

## **BORGIE FOREST RIDE**

If you are feeling adventurous, why not venture one day to the Forestry Commission's **Borgie Forest** in Sutherland, about 3 miles beyond Bettyhill. This is a truly lovely forest, with stunning scenery and views and is also quite hilly, so excellent for getting you and your horse fit! The total length of the ride, if you do everything, is 8 miles and as you will see from the Forestry Commission map, a circular ride is available which is always more interesting and it is all way-marked.

The drive is a challenge as the A836 becomes increasingly steep and twisty, the further you get from Thurso! It takes 2 hours to get to Borgie from Lybster and the distance from there is 60 miles. However, it is such a beautiful route that there are compensations, although it is probably quite challenging for the horse so possibly not something one would wish to do every day!

Look out for the entrance to the forest on your left hand side, about two miles after the very minor B road that goes off to the left, signed to Syre. The entrance is a sharp left on a downhill stretch of road, shortly after you see a sign for Borgie Lodge. The access road goes for about ¼ mile downhill and is very stony but there is a nice, level parking area at the bottom with picnic tables, beside a lovely little burn. You can drive over a bridge to a good, wide, turning area for the return journey.

The route on the map that is marked with blue circles starts off very stony but soon improves until eventually you are on a lovely track with grass in the centre, flanked by tall trees. Beyond where the return loop veers off to the right, the blue route continues as an 'up and back'. This is a really beautiful grassy track which eventually leads downhill and across a burn via a wooden bridge. Shortly afterwards, the way-marked track comes to an end in a circular area of lovely green grass. You can continue further, if you wish, on an un-marked narrower path. There is plenty of opportunity on this track for cantering!

Retracing your steps, you join a track on your left with a gravel surface that leads steeply downhill to link with a forest road where you turn right. This lower, return track (the yellow route on the map) has lovely open views of all the surrounding mountains and the Borgie river. However, it is extremely stony and it is not possible to go at a faster pace than a walk. It is also quite hilly. It might be best to do this side of the loop first while the horse is fresh (in which case, turn to your right on the forest road marked with the yellow markers after leaving the car park) and you then have the softer route to look forward to!

# Welcome to Borgie Forest...

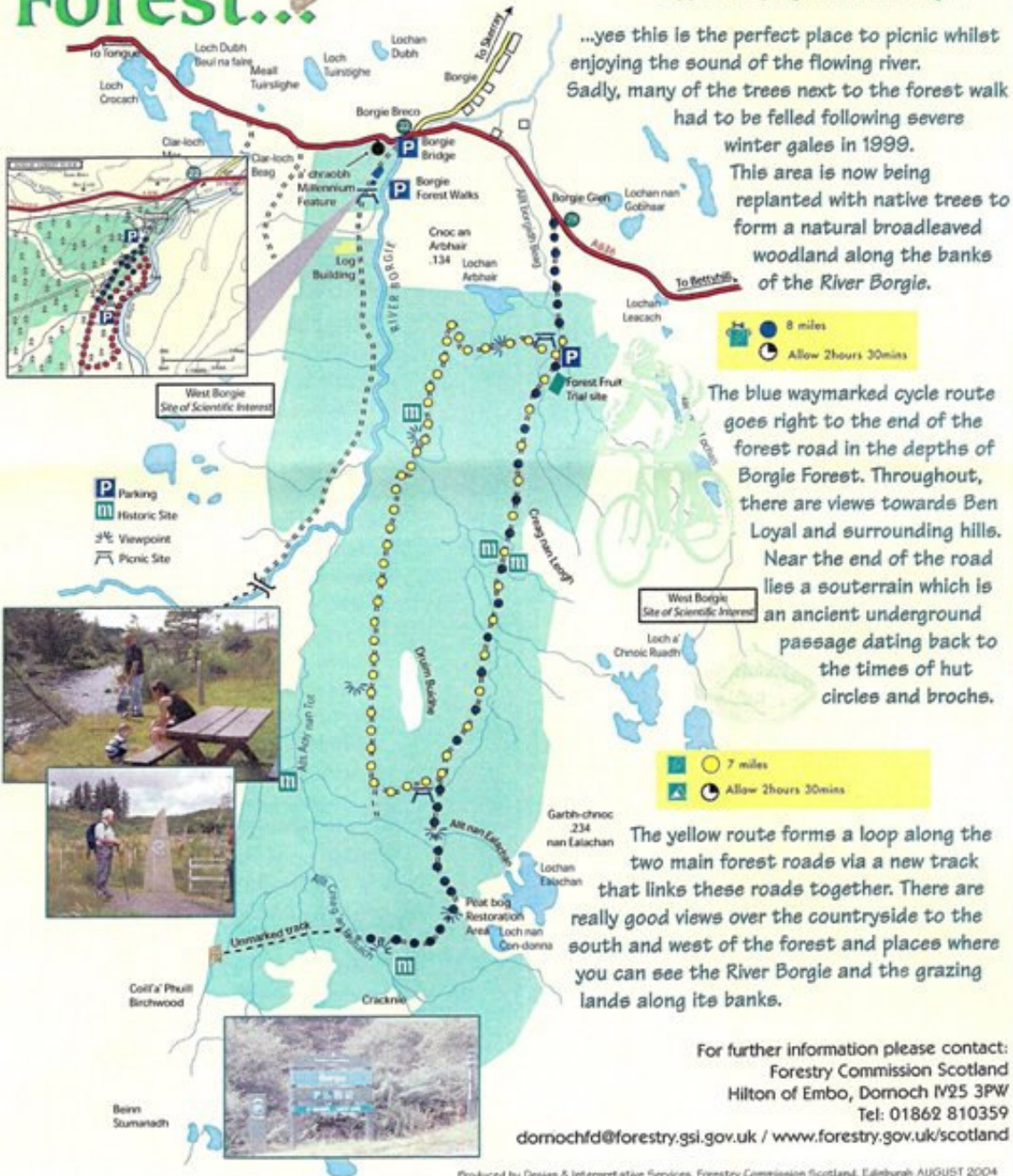


  
Forestry Commission  
Scotland



Supported by Highland Access Project

...yes this is the perfect place to picnic whilst enjoying the sound of the flowing river. Sadly, many of the trees next to the forest walk had to be felled following severe winter gales in 1999. This area is now being replanted with native trees to form a natural broadleaved woodland along the banks of the River Borgie.



The blue waymarked cycle route goes right to the end of the forest road in the depths of Borgie Forest. Throughout, there are views towards Ben Loyal and surrounding hills. Near the end of the road lies a souterrain which is an ancient underground passage dating back to the times of hut circles and brochs.

The yellow route forms a loop along the two main forest roads via a new track that links these roads together. There are really good views over the countryside to the south and west of the forest and places where you can see the River Borgie and the grazing lands along its banks.

For further information please contact:  
Forestry Commission Scotland  
Hilton of Embo, Dornoch IV25 3PW  
Tel: 01862 810359  
[dornochfd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dornochfd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) / [www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland)