

# Hazlehead Park Trail & Guide

The park's history, art & attractions



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## Opening times

**Hazlehead Park** is open 24 hours and **Pets Corner** at the following times:  
April–September 10.00am-5.30pm  
October 10am-4.15pm  
November–March 10.00am-3.15pm

There is a small entry charge for **Pets Corner**

## Facilities

The Park Cafe is open 9.00am-5.00pm and offers a range of food and refreshments in their attractively refurbished home.  
The park toilets are open at the same times.

## Transport

**Hazlehead Park** can be accessed by First Bus 11 and Stagecoach X17. These stop on Queen's Road at the end of Hazlehead Avenue and Groat's Road, involving a walk to the park. A traffic-free route to the park runs parallel with Hazlehead Avenue.

There is parking off Hazlehead Avenue and off the road north of the park.

Bike lock up stands are located in front of the pond and at the café.

## Accesibility

 This trail is accessible but has some uneven ground.

## Picture Credits

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# #aberdeentrails

Hazlehead Park is one of the oldest and most historical properties in Aberdeen as it was originally part of the Freedom Lands which were gifted to the city by King Robert the Bruce.

It became a country estate before being bought back by the city as a public park and now has an excellent range of exciting and family-friendly facilities include playparks, café, maze, Pets' Corner and year-round events such as Aberdeen Highland Games.

The park is renowned for its formal gardens including two rose gardens – the Queen Mother's Rose Garden and the North Sea Memorial Rose Garden – and the new Rainbow Garden, a beautiful area of quiet contemplation.

Hazlehead Park encompasses both city and countryside with its formal garden layouts and neighbouring woodland walks, nature trails and bridleways. This park truly has something for everyone and has a significant collection of sculpture by a range of artists and heritage items, many of which have been rescued from around the city.

The surrounding woods form the largest woodlands in Aberdeen and are home to a thriving population of red squirrels along with many woodland birds.

Have fun roaming around and discovering for yourself why Hazlehead Park is a great place for park and woodland walks and family-friendly days out!



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### 1 Hazelhead Tram Terminus

This is the original shelter for the Hazelhead Terminus tram stop. Aberdeen's tram service ended in 1958. The current walkway behind, to Queen's Road, was the original driveway to Hazelhead House.



### 2 Hazelhead Park Gatehouse

Original lodge to the former Hazelhead House, early 19th century (circa 1826) in Tudor style. Several former estate buildings and features can still be seen in the park and surrounding area.



### 3 Pets' Corner

Animal attractions at Pets' Corner include alpacas, geese, turkey, chickens, sheep, goats, Shetland pony, miniature donkeys, fish, reptiles, budgies, ducks, finches, guinea fowl, ferrets, rabbits, chinchilla, guinea pigs, Vader the Burmese python and Getthin the pygmy goat. Small charge for entry.

### 4 Redwood Trees

The Rose family lived at Hazelhead House and three great redwood trees were planted to each celebrate the births of their children. Today they stand 98ft, 114ft, and 118ft and are upwards of a century old. The other two trees are shown on the map at **4a** and **4b**.



### 5 Tillycorthie Fountain

This fountain (see cover) is of red Peterhead granite, built 1883 by John Fraser & Sons, North Broadford. The fountain was kept indoors in both Aberdeen's New Market, its original home pictured above, and then at Tillycorthie House, Aberdeenshire, where it was installed in the glass roofed interior courtyard by 1933. The University of Aberdeen bought the estate in 1953 and later donated the fountain which was moved to Hazelhead Park late 1980s. It is itself a replica of an original fountain destroyed when the first Aberdeen Market burned down in 1882. One of the two gas lamp plinths behind the fountain in the photo above is now in Duthie Park.



### 6 Alla Sec

Stone sculpture, 1986, by Bradford Graves 1939-1998. He was born in Dallas, Texas and in 1986 attended a symposium at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden. Whilst there he created *Alla Sec*, an abstract sculpture inscribed and carved with Celtic patterns. Whilst sculpting, Graves says that the basis for his art is the 'people, cultures, other objects, past events' which one carries with one. In this case, the inspiration must have come from the North East of Scotland's Pictish past. The sculpture comprises two flat stones, inscribed and carved with a Celtic pattern and it originally stood in Duthie Park but was removed and re-erected in here in 1992. Set in a large pond, the work became a fountain piece, with a water jet originally playing on the surfaces of the stones.

## 7 Hazlehead Park Café & Kiosk

In the heart of the park is the restaurant building and snack kiosk, with a pool, featuring *Alla Sec* (6), and patio area, built in 1960 on the site of the former Hazlehead mansion house. The west boundary of the forecourt is made from stone from the old house.

## 8 Gruffalo

Created from tree stumps, David Roberts has carved out the iconic children's character the Gruffalo from the popular book by Julia Donaldson. David, a researcher at the James Hutton Institute, creates the artwork in his spare time using a variety of differently sized chainsaws. The sculpture was organised by Friends of Hazlehead Park and others created by David include a red squirrel (8a) near the maze, and a giant spider (8b) near the Robert the Bruce cairn.



## 9



## Cooper Fountain

Granite and copper fountain manufactured by Arthur Taylor. At the turn of the century, Aberdeen was famous for its granite memorials, monuments, and decorative sculptural pieces. This flamboyant example of lavish granite opulence was erected by Alexander Cooper who was a local fruiterer. Granite is a stone which is hard to carve but pneumatic tools introduced a decade earlier allowed for much more elaborate carving. It was relocated from the Castlegate, seen below at the very right hand edge, in front of the Mercat Cross.



## 10 Robert The Bruce Cairns

Richard Ross Robertson, Aberdeen, Scotland, 1914-2007. These cairns with their pictorial plaques tell stories from Robert the Bruce's famous campaign. One of them shows Robert Bruce sitting in a kingly throne giving to the City of Aberdeen the Freedom Lands (11). These include what is now Hazlehead Park. The cairn above shows Bruce and Henry de Bohun's duel at the start of the Battle of Bannockburn.



## 11 Freedom Lands

The park is one of the oldest historical properties in Aberdeen. It was originally part of the great hunting forests of Stocket just outside the city and shown as Moss of Hazlehead (below). In 1313, King Robert the Bruce gave Aberdeen custodianship over these. In 1319, the land, as part of the Freedom Lands, was given to the city in appreciation for the support that the townspeople gave in the dark years prior to the King's victory at Bannockburn in 1314.

In 1551, for financial reasons, Aberdeen applied to Mary Queen of Scots for the rights to let these lands. This meant that in return for a yearly payment, the lands became privately managed. Many of the main estates established at this time are still recognisable today, such as Countesswells, Forresterhill, Hazlehead and Kingswells.



For further information the **Boundary Stones Trail** covers the Freedom Lands and the March Stones which mark them.



## 12 Provost Alexander Maze

This is the oldest planted maze in Scotland and reputedly based on the famous Hampton Court maze. It was gifted by Sir Henry Alexander Lord Provost and opened by his children Gavin and Charlotte on 19th October 1935. The maze was governed for decades by a 20-foot tall watchtower which sadly burned down in the 1970s. The hedge length is 2318m, approximately 1.5 miles. Direct route to the centre 443m.



## 13 Source

Gheorghe Coman 1925-2005, from Ploiești, Romania, produced this Moray sandstone sculpture in 1991 while at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden. The Workshop offers tremendous facilities for artists to create works in wood, metal and granite, among other materials, attracting artists from all over the world.

## 14 Sundial

Ian Hamilton Finlay 1925-2006, originally from Nassau, Bahamas. His art is unique in that each piece incorporates several types of



media, and often includes an intriguing combination of influences from poetry, history, philosophy, and landscape design. This rectangular sundial with a bronze upright, is carved in relief in Portland Stone, which he favoured for its composition of millennia-old shell fossils. The medium itself is strongly linked to the sundial's inscription 'The Land's Shadows', reflecting the passage of time. It is an excellent example of 'concrete poetry,' which uses words and images to express through their shape and design, the idea that language dwells in a real, physical dimension.

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## Memory Path

This is believed to be the first of its kind in Aberdeen with messages and dedications to loved ones who have passed away, inscribed into the paving slabs. This is funded by Aberdeen City Council's Change Fund Project. If you are considering sponsoring one, then it should be that of a haiku, a verse, a quote or a line from a poem or part of a song lyric which triggers a happy memory of the person, but not consist of conventional memorial text with dates. For further details, email [wintergardens@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:wintergardens@aberdeencity.gov.uk) or phone 01224 346421.



## 16 Gasolier Plinth

This came from Queen's Cross where Queen Victoria's statue now stands. The plinth originally held a gasolier, a gaslight chandelier, from before the era of electric street lighting.



## 17 Hazlehenge

These three blocks of Kemnay granite were originally intended for the George VI Bridge spanning the River Dee, near Duthie Park. It had been planned that the Scottish sculptor D.O. Pilkington Jackson would carve four heraldic lions. However the outbreak of war halted this and the bridge was eventually opened without them, by King George VI on 10th March 1941. The fourth block, donated to Aberdeen Civic Society in 1975, forms the memorial to the architect Archibald Simpson in Bon Accord Square – see the [Sculpture & Curios Trail](#).



## 18 Rainbow Garden

The Rainbow Garden was created in 2019 by Aberdeen City Council as a memorial for those impacted by past practices at Aberdeen Crematorium.

A group of affected parents met to develop and design the garden as a space for peace and contemplation, with inspiration from the song *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. The song was also the inspiration from the stunning bronze sculpture in the middle of the garden, which features flying birds. The sculpture *Fleeting* by Maja Quille symbolises remembrance, peace, and hope, whilst providing an area for reflection.



## 19 Disintegration III

James Reid, Scotland, Painted steel, 1969. Though it appears to be an abstract assemblage of metal shapes, James Reid actually intended *Disintegration III* to be a visual puzzle. The large flat pieces are cut from a metal sheet and, if laid out flat, would fit back into the sheet. Originally commissioned by the Arts Council for an exhibition of sculptures in glass, steel, fibre glass and wood during the Aberdeen Festival of 1969, the piece was so admired that it was later presented to Aberdeen City Council.

## 20 Re-Thinker

Moray based artist Lucas Dew, 1989, inspired by Rodin's classic sculpture *The Thinker*. Lucas sculpts exclusively in scrap metal through his business *Something For Nothing*. Created in 2014 from half a tonne of recycled steel, collected from recycling centres around Aberdeen. The metal items, including pipes, bedsprings, spoons and a digger bucket, have been transformed into a work of art in a bid to change the way we think about rubbish.



## 21 Division

Gerald Laing from Newcastle upon Tyne, England, 1936-2011. Galvanised steel painted in vibrant JCB yellow, *Division* is a startling sculpture which harkens back to Laing's brief spell as a member of the American Pop Art movement in New York. It is purposefully set in a garden, so that in Spring it may rival the blossoms for its colour. Gerald Laing, an internationally acclaimed sculptor, was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1936 but moved to Scotland in 1969.

## 22



### Hazlehead Running and Walking Routes

There are four colour coded waymarked routes through the neighbouring countryside and woodlands (see fold out map on the back page). The shortest is the one mile green route which starts here. This is known

as Myles' Mile in honour of the Scottish International athlete Myles Edwards who trains here. The 4km blue and 6km red routes start at the main park entrance and a 5km there-and-back purple route starts and finishes on Groat's Road. These are designed as running routes but are just as good for walking or cycling!

23



### Freedom with Her Dove Of Peace

Richard Ross Robertson, Aberdeen, Scotland, 1914-2007. Hopton woodstone and Derbyshire marble. This striking stone sculpture, standing at nine feet, took Robertson two years to complete. A lecturer at Gray's School of Art, he sculpted *Freedom with Her Dove of Peace* for a competition set up by Aberdeen City Council in 1953.



### 24 Queen Mother Rose Garden

The rose gardens previously sat on the south side of the former Hazlehead House and consisted at one time of over 6,000 plants, with a wide variety of species in numerous arrangements. The current arrangement forms the Queen Mother Rose Garden, originally commemorating the Queen Mother's 80th birthday. Today, the roses still pay tribute to the splendour of the historic gardens.

### 25 Archaic Form & Bench

Horace Farlowe, Robbins, North Carolina, USA, 1933-2006, Kemnay and Caran granite, 1996. Horace Farlowe has made stone sculptures all over the world,



in places as diverse as Africa, Italy, Scotland, and North Carolina, where he attended university. This piece is meant, as are many of his works, to engage the viewer on many different levels. The abstraction and interplay of positive and negative space allow us to see the sculpture's surroundings in a different light. Farlowe also intended it to be a seat, lessening the physical distance between art and its spectators he saw as so oppressive in gallery settings.



### 26 Piper Alpha Memorial

Sue Jane Taylor, Dingwall, Scotland, born 1960. Bronze with gilt and Corrennie granite plinth. The memorial to the 167 men killed in the Piper Alpha disaster on 6 July 1988 is in the North Sea Memorial Rose Garden and was unveiled by the Queen Mother in 1991.

It comprises three separate standing bronze figures, their backs to one another, representing offshore oil workers. The central figure facing north represents a mature character. In his left hand he holds a pool of oil sculpted in the shape of an unwinding spiral form. This black shape in his palm flows into the gold leaf. His right hand points down to the ground, indicating the source of crude oil. The carved motif on his helmet, a fish and sea birds design, symbolises the environment. The figure facing west represents a roustabout drill-deck worker, showing pushing and pulling movements. On his right sleeve is a celtic tree of life motif, the leaves gilt. The figure facing east wears a survival suit and on his left sleeve is a sea eagle spread winged with a gilt head, native to the North Seas. To the rear is a small stone plinth with a cross behind which has an urn of ashes interred within the plinth. The Corrennie granite plinth was supplied and cut by John Fyfe Ltd.



### 27 Hazlehead Golf Courses

The 18-hole MacKenzie Championship Course was laid out in the 1920s by Dr Alister MacKenzie, the creator of Augusta National and Cypress Point. It is the only public Championship course in the North East of Scotland. Hazlehead Pines became 18-hole through reclamation of wet marshland. There is also a 9-hole course for practice or beginners plus the North-east's first footgolf course.





## Hazlehead House

Hazlehead Park was originally part of the grounds of Hazlehead House. The last private owner was the Rose family who made their fortune through shipbuilding in Aberdeen.

They bought the estate in 1775 and retained ownership for almost 150 years until June 11, 1920, when the lands were bought back by the Aberdeen Town Council for a sum of £40,000 to develop a park for use by the citizens of Aberdeen.

Much of the character of the old estate remains. Areas of surrounding greenspace are now golf courses and sports pitches, where as they were fields. Woodlands and avenues of trees along former driveways to the estate remain, along with some original estate buildings and features.

The house itself was built in 1775 and demolished in 1959. It was replaced with the modern restaurant and continental style pool and patio area. The stones from the forecourt were salvaged from the old house.

**Above:** Hazlehead House when it was the original park café

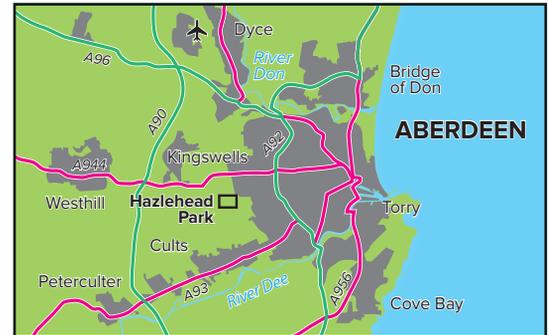
**Below:** Ordnance Survey map of 1867 showing part of the estate

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This is one in a series of themed trails in Aberdeen City, visit the website to see more: [www.aberdeency.gov.uk/trails](http://www.aberdeency.gov.uk/trails)

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