worth seeking out. In the internal courtyard there are often demonstrations of archery, falconry, etc.

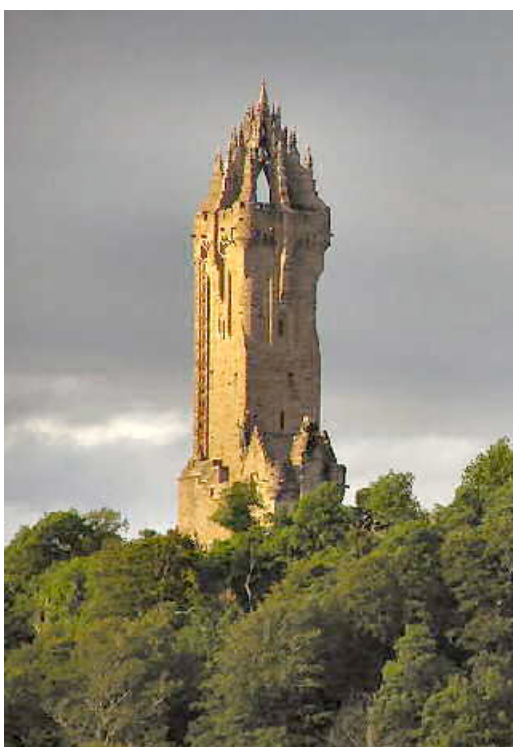
The best way to get there is to arrive in Stirling and walk uphill until you reach it; this way you pass through the historic part of the city on your way (with the option to see some interesting graveyards). But it is a (very) steep walk from the town centre; take a taxi or bus (from Murray Place) if you want to save energy, particularly on a hot day.

Adults: £13.00 (£10.00 concessions)  
Open 9.30am - 5.00pm

## **National Wallace Monument**

*Abbey Craig  
Causewayhead, Stirling  
Tel: 01786 472 140*

Teaching in the shadow of this means never being at a loss when students ask what you mean by nationalist metanarrative, Victorian Gothic, or phallic symbols.



Needless to say, the climb to the top is a long and (when busy) claustrophobic one (242 stairs). And that's after you've climbed to the foot of the monument from the parking lot halfway up the Craig (a shuttle bus is also available). It is possible to walk all the way up from the level of the A9 (ask locals the way), but quite tiring.

The views from the top are spectacular, and the displays at lower levels are interesting (a video exhibit about Wallace and replica of his broadsword, a 'Hall of Heroes' featuring busts of various famous Scots, and an exhibit explaining the protracted building of the monument).

From their website:

*The National Wallace Monument stands tall and proud outside the city of Stirling, and overlooks the scene of Scotland's victory at The Battle of Stirling Bridge. This is a place where history is something you can touch and feel, as you follow the story of Sir William Wallace, patriot, martyr, and Guardian of Scotland.*

If you're catching a bus from Stirling, be sure to tell the driver you're going to the monument, and he or she will make a 'request' stop at Causewayhead, just below the Craig.

Adult: £7.75 (£6.25 concessions)  
Open 10.30am -4.00pm (last admission 3.15pm)

## **WALKS**

### *Dumyat*

The large hill that looms above the university campus is called Dumyat [duh-MY-it]. It is deceptively easy to climb (especially if you drive halfway up!), and rewards a minimum of time/effort with terrific views in all directions. Sturdy walking shoes are desirable but (when the ground is dry) not essential. The weather can change quickly, however, and it is invariably very windy at the summit (418m).

If you take a taxi to the starting point of the walk, you can easily climb to the summit and back inside 2 hours. It's then a pleasant walk down the hill (along the road you drove up) to return to the conference venue.

Any local taxi driver will know where the Dumyat walk starts, but here are directions if you're driving. (The same route can, of course, be taken on foot; it will add about 40 minutes and substantial weariness to the journey – every step is uphill.)

Exiting the university campus from the main gate (**A**), turn right onto the A9 and then immediately turn right again onto Kenilworth Road, passing The Med pub on your left. Follow this road uphill for a few hundred yards and turn right again, onto Sheriffmuir Road (signpost: Sheriffmuir). This road goes directly behind the Pathfoot Building. You'll pass a field on your left, at the end of which the road will turn left, steeply uphill. Follow (carefully!) this single-track road for about a quarter of a mile, past a few farms, until you see parking places on the right hand side. You've arrived (**B**).

On foot from there:

Go through a metal gate on the right, at the northern (uphill) end of the parking area. On the other side, follow a path to a fork, where you go left. After this, it doesn't really matter which path you take, as all lead eventually to the top of Dumyat. Once you reach a fence, it is easiest to bear left, cross a stile and then take the right-hand path on the other side. But if you follow the obvious paths (and other walkers), you should have no difficulty. For the first half of the walk, you're walking 'across' as much as 'up' the hill. Our students have an annual race to the top – this year's winner ran it in under 34 minutes.

## Bridge of Allan – Darn Walk

The Darn Walk is strongly associated with Robert Louis Stevenson, who included the route as part of *Kidnapped* (opening pages of ch. 26). A small cave on route by the river bank is also linked with Stevenson and, some say, was the inspiration for Ben Gunn's cave in *Treasure Island*. From point (C) you can either cross the river and return to Bridge of Allan, or continue on to the handsome cathedral town of Dunblane, from where you can later catch a train back to Bridge of Allan or Stirling, or a taxi back to the university.

Bridge of Allan is a mile or so west of the university campus, along the A9. If you walk from Pathfoot (turning right as you leave campus), it takes approximately 15-20 minutes to reach the main part of the village (where the same road becomes Henderson Street). The Darn Walk begins at the far end of the village, slightly further along. Keep walking until you reach the Allan Water Bridge (just after the main restaurant/shopping district, and the Allan Water Café on the right-hand side of the road). Just before the bridge itself, follow Blairforkie Drive off to the right. Follow this up the hill until you see, next to a private house marked 'Darnallan House', a timber signpost for Dunblane, branching off the road down to your left (A).

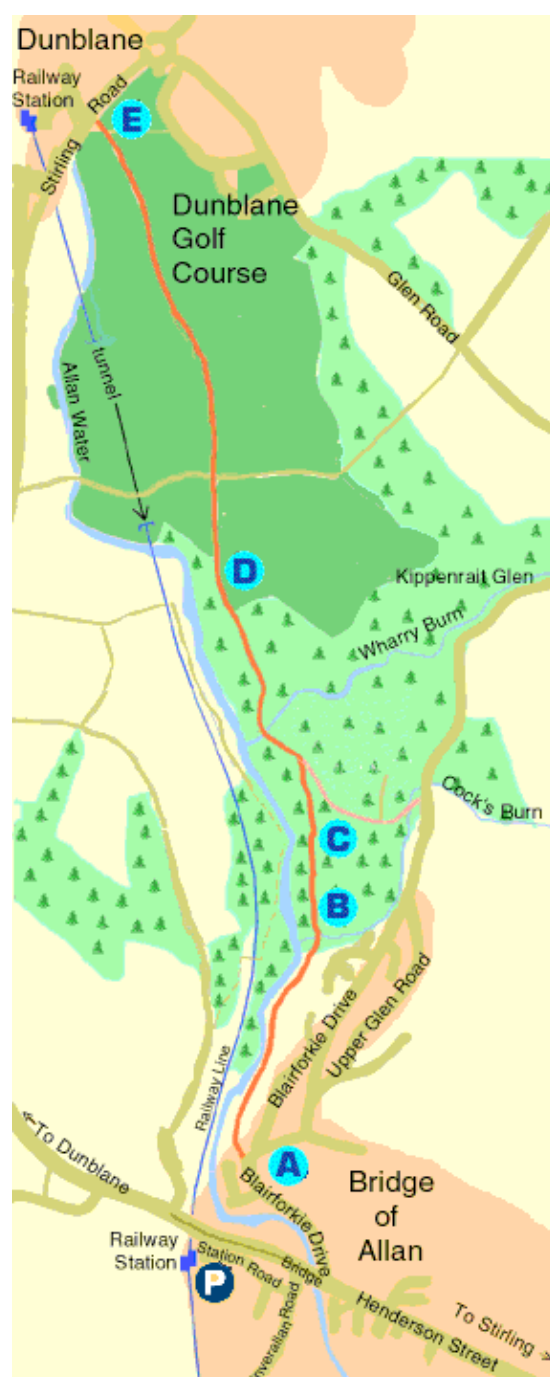
*Directions from instirling.com, from point (A)*

This is a well maintained path but it can get muddy and slippery after heavy rain. Go past the new housing estate on the left. The path carries on with the river Allan to the left and a field of horses on the right. Cross the small timber footbridge, marked *Stirling Council Countryside Service*, built over a section where the path has worn away. There are plenty of opportunities to stop along the route and you will be rewarded with a different view as you round each bend.

A little further on, the path leads you down some concrete steps, through a channel in the rock and into a gully where the Cock's Burn tumbles over rocks and fallen trees before flowing into the River Allan (B). Dense and shady, this is an atmospheric place where time seems to stand still. Cross the little footbridge over the burn. Take care on this short stretch as the path is narrow and often slippery. Follow the path round to the right, up into the woods and over the hill. The path leads to some timber steps which help you down a steep incline.

As you walk along, keep a lookout for a cave on your left – the Darn Road walk was a favourite of Robert Louis Stevenson and it has been suggested that the cave was the inspiration for Ben Gunn's cave [‘And thereupon we all entered the cave. It was a large, airy place, with a little spring and a pool of clear water, overhung with ferns. The floor was sand...’, *Treasure Island*, ch. 33]

Go on a little further until you come to the footbridge over the Allan (C). This is where you should cross if you want to walk back to Bridge of Allan on the opposite bank of the river. To keep following the Darn Road, walk



past the footbridge and on until you come to the new timber footbridge over the Wharry Burn. The path then climbs up hill between moss covered stone dykes, through the woods and fields until the town of Dunblane gradually comes into view on the left **(D)**. The path skirts Dunblane golf course and deposits you near the bus stop on the Stirling Road **(E)**. Cross the road and go down the hill, onto Dunblane High Street. Spend some time in Dunblane and then catch a train back to Bridge of Allan or Stirling.