

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water providing they act responsibly. Your access rights and responsibilities are explained fully in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Whether you're in the outdoors or managing the outdoors, the key things are to:

- **take responsibility for your own actions**
- **respect the interests of other people**
- **care for the environment.**

Visit [outdooraccess-scotland.com](https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) or contact your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.



BENMORE & KILMUN PATHS

The routes described in this leaflet are just a taster of the many and varied walks available in the area. Forestry Commission Scotland provides a wealth of way-marked trails - a leaflet describing these is available from their visitor centre at Ardgartan and the tourist Information Centres in Dunoon and Ardgartan. We hope the selection will provide something for everyone from the experienced hill walkers to those who want a stroll with family and friends.

Those of you who choose to follow some of the routes described will be rewarded with dramatic scenery of wild and rugged hilltops; fantastic rock formations; views from the Isle of Mull to Ailsa Craig. We have forests, rivers and farmland and a history dating back to the Vikings with a fascinating heritage from the Victorian era and a graveyard containing the mausoleum for the Dukes of Argyll and many historic graves. There is a wealth of wildlife to be seen - roe and red deer, otters, badgers, eagles, ravens and even osprey and the occasional humpbacked whale.

For the fit and experienced there are the hill walks to the summit of Beinn Mhor and Strone Hill, to be rewarded with views to Mull, Arran and beyond. For the less ambitious the beautiful and gentle walks along river banks and through woodland. For those with a fascination for history there is a stroll along pavements and footpaths past many of the buildings and houses which mark the era when 'doon the water' was the favourite holiday destination for wealthy Glaswegians.

RIVER EACHAIG & MASSAN CIRCUIT



Distance: 5km + 1km loop
Time: 1½ - 2 hours
Type of route: Easy/moderate. Mostly on even flat ground, but with short stretch on narrow/uneven ground.
Possible users: Walkers, cyclists

This route takes you from Benmore Botanic Garden along the banks of the Rivers Massan and Eachaig on woodland paths and the old road.

The route starts from the car park at Benmore Botanic Garden. Cross the A815 and follow the old road just past Eckford House. Turn to the right, re-cross the main road and follow the track over the River Eachaig using the iron footbridge. To the right is a weir and to the left an old ford, and on a fine day a great opportunity for a paddle in the warm waters from Loch Eck. Turn left and follow the river as far as the junction with the Glen Massan road. Crossing the road diagonally to the left, cross the road bridge and follow the narrow path up the right bank of the River Massan. Some of the path is uneven, but passable. After about 500 metres the path curves away from the river and joins a forest road up Glen Massan. (For wild and more spectacular mountain scenery, follow the road up past Corarsik for up to 2 kilometres before turning back.)

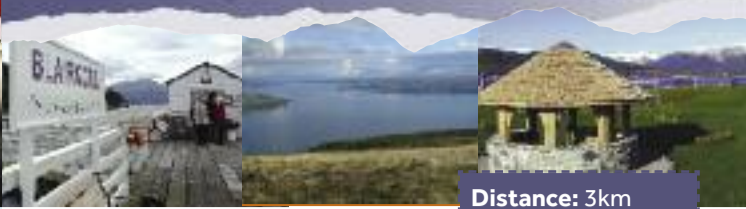
Turn left and follow the forest road for a few metres and then take the first track to the right. The track passes a locked gate and through a disused gravel pit, continuing through a small mature forest plantation.

On rejoining the Glen Massan road, you have the option of a delightful loop down and along the River Eachaig (join the loop by walking down the Eachaig road to the right for 200 metres, the loop is signposted to the left by Scottish Woodlands, Deargacha Walk). Rejoin the Glen Massan road turning right, and after a kilometre cross over the stone bridge over the Massan. Here again turn right and rejoin the track following the River Eachaig. Continue along this river track, with beautiful views of the river to the right and Benmore House to the left, passing the old iron bridge and the weir. After a further kilometre you reach a second bridge. Cross it to enter the Benmore Garden car park.

Several other forest walks and cycle routes start from this car park.



STRONE HILL



Distance: 3km
Time: 3 hours
Type of route: Strenuous. Steep in places, walking on open hill.
Possible users: Walkers

Strone Hill overlooks the village of Strone and offers superb views over the Firth of Clyde and its sea lochs. On a clear day it is possible to see over to Arran, the Arrochar Alps and down the Clyde to Glasgow. The route follows forest paths and roads before it becomes a faint path onto the open hill.

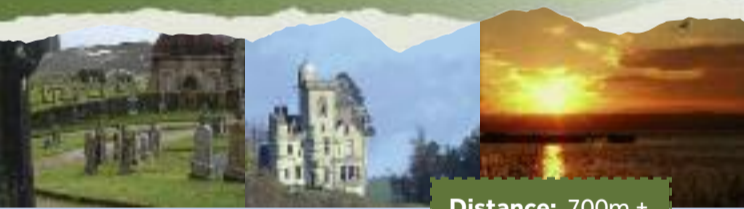
The route starts from Graham's Point Heritage Park. Departing from the Monk's Hut at Graham's Point, cross the main road and take the first left at Johnstone Avenue, turn right onto the path immediately behind the row of houses on the right. Ascend to the forest road and turn left. After a few yards take the right fork. The walk climbs steadily, emerging from the forest to



spectacular views of the Clyde estuary and Loch Long at the viewpoint. Where the road forks there is a small path to the left. Follow this path up Strone Hill. It is rough in places so take sturdy footwear. You will see Dunselma Castle on its promontory below the golf course and the recently restored Blairmore Pier on Loch Long. The path follows a dry stone dyke to the hilltop where there are panoramic views from the hill marker.

On descending make sure you follow the correct wall and retrace your steps. At the forest road the lower left fork takes you to Blairmore, otherwise turn right for Kilmun. On the walk look out for signs of wildlife, including red squirrels and pine martens in the forest, red deer and black grouse on the open hill and woodland edge and oyster catchers on the shore.

KILMUN HERITAGE



Distance: 700m +
Time: 1 hour
Type of route: Level, surfaced paths & cycleway
Possible users: Wheelchair users (partial route) / walkers/cyclists

The Holy Loch is fascinating for anyone interested in Scottish heritage. The Kilmun heritage walk follows a circular route through the village returning through the forest.

The historic Kilmun Church makes a good starting point. A holy site for at least a thousand years, the present Victorian building has fine stained glass of original design and a unique, recently restored, organ driven by mains water. The Campbell's of Inverary Castle adopted Kilmun as a holy site and endowed a collegiate church, the 15th century tower of which still stands, as does the Campbell mausoleum with its 19th century cast iron dome. Equally fascinating is the fine churchyard which includes examples of mort safes - iron coffin covers that protect the graves from body snatchers - and the grave of Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to qualify as a doctor in Britain.

The Holy Loch also provides one of the earliest examples of the impact of the age of steam. David Napier who worked with Henry Bell to produce the Comet, Europe's first passenger carrying steam ship. Napier saw the potential of the area for second homes for the successful merchants and industrialists of Glasgow and of a new route north from Glasgow by ship to Kilmun and by carriage and boat to Inverary.

Around 1825 he bought a strip of land, five miles of which now forms the villages of Kilmun, Strone and Blairmore.

From the church car park turn left and follow the road in the direction of the pier and past Napier's first buildings, six square houses of Georgian design. These houses, known locally because of their shape as the 'tea caddies', were built together with the pier, pier buildings and the pier hotel. Continue past the pier to the small heritage park at Graham's Point. This includes a play area for children in the shape of a steamship, a monk's hut and a monument to Duncan who in the 1870s established what is now the Benmore Botanic Garden. From this point onwards it is unsuitable for wheelchair users, who should return by the road.

Leaving the park cross the road leading uphill passed Hillside House (1835) which in the 1940s was the home of Lewis Fry Richardson, a visionary mathematician and physicist. Richardson's vision was such that application of his discoveries relies on the digital computer which was in its infancy at the time of his death in Kilmun in 1953.

Turn left behind Hillside House and take a footpath to the right immediately behind the houses of Johnstone Avenue. Ascend and turn left onto the forest road. Enjoy the fine views and continue to Kilmun, exiting before the church.

BEINN MHOR



Distance: 12km
Time: 4-5 hours
Type of route: Strenuous, uneven, boggy ground. A climb of almost 700m. Boots essential.
Possible users: Experienced Walkers

The highest peak in Cowal (741 metres) offers wonderful views of Loch Eck, the Clyde Estuary and north and west to the Highlands and islands. This walk passes through farmland, forests and moorland with the initial walk in from the car park area an ideal walk for all the family. Why not stop off at the beautiful and spectacular Massan Falls on your way to the start of this walk.



Park at the small car park at the top of the Glen Massan road just beyond Stonefield Farm. Follow the unsurfaced road through the Glen Massan estate for about 3 kilometres. 200 metres beyond the stone cottage

the track crosses the River Massan and beyond the bridge a path is signposted for walkers up to the right. This is where the real climb begins. The path climbs quite steeply as it passes through mature conifer forest. Starting as a forest road it slowly changes to a path and finally leads you to the open moorland above the forest. Continue to climb through open somewhat boggy grassland to the ridge in front of you. From the ridge are wonderful views from the Clyde estuary to Ben Cruachan and the islands. The ridge continues to the summit. The most straightforward return route is to retrace your steps.

The upland area is used for hill grazing. Please keep your dog under control at all times.

A NATIONAL PARK FOR EVERYONE

It's the nation's park. To discover, to explore, to enjoy. It's all about finding your own space. And then choosing what you do with it...

There is so much to enjoy in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park - woods and forests, wild flowers and wildlife watching, watersports, climbing or just taking in the view.

There's always something to do. Whether you love adventure or prefer more passive pastimes, you'll find an activity to suit.

If you would like further information about paths in the National Park please contact:

National Park Ranger Service,
Ranger Base, Ballochyle

Tel 01389 727736

or

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs
National Park Headquarters

20 Carrochan Road, Balloch, G83 8EG

Tel 01389 722600

email: info@lochlomond-trossachs.org

web: www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

Large print version of this leaflet is available on request

This leaflet was compiled by the Benmore, Blairmore, Strone and Kilmun Paths Group, a group of local residents and path users, and produced by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority on their behalf.

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Members of the Benmore, Blairmore, Strone and Kilmun Paths Group and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

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Please pass this leaflet on when you have finished with it!

Cowal Benmore & Kilmun Paths



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