



# National Cycle Network Go Traffic Free in Scotland

**The Central Highlands, Argyll  
and The Trossachs**



Use this booklet to follow safe and attractive walking and cycling options in the Central Highlands, Argyll, and The Trossachs. It shows the main traffic-free sections on the National Cycle Network, Regional Routes and key local routes. Use it to plan your (carbon-free) trips around and out of town. See how far and easily you can travel without a car.

For information on cycle routes across Scotland, see Sustrans' Routes2Ride website – you can also add your own routes, comments and photos.  
[www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland](http://www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland)

Use Ordnance Survey maps to plan your own routes. Contact the relevant local authorities for more information on cycling routes in each area.

How to use this booklet

This booklet highlights walking and cycling routes in the following areas:

- Inverness, Aviemore and Drumochter.....p4
- Fort William to Fort Augustus .....p18
- Argyll – the Lochgilphead area .....p24
- The Trossachs and Glen Ogle .....p26

Each detailed map uses the following key

	Featured route		Public house
	National Cycle Network traffic-free		Cafe / Shop
	National Cycle Network on-road		Bike Shop
	Other route		Birdwatching
	Proposed cycle route		Public toilets
	Railway (station)		Post office
	Access point		Tourist Information
	Take care point / section		Tourist attraction
	Steep hill / One way		Signalled crossing
	Caravan site / Campsite / Youth hostel		

Time: The time given to complete a route is calculated on an average travelling time of 7 miles or 11 km per hour. This allows for a leisurely cycling pace or for plenty of stops. Times and distances given for linear routes are for one way only.

Obey the rules of the road

Be courteous

- Give way to pedestrians
- Remember that some people are hard of hearing or visually impaired
- Where there are wheelchair users or horse riders, please give way
- Ring a bell in good time or politely call out to warn of your approach

Care for the environment

- Can you reach the start of your journey by bike or public transport?
- Follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code; in particular, do not damage crops, don't disturb livestock or wildlife and always take litter home

Look after yourself

- Take care at junctions, when cycling downhill and on loose or wet surfaces
- In remote areas carry food, water, repair kit, map and waterproofs
- Keep your bike roadworthy; use lights in poor visibility
- Consider wearing a helmet and conspicuous clothing

Using public transport

Why not use the train to carry you and your bike further afield or to take you home after a cycle? Bicycles can be carried on most trains, but it is advisable to check in advance and book a place as space is limited. For rail information call **08457 48 49 50** or visit [www.thetrainline.co.uk](http://www.thetrainline.co.uk). Bicycles can be carried on Citylink coaches, but they must be bagged or boxed. Check before travelling. Phone **08705 50 50 50** or visit [www.citylink.co.uk](http://www.citylink.co.uk). For information on all public transport within Scotland, call **0871 200 22 33** or visit [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com).

**Scottish Outdoor Access Code**  
Know the Code before you go ...  
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.

Find out more by visiting [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) or phoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

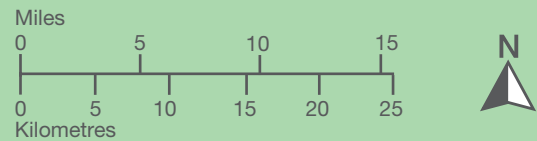
SCOTTISH  
OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

# Inverness, Aviemore and Drumochter

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- 2 Ness Islands to Dochgarroch..... p8
- 3 Calvine to Dalwhinnie ..... p10
- 4 Dalwhinnie to Kingussie ..... p12
- 5 Aviemore to Boat of Garten ..... p14
- 6 Boat of Garten to Slochd..... p16

## Highland Cycle Bus

If you want to head to the North West Highlands, the **Highland Cycle Bus** (and Trailer) operates between Inverness and Durness via Ullapool from April to September. The bus can carry up to 15 bikes and is available for private hire. For more information, phone 01349 883585 or see [www.timdearmancoaches.co.uk](http://www.timdearmancoaches.co.uk)



- On-road National Cycle Network section
- - - Traffic-free National Cycle Network section

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Whilst every effort has been made to achieve accuracy of information in this booklet at time of publication, Sustrans can take no responsibility for: loss or injury (including fatal) to persons; loss of damage to property or equipment; trespass, irresponsible riding or any other mishap that may be suffered as a result of following route descriptions in this booklet.

Map and text © Sustrans 2009

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# Inverness to Culloden 1



**Category:** Mainly on-road, some cycle path  
**Distance:** 8 miles/13 kilometres  
**Time:** 1 hour 15 minutes  
**Gradient:** Sustained climb from Balloch to Newlands, otherwise fairly flat  
**Surface:** Tarmac, some whin dust



Leave the friendly Highland capital of Inverness to cycle by some remarkable historical sights. The route heads east, with a variety of on-road cycle lanes and quiet residential sections, before climbing away from the Moray Firth.

At the Newlands crossroads it's worth diverting right for 200 yards to the Culloden battlefield site and newly renovated visitor centre. Scottish history was written here in April 1746 when the Jacobites were routed by government forces. Decades of Highland oppression ensued.

Back on the bike, continue to the magnificent Clava Cairns. This collection of well preserved Bronze Age cairns and passage graves stand timeless in a tranquil open setting. Those with an interest in archaeology, or who are simply curious about our ancestors, will be absorbed.

If you head north across the Kessock Bridge, you can follow Route 1 for 14 miles to Dingwall using a combination of quiet roads and new cycleway alongside the A835 between Tore and Maryburgh.

Map 1

**Category:** Canal towpath  
**Distance:** 5 miles/8 kilometres  
**Time:** 50 minutes  
**Gradient:** Flat  
**Surface:** Tarmac, smooth earthen/gravel surface

Explore the Caledonian Canal on this peaceful cycle from Inverness. To get to the canal, follow the River Ness upstream, branching right on to Ness Bank. Where this road curves away from the river at the suspension bridge, keep straight on the riverside path.

Continue until you reach a narrow bridge and follow the Great Glen Way (GGW) signs onto the Ness Islands. Follow the GGW signs along the path across these green, wooded islands to the far river bank. Turn left and follow the track or quiet Bucht Road to Whin Park where there is a childrens' play park, boating pond, refreshments and toilets.

Carry on up the road to Tomnahurich Bridge, where you leave the GGW. Don't cross the bridge, but turn sharp left onto the canal towpath. From here enjoy a perfect family-friendly ride along the east side of the canal – at some points you can see the canal to one side and the River Ness to the other. The ride ends at Dochgarroch Lock where there is a picnic spot and a café nearby.

## Be a considerate cyclist

- Avoid cycling where your tyres will damage the path or verges
- Give way to others on the towpath and warn them of your approach
- For more information contact British Waterways on 01923 201120 or [www.waterscape.com](http://www.waterscape.com)



**British  
Waterways  
Scotland**



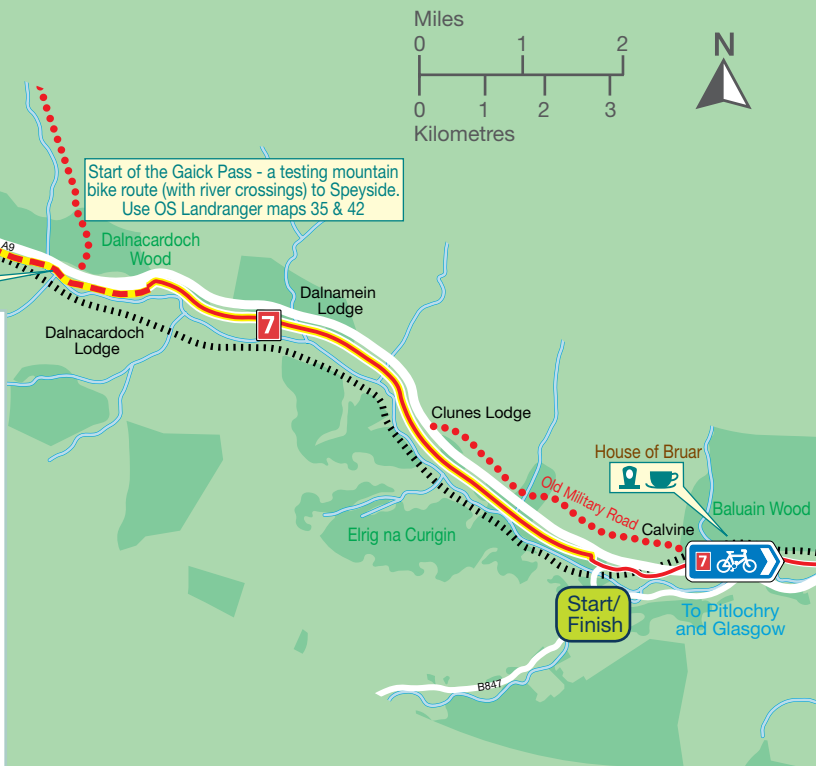


Looking west from the high Drumochter Pass © Fergal MacElean

**Category:** Upland cycle path  
**Distance:** 17 miles/27 kilometres  
**Time:** 3 hours  
**Gradient:** A long incline with a total ascent of 665 metres  
**Surface:** Tarmac and whin dust

Try an exciting section of National Route 7 as it crosses the Drumochter Pass. It's the ultimate route north with long sections of purpose built off-road cycle path and minor roads that carry only occasional local traffic.

The start, in the hamlet of Calvine, is marked by a drum sculpture, which is apt as your heart will be beating loudly as you climb to the 1508-foot-high pass. Along the way there are jaw dropping views down Loch Garry as it disappears mysteriously into the hills. From the top of the pass, the reward is a five-mile downhill run to Dalwhinnie.





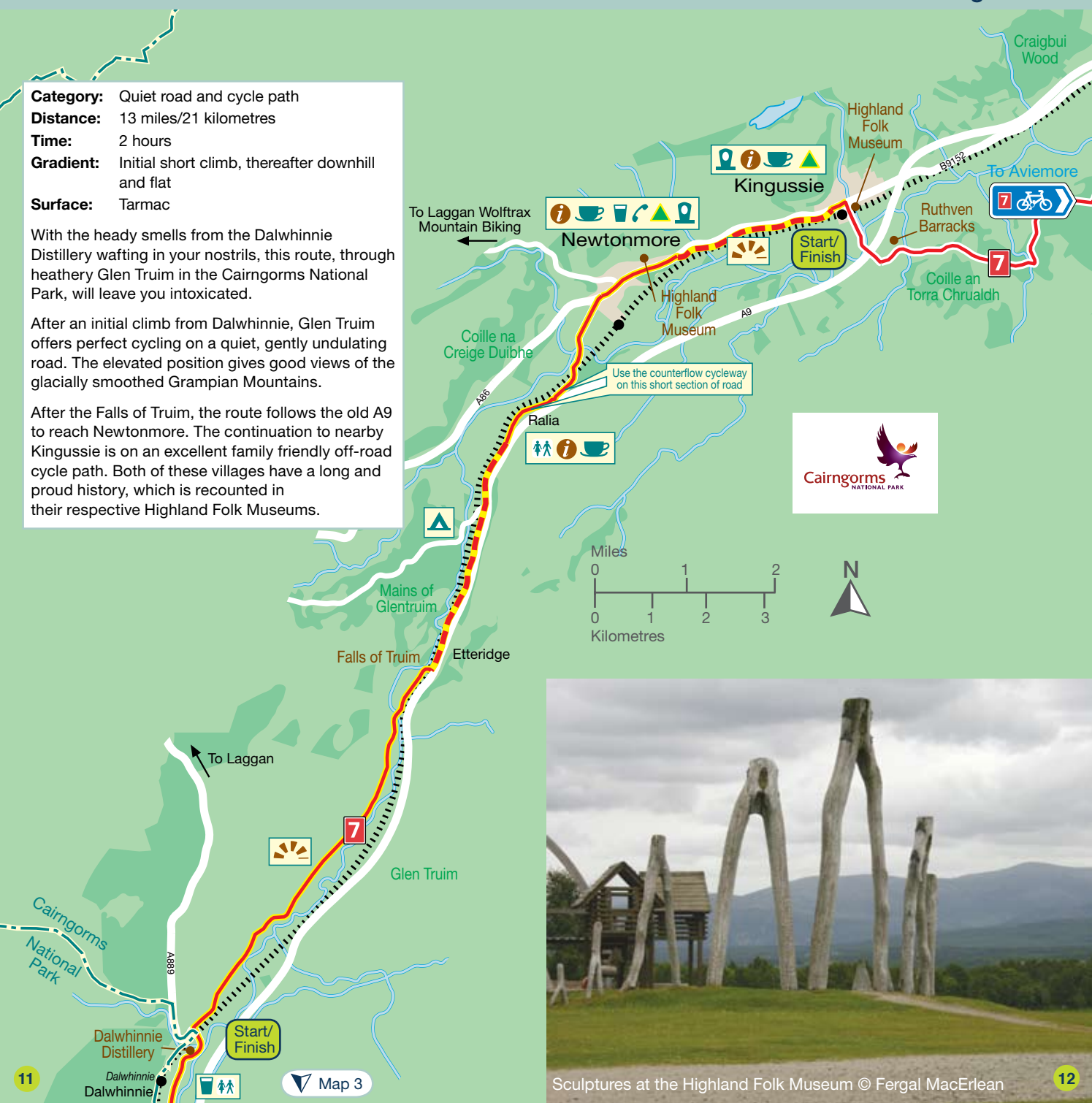
## Dalwhinnie to Kingussie 4

**Category:** Quiet road and cycle path  
**Distance:** 13 miles/21 kilometres  
**Time:** 2 hours  
**Gradient:** Initial short climb, thereafter downhill and flat  
**Surface:** Tarmac

With the heady smells from the Dalwhinnie Distillery wafting in your nostrils, this route, through heathery Glen Truim in the Cairngorms National Park, will leave you intoxicated.

After an initial climb from Dalwhinnie, Glen Truim offers perfect cycling on a quiet, gently undulating road. The elevated position gives good views of the glacially smoothed Grampian Mountains.

After the Falls of Truim, the route follows the old A9 to reach Newtonmore. The continuation to nearby Kingussie is on an excellent family friendly off-road cycle path. Both of these villages have a long and proud history, which is recounted in their respective Highland Folk Museums.



Sculptures at the Highland Folk Museum © Fergal MacErlean



## Aviemore to Boat of Garten 5

**Category:** Off-road cycle path

**Distance:** 4 miles/7 kilometres

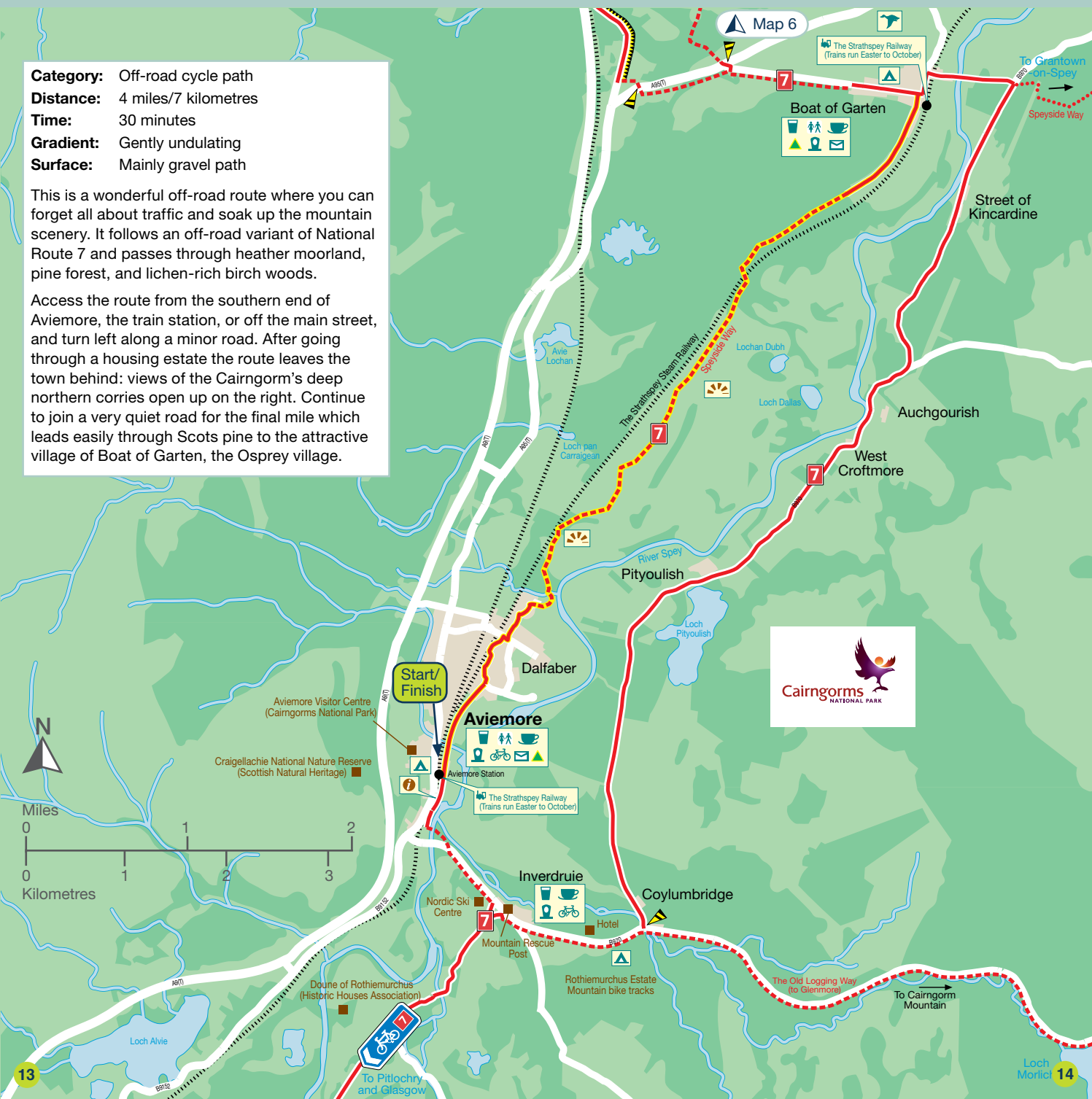
**Time:** 30 minutes

**Gradient:** Gently undulating

**Surface:** Mainly gravel path

This is a wonderful off-road route where you can forget all about traffic and soak up the mountain scenery. It follows an off-road variant of National Route 7 and passes through heather moorland, pine forest, and lichen-rich birch woods.

Access the route from the southern end of Aviemore, the train station, or off the main street, and turn left along a minor road. After going through a housing estate the route leaves the town behind: views of the Cairngorm's deep northern corries open up on the right. Continue to join a very quiet road for the final mile which leads easily through Scots pine to the attractive village of Boat of Garten, the Osprey village.







**Category:** Off-road forest cycle path  
**Distance:** 10 miles/16 kilometres  
**Time:** 2-3 hours  
**Gradient:** Hilly  
**Surface:** Mainly stony paths; two-mile on-road section.  
Mountain bikes recommended



The old bridge at Carrbridge stands strong © Fergal MacElean



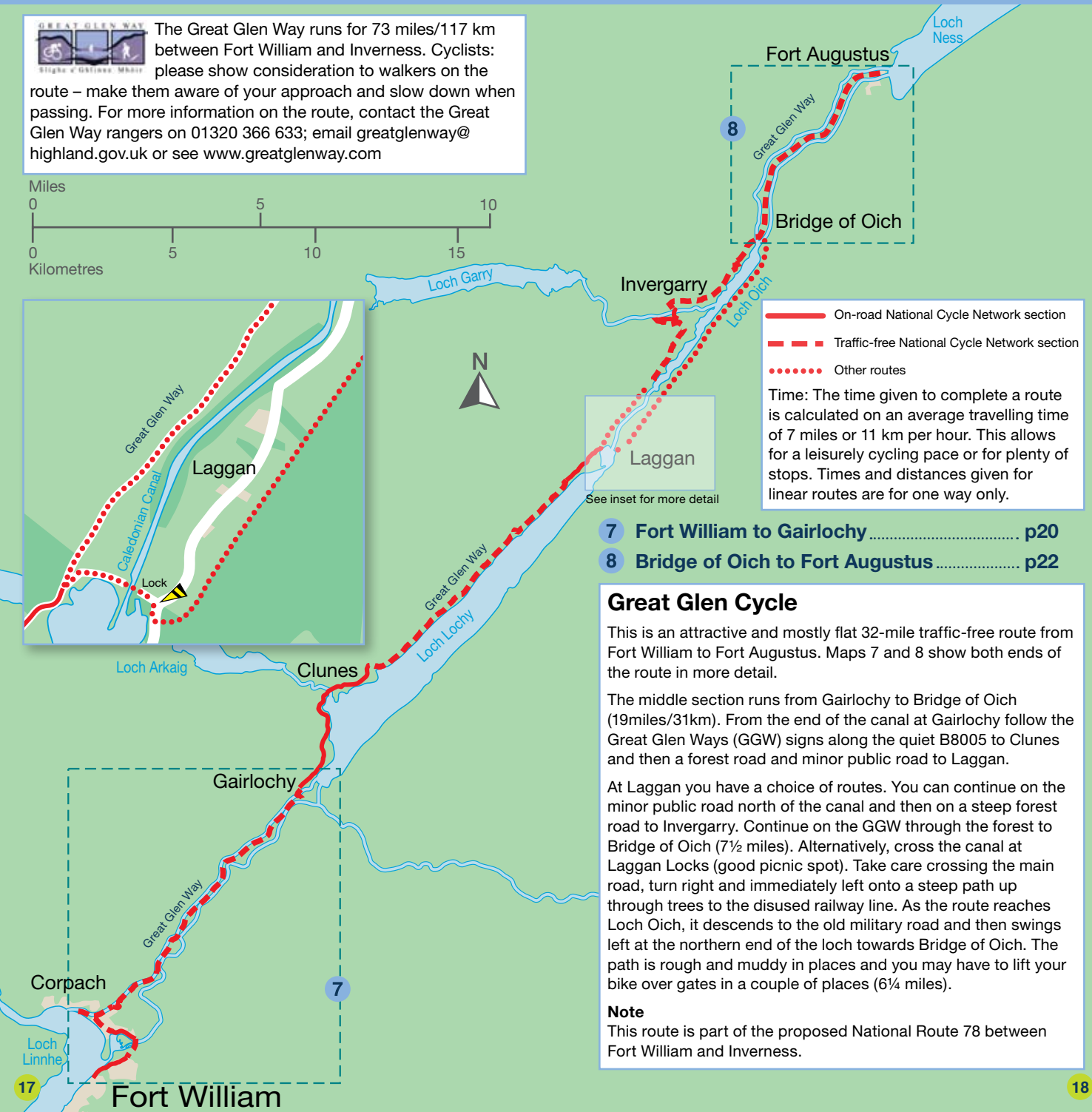
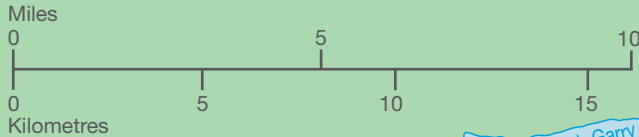
From Boat of Garten the route follows a dedicated paved and flat cyclepath, which runs separate from and parallel to the road; open heather-covered moorland extends to the right. After 1¼ miles, cross the A95 to follow the off-road variant of National Route 7 to Carrbridge.

In Carrbridge take the off-road route for Slochd, passing Carrbridge's wonderfully antiquated humpbacked bridge. The initial section follows a quiet minor road before branching off through beautiful birch woods to descend to the restored, grass-covered Sluggan Bridge. From here enjoy cycling through Scots pine to arrive by Slochd Mhór Lodge (bunkhouse) and cycle shop. Another 1.5 miles takes you to Slochd Summit, where the cycle track runs between the railway and the A9 through a narrow pass.

# Fort William to Fort Augustus



The Great Glen Way runs for 73 miles/117 km between Fort William and Inverness. Cyclists: please show consideration to walkers on the route – make them aware of your approach and slow down when passing. For more information on the route, contact the Great Glen Way rangers on 01320 366 633; email [greatglenway@highland.gov.uk](mailto:greatglenway@highland.gov.uk) or see [www.greatglenway.com](http://www.greatglenway.com)



- On-road National Cycle Network section
- - - Traffic-free National Cycle Network section
- ..... Other routes

**Time:** The time given to complete a route is calculated on an average travelling time of 7 miles or 11 km per hour. This allows for a leisurely cycling pace or for plenty of stops. Times and distances given for linear routes are for one way only.

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**8 Bridge of Oich to Fort Augustus ..... p22**

## Great Glen Cycle

This is an attractive and mostly flat 32-mile traffic-free route from Fort William to Fort Augustus. Maps 7 and 8 show both ends of the route in more detail.

The middle section runs from Gairloch to Bridge of Oich (19miles/31km). From the end of the canal at Gairloch follow the Great Glen Ways (GGW) signs along the quiet B8005 to Clunes and then a forest road and minor public road to Laggan.

At Laggan you have a choice of routes. You can continue on the minor public road north of the canal and then on a steep forest road to Invergarry. Continue on the GGW through the forest to Bridge of Oich (7½ miles). Alternatively, cross the canal at Laggan Locks (good picnic spot). Take care crossing the main road, turn right and immediately left onto a steep path up through trees to the disused railway line. As the route reaches Loch Oich, it descends to the old military road and then swings left at the northern end of the loch towards Bridge of Oich. The path is rough and muddy in places and you may have to lift your bike over gates in a couple of places (6¼ miles).

### Note

This route is part of the proposed National Route 78 between Fort William and Inverness.

# Fort William to Gairloch 7

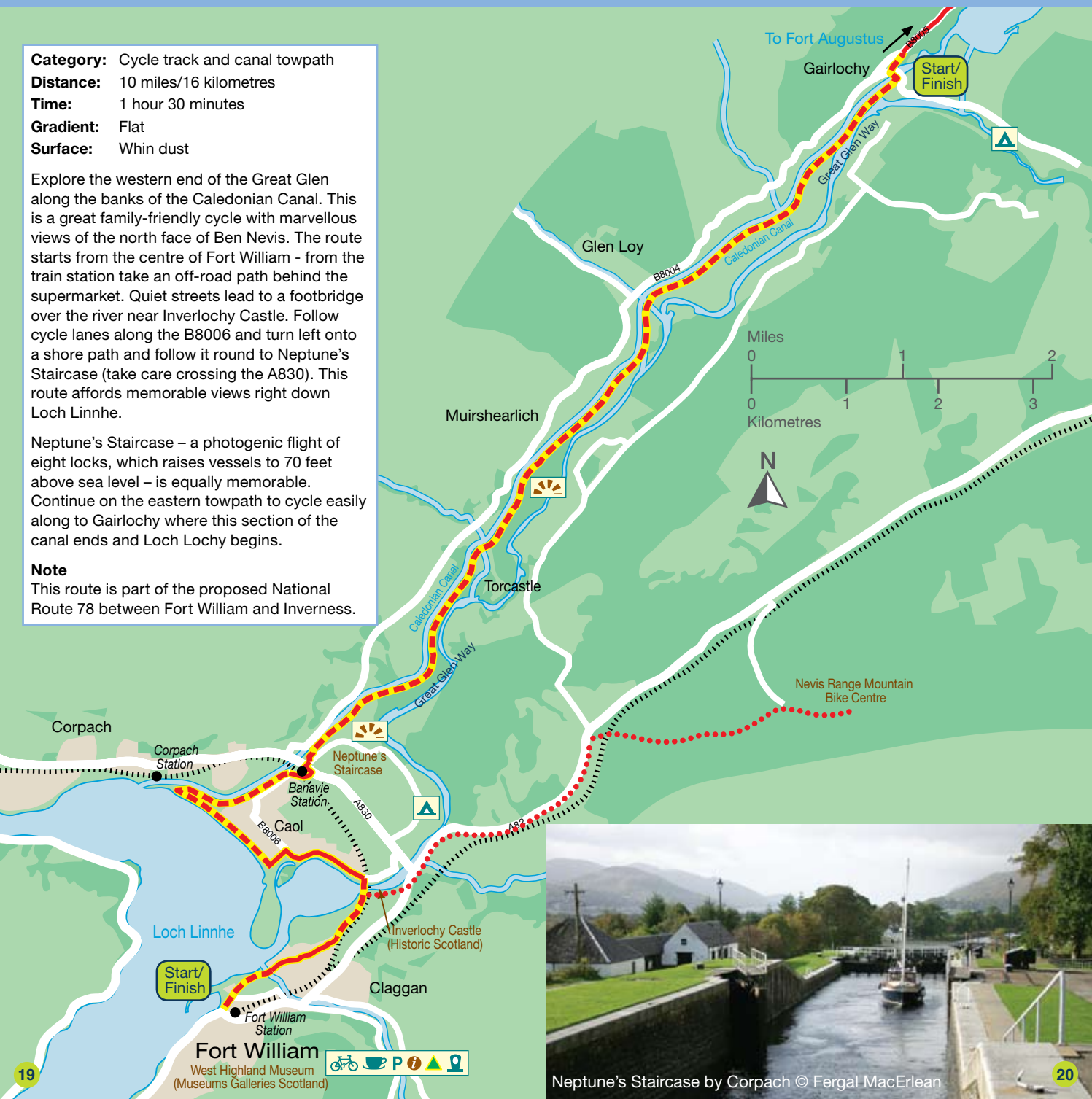
**Category:** Cycle track and canal towpath  
**Distance:** 10 miles/16 kilometres  
**Time:** 1 hour 30 minutes  
**Gradient:** Flat  
**Surface:** Whin dust

Explore the western end of the Great Glen along the banks of the Caledonian Canal. This is a great family-friendly cycle with marvellous views of the north face of Ben Nevis. The route starts from the centre of Fort William - from the train station take an off-road path behind the supermarket. Quiet streets lead to a footbridge over the river near Inverlochy Castle. Follow cycle lanes along the B8006 and turn left onto a shore path and follow it round to Neptune's Staircase (take care crossing the A830). This route affords memorable views right down Loch Linnhe.

Neptune's Staircase – a photogenic flight of eight locks, which raises vessels to 70 feet above sea level – is equally memorable. Continue on the eastern towpath to cycle easily along to Gairloch where this section of the canal ends and Loch Lochy begins.

## Note

This route is part of the proposed National Route 78 between Fort William and Inverness.



Neptune's Staircase by Corrach © Fergal MacErlan

Those with an aversion to hills will love this flat route which follows the Caledonian Canal from the head of Loch Oich. Join the towpath by the Aberchaldler Swing Bridge to enjoy effortless traffic-free cycling.

The River Oich runs alongside for much of the towpath's length, giving a watery feeling to this outing. On the right, rise the steep slopes of the Great Glen formed by a tear fault in the Earth's crust. Continue to enter bustling Fort Augustus where the canal descends through five locks to enter Loch Ness. Among the many attractions is the Caledonian Canal Visitor Centre, which details the waterway's history up to its present day rejuvenation.

## Note

This route is part of the proposed National Route 78 between Fort William and Inverness.

To Inverness via Drumnadrochit  
- 33 miles/53 km - busy main road,  
no hard shoulder.

Loch Ness

Jenkins  
Park

Caledonian Canal  
Visitor Centre

A82

Fort Augustus

Abbey

Start/  
Finish

To Inverness via Dores -  
33 miles/53 km  
- minor rural road,  
some hills.

B862

**Category:** Canal towpath  
**Distance:** 4.5 miles/7.5 kilometres  
**Time:** 40 minutes  
**Gradient:** Flat  
**Surface:** Whin dust



Kytra  
Lock

Coiltry

Coille Torr  
Dhuin

A82

Miles

Kilometres



Newtown

Cullochy

Bridge of Oich  
(Historic Scotland)

Start/  
Finish

Aberchaldler

To Fort William

Loch  
Oich



A peaceful Loch Ness near Fort Augustus © Fergal MacErlean





The shipping shortcut of the west coast, the Crinan Canal, is a delight for cyclists of all ages. Dark peaty waters fill this wide canal which links the Atlantic with Loch Fyne. Join the towpath by Lochgilphead and turn right to cycle through lush countryside.

At Cairnbaan, there's the first in a series of locks. To the north of the village lies Kilmartin Glen which contains hundreds of Cup and Ring marked stones, chambered cairns and stone circles dating from Neolithic/Bronze Age times. Continue on the canal by Móine Mhór (The Great Bog) to reach the attractive harbour at Crinan.

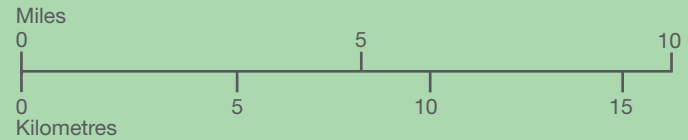
For a more adventurous ride, head south on the canal towpath to Ardrishaig. Before the canal intersects the main road cross a bridge to the right and head up through the residential streets and lanes until you come to the start of a track that leads along the hillside above Loch Gilp. Best suited to mountain bikes, there are some steep gradients, but spectacular views.



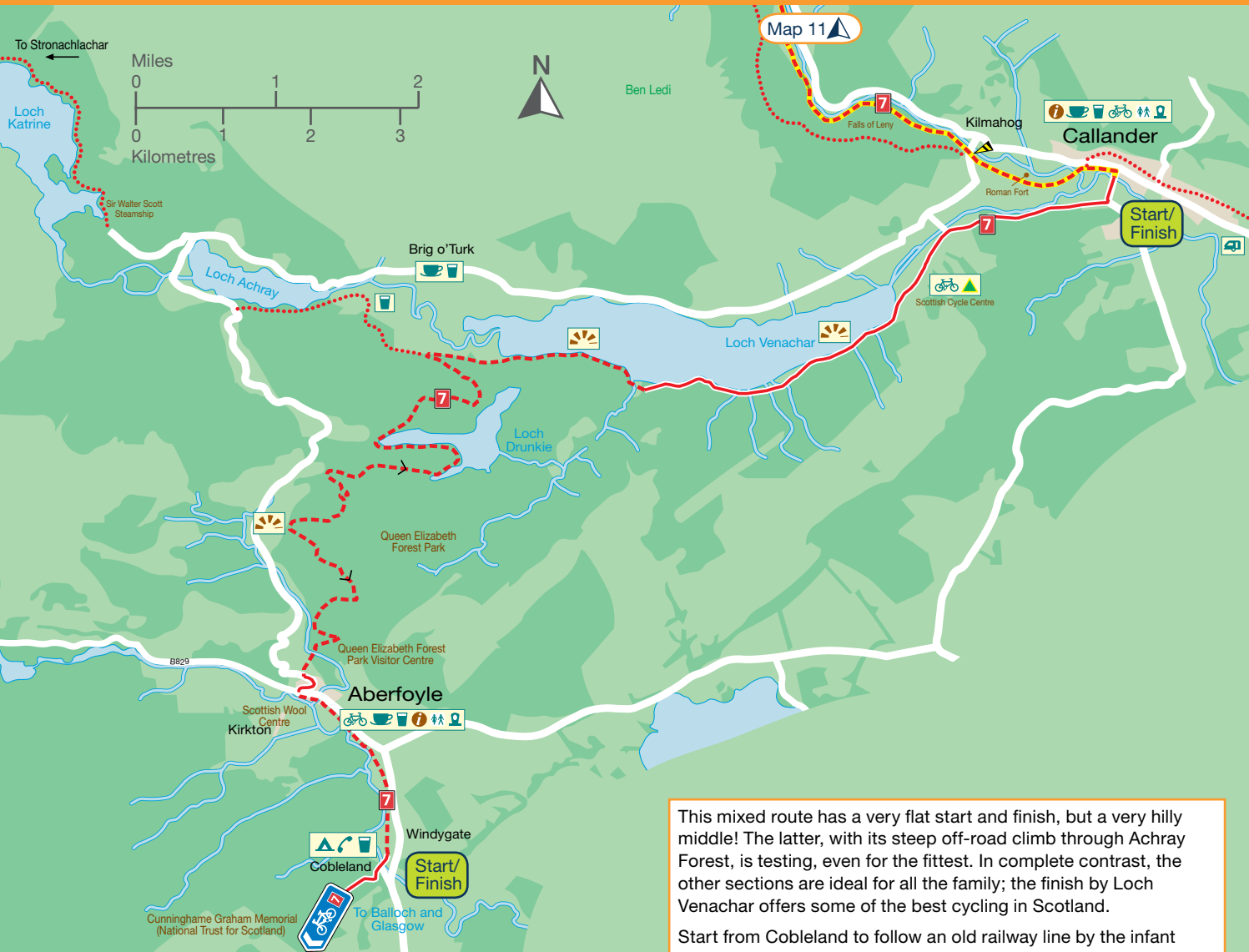
- 10** Aberfoyle (Cobleland) to Callander ..... p28
- 11** Callander to Strathyre ..... p30
- 12** Kingshouse to Killin ..... p32

— On-road National Cycle Network section  
- - - Traffic-free National Cycle Network section  
..... Other routes

Time: The time given to complete a route is calculated on an average travelling time of 7 miles or 11 km per hour. This allows for a leisurely cycling pace or for plenty of stops. Times and distances given for linear routes are for one way only.



The Glen Ogle Viaduct near Killin © Jenny Baker

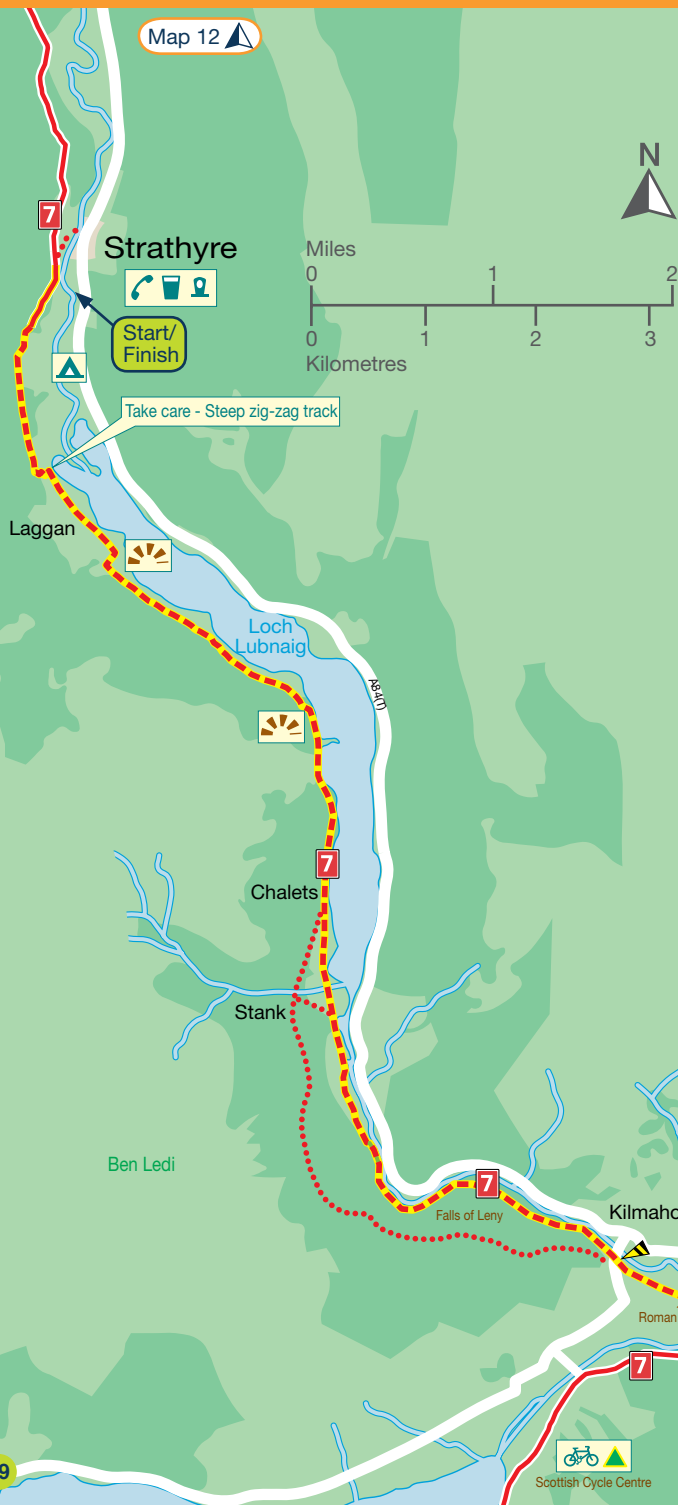


- Category:** Railway path, forestry route, loch shore cycle path and minor road
- Distance:** 15 miles/24 kilometres
- Time:** 3 hours
- Gradient:** Flat to Aberfoyle followed by a long sharp climb and descent to Loch Venachar. Flat thereafter
- Surface:** Tarmac, forestry roads. Mountain bike recommended

This mixed route has a very flat start and finish, but a very hilly middle! The latter, with its steep off-road climb through Achray Forest, is testing, even for the fittest. In complete contrast, the other sections are ideal for all the family; the finish by Loch Venachar offers some of the best cycling in Scotland.

Start from Cobleland to follow an old railway line by the infant River Forth. Cycle through Aberfoyle before the climb through the forest – rewarded with great views from the top. Descend by Loch Drunkie and look out for Route 7 signs directing you right at a junction. The path leads by Loch Venachar, which has many picnic spots.

Carry straight on at the junction to reach Loch Katrine. There's a great cycle and walkway round the loch to Stonachlachar where you and your bike can catch the Steamship Sir Walter Scott back to the eastern end of the loch or carry on to Inversnaid on the east shore of Loch Lomond. (Use OS Explorer maps 365 and 364).



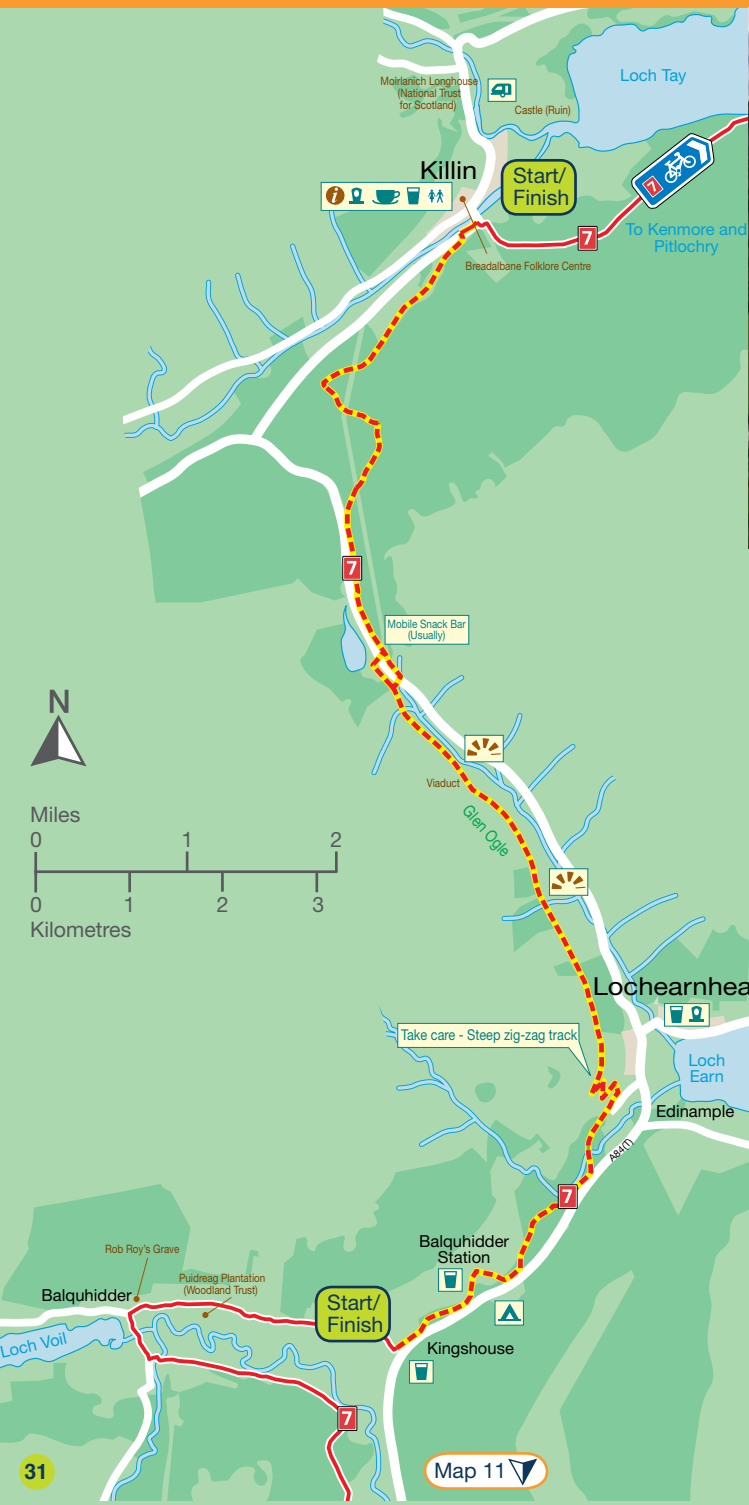
Looking across Loch Lubnaig towards National Route 7  
© Fergal MacErlean

- Category:** Railway path  
**Distance:** 9.5 miles/15 kilometres  
**Time:** 1 hour 30 minutes  
**Gradient:** Flat start to Falls of Leny. Thereafter undulating with some short climbs  
**Surface:** Tarmac, whin dust

This almost entirely off-road route is a big favourite with families and others looking for a quiet cycle. From Callander a level cyclepath follows the old Oban railway line alongside the River Leny. Just outside the town it passes the remains of a Roman fort at Bochastle – one of several in the area.

Pass the mesmerising Falls of Leny and continue, through an oakwood, to reach Loch Lubnaig, which has a strong Highland character. The cycle route uses a quiet access road for some of the way. Take a picnic – you're sure to find an idyllic spot for lunch. After four flat miles you'll encounter some hills and one very steep zig-zag section but the final stretch into Strathyre is a breeze.





Loch Voil by Balquhider © Fergal MacErlean

**Category:** Railway path, forestry road  
**Distance:** 10 miles/16 kilometres  
**Time:** 2 hours  
**Gradient:** Undulating to Lochearnhead then stiff climb and long incline up Glen Ogle. Mainly downhill and flat to Killin  
**Surface:** Tarmac, whin dust, forestry road

Enjoy another entirely off-road section of National Route 7 as you travel north to the beautiful village of Killin. Join the route off the minor road to Balquhider, which is worth a look itself as it's the resting place of Rob Roy. The incorrigible outlaw – forced by a crooked landlord into a life of cattle rustling – is synonymous with the surrounding rugged landscape.

As you approach Lochearnhead, you'll experience this ruggedness first hand where the cyclepath climbs alarmingly before a long incline up Glen Ogle. Enjoy the views and catch your breath at the top before continuing through forestry for a well deserved rest in Killin.

See page 38 for a list of maps and guides available from Sustrans.



# Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity.

Our vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. We work on practical, innovative solutions to the transport challenges facing us all. Sustrans is the charity behind the award winning National Cycle Network, Safe Routes to Schools, Bike It, TravelSmart, Active Travel, Connect2 and Liveable Neighbourhoods, all projects that are changing our world one mile at a time.

## Support Sustrans. Join the movement.

For more information on the National Cycle Network, to buy maps and guides or to find out more about Sustrans, visit [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) or call **0845 113 00 65**

If you think what we do sounds sensible, we urgently need people like you to help us do more. By giving from £5 a month you'll start to make a difference. Without this financial support, Sustrans and projects such as the National Cycle Network would probably not exist.

To become a Sustrans Supporter today please complete the form on the opposite page and send it to:

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**Freepost BS7739**  
**Bristol**  
**BS1 5FA**  
or phone **0845 838 0651**

If you'd like to help Sustrans in a hands-on way, why not become a volunteer ranger?

As a Sustrans **Volunteer Ranger** you will help to look after and promote a section of the National Cycle Network near your home, and so encourage more people to cycle and walk.

To find how to become a Volunteer Ranger visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/rangers](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/rangers)



Please complete this form and send it to:

**Sustrans, Freepost BS7739, Bristol BS1 5FA.**

Alternatively, you can make a donation online by visiting [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) or over the phone on **0845 838 0651**.

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**A** YES  
I'll join Sustrans with a **Direct Debit**

Your monthly gift will provide us with vital regular income to help us develop the National Cycle Network and enable us to keep our administration costs to a minimum.

(Please tick) £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £15 ☐ £  other

Please complete the Direct Debit instructions overleaf.

**B** YES  
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**Sustrans, Freepost BS7739, Bristol BS1 5FA**

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### Firth of Tay to Moray







To find maps, route information and suggested routes from cyclists throughout Scotland visit:  
**[www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland](http://www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland)**

## Sustrans and the National Cycle Network

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. The charity is behind many groundbreaking projects including the National Cycle Network, over twelve thousand miles of traffic-free, quiet lanes and on-road walking and cycling routes around the UK. We are the charity making a difference today so everyone can live a better tomorrow.

## Support Sustrans. Join the movement.

For more information on the National Cycle Network, to buy maps and guides or to become a Sustrans Supporter visit or call:

**[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)**  
**0845 113 00 65**

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