Welcome to England’s longest and highest Forest Drive, which winds through the working forest between Kielder Castle and Blakehopeburnhaugh on the A68.

Watch for the white rumps of roe deer, or glimpse our secretive feral goats.

Stroll to the wildlife hide above Kielder Burn, or enjoy upland meadows and a picnic near East Kielder.

Spot a circular stone ‘stell’ for holding sheep. This area was farmed before Kielder Forest was planted.

The weather can be wild up here, so the Forest Drive closes over the winter.

Kielder Forest Drive only open seasonally. Please check forestryengland.uk for details.

Connecting communities
Kielder Forest Drive opened in 1973. It was built by Forestry England for planting and harvesting trees high on these hills. The Drive gave local people a valuable shortcut between Byrness and Kielder, and some foresters drove along here every day to get to work. Today it also offers visitors an exciting high level perspective on Kielder Forest.

Kielder Forest Drive 12 miles (20km)

Use this guide to help you discover the secrets of our wild border country. What will you see here today?

Please return this guide to one of the toll points at either end of the Forest Drive when you leave.

Blakehope Nick and The Nick shelter
457m above sea level
Mid-point of the Forest Drive.
Top of the watershed between the North Tyne and Rede river valleys. The burns flowing west feed into Kielder Water.

Spot rocky ridges and old quarries. The sandstone was used for building.

Look out for red squirrels and listen for the cat-like call of buzzards overhead.

Blakehopeburnhaugh Waterfall trail

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Travelling Tales
enjoy the views from Blakehope Nick

Welcome to The Nick, which stands on the highest point of the Forest Drive. Take a moment to stop, look, and enjoy the drama of this wild and remote spot.

Whatever the weather, there’s something extraordinary to see. Use this guide to orientate you when you’re standing inside The Nick.

The Nick is made from larch
Larch is the only European conifer that loses its needles in the autumn. Look out for larches along the Forest Drive turning golden-yellow in September, then standing bare until spring. Larches grow quickly and produce very useful wood, so they are popular trees for working forests like Kielder.

The red squirrels who live here are also very partial to the seeds!

Entrance to The Nick

Don’t forget to sign the Visitors’ Book! You’ll find it in the box on the back of the stone sign.

Celebrating 100 years of Forestry 1919-2019