

# Caithness Riders Access Group



## ***Broubster Forest***

Maximum Distance – 10 miles  
Surface: Hard Tracks with Short Grassy Sections. Stony in places

The information contained in this pack is correct as of 13/06/2005

## *Broubster Forest*

The Broubster forest tracks are wide and firm with a good surface for horses, although a little stony in places and with deep ditches at either side in some parts, especially along the first stretch. The tracks wind gently uphill and there are superb views over the surrounding countryside. There is a lot of mixed planting with many broadleaved trees alongside the tracks as well as the young conifers, so plenty of variety and you pass by two lochs, Saprán and Thornaid that are side by side.

**Access From:** - Broubster forest is located along the minor road that runs from the B874 (Thurso to Reay) road through Broubster village and on past Loch Calder to Halkirk. It is approximately 4 ½ miles from Thurso. The most direct route is via the B874 from Thurso (the road that goes up past the high school and college) and you continue on this for roughly 3 ½ miles through Westfield, until you reach a cross roads where you turn left onto the minor road towards Broubster. The forest access is approximately 1 to 1 ½ miles down this road on your right hand side. Alternatively, you can get to Broubster by a more scenic route from Halkirk, taking the minor road that runs up past Loch Calder (opposite the football pitch and the indoor riding school) and keep bearing right, following the signs for Broubster. If following this route, the parking area will be on your left hand side and the new access gate can be clearly seen on your approach.

**Parking:** - The parking area is a wide gateway. Vehicular access for authorised vehicles is via a padlocked double gate and this must be left clear so please park to one side. The smaller public access gate is to one side of this; please note that the forest is popular with walkers etc and there may be other vehicles parked there.

**Land Management :** - The forest is managed by Fountain Forestry and Highfield Forestry.

### **Ride Report**

About ¾ mile in from the entrance, a short track leads off to your right which takes you down to a beach with a gently shelving, easy access into the water- great for a paddle and a good place to introduce your horse to the idea of venturing into the water! Following the main track for about another mile, you reach a point where it branches into two forks to the left and right. These are both about 2 to 2 ½ miles in length and both are well worth riding. The one to the left has the advantage of a few grassy sections suitable for a canter and also a picnic table if you feel like a fuel stop! There is a short off-shoot of about ¼ mile along this track, leading off to the right that climbs to the top of a hill- another excellent vantage point ending in a lovely, circular, grassy area.

The other branch of the track off to the right takes you past Loch Thornaid and climbs steadily and gently uphill, giving great views for miles around. There is a grassy section near the end where you can pick up the pace for a short distance but otherwise the surface is a little stony. The track ends abruptly and obviously in a boggy section which dives into a wall of trees! The total distance of the ride is roughly 10 miles and it is well worth a visit.

### **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.**

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.

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](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) or phoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

## **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.

Access officer David Barclay: 01955 605858

Useful websites

[www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk](http://www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk)

[www.bhsscotland.org.uk](http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk)

[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

**The attached map shows how to get there**

