

Chancefield Trenches

Aerial photograph
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Starting from Falkland Centre for Stewardship car park (1), learn about the heritage of medieval hunting as you walk through the stunning Falkland Estate to Chancefield Trenches.



Falkland Palace and Park painted c1639 by Alexander Keirincx.
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These large V-shaped earthworks (2) are the remains of old road-ways that may have been used for driving deer into the hunting park of Falkland Palace. There are five trenches that overlap in places, each around 2.5m to 3m deep and up to 220m in length. Originally they stretched 45m farther east.

At its greatest extent the Falkland deer park covered an area of 1600 acres to the north of the historic village. The hunting grounds were first used by the MacDuff Earls of Fife. Under royal ownership the park was expanded during the 15th and 16th centuries by the early Stewart kings. James IV added a large extension into the lands of Cash in 1508. Nearby to the south the old road from Falkland to Kinross in the 18th century passed close to the site. At Arraty Burn (3) the place-names 'Greyhounds Den' and 'Deerends' (4) give a clue to the area's history.

In 2016 a community excavation revealed that the trenches were quarried through natural bedrock and had man-made earth banks on either side. Prehistoric worked-stone flints indicated occupation in the vicinity between c.4000BC-c.1500BC. The site had other uses during its long history, such as a training ground during World War I and possibly a quarry.



Terrain: The route follows estate roads, which are used for vehicle traffic and can be muddy in places. The area around Chancefield Trenches contains sloping and uneven ground. There is one field gate. Please be aware of livestock.



moderate

Distance: 4.5km 2.8 miles
Time: 2 hours 30 minutes

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