



Laich o' Moray

50 Mile Challenge

29th/30th August 2026



Introduction

Welcome to Moray in the North of Scotland. Moray (pronounced Murray) is blessed with a beautiful coastline that stretches along the Moray Firth with miles of unspoilt beaches, cliffs and picturesque villages. Moray is also reputed to have 40 more days of sunshine than any other part of Scotland! Please note that this description of this 50-mile circular route (in 24hrs) is from the Rafford Village Hall. As well as a change of start point there are several other changes to the route from previous years. The terrain is a mixture of forest paths and tracks, pavements, sandy beaches and minor roads. Most of the route is fairly flat except for a minor climb to Nelson's Tower, and later to the forested ridge of Heldon Hill, after Milntown. Total elevation is around 2510ft (765m).

You will need a compass and map (OS Explorer Map 423 or OS map 28, 1:50,000) to help you follow this description. Alternatively maps in downloaded electronic format will be allowed provided adequate power supply for 24hrs can be demonstrated. Sunset on the 29th August is at 20:19, with Civil twilight at 21:01. Sunrise on 30th August is at 06:09.

Starting at Rafford, the route travels to Forres through forestry to the Dava Way and then after Nelson's Tower to the coast at Findhorn. Here you have the choice of following the Moray Coast Trail through the dunes or via the beach to Burghead (low water 07:24, high water 13:46). From here the route runs along the cliff tops then drops back down to the beach to pass the Lossiemouth lighthouse, and then on to Elgin via the old railway line. The route then returns via Quarrel Wood and Milntown to pass above Plusscarden Abbey on Heldon Hill and Califer Hill before dropping down to the finish at Rafford.

Please be vigilant on roads especially later in the Event as you become increasingly tired and possibly less attentive. Also please keep noise to a minimum as you pass through Towns and built-up areas on the route.

Abbreviations

TR	Turn Right	GR	Grid Reference (all NJ)
TL	Turn Left	CP	Checkpoint
N,S	North, South etc	Thru	Through
BR/L	Bear Right/Left	WM	Way Marker
jct	Junction	FP	Fingerpost
Immed	Immediately	St	Stile
Tk	Track	R/LHS	Right/Left hand side
AH	Ahead	M	Miles
km	Kilometre	m	metres

1. Rafford start to Findhorn CP1 – 17.9km, 11.1 miles

Checkpoint 1 Open: Saturday 10.15

Close: Saturday 12.45

Woodside (2.9km, 1.8M)

From the Rafford Village Hall, walk to the B9010 and TL(SE) for 200m along the road and on a pavement (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Cross road onto a vehicle track (NJ069554) and head SW for about 500m, keeping R at junctions with other vehicle tracks until you come to a locked gate. Go around the gate and head W and then SW on wide forestry tracks for about 700m, going past the Woodsman cottage and gate until you get to another locked gate. Go around the gate and keep heading SW over a stream and onto another vehicle track with woodland on the R and a large field on the L. After about another 400m, there is a track junction at the corner of the field, continue straight AH on a

vehicle track with woodland on both sides. Continue SW along the forestry track for about 1km, until you come to the Dava Way junction (NJ047541).

Dava Way (4.3km, 2.7M)

Turn R and go N and follow the Dava Way way markers for about 4km, to Dallas Dhu Distillery on forestry tracks and the disused railway line embankment. Stay on the Dava Way and keep heading N for about 800m to a stone over bridge (NJ036573) and immediately after it, turn R and go up steps to a farm track.

Sanquhar Woods (2.1km, 1.3M)

Head E on farm track for about 100m and then bear L onto a forestry track for about 700m, keeping woodland on the left and open countryside to the right. After the woodland cycle park (jumps) on left, in 200m go L (NJ043573) into the woodland on a wide uphill forestry track. After about 160m go R onto a trod path and head N across a woodland meadow. On the other side of the meadow join another path and go ½ L in a NNW direction. Keep on this wide path that takes you close behind housing on the left side and after about 500m the path bends to the right to head NNE away from housing and starts to go downhill. Continue going NNE until you get to the wooden footbridge over the Mosset Burn (NJ043582). Go over the bridge and TL(W) to follow the burn downstream for about 140m, then take a sharp R turn uphill on a narrow-stepped path. Follow this path up hill and then behind housing on LH side until you emerge onto a road.

Cluny Hill (1km, 0.6M)

Go R and head NE on a narrow-enclosed path between gardens, that leads to a wide access track going N to the B9010, St Leonards Road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go directly across the road and up a steep roadway up towards the Cluny Cemetery. Keep going uphill and after about 250m take the left fork to the cemetery corner. From corner, head N up hill to the highest point which is the Nelson Tower (NJ044590). Walk around it for some fantastic views of Findhorn Bay, the Moray Firth and the hills beyond. From here, go easterly (to R of Tower) on trod paths through the woodland and then steeply down the ridge to join a traversing path. From here head SE down a steep leaf covered slope to a minor road access point (NJ046590).

Drumduan School Grounds to Sueno's Stone (0.5km, 0.3M)

TL onto the minor road and in a short distance TR to the entrance of Drumduan School. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go down the rough vehicle track for 230m (ignore turning on L) into the school grounds and as the track bends L (school/play area on R), look for a narrow grassy path between two fields on L (NJ046592). Go down this grassy path which will take you to a road between houses. TL and then R to cross road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) and follow the pavement on the minor road to the large, visible, Pictish stone in glass case (Sueno's Stone). Note street signs for Sueno's Stone & Kinloss.

Sueno's Stone to Findhorn CP1 (7km, 4.4M)

Just before Sueno's Stone, take the tarmac cycleway/pavement (signed for Kinloss & Findhorn) over A96 bridge towards Kinloss, and continue for 2.3km go over the railway bridge after LH bend. Just after the bridge, cross road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) to opposite pavement and continue to pedestrian crossing (after petrol station). Cross road and follow pavement for 2.3km (NW) to end of pavement opposite Findhorn Foundation (NJ050634). Cross road to opp pavement for 1.2km keeping the shoreline of the bay to your left until the start of the one way traffic system at the fork junction. Take the right fork and TR to go past the Church car parking area (on R). The Findhorn Village Centre is the stone building just ahead of you. Please use the entrance on the right side of the building, by the wooden fence. This is **Checkpoint 1** (NJ041641).

Total Distance – 17.9km, 11.1M

2. Findhorn CP1 to Burghead CP2 – 13.2km, 8.2M

Checkpoint 2 Open: Saturday 12.00

Close: Saturday 16.00

From the Findhorn Village Centre, go back to the fork junction and follow the shoreline road towards the harbour. Come off the tarmac road opposite the Kimberly Inn and walk along the shoreline tracks until the coastal path fingerpost pointing inland (NJ037645). TR and take the road past the Royal Yacht Club, then TL at a crossroads junction. Follow the public road NW to the Ice House (on L), then TR (past toilet block) onto the beach car park and B/L past car park barriers to public toilet block where the beach is accessed via wooden steps. There will be a marshalled clipper post at this point (NJ036648). The tide will be sufficiently out along Burghead Bay to walk the 11.2km along the beach to Burghead.

Alternatively the Moray Coast Trail runs parallel to the beach through the adjacent woodlands and although more difficult to follow in early stages (further inland than shown on map) is well signed beyond the dunes area.

At Roseisle, half way to Burghead, there is a forestry picnic area with toilet facilities (NJ105657) that is on the way marked coastal trail, but is also easily accessed from the beach. You can of course use a combination of both options of beach and coastal trail.

Go up the slipway at the end of the beach and keep close to the rocky beach on L. TL at the main sea defence wall as you enter Burghead, then take the first tarmac road to the right which is signposted the Moray Coast Trail and go about 100m NE, then TL onto Granary Street and 100m after road jct TR onto Seller Street where you'll find **Checkpoint 2** (NJ112689) in the Community hall.

Total Distance – 31.1km, 19.3M

3. Burghead CP2 to Lossiemouth CP3 – 15.8km, 9.8M

Checkpoint 3 Open: Saturday 14.30 Close: Saturday 19.30

From the Burghead Community Hall, TL back to Granary St, and TR to walk WNW to the tall main harbour back wall, where you'll find stone steps in a corner (NJ107690) going north up to the high ground of the headland cliffs. After the steps keep to the right of a retaining wall and then go left up a narrow flight of stone steps. Follow the cliff top path to the white lookout building and anchor sculpture on its east side. There will be a marshalled clipper post at this point (NJ108691). From here, head down the grassy ridge path to a small public road and TL (NNE) for a short distance and then TR to the coastal path. Go SE along the coastal path past the large maltings building that dominates the town. From here, follow the coastal trail way markers to Hopeman along the disused railway line. TL at stone over bridge and then through a caravan park to the harbour. continue along the Coastal Trail past beach huts, and then up steep steps to where the path emerges above the quarry. Continue AH along the Coastal Trail on the narrow cliff top path towards Lossiemouth.

At Covesea, well before Lossiemouth, the path goes close to a sandy beach near the Covesea Lighthouse, go along the beach from here because it is much easier to walk on than the overgrown coastal trail, which goes through the dunes slightly inland. At the end of the beach, go up the slipway and follow the sea wall to the end of the parking area. Follow the coastal trail to the seaward side of houses and over a rough grassy area to meet a minor road. TL for 200m, past business premises, and then TR (SSW) before the petrol station and go up King Street (Unsigned). Continue up King St and cross over Commerce St and Queen St to the grass park on R. The Lossiemouth Baptist Church is on King Street (on L) opposite the top corner of the park. This is **Checkpoint 3** at 45.8km (NJ236709) and is the halfway feeding station where you will be served with your evening meal.

Total Distance – 46.8km, 29.1M

4. Lossiemouth CP3 to Elgin to Bishopmill Hall CP4 – 10.1km, 6.3M

Checkpoint 4 Open: Saturday 16.00 Close: Saturday 22.30

Lossiemouth to Disused Railway Line (640m/0.4M)

After a good feed at the Lossiemouth Baptist Church continue SSW up King Street until it meets Prospect Terrace. TR onto opp pavement, and in 100m, look for a narrow tarmac path (on L) going downhill opposite St James' Church. Before descending this, take in the magnificent views to the east and south. Go down the path and cross over Quarry Road and go down Queen's Lane (Unsigned) in a SSE direction, and at the bottom, cross over Clifton Road and then Church St. Where it meets Macduff St, go slightly L (SE) onto the disused railway line path known as the Imlach Way. Look for the tarmac path that goes through a gap between two stone walls.

Disused Railway Line to Elgin Cathedral (8.2km/5.1M)

You are now on the unsigned old railway line to Elgin which heads south. It soon turns into a dirt track when it leaves Lossiemouth and then crosses the busy B9103 road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). After the road crossing, walk down this very straight disused railway line for 4.8km to where it comes to a minor public road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go L here in an east then SE direction, before taking a R turn (SW) and walking about 1.5km on a minor road to the outskirts of Elgin. At the jct, BR and keep AH for 100m to meet a main road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). TL (S), and stay on LH pavement to pedestrian crossing. Cross to RH pavement, and follow the main road, past RH bend and TR (NW) onto a tarmac path just before the big road bridge. This will take you to a footbridge over the River Lossie. Go over the bridge and TR (W) for a short distance and then TL and in 100m, look for the entrance path to Copper Park on R (opp Elgin Cathedral).

Elgin Cathedral to Bishopmill Hall CP4 (1.3km/0.8M)

Walk (W) through the park and past the Elgin Library, and continue NW along the west side of the big pond and look for a footbridge (beyond the car parks) across the river Lossie. Cross the bridge and walk up the side road until it meets the busy Lossiemouth road. Continue (N) up the main road pavement for a short way to a pedestrian crossing. Cross road and TR and then immed TL (W) onto Blantyre Place. Go up street past parked cars and TL to the entrance to Bishopmill Community Hall, **Checkpoint 4** (NJ214635).

Total Distance – 57km, 35.4M

5. Bishopmill CP4 to Miltonduff Hall CP5 – 8.7km, 5.4M

Checkpoint 5 Open: Saturday 17.30

Close: Sunday 00.30

Elgin to Quarrelwood (1.9km/1.2M)

From the Bishopmill community Hall entrance, TR and then TL (W) along Blantyre Place and straight on at the junction until the T-junction. At the Primary School grounds TL (S) and follow the school boundary fence for a short distance to the fence corner. Go R (SW) along the narrow trod path that goes down to a riverside path. Follow this to the tarmac path junctions where there is a fingerpost indicating the path to Quarrelwood. TR (W) to follow a wide tarmac track (Cycle Route 1) that is signed to Quarrelwood. The tarmac path and then, before tarmac zig zags, B/L onto trod riverside path for about 300m to exit onto Morriston Road. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) Cross the road to the start of Brumley Brae. Take the road up the Brae (WNW). Keep to the pavement on the right but look out for a small path after about 150m on the LH side. **Cross the road carefully** and take the trod path running on the right hand side of a concrete post and wire fence, just after the **yellow grit bin** and street light.

Quarrelwood (3.2km/2M)

(Quarrelwood has a network of criss-crossing paths, which can make navigation tricky. If you think you may have deviated from the route, keep the noise of the busy A96 on your left and high ground on your right. Head W until you reach a minor road. Turn left on this road and rejoin the route. (**Beware of mountain bikers in the forest during daylight hours**).

From the yellow grit bin (NJ201633) follow the forest path (W) and continue for 320m and take a sharp R turn (before the bench) up wooden steps to reach standing stones at top. TL for 30m and TR to go up slight uphill path for 120m to Tk jct and wooden posts (NJ197634). TL thru wooden posts (SW) and keep AH for 880m, on narrower and undulating path (ignoring all jcts) to path jct at (NJ191629).

TR uphill (NW) for 150m, keeping AH at 1st jct to reach wide jct at (NJ188629). TL and continue AH for 1.8km in a westerly direction that trends downhill until a minor road is reached (NJ172630) (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go left down the minor road to where it meets the busy A96. (**MAJOR ROAD – TAKE EXTREME CARE**).

Quarrelwood to Miltonduff CP5 (3.5km/2.2M)

Go straight across this major trunk road at the junction, following the instructions of the marshals for your safety, and go directly to the narrow path over the low embankment. On the other side of the embankment you will find a narrow path which continues to a disused tarmac road and a gate near a cottage, which may be padlocked. . Go over, or around the gate and continue SW for about 200m, until a minor road is reached. (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). Go L (S) along this road for about 1.9km. Look out for a metallic cockerel on the RHS and just after the house called Whiteoaks at the top of a rise, on the R there is a single track road. **DO NOT** take this turning (but **remember it** for the return journey after the CP). Continue along the road down past the Primary School, joining the pavement on the left hand side of the road, to the road junction. TL and after 100m cross the road, just after the War Memorial junction (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) to the Miltonduff Hall **CP5** (NJ178602). Walk through the car park to the entrance.

Total Distance – 65.8km, 40.9M

6. Miltonduff CP5 to Rafford Village Hall Finish – 15.8km, 9.8M

Finishing Checkpoint Open: Saturday 18.00 Close: Sunday 08.00

Miltonduff Hall to Califer Hill Viewpoint (12.4km/7.7M)

After the CP, retrace your steps by crossing the road (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**) and in 100m TR at the road junction and back up the minor road. After passing the Primary School, take the single track road on L. Walk W and TL after about 400m onto a forestry track next to a house (Glendale) (NJ169602). Go SW along and up the wide forestry track for about 670m, following green way marker posts and at (NJ166597) go L at a track Y junction, between 2 wooden posts. Continue on narrow forest path for 960m (keep AH at next jct – NJ165591) and go round to R of fallen tree (NJ163589). Keep AH (ignoring next 2 minor junctions) to reach wide jct at NJ157585. TR on wide tk and continue uphill for 1.75km to fork jct (NJ141580). Take R fork on steep uphill stony Tk for 650m and later keep L (hidden quarry on R) to reach wide t-jct (NJ136581). TL (SW) and continue for 2.2km on straight, wide track to t-jct (NJ116572). TR for 650m to go downhill to next t-jct (NJ114578). TL for 1.5km and continue AH to minor public road jct (NJ101570). (**PUBLIC ROAD – TAKE CARE**). TR (NNW) and go downhill on public road to a T-jct, and then TL up the gently sloping public road for 1.6km to the Califer Hill Viewpoint, where there will be a marshalled clipper post (NJ084570).

Califerhill VP to Rafford VH (3.4km/2.1M)

Go back to the Califerhill Viewpoint access point, TR (SW) and go down the road for about 350m and take the sharp L turning onto a farm track signed Laverock Height and Burnside. Keep R and follow this to a junction and take the R fork (S), leading to the converted steading at Burnside. Go straight on past the house and then after a short distance and **before** you go get to the gate, TR to follow the woodland path (SW) down the hill that has a fingerpost signed Sourbank.

This path can be a bit rough and muddy in places, but after about 800m, it comes to a field gate at a public road end. Continue down hill on the road for a short way, to where the road bends sharply to the L. Go slightly R here, down a rough track/driveway (Parkview) that goes in front of the house, to a rough trod path, heading W. Follow this slightly overgrown path through a corridor of tall gorse and broom bushes, followed by a less enclosed path section to where it eventually meets a wide farm track.

Go L on the farm track and head SE past scattered houses on RHS then SW though housing either side of a rough vehicle track which later bends to R to reach the B9010 public road. Go R here for 180m on a pavement then on the road to arrive at the Rafford Village Hall car park entrance, which marks the end of the Laich o' Moray Challenge and the start of a well deserved breakfast after completing about 81.6km/50.7M.