

Why do we need your help?

During our first decade we had help from some very large bodies but now we have achieved our primary aim we need help on a more modest scale to fund our cycle of repair and care.

We need help to buy materials to repair wear and tear to the path surface over short distances, lay drains in muddy places or hire equipment for volunteers to clear fallen trees and land slips. Individually, such projects are not vastly expensive but over time require the purchase of substantial amounts of material and equipment. Can you help with time or money?



What help can do:

before and after in Newtyle Forest



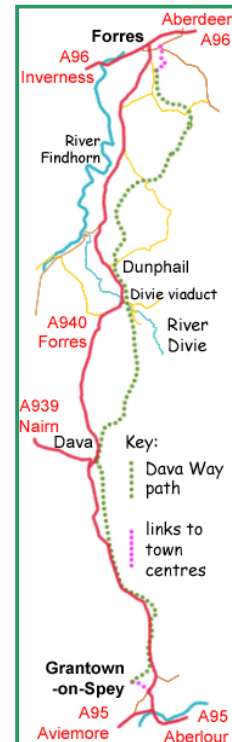
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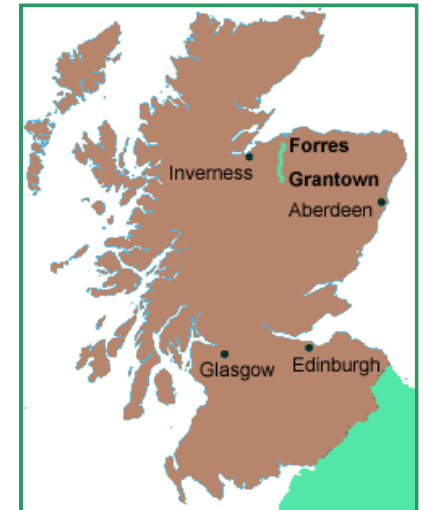
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Who are we?

In 1996 a survey concerning the development of Forres showed strong support for re-opening the route of an abandoned railway line as a pathway.

As a consequence a group of local people formed The Dava Way Association as a not for profit company and a registered charity. Having achieved our aim of negotiating full access and clearing the route we now have to promote and maintain it. We believe we are the only volunteer group in the UK, to have opened and then maintain a trail of this length.





What is the Dava Way?

The Dava Way is a 23 mile trail in North East Scotland following the abandoned part of the Highland Railway Line between Forres and Grantown-on-Spey. It is an off road walking and cycling route connecting the Moray Coast with the Speyside Way in the

Cairngorm National Park. It passes through a mix of farmland, woodland and moorland as you climb from the River Spey to cross Dava Moor before descending to the Moray Firth.

The Dava Way is now shown on the Ordnance Survey and AA maps as a Core Path. Our web site has fuller information on the route, its history and the work we are currently undertaking.

Why do we need help?

Whilst we have established access along the route we are still in the process of creating a pleasant and passable path along its whole length. Our attempt to make a good surface and maintain it is at odds with its popularity. Moray Council assists us to monitor our success and their foot-fall counter indicates around 15,000 visitors a year.

The popularity of the Dava Way demands work to combat erosion and improvements to drainage to ensure the route is available when we have prolonged rainfall. In the longer run we expect a demand for picnic and parking facilities at strategic points along the route.



Who will benefit?

In addition to providing a linear home for a variety of wildlife, much of it endangered elsewhere, the path is an asset to people who live in the area or visit the region.

It passes through an area of Britain with a particularly rich flora and fauna. Ospreys nest near the route, red squirrels and roe deer inhabit the forests, grouse and golden plover are frequent sightings on the open moorland.

To encourage public use and awareness we maintain a web site and have erected signs and interpretive boards along the route. We also provide assistance to outdoor activity organisations that use the Dava Way and have helped charities to hold fund raising events on the route.



What have we achieved?

So far the Association has received over £50,000 from various sources along with material donations which we translated into a new footbridge, rebuilt embankments, access steps and ramps, surface work, picnic site, drains, tree pruning, leaflets and information boards.

Routine maintenance is done entirely by volunteers, as is all fund raising and clerical work.

Where contractor work is necessary it is always supported by volunteers working alongside. The Association has no paid employees.

