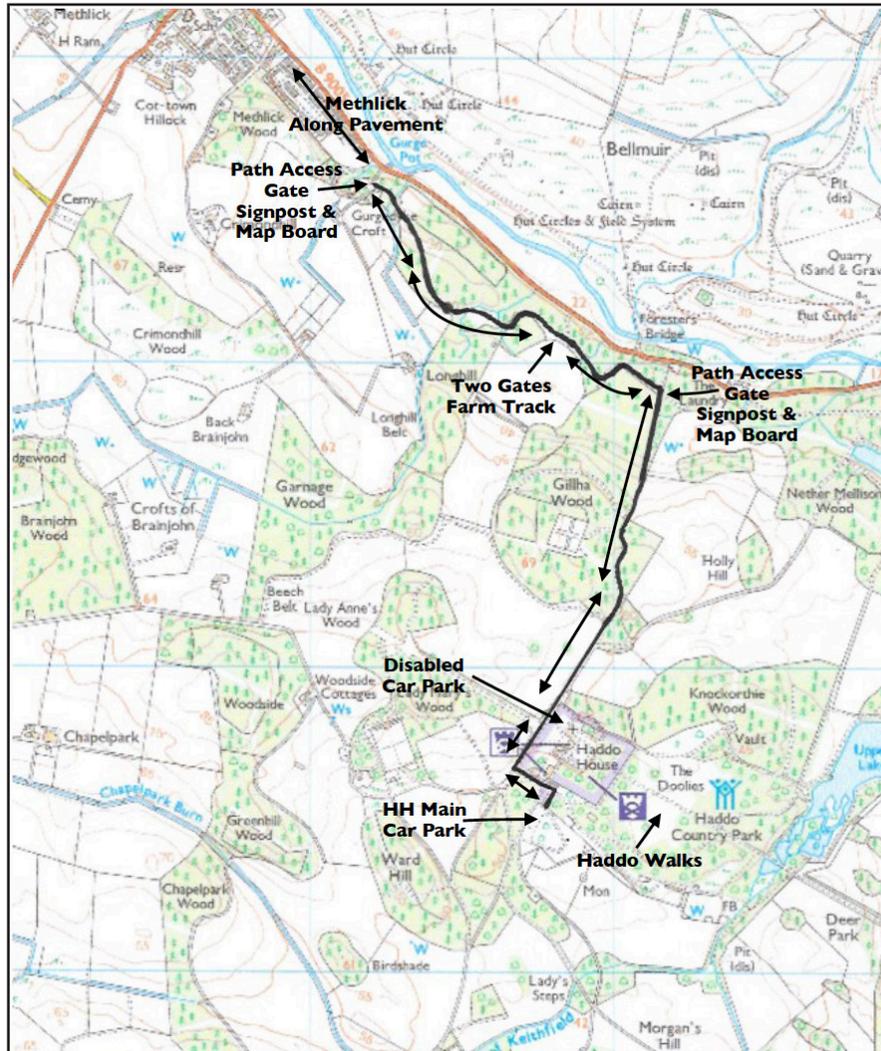


HADDO LINK PATH

Access to the Country Park is 9.5km. NW of Ellon and 1.5km N of Tarves.



Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen AB16 5GB

This route connects Haddo Country Park and its walks (separate sheet), to Methlick village and thence to the Wood of Wardford walk and the Gight Castle walk (separate sheets). It is along tarred estate roads, hard surfaced paths and finally pavements in Methlick, making it suitable for a wide variety of users.

From Haddo there is a hill, with gradual gradient, on the estate road descending to the Ythan valley. Once off of the tarred road the path has only a few short and gradual inclines. There are four gates all designed for wheelchairs, pushchairs, bicycles and other users.

The National Trust tearoom and shop is open seasonally 01651 851440

Mrs. Smith's tearoom, close to the main car park, is open all year round 01651 851815

Distance 4km

Start:

From the main HH car park walk towards the house and turn left on the tarred estate road to the T junction (signed: To Disabled Car Park. Disabled users can drive to this car park, and begin their walk from there). Turn right at the T junction and follow the road that runs in front of Haddo House and follow it without turning off. Be aware that on occasion estate vehicles (cars and tractors) use this road.

Follow the road as it turns gradually through mature trees with estate buildings through trees on your left and open farm fields on the right. It soon descends slowly into the Ythan valley with views across to the Bellmuir Hills (archaeological interest: hut circles).

At the bottom of the hill look for the signpost pointing left that marks the start of the link path. There is a map/interpretive board just before the first gate. Go through the gate and follow the path, crossing foot bridges and through two further gates (look out for tractors between these gates). Then through and along the edge of more woodland until you reach the final footbridge and shortly after that the exit gate. This leads onto a short road that on the left leads up to the Methlick Community Garden, and on the right down to the start of the pavement alongside the B9005 that takes you into the village of Methlick.

The walk through Haddo Country Park provides the opportunity of seeing some very fine specimens of both native and exotic trees. Our own wych elm, ash and oak grow side by side with the introduced horse chestnut, sitka spruce and sycamore. You will go through good stands of the native Scots pine, a lovely conifer that is easy to identify with its orange/red bark on the upper parts of the trunk. In mainland Europe the tree is often referred to as 'red pine' because of the colour of the bark.

Passing the Scots pine is the best place to watch for red squirrels, as their favourite food is pine cones. Look on the ground for cones that have been chewed, the squirrels do this in order to get at the seeds.

You may well see and hear buzzards flying through and above the trees and woodland. Woodpeckers may also be heard attacking the trees with their pneumatic drill beaks. Listen for something that sounds like a large dog barking in the woodlands, which is the sound of male (buck) roe deer, they really do sound like a dog!

Once in Methlick visit the award winning memorial garden that is a very attractive area close to the Church. Methlick is also the start of two fine further walks along the Ythan valley through the Wood of Wardford and on to the old Gight Castle, home at one time to the mother of Lord Byron (separate walk sheets).

Methlick village provides public toilets, shops, café and pub lunches. It can be accessed by bus from Aberdeen: no. 291, and the link path provides the opportunity to explore the delightful National Trust owned Haddo House built by William Adam. You can also explore the large Country Park along its range of paths leading to features of interest.

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