

Caithness Riders Access Group



Braehour

Maximum Distance – 4 miles

Surface - Firm track with a mainly stony surface, although there is moss and grass covering the central part.

Distance from A9: 3 ½ to 4 miles.

Information contained in this pack is correct as of 03/03/2006

BRAEHOUR FOREST

Braehour Forest is a Forestry Commission plantation situated beyond Westerdale on the road to Loch More. There is a single track that can be ridden as an up-and-back route which provides a good, firm surface although it is quite stony in a lot of places and is probably more suitable for shod horses. It is a very pretty route planted mainly with conifers and providing attractive views out towards Dorrery and Shurrery, beyond the forest edge.

ACCESS FROM: Braehour forest is located on the very minor road that is an extension of the B870. From the A9, Thurso to Latheron trunk road, turn at the cross roads at Mybster just south of Spittal, signed for Westerdale. Continue along this road for 3 ½ to 4 miles. You will pass the turn-off to Halkirk and then cross the river Thurso at Westerdale, with the very attractive old mill building set back beside the water. Eventually, you will pass a disused quarry on your left and approximately ¼ mile beyond this, will come to the entrance to the forest on your right, with Forestry Commission signage.

Alternatively, if travelling from Halkirk, follow the minor road out from the village for Westerdale and when you reach the junction, turn right.

PARKING: There is no designated car park but you may park in the wide, outer part of the forest entrance where there is room to turn around. There is comfortable room for 2 to 3 horse boxes but please take care to leave the access clear.

Please note that your horse will have a full-on view of the wind turbines from the parking area as you are at the back of the Causewaymire wind farm, located about 2 to 3 miles away.

Land Management: The forest belongs to the Forestry Commission but as the trees are quite young, there is usually only occasional maintenance activity taking place and so you are less likely to encounter heavy machinery or vehicles on the track.

Ride Report

Access to the forest is gained via a side gate which you cannot open from horse back. The track then proceeds for no more than 2 miles, coming to a halt in a soft, boggy area but with a forest 'ride' opening up ahead of you from which there is a lovely view of the surrounding countryside.

General Information

During the week, forestry workers may be operating machinery in the forest. Read any signs warning you of forest operations such as tree felling and extraction and follow any precautions taken by the land manager. This will ensure that you do not hinder these operations and ensure your safety and that of people working there. In some cases signs may indicate that it is safe to go along a route if the activity has stopped, such as for the weekend.

Forestry Commission office: 01593 721204

Access Officer: David Barclay: 01955 605858

Caithness Riders Access Group: www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk/

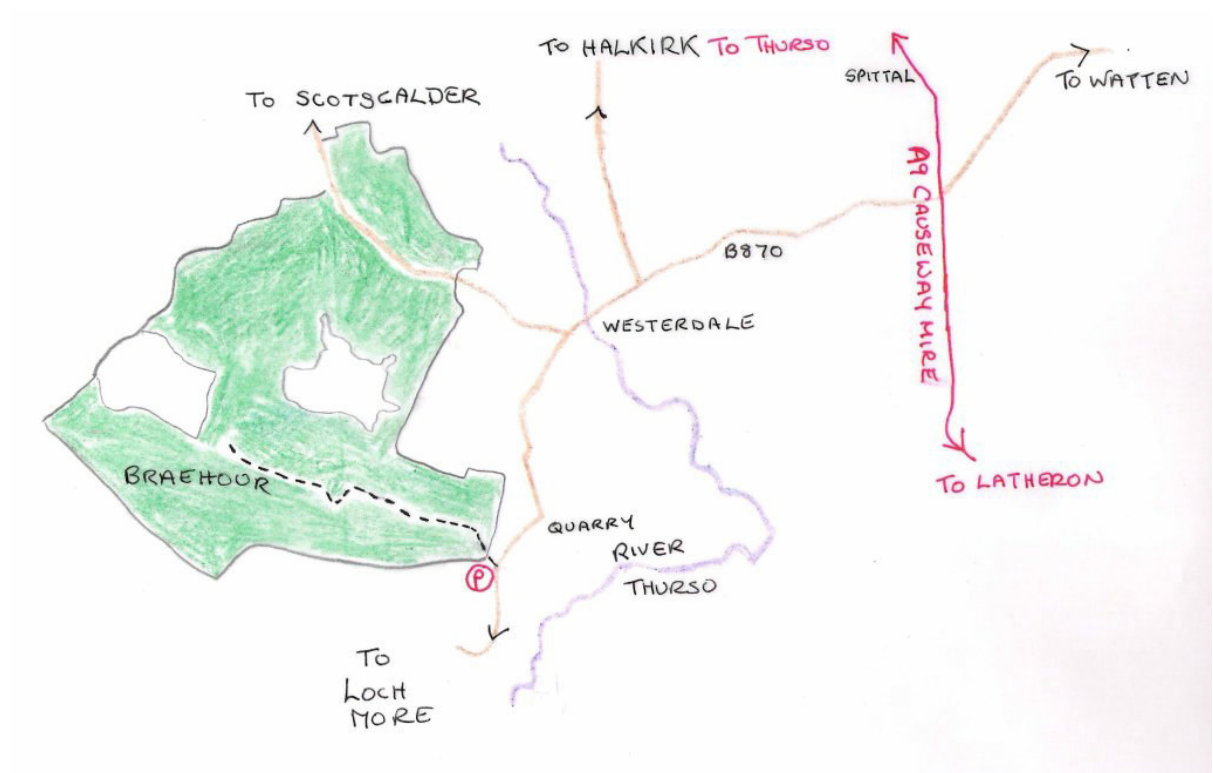
Useful websites

www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk

www.bhsscotland.org.uk

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

The attached map shows how to get there



Caithness Riders Access Group Code of Conduct

We would advise anyone planning to ride any route to walk it and assess if it is suitable for them to ride before taking their horse out on it.

Riders should always proceed with courtesy, care and consideration for all other users and landowners.

Remember that hooves can damage surfaces in wet conditions and after frost. Always try to ride on the middle of the track or the verge.

Be aware that others can be frightened of horses; stop, or proceed with caution and do not canter past them. Whenever possible acknowledge courtesy shown by other users, especially to drivers of motor vehicles.

Leave all gates as you find them.

Park horseboxes carefully and always leave access points clear.

Clear up all droppings from parking areas and take your rubbish and litter home.

Ensure that you and your horse are clearly visible to others.



Know the Code before you go

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors. Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water for recreation, education and for going from place to place providing they act responsibly. These access rights and responsibilities are explained in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The key things are:

When you're in the outdoors:

- ***take personal responsibility for your own actions and act safely;***
- ***respect people's privacy and peace of mind;***
- ***help land managers and others to work safely and effectively;***
- ***care for your environment and take your litter home;***
- ***keep your dog under proper control;***
- ***take extra care if you're organising an event or running a business.***

If you're managing the outdoors:

- ***respect access rights;***
- ***act reasonably when asking people to avoid land management operations;***
- ***work with your local authority and other bodies to help integrate access and land management.***
- ***respect rights of way and customary access***

Find out more by visiting www.outdooraccess-scotland.com or phoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.