

District CAITHNESS

Gaelic Name

Gallaibh

Tartan Designer Wilsons of Bannockburn

Date 1708 to 1918

Caithness (*Gallaibh* in Gaelic) is a registration county, lieutenancy area and historic local government area of Scotland. The name was used also for the earldom of Caithness and the Caithness constituency of the Parliament of the United Kingdom (1708 to 1918). Boundaries are not identical in all contexts, but the Caithness area is now entirely within the Highland council area. In 2007 the Highland Council, which is now the local government authority, created the Caithness ward management area, which has boundaries similar to those of the historic local government area.

Caithness became a local government county, with its own county council, in 1890, under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1889. Although officially within the county, the burghs of Wick and Thurso retained their status as autonomous local government areas. Wick, a royal burgh and traditionally the county town, became the administrative centre for the local government county. County and burgh councils were later abolished, in 1975, under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, and Caithness became one of eight districts, each with its own district council, within the new two-tier Highland region. In 1996, under the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994, the region became a unitary local government area, and the district councils were abolished.

As registration county, lieutenancy area and historic local government area, Caithness has a land boundary with the equally historic local government area of Sutherland. Otherwise it is bounded by sea. The land boundary follows a watershed and is crossed by two roads, the A9 and the A836, and one railway, the Far North Line. Across the Pentland Firth ferries link Caithness with Orkney, and Caithness has also an airport at Wick. The Pentland Firth island of Stroma is within Caithness.

In 2001 Caithness had a resident population of 23,866 and settlement centres include those of Berriedale, Burnside, Castletown, Dunnet, Halkirk, Haster, Reiss, John o' Groats, Latheron, Mey, Reay, Sibster, Thurso, Watten and Wick.

Taken from "District Tartans of Scotland", by Gordon Teall & Philip Smith, Shephard-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd.

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