



# 8th Caithness & Sutherland WALKING FESTIVAL 22nd - 29th May 2011

*Land of Mystery & Imagination*



The Wick Paths Project

# Introduction

## **The 8th Caithness & Sutherland Walking Festival will take place from Monday 22nd May to Sunday 29th May 2011**



**The Wick Paths Project**

This event is being organised by the WICK PATHS PROJECT a sub group of the ROYAL BURGH OF WICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL, and was formed in 2001 to create, develop and maintain pathways in Wick and its environs. We have undertaken to provide informative panels, sculptures made by local artists, and illustrated guides for each of our pathways.

The Wick Paths Project would like to thank the many sponsors and supporters of this festival, and especially the Dunnet Head Educational Trust for their invaluable help and advice having run the festival for many years previously.

The Walking Festival was originally launched in 2004 to raise the profile of Caithness and Sutherland as a walking destination, and allow walkers the opportunity to enjoy the unique scenery of the **FAR NORTH, "THE LOWLANDS BEYOND THE HIGHLANDS"** with its rare Flora and Fauna.

Special thanks for help from the FORESTRY COMMISSION, RSPB, HIGHLAND COUNCIL RANGER SERVICE, CAITHNESS FIELD CLUB, THE WAYBAGGERS CLUB and other local organisations and businesses in supporting us in this new venture.

There is a wide selection of walks from leisurely jaunts to the more physically challenging hikes with leaders who have excellent local knowledge.

Please note the various grades alongside each walk, and ensure you are fit enough to undertake the ones you have chosen. As the weather can be unpredictable, be personally prepared with good walking shoes or boots, spare clothing, wet weather gear, basic first aid kit, and a packed lunch for the longer walks. Transport will be provided for some of the starting or finishing points of the walks, and the local train service will be used for the journey to and from Forsinaird.

### **PLEASE NOTE NO DOGS ARE ALLOWED ON WALKS.**

Adhere to the **SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE** at all times, - more information on [www.outdooraccessscotland.com](http://www.outdooraccessscotland.com) and ensure you have personal accident insurance to cater for your needs. Walk leaders reserve the right not to allow participants on the walks if they are incorrectly attired. Enjoy the scenery of the FAR NORTH, experience the peace and sanctuary of this truly wild part of Scotland, see beautiful rare spring wild flowers, nesting seabirds, the wide magnificent skies and travel along a wild coastline with impressive cliffs and castles.

**Find time to explore and see many more interesting sights for yourself, and be sure of a warm welcome wherever you go.**

## ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS IN CAITHNESS & SUTHERLAND.

This WALKING FESTIVAL is one of the few in SCOTLAND which can offer RIVERSIDE, FORESTRY, COASTAL, TOWN, and MOUNTAIN walks.

Wherever you are we can guarantee, BIG SKIES, REMARKABLE SCENERY, TRUE HIGHLAND HOSPITALITY and EXHILARATING WALKING for all levels of fitness and abilities.



Various alternative sports are also available in the area.

<b>GOLFING</b>	Reay, Thurso, Lybster and Wick (Reiss).
<b>FISHING</b>	Sea, river and loch fishing are all available.
<b>BIRDWATCHING</b>	Hides are at various places ie .St Johns Loch, and Forsinard.
<b>DIVING</b>	Open sea diving around the coast.
<b>KAYAKING</b>	Opportunities for sea and river experience.
<b>CYCLING</b>	Road and Mountain biking can be catered.
<b>GYM FITNESS</b>	Enjoy a session of training in Dunnet Forest.
<b>SWIMMING</b>	Pools in both Wick and Thurso.
<b>SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING</b>	Thurso.
<b>CEILIDH DANCING</b>	Halkirk.
<b>WORLD CLASS SURFING</b>	Thurso.

Enjoy breathtaking sea tours around the fascinating east sea coast of Caithness with SEACOAST.

Explore the caves, goes and natural stone arches alongside impressive cliffs. See bird and marine life up close, and view the magnificent cliff top ruined castles, and learn their dark history.

**Contact. Tel 01955 609200 [www.seacoast.com](http://www.seacoast.com)** SEACOAST operates from Wick Harbour.

Enjoy a Wildlife Cruise with the PENTLAND VENTURER, to view seals, orcas, and seabirds.

Sails from John O Groats Harbour. £15 adults, £7.50 children. **Contact: 01955 611353**

**[www.jogferry.co.uk](http://www.jogferry.co.uk)**

Spend time in WICK HERITAGE MUSEUM discovering the fascinating history of the town. A variety of local memorabilia including the famous photographic JOHNSTON COLLECTION. See and hear of the thriving HERRING FISHING of the 1800's in Thomas Telford's industrial settlement of Pulteneytown. Shop, and gardens. Open from 10am to last entry 4pm. **Contact: 01955 605393 [www.wickheritage.com](http://www.wickheritage.com)**

When visiting WICK take a trip to PULTENEYTOWN DISTILLERY and VISITOR CENTRE. Tasting Tour by arrangement also. Well worth a visit and enjoy the true maritime malt of the area. Open 10am to 16.00pm.  
**Contact: 01955 602371 [www.oldpulteney.com](http://www.oldpulteney.com)**

Visit THURSO and see CAITHNESS HORIZONS, a modern visitors centre with exhibits relating to Caithness. Archaeological remains, local industrial life, Dounreay memorabilia, the Robert Dick Collection of plant life, Stuffed birds, Film shows etc. Café and Art Gallery.

**Open from 10am to 8pm. Contact. 01847 896508 [www.caithnesshorizons.com](http://www.caithnesshorizons.com)**

Discover The Queen Mother's Home in Caithness. The Castle of Mey. Visit The Castle, Gardens, Shop, Tearoom And Animal Centre.

**Open from 10.30 am to last entry 16.00hrs. Contact: 01847 851227 [www.castleofmey.com](http://www.castleofmey.com)**

**Other visitor attractions are:**

Sinclair Girnigoe Castle	Outside Wick.
Yarrows Archaeological Trail	Thrumster.
Dunbeath Heritage Centre	Archaeology museum.
Castletown Heritage Centre	Museum relating to the 19th c Slate industry.
Dunnet Head Educational Trust	Shop/museum in Brough, Dunnet.
Mary Ann's Cottage	Dunnet A window to life on a croft.
Seadrift Centre Dunnet	Small museum of wild and sea life.
Caithness Broch Centre Auikingill	Near Keiss. Viking museum.
Laidhay Croft Museum	Lybster. Exhibits of crofting in Caithness.
Northlands Glass Centre	Lybster. Glass workshops & exhibitions.
Waterlines	Lybster. Café and small museum.



# Programme 2011

## **SUNDAY 22nd MAY: - STAXIGOE HARBOUR to REISS BEACH** Walk 1 A

A guided coastal walk with a Highland Council Ranger from the old Herring Fishing Harbour of Staxigoe along the cliffs to Noss Head Lighthouse and Sinclair Girnigoe Castle passing seals and seabird colonies on the way to Ackergill harbour. Walking boots essential.

Starts 11am. Bring a packed lunch. £3 adult, Cons £2 Terrain. Coastal Grass path 3hrs walk.

Contact. Marina: 01955 607758 or 07818588256. or Email: [marina@highland.gov.uk](mailto:marina@highland.gov.uk)

## **MONDAY 23rd MAY: - TELFORD TRAIL, WICK** Walk 2 A

Step back in time with a guided walk through the streets of Thomas Telford's planned industrial settlement of Pulteneytown looking at art and architecture. Light lunch and illustrated talk, prior to walk is included in price. £7 adults, £5 children. Terrain: Pavements and paths. 2hrs walk: Booking essential.

Contact Mackays Hotel Wick: Tel 01955 602323

Suggestion for afternoon: Visit Wick Heritage Museum or Pulteneytown Distillery.

## **TUESDAY 24th MAY: - FRESWICK to JOHN O GROATS** Walk 3 B

Join the Waybaggers on their guided walk from Freswick Harbour enjoying coastal scenery and seabird life with views of the North Sea passing the spectacular Stacks of Duncansbay with magnificent views of Stroma, the Orkney Islands and the Atlantic Ocean on the way to John O'Groats.

Special transport arranged from Wick to start of walk and also finish.

Contact: 01955 604 773 after 6pm please.

Coastal grass path 4-5hr walk. Packed lunch essential.

Evening event: Illustrated talk. Under Northern Skies. By Dan Mackay. 7pm.

## **WEDNESDAY 25th MAY - (Morning) HALKIRK, CAITHNESS** Walk 4 A

A Riverside walk visiting the site of Old Gerston Distillery and 14th c Braal Castle with views of Thurso River, Dorrery, and Morvern. Starts at Ross Institute, Halkirk 10.30am. Approx 2hr walk (4km)

Contact: 01847 831 459. Rural transport bus will be available from Wick or Thurso to start of walk.

## **WEDNESDAY 25th MAY - (Afternoon) WALK, WICK RIVER** Walk 5 A

Enjoy a leisurely Riverside walk looking at the springtime variety of rare flowers and grasses with a well known local expert on botany. Wildlife and nesting river birds also.

Starts 2.30pm (2hrs walk) Terrain core path.

Booking Contact Norseman Hotel, Wick: 01955 603 344

**THURSDAY 26th MAY: - DUNNET FOREST WALK** Walk 6 A

Enjoy an easy, gentle stroll through the sculptural trail of Dunnet Forest Trust noting natural fauna & flora of the area. Starts 10.30am

Contact. 07770 697711. Email: [kirstyrosie@dunnetforest.org](mailto:kirstyrosie@dunnetforest.org)

**THURSDAY 26th MAY: - FLOW COUNTRY WALK, RSPB, FORSINAIRD** Walk 7 B

Walk with RSPB guides through the magnificent wild peatland nature reserve seeing a variety of rare moorland birds, wildlife and plants.

Starts Wick railway station, 12.30am Thurso 12.45am (Train journey to Forsinaird). 2pm start. 2hr walk. £5 non members, £2 members

Contact. 01641 571 225 Email: [forsinaird@rspb.org.uk](mailto:forsinaird@rspb.org.uk)

**FRIDAY 27th MAY: - COASTAL WALK, WICK HARBOUR to SARCLET** Walk 8 B

Stupendous cliff scenery, nesting birds, and points of historical interest on the way .Packed lunch essential. Starts Wick Harbour 10am. Minibus arranged from finish back to Wick. Exposed cliff top walk with rough walking, Boots required.

Booking. Contact: Nethercliffe Hotel: 01955 602 044

Evening event: Illustrated talk by Dan Mackay. 7pm.

**SATURDAY 28th MAY - (Morning) ROBERT DICK WALK, THURSO** Walk 9 A/B

Enjoy hearing about the rare natural history collection of a local 19th c botanical expert Robert Dick as you walk along Thurso River. Starts: 10am Caithness Horizons, Town Hall, Thurso.

Booking contact: 01847 896 508. Suggestion for afternoon. Visit: Caithness Horizons or Castle of Mey.

**SATURDAY 28th MAY: - THE FORSINAIRD CHALLENGE** Walk 10 C

A challenging 12 mile hike with the RSPB Rangers over rough ground with magnificent views of moorland wildlife and birds. Packed lunch essential. Train available from Wick 8.30am or Thurso. 9am.

Booking contact. 01641 571 225 Email: [forsinaird@rspb.org.uk](mailto:forsinaird@rspb.org.uk)

Evening event: Ceilidh, Mackay's Hotel, Wick - 7.30pm to 11.30pm.

**SUNDAY 29th MAY: - DUKE OF KENT'S MEMORIAL, BERRIEDALE** Walk 11 B/C

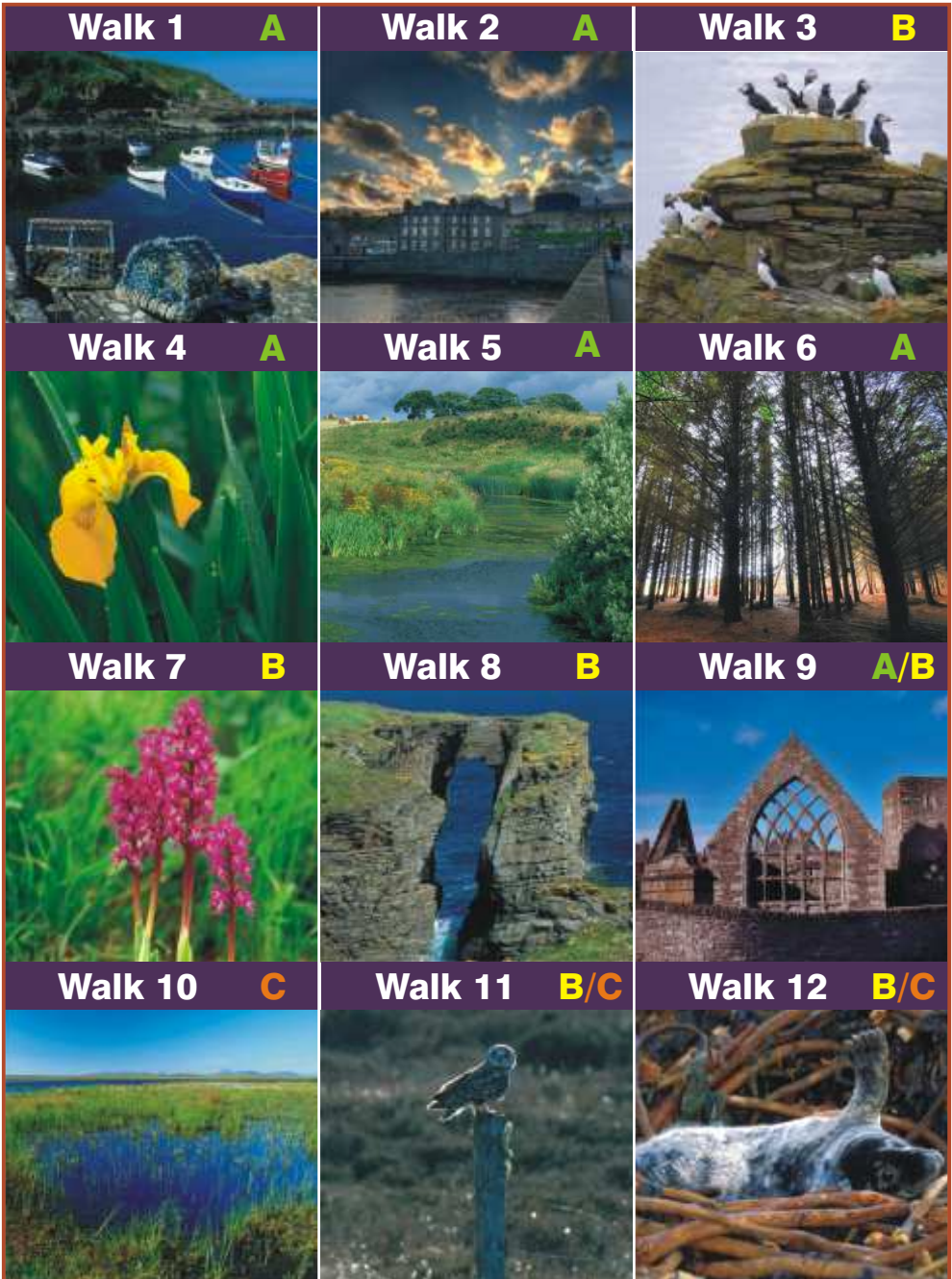
Join the Caithness Field Club on a guided walk through the moors to the memorial, looking at prehistoric monuments on the way. A packed lunch is essential. Leaving Thurso Railway station at 9.30am, Wick Railway station at 10am arriving Ramscaigs Berriedale 10.40am. Transport available from Thurso and Wick also Terrain. Moderate to Rough ground, Walking Boots required. 4hrs walk. Contact: 01847 892 999

**SUNDAY 29th MAY: - WHALIGOE to YARROWS** Walk 12 B/C

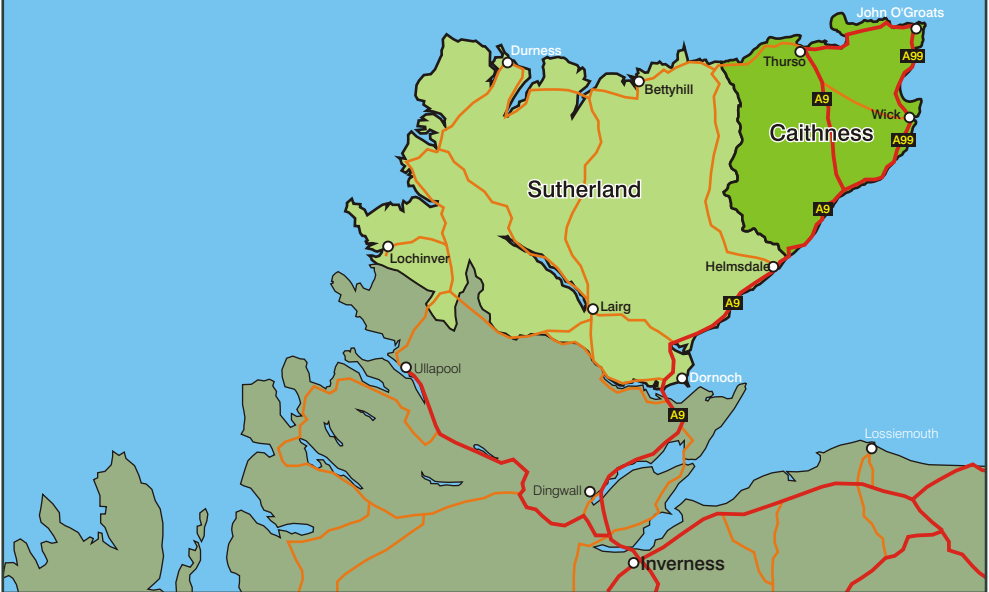
Guided walk with a Highland Council Ranger from the spectacular steps of the 19th c Fishing harbour of Whaligoe with its magnificent 365 stone steps to the archaeological site of Yarrows passing stone circles, standing stones ,burial cists and hill forts on the way. Packed lunch essential. 3/4hr walk. Starts Whaligoe: 10.30am.

Booking contact. Dieter 07500784123 or 01955 607758

From easy strolls to strenuous hikes here are some glimpses of this unique and distinctive landscape with its varied wildlife and, flora you can expect to see during the festival week.



# Map of Caithness & Sutherland



## Walking Grades

- A** = Easy walk up to 3 miles
- B** = Moderate walk - 3 to 5 miles
- C** = Degree of fitness recommended - over 5 miles



# Accommodation

A wide selection of accommodation is available whether you would like to rent a cottage, stay in local hotel, or B&B or use caravan and camping facilities. Some suggestions as we have something for everyone. Please book direct with accommodation providers. See also NORTH HIGHLAND TOURISM and NORTH OF SCOTLAND HOSPITALITY web sites for alternative accommodation.

## HOTELS

### WICK

Mackay's Hotel Tel: 01955 602323 [www.mackayshotel.co.uk](http://www.mackayshotel.co.uk)  
 Norseman Hotel Tel: 01955 603344 [www.norsemanhotelwick.co.uk](http://www.norsemanhotelwick.co.uk)  
 Queens Hotel Tel: 01955 602992 [www.queenshotelwick.co.uk](http://www.queenshotelwick.co.uk)  
 Nethercliffe Hotel Tel: 01955 602044 Email: [peepba@aol.com](mailto:peepba@aol.com)  
 Breadalbane House Hotel Tel: 01955 603911 [www.breadalbanehousehotel.co.uk](http://www.breadalbanehousehotel.co.uk)

### THURSO

Park Hotel, Tel. 0184 893 251/252 [www.parkhotelthurso.co.uk](http://www.parkhotelthurso.co.uk)  
 Station Hotel Tel. 01847 892722 [www.northhotels.co.uk](http://www.northhotels.co.uk)  
 Pentland Hotel Tel 01847 893202  
 Weigh Inn Hotel. Tel 01847 893722

### HALKIRK

Ulbster Arms Halkirk. Tel 01847 831641 [www.ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk](http://www.ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk)

### LYBSTER

Portland Arms Hotel. Tel: 01593 721721 [www.portlandarmshotel.co.uk](http://www.portlandarmshotel.co.uk)

### CASTLETOWN

Castletown Hotel, Castletown Tel. 01847 821656 [www.castletownhotel.co.uk](http://www.castletownhotel.co.uk)

## GUEST HOUSES and B&BS (WICK)

The Clachan, Wick: Tel 01955 605 384 [www.theclachan.co.uk](http://www.theclachan.co.uk)  
 Duncorran Guest House: Tel 01955 603500 [www.visit-wick.co.uk](http://www.visit-wick.co.uk)  
 Bank House: Tel 01955 604001  
 Impala: Tel 01955 602194  
 Riversdale Guest House: 01955 603875

## CARAVANS AND CAMPING

Wick Caravan and Camping Site: Tel 01955 605420  
 Thurso Caravan Campsite Tel 01847 895782 [www.ukcampsite.co.uk/sites/sendenquiry.asp?id=3293](http://www.ukcampsite.co.uk/sites/sendenquiry.asp?id=3293)  
 Dunnet Head Campsite Brough, Thurso. Tents only. Tel 01847 851774  
 Halladale Inn, Chalet and Caravan Park Melvich Sutherland. Tel 01641 531282. [www.halladaleinn.co.uk](http://www.halladaleinn.co.uk)

## EATING OUT

There is a large selection of eating establishments from traditional Scottish food to Indian and Chinese restaurants. All the Hotels serve meals using local fresh produce too.

No 1 Bistro, Mackays Hotel	Wick
Norseman Hotel	Wick
Nethercliffe Hotel	Wick
Houstons	Wick
Station Hotel	Thurso
The Bistro,	Thurso
Caithness Horizons	Thurso
Beat 4. Ulbster Arms Hotel	Halkirk

# A Picture Perfect Break



## MACKAYS

### HOTEL

*Discover the ancient beauty of Caithness and The Orkney Islands from the comfort and hospitality of Mackays Hotel.*

Mackays Hotel has been at the heart of the Wick Community since it was purpose built in 1833 and nothing has changed today. Its lively atmosphere and popular bar ensure that it delivers the most hospitable of highland welcomes.



### No.1 Bistro



Mackays Restaurant, No.1 Bistro provides a first class dining experience. The chef's menu is created around seasonal Highland produce and Scrabster landed fish, giving you a mouthwatering choice of the freshest local ingredients.

To find out more click onto  
[www.mackayshotel.co.uk](http://www.mackayshotel.co.uk)

Or call 01955 602323

Union Street, Wick, Caithness, Scotland KW1 5ED



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



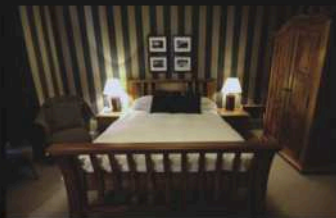
Hospitality  
assured



People. Processes. Innovation. **PRIDE** in Excellence

## The Ulbster Arms Hotel

**Accommodation....** 13 newly refurbished bedrooms, perfect for relatives over the festive period, or a romantic break away. The hotel has a unique Highland charm with comfortable lounges and friendly staff.



### The Angler's Nook...

lounge bar, with an extensive selection of quality malts, beers, wines and spirits. Bar lunches & bar suppers freshly prepared every day in relaxing surroundings.

**Beat 4 Restaurant...** In 2007, we recruited local head chef, Donald Munro, who persuaded his son Andrew to leave the fine dining of St Andrews to join him. Meticulous refurbishment of our Dining Room has further enhanced the superior dining experience. We pride ourselves on using only the best local produce. Breakfasts, lunches & dinners are served each day in our dining room. On Sunday, we serve a special carvery, which is very popular for family get togethers and celebrations.



The Ulbster Arms Hotel, Halkirk, KW12 6XY Tel: 01847 831641  
[www.ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk](http://www.ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk) [info@ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk](mailto:info@ulbsterarmshotel.co.uk)

## *The Norseman Hotel*



RIVERSIDE, WICK

## *The Castletown Hotel*



THURSO

# *Your Jewels of the North*

- Close to all Orkney ferry ports
- Minutes from the Castle of Mey
- Quality Accommodation, all en-suite
- Open Fires
- Warm Hospitality
- Complimentary Wifi access
- Private Coach Parking
- Great Food

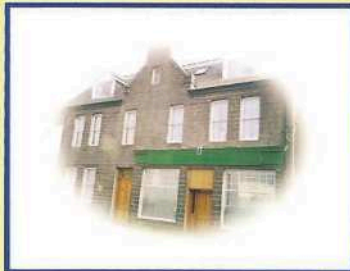
The Norseman Hotel  
01955 603344

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

The Castletown Hotel  
01847 821656

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

## DUNCORANN HOUSE & THE LORNE APARTMENTS



Choice of Five Self Catering  
Homes or Apartments



**WWW.VISIT-WICK.CO.UK**

**Telephone: 01955 603500**

**Telephone - Text: 07879641333**

“The” place to stay while visiting Caithness....

Excellent value for both Business folks and those visiting the county for a Holiday or to spend some time with their Friends and Family. Real home from home with each house or apartment furnished and equipped to provide everything you need for a relaxed stay.

24/7 Courtesy access to WI-FI BROADBAND.

Sky TV Viewing, Office Area if required. Library.

Close to Railway Station and Wick Airport with courtesy transfer on arrival in Wick by arrangement.

Apartments to suit single traveller -  
up to a four bedroom Family Home.

Business prices *from* £75 per night!

***Three and Four Bedroom House only £550 inclusive  
for all bookings during the Walking Festival.***

All stays from one night, short breaks, weekly holiday breaks, flexible week on week arrangements and short term inclusive accommodation contracts.

Longer rentals according to availability.



# PORTLAND ARMS HOTEL

Perfect for wedding receptions, conferences, meetings, private dinner parties and all special occasions



THE PORTLAND ARMS HOTEL

Lybster KW3 6BS

Tel: 01593 721 721 Fax: 01593 721 722

Email: [Manager@portland-arms.co.uk](mailto:Manager@portland-arms.co.uk)



## NETHERCLIFFE HOTEL

Louisburgh Street, Wick



**Welcomes walkers to the Caithness Walking Festival. Family run hotel in the centre of Wick offers a warm welcome in a cosy atmosphere.**

**Bar meals served daily**

**Free Wi fi access**

**6 en-suite rooms**

**Private Garden**

**Tel: 01955 602044**

**[www.nethercliffehotel.co.uk](http://www.nethercliffehotel.co.uk)**

## Station Hotel & Apartments



**Princes Street, Thurso, KW14 7DH**

**Tel: 01847 892003**

**E-mail: [station@northhotels.co.uk](mailto:station@northhotels.co.uk)**

Only 2 minutes walk from the main rail and bus stations the Station Hotel is an ideal haven for people wishing to explore Caithness and the North Coast of Scotland.

The Dining Room seats up to 50 people and offers an a la carte menu as well as daily specials. This is complimented with a good selection of wines, Scottish beers and malts.

The 35 en-suite rooms offer comfortable accommodation, including television, telephone, hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities and wi-fi.

Self-catering apartments are also available upon request. These are two bedroom, fully furnished apartments with bathroom, kitchen and sitting room.



# Festival Booking Form

Please list the walks you would like to do, and fill in your details in the space provided.

Send the completed booking form together with your payment as necessary to

**The secretary, wick paths project:  
Glengolly Farmhouse, Thurso KW14 7XH**

Cheques should be made payable to : **Wick Paths Project.**

Please note all children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.  
Please observe the outdoor access walking code on all walks.  
We regret but no dogs are allowed to accompany walkers.

Please detach this form and sent to above address (enclose payment as necessary)



## Walks

- |          |            |              |           |             |           |
|----------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | Sunday 22  | <b>6</b>     | <b>7</b>  | Thursday 26 |           |
| <b>2</b> | Monday 23  |              | <b>8</b>  | Friday 27   |           |
| <b>3</b> | Tuesday 24 | <b>9</b>     | <b>10</b> | Saturday 28 |           |
| <b>4</b> | <b>5</b>   | Wednesday 25 | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b>   | Sunday 29 |

Full name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone Number: .....

Email: .....

Cheque enclosed for: .....