

Edinburgh Geological Society – Excursions 2026



Excursion title:	Belhaven to Dunbar
Date & start time:	Saturday 5th September 2026 at 10:30
Finish time:	16:00
Leader(s), organisation:	Fiona McGibbon

Excursion summary:	This field trip is an opportunity to look at sedimentary rocks that straddle the Devonian/Carboniferous boundary as well as many igneous features that control the coastal geomorphology. We start at Belhaven Bay looking at low energy sedimentary rocks of the early Carboniferous and walk round the coast to examine some exquisite pyroclastic rocks of a major volcanic structure. We then take the clifftop trail and end at Dunbar harbour where we see a variety of igneous features as well as some late Devonian sedimentary rocks. This is a joint trip with Geological Society of Glasgow.
Meeting point:	Meet at Belhaven Bay carpark on Shore Road, Belhaven EH42 1NX, NT663786 (W3W = canoe.concerned.spilling) Parking - There is a £3 charge for the day (pay and display or use RingGo App). There are public toilets.
Transport details:	Car share or public transport 10:30am (no coach run) Contact excursion secretary if this is an issue.
Outline of the excursion route:	Belhaven Bay, coastal trail to east skirting edge of golf course; shore section by Winterfield, then up to clifftop trail round coast to Dunbar (Victoria) Harbour, The Battery.
Terrain, walking distance, height gain:	We will walk from the carpark at Belhaven straight on to the shore and follow a route round the headland to the east, up onto the clifftop trail and will end in the Dunbar Harbour area. The total walking distance is about 3km. We will descend some steep steps down to the shore by Winterfield. The terrain will be beach and rocky intertidal zone.
Excursion Grade	B - Moderate field trips all participants should have good balance and be used to walking up to 3 miles (4.8 km), sometimes on uneven ground (such as rocky shores). Note these grades are not an extensive list of difficulty so please read the full excursion form or inform the excursion secretary if you have any questions or concerns.
Additional Hazards not included in the EGS Excursion Handbook:	The first section of the trip is on the coast next to a golf course. Flying golf balls can be a hazard.
Control measures required to mitigate against any Hazards referred to above:	Vigilance and due care when walking along edge of golf course.
Hard hats or Hi-viz clothing needed?	Hard hats would be useful for the (optional) shore section beneath cliffs by Winterfield.
May dogs be brought	No

on the excursion?	
Toilet information:	There are public toilets at the start of the trip at Belhaven and towards the end near the swimming pool at Dunbar Harbour.
Geological map sheet:	33 (E) Dunbar Explorer 351 Landranger 67
References:	Lothian and Borders Geoconservation leaflet: <i>Dunbar Geology Walk</i>, https://edinburghgeolsoc.org/downloads/lbgcleaflet_dunbar.pdf McAdam, A.D. and Clarkson, E.N.K. (1986) <i>Lothian Geology- An Excursion Guide</i>, EGS, Edinburgh, p. 119 – 132. Available online at: https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/Dunbar_-_an_excursion -and: https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/Dunbar,_Belhaven_and_the_Parade_-_an_excursion

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Excursion grade key

A grade field trips participants should be able to walk 1 mile (1.6 km), on good coastal paths and beaches of sand and pebbles.

B grade field trips all participants should have good balance and be fit enough to walk up to 3 miles (4.8 km), sometimes on uneven ground (such as rocky shores).

C grade field trips all participants should have very good balance & be fit enough to walk up to 4 miles (6.5 km), sometimes on more uneven ground than for B grade (such as rocky shores with small boulders), on steeper slopes, & for light scrambles.