Explore around Braemar

This leaflet describes six easy to follow routes around the village, with information about their length and what sort of path conditions to expect. There’s something for all tastes, from a gentle stroll by the River Dee to a strenuous hike for one of the best views on Deeside.

Each route is colour coded, and is marked on the ground with coloured way markers, signs or stone cairns to help find your way.

Gatherings and castles

The routes up Morrone or the lower Creag Choinnich follow in the steps of competitors at Braemar’s famous Gathering. This spectacular event includes races up the two hills, as well as Highland dancing, piping competitions and tossing the caber.

From other routes you’ll see Braemar Castle. Once home to the laird of Clan Farquharson, it was originally built by his arch rival! You can visit the castle in season to find out more about its fascinating history. The Farquharson family home is now Invercauld House, a little further down the valley.

About COAT

Sales of this leaflet help support the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust, which works to build and improve paths and to encourage access throughout the Cairngorms. Find out more at www.cairngormsoutdooraccess.org.uk
**River Dee - brown route**

**Distance:** 3 miles (4.8km)

**Start:** Visitor Information Centre

**Terrain:** Level earth path, with the surface broken and muddy in places.

A meander along Clunie Water and the River Dee, with fine views up and down the strath.

Cross the Clunie Water opposite the Invercauld Arms Hotel. At the Pulladh (a pool on the Dee) there’s a short cut back into the village, or you can continue to the mill of Coull. Turn left here to join the blue route and return to the village down Chapel Brae.

**Lion’s face and the Cromlins - yellow route**

**Distance:** 4 miles (6.5km)

**Start:** Visitor Information Centre

**Terrain:** Earth path with some steep sections

Great views of the village, Braemar Castle, Invercauld House and the upper Dee valley.

From Lion’s Face rock the Dee valley spreads out below you, with the Cairngorm Mountains in the background.

After the rock, drop down the hill to join a path running just above the A93, then turn left at the sign to ‘the Cromlins’ opposite Braemar Castle. Join the red route back into the village.

**Creag Choinnich - red route**

**Distance:** 2 miles (2.5km)

**Start:** Visitor Information Centre

**Terrain:** Steep, uneven surface; sometimes slippery

A short but steep climb up a charming wee hill, with magnificent panoramic views. The Gaelic means ‘mossy hill’.

This out-and-back path gives you a real taste of hillwalking, although its highest point is only 538 metres. In clear weather you can spot the granite tors that rise as sharp points on the top of Ben Avon in the heart of the Cairngorms.

**Queen’s Drive - green route**

**Distance:** 2.5 miles (3.8km)

**Start:** Visitor Information Centre

**Terrain:** Low level, with some sections on road

This gentle route follows part of a carriage drive that was one of Queen Victoria’s favourites.

Take the minor road south towards the golf course, then cross the Clunie water on the Royal Highland Society bridge.

Cross the A93 and follow the sign to ‘Queen’s Drive and Lion’s Face’. Turn left at a sign marked ‘Braemar’ to return to the village.

**Morrone Birkwood - blue route**

**Distance:** 2.5 miles (3.8km)

**Start:** Visitor Information Centre

**Terrain:** Some sections are uneven and muddy

The birkwood (birch wood) changes from deciduous trees in the valley to open scrub, dotted with juniper bushes, a real relic of the old mountain woods that once covered the Cairngorms. It’s one of the best examples of this transition in Britain, and protected under European Law.

After Pol na Ceire (the duck pond) at the top of Chapel Brae, take the left fork up Woodhill to a fine viewpoint. You’ll pass some high fences: they protect the trees from grazing by deer.