

Brackwalks



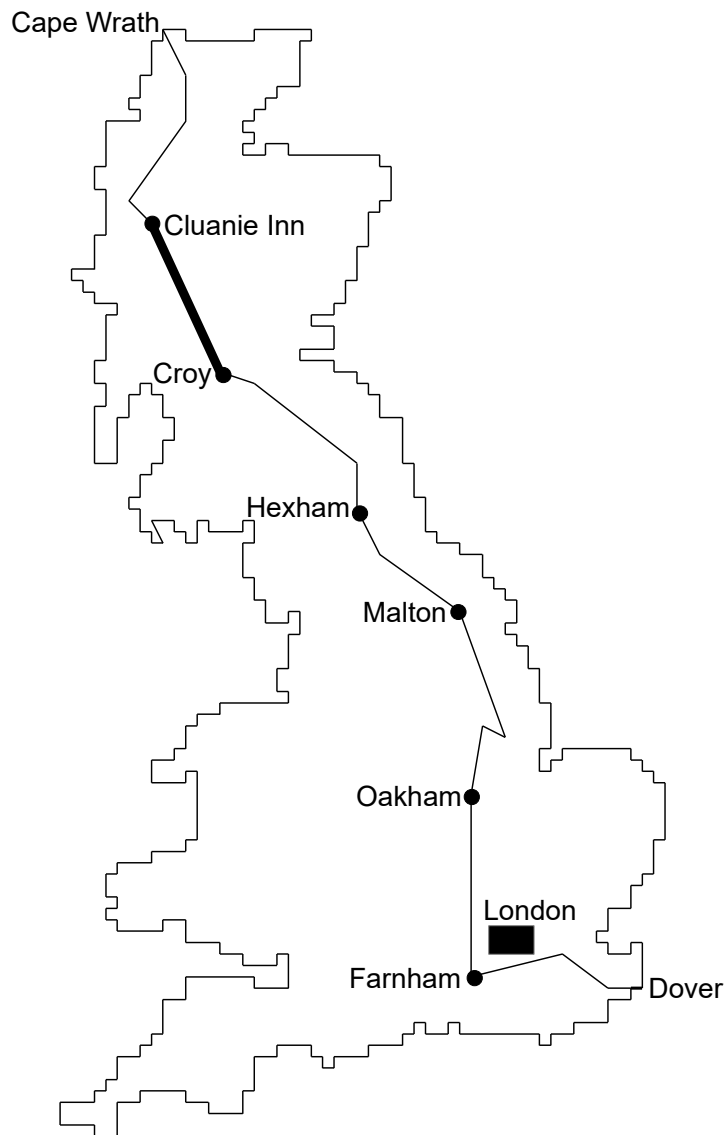
From FORELAND to CAPE

- an end to end walk across Britain from
South Foreland (Dover) to Cape Wrath

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Disclaimer: All details are given in good faith. However no activity can be completely hazard-free so undertaking any part of this route is done entirely at your own risk and I accept no responsibility for errors, loss or injury however caused.

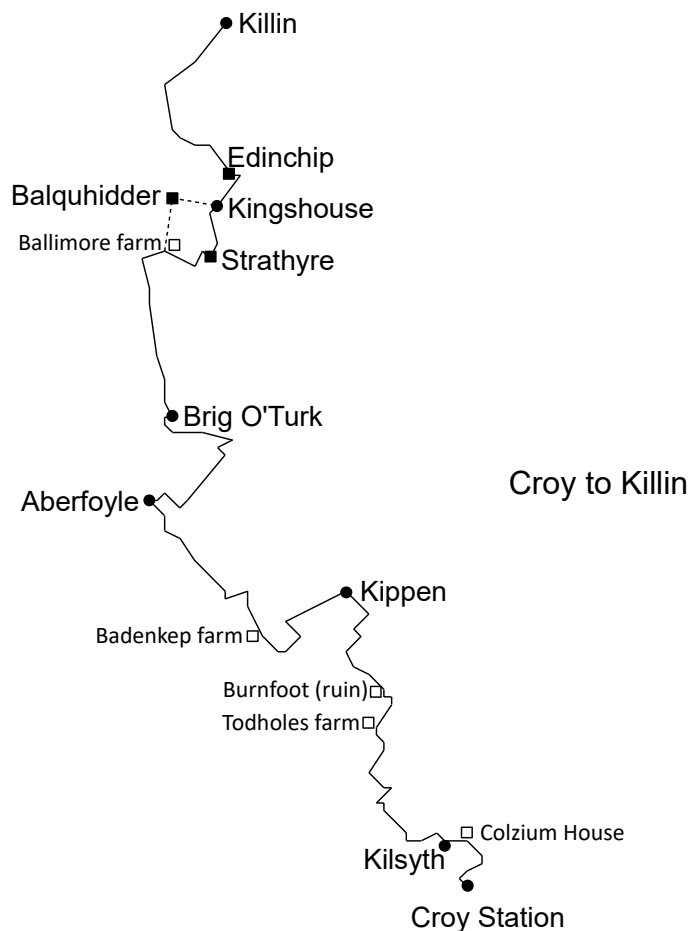
Part 6 Croy to the Cluanie Inn (170.4miles)

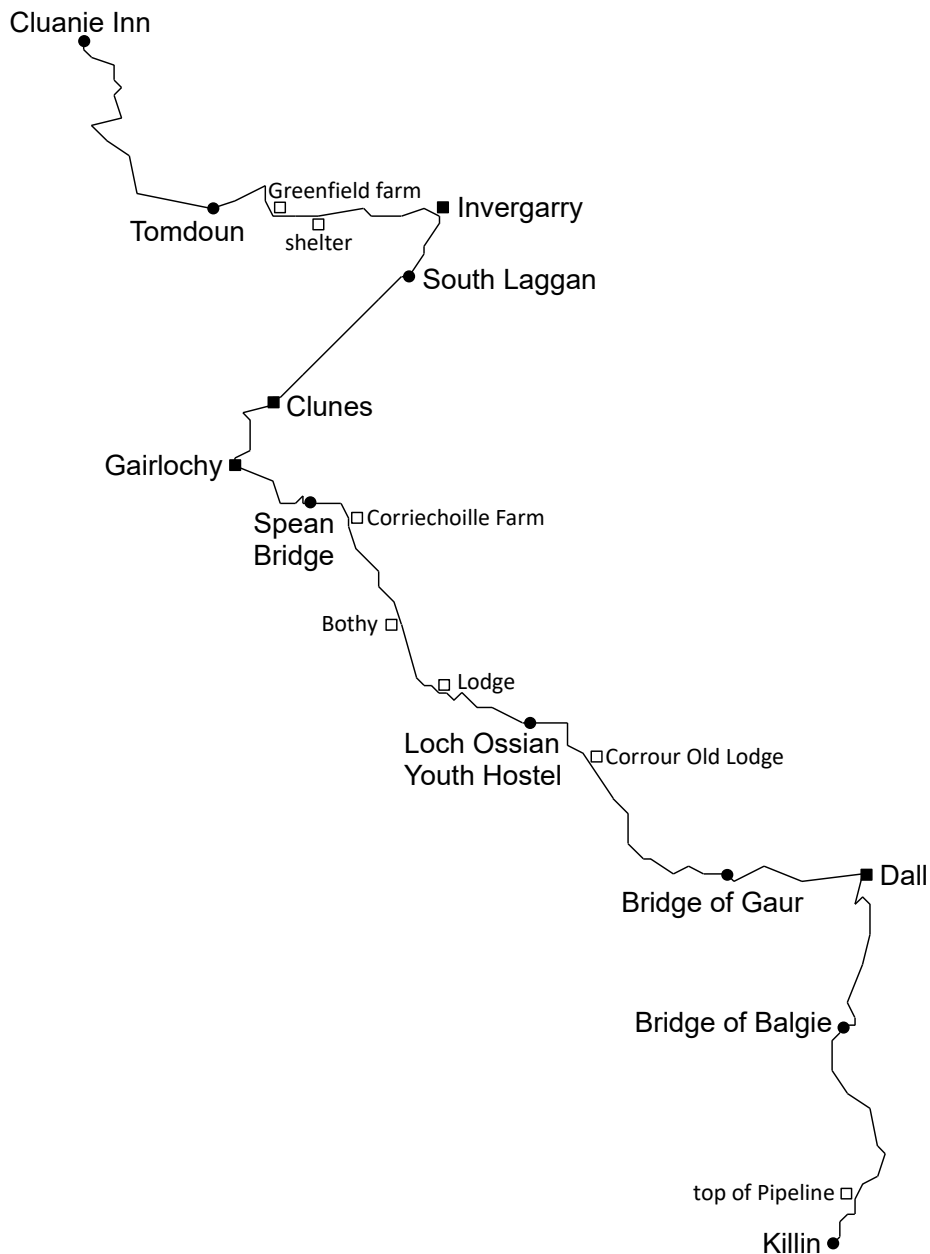


From Croy the route twists its way northwards crossing the Kilsyth and Gargunnoch Hills to the attractive village of Kippen. The route then turns eastwards to reach the cycle track across Flanders Moss to Aberfoyle at the south end of the Trossachs.

The route continues along the Menteith Hills before dropping to the shore of Loch Venacher and on to Brig o’Turk in the heart of the Trossachs. Hill tracks and paths lead into Strathyre and on to delightful Killin. Beyond Killin, the route goes cross country to lovely, lonely Innerwick in Glen Lyon from where the old Kirk Road (now a track) leads to Loch Rannoch. A hill track leaves beyond the west end of the loch to Corroul which has no road access but does have a regular but infrequent train service. A further hill path and track lead over into Glen Spean and on to Spean Bridge.

A newly created path and lane walking are taken to Gairloch at the southern end of Loch Lochy, enabling the Great Glen Way national trail to be followed to Laggan. The route now turns westwards on forest tracks to Tomdoun. Much of the original drove route from here over to the old droving inn (the Cluanie Inn) in Glen Shiel is no longer feasible due to the construction of Loch Loyne. So the route takes to the hill path which crosses Glen Loyne just west of the loch and continues to meet the original track (which was the Road to the Isles from Inverness). The old drove route emerges on the present day (main) Road to the Isles at the popular, busy and isolated Cluanie Inn in Glen Shiel. Surprisingly, there's an infrequent but regular bus service to and from Inverness which passes its door daily, yielding the escape route back to civilisation.





Killin to Cluanie Inn

Croy to Allanfauld (Kilsyth) 4.6miles, ascent 234metres (760ft), descent 185metres (600ft). Explorer 348 (Campsie Fells); Landranger 64 (Glasgow).

From Croy railway station, it's a simple and pleasant rural walk to accommodation in Kilsyth. There are good wide views from Croy Hill which also boasts the remains of the Antonine Wall. Later the walk passes through the Colzium Lennox Estate – a vast area of public parkland in the care of North Lanarkshire Council. Beyond, paths and tracks are used to reach Allanfauld at the northern extremity of Kilsyth.

Route: From Croy station, the route back to Craigmarloch on the Forth & Clyde canal is retraced. So, from the station, turn left down the 'main' road (towards Kilsyth) and after 0.5mile turn right into Nethercroy Road, signed to the Antonine Wall and Croy Hill. Turn right immediately before the green barrier (as signed) and very shortly at the next right turn, go straight on (signed for the John Muir Way). Pass through a walkers' gate onto Croy Hill and take the wide trodden ascending path ahead; the ditch of the turf Antonine Wall dating from the first half of the second century can be viewed on the left. Continue to a multi path/track fork and follow John Muir Way signs. Continue on the main track to meet a more major track. Turn left, signed for Castlecary. Shortly ignore a sign off right to Castlecary and continue briefly to a John Muir sign off right. Take this and follow the wide gravel path which descends steeply to meet the lane just south of the canal at Craigmarloch. Turn left on the lane and cross the canal.

If preferred, Craigmarloch can also be reached by ignoring the turn off into Nethercroy Road and instead following the 'main' road to a T-junction. Turn right (signed Kilsyth) and follow the B-road to a roundabout. Take the second turn-off clockwise (signed to Kilsyth) and shortly cross the Forth & Clyde canal. Immediately after turn right to join the canal towpath (at Auchinstarry) and follow it eastwards to the lane at Craigmarloch where the route turns left.

Follow the lane northwards and take the first turn left, signed Kilsyth. After 120metres take a good path off right into trees which soon joins a track. Follow the good track ignoring paths and tracks off left. Follow the track as it curves right to run parallel to a main road then follow it left to the main road. Cross opposite left into the Colzium Lennox Estate and follow the surfaced main drive up. After crossing a stream on a stone bridge, the drive continues ascending to a T-junction with Colzium House opposite. Turn left here along the drive. Ignore a wide track branch off left to continue on the still-surfaced drive and curve right, ascending to a track T-junction. Turn left briefly to meet a lane. Turn left and before a right bend, turn right on a good track signed to Queenzieburn. Follow the track to meet a lane and turn right. When the lane turns right into the Kilsyth Lennox Golf Club, continue straight ahead on a wide track which ascends to a track T-junction. Turn left and descend to a bridge across the Garrel Burn and reach a sign. The route continues straight ahead on the track signed to Balcastle while the buildings half-left are Allanfauld Farm (B&B); the centre of Kilsyth with more accommodation is to the left.

Yet a further alternative to reach the accommodation in Kilsyth if time is pressing is not to join the canal at Auchinstarry but to continue on the B-road to meet the main road in Kilsyth. Turn right for about 200metres then left up Parkburn Road and ascend steeply. As the road bends sharp left, take the No Through Road ahead right and ascend up Allanfauld Road. The lane becomes a track and just past Allanfauld Farm (B&B) meets a track with the sign left pointing to Balcastle which is taken in the following stage.

Stage 63: Kilsyth to Kippen 16.3miles, ascent 846metres (2750ft), descent 895metres (2910ft). Explorer 348 (Campsie Fells); Landranger 64 (Glasgow), 57 (Trossachs).

This is a satisfying but long day's walk crossing the Kilsyth Hills using the old drove track to Birkenburn Reservoir before dropping down through the Carron Valley Forest into the Carron Valley. The Forest covers a large area and walkers are strongly advised to go to forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/carron-valley and scroll down to download the (pdf) *Guide Map to Walking Trails* for the most detailed and accurate map of the forest paths and tracks with its numbered posts. If using OS maps, use the 1:50000 map rather than the 1:25000.

From the Carron Valley road, which is roughly the half-way point of this stage, a good hill track is taken crossing the Gargunnoch Hills from which the Spout of Ballochleam waterfall, tumbling through a gap in the crags, can be seen; this route uses the footbridge installed by the Scottish Rights of Way Society to cross Burnfoot Burn (this bridge is not shown on the OS maps). Finally the original drove route crossing of Dasher Bridge is used to reach the old and picturesque village of Kippen which has accommodation, shops and a tea-room. Kippen lies between the Fintry and Gargunnoch Hills and to its north overlooks the Carse of Forth which refers to the fertile farmland surrounding the River Forth.

Route: From Allanfauld, continue on the track signed to 'Balcastle'. The farm track runs westwards along the northern edge of Kilsyth's housing. Keep straight on ignoring turn-offs left. Pass the entry to Five Oaks and continue on the track to meet a lane (NS 702 785). Go straight on (right) and follow the lane to four-way path sign (690 784). Turn right on an ascending track up the Kilsyth Hills, signed to Birkenburn Reservoir and the Carron Valley. The gravel track bends right towards farm buildings, passing to the right of the buildings. Immediately after the end of the buildings the track curves left behind the buildings but soon curves right making for the hillside. After a steep ascent, the track levels off and eventually reaches the reservoir. Cross the dam and at its end the track abruptly finishes. Look ahead to an obvious fence away from the reservoir with a path to the right of the fence. Reach this path by continuing a few paces to the reservoir corner and fording the reservoir outflow here (3.8miles). Ascend the bank and follow the bank briefly to the fence and then turn right beside the fence (don't cross the stile).

When the fence meets a fence at right angles, hop over the fence ahead and turn left along the left fence ascending gently to a high point of around 460metres (1500ft). As the Carron Valley Forest is reached, turn right to follow the forest edge on a descending path which keeps right of the remnants of a left fence; the path down is boggy and if lost, go slightly right to pick it up again. Eventually, reach a footbridge comprising some small uneven round wooden poles over a ditch. Almost immediately beyond, turn right on a descending track which shortly meets a forest road. Go left and reach a T-junction with a post 13 sign. Go left towards Meikle Bin (hill). The track soon turns right and when the track ends, it continues as a good path up the left side of a valley. The path meets a forest track at post 15. Turn right towards the main car park. At the next and subsequent posts, follow signs to Todholes Car Park (not the Main Car Park). And eventually emerge in Todholes Car Park at the west end of the Carron Valley Reservoir (8.3miles); there is the odd glimpse of the reservoir through the trees.

Cross the lane and take the Earlsburn Windfarm construction road opposite, passing to the right of Todholes Farm; after passing a barrier, it is polite to report to a reception hut if manned. Follow the construction road across Endrick Water and continue to a sign off left saying 'Public Path to Kippen 4.5miles'; these must be Scottish miles because my measurement and feet tell me it's 6.3miles There is no path but you are aiming for the ruin ahead (next to two trees) and this requires crossing significant Burnfoot Burn; from afar the ruin looks like a sheepfold but is in fact the remnants of Burnfoot farm. There is a new footbridge across the burn but it is close to where it flows into Endrick Water. To reach the footbridge go a quarter-left to find a stile by a field gate in the left fence. Over, descend to the visible footbridge ahead left. Cross and cross the stile ahead and turn right ascending to reach the two trees. Continue to the near corner of the building and pass down the side and along the back of the building to meet the fence ahead. Looking left, the fence soon turns right with a hill track running to its right (west-northwest). This is the track to be joined and followed across the Gargunnoch Hills.

Follow the clear track to the right of the fence. Keep left at all track junctions. Eventually pass left of a sheep pen area, at a high point of around 335metres (1090ft) for this half of the stage and descend to ford Gourlay's Burn (wet feet if in spate). Beyond, continue to follow the rising track still keeping left at junctions. Eventually, the track starts to descend and after passing through a gate with a 'Welcome to the Moors' sign beyond, look back from the track to the chasm below on the left to observe the Spout of Ballochleam waterfall. Continue on the track, which contours after the descent from the hills. The track passes through a further gate then curves left to pass to the right of Ballochleam Farm's entry and continues to meet a lane (14.1miles).

Turn right for around 0.75mile and 200metres after passing a large farm on the left, turn left through a difficult rickety gate arrangement (not signed) (663 937). Follow the track (which is initially along the right fence) down to Dasher Bridge over the Boquhan Burn. Across, take the ascending farm track ahead. Ignoring a track off left (with Dasher Farm to the right) and keep ascending ahead to a farm gate. Through, go half-left across a large field to a gate plus stile in the diagonal opposite corner. Over, follow a clear path along a woodland edge to meet a lane. Take a good path opposite right signed to Kippen. When it approaches a recreation field, cross a footbridge over a stream and turn right. The path becomes an access track to the field and when it shortly reaches a track junction turn right for Kippen. Turn off right on a tarmac path signed to Burnside and when the tarmac finishes go ahead briefly to a burn and turn left keeping along the burn until a stone path is met. Turn right here and soon meet a lane. Turn left to shortly reach the centre of Kippen at a cross-road.

Stage 64: Kippen to Aberfoyle 15.2miles, ascent 332metres (1080ft), descent 388metres (1260ft). Explorer 348 (Campsie Fells), 365 (The Trossachs); Landranger 57 (Trossachs).

To reach Aberfoyle it's necessary to cross the Flanders Moss area of bogland. This wet ground stretches around the low lying land around the River Forth and its tributaries. The only sensible off-road dry-feet crossing of this area is to take to the cycle routes provided. Furthermore, an indirect route needs to be adopted to reach Flanders Moss due to the lack of a bridge over Mye Burn.

Route: From the centre of Kippen turn left along Main Street (the B-road to Fintry). When the B-road bends left (at a sign to Fintry), fork right on an unnamed minor lane. Keep to the lane and follow it as it turns sharp right by a seat and then quickly turns left by a cottage. Ignore turn-offs right to farms and then ignore a lane on the right to stay on the (rough) lane. After descending to cross a stream, the lane ascends, wriggling to keep left of Jennywoodston farm. Continue on the lane to meet a more major lane and turn left to re-meet the B-road to Fintry.

Turn right along the B-road for about 0.75mile and as a large farm on the left is neared, pass a solid green cabin on the left and take the next (unsigned) field gate on the right (NS 613 909). Follow the wide gravel construction road which shortly enters the Balgair Muir Forest. Follow the forest road up. There's supposed to be a path on the right which leaves this road but excavations left by the side of the road means it is very hard to spot and we didn't find it. Instead, continue to near the end of the road (where a short road branch goes off left and ahead the road soon ends abruptly). Go on a few metres and look right – there's a fire break. Leave the forest road here (NS 60205 91065) and follow the (wet) gap to the edge of the forest; it's not too far. At the forest edge observe Badenkep farm a quarter-left. This is the next objective but the ground between is boggy. So to get there, turn right for around 200metres along the fence to a gate on the left. Through, follow the

marshy grass track which is the only visible track. When the track starts veering right to go further away from the farm, leave it to go left, cross-country and rough but not too far, towards the right far-end of the forest to find a small stone bridge over a stream at NS 59841 91791.

Across, go ahead on a rough path to a field gate. Through, go ahead to find a track which curves right to the farm. Keep to the right of the barn and meet Badenkep's (and other farms) access drive (6.2miles). Go ahead on this, ascending and descending towards the Forth Valley. Eventually, the lane turns left and shortly reaches a junction. Turn right here and continue descending to the main road. Turn right for a short distance then turn left on a rough lane signed as a No Through Road. Continue on the lane to just past Gartentruch on the right and then take a path off left through a walkers' gate signed to Buchlyvie Station. The grass path follows the embankment of the old railway line and is not that well walked. Eventually, the path meets a wide dirt track (9.7miles). Turn right, signed 'Aberfoyle 5.5miles'. The track crosses Flanders Moss and many of the surrounding trees have been felled, giving a more open aspect than might be expected. Keep straight on (ignoring turn-offs) and after a couple of miles, cross Kelty Water. Almost immediately after, ignore a track off left to go straight on, signed 'Aberfoyle 3.5miles'. The track becomes a path, crosses the River Forth and continues to a walkers' gate. Through, the cycle path continues straight ahead as an access track. Eventually, with the noise of the A81 main road evident, the track becomes surfaced, passes under the main road and shortly meets a lane.

Turn right signed 'Cycle Route 7 for Aberfoyle 1.75miles' and when shortly the lane curves right, go straight on along the signed tarmac cycle path. Eventually the cycle path emerges on a lane close to Aberfoyle's centre. Go straight ahead following Cycle Route 7 signs and shortly turn right as signed to emerge just left of the junction of the A and B roads. The route and the shops of Aberfoyle lie to the right.

Stage 65: Aberfoyle to Brig o' Turk 9.6miles, ascent 566metres (1840ft), descent 486metres (1580ft). Explorer 365 (The Trossachs); Landranger 57 (Trossachs).

The route follows the signed Rob Roy Way (RRW) as it ascends to follow the line of the Menteith Hills. Unfortunately, this part of the RRW uses a lot of hard surfaced forest roads so it's hard on the feet and views are fairly limited. However, there's a lovely section of open hill path leading to a lochan (a small loch) and beyond the RRW is left for a forest track down to Loch Venacher. A pleasant shoreline path follows before forest roads once again take over for the final entry to Brig o'Turk.

Route: Turn right along Aberfoyle's main road, signed to Glasgow and Stirling. Immediately before the Aberfoyle Medical Centre sign, turn left up a rough lane to the Dounans Outdoor Centre. At the centre, continue straight ahead ascending to its car park and at the car park entry take the track which curves right. Shortly meet a forest road and go straight on (right); the forest road has forestry to its left and soon a golf course to its right. Keep to the main forest road ignoring turn-offs left. Eventually, a T-junction is reached. Here, turn left on an ascending forest road going north-eastish. After ascending steeply, the gradient lessens and enters a forestry estate. Follow the forestry road to its end. The RRW then continues as a lovely grassy path which passes through woodland to a walkers' gate onto the open hillside; the tops of the Menteith Hills can be seen on the left.

Follow the good contouring path across the hill to the next walkers' gate; this section with

its open views and soft walking underfoot is the highlight of this stage. Through the gate, it's quickly back into woodland. The path leads to a small loch, Lochan Allt a' Chip Dhuibh, passing along its left side to reach a good forest track (4.7miles). Turn left here leaving the RRW (which turns right).

The forest track curls round the hill and reaches a branch with Loch Venachar visible below. Fork right here. The track descends steeply and then curves left before twisting right to reach a lane along the south side of Loch Venachar. Turn left and shortly branch off right at a Cycle Route 7 sign. The pleasant path soon reaches the loch and then continues close to the loch edge. It continues beyond the loch end and meets a forest road (8miles). Turn right, signed for Loch Katrine and keeping to the main track eventually reach a junction (with Loch Achray visible to the left). Turn right, signed Brig o' Turk and Callander. Follow the farm access track which keeps right of the farm and comes alongside a river. Shortly, the track turns left to cross the river by an old stone bridge. Over, the track shortly becomes a lane which soon meet the main road. Turn right for Brig o' Turk village. In the village the route continues by turning left along a 'No Through Road' (Glen Finglas Road), passing the village's rather good tea room.

Stage 66: Brig o' Turk to Kingshouse via Strathyre 13.5miles, ascent 862metres (2800ft), descent 818metres (2660ft); via Balquhidder 13.1m, ascent 658metres (2140ft), descent 622metres (2020)ft. Explorer 365 (The Trossachs); Landranger 57 (Trossachs).

This is an excellent hill walk which follows the line of the Glen Finglas Reservoir before turning off to follow the glen of the Allt Gleann nam Meann. This excellent track is left for a hill path signed to Balquhidder which is followed to Ballimore where there is a route choice. The more interesting but harder route involves a hill path over to Strathyre followed by an easy walk along a disused railway line to reach Kingshouse. The gentler option is to take the lane to Balquhidder followed by the valley road eastwards to Kingshouse.

Route: Follow the Glen Finglas Road up to a lane fork. Go right here (straight on is the Dam Road) and soon pass a Glen Finglas Estate notice board. Ascend steeply on the lane and eventually the reservoir can be seen below on the left. The lane now follows the line of the reservoir and once the woodland is left, the lane drops to and follows the shoreline. When the lane ends, take the track continuation which also stays close to the reservoir. The track swings temporarily away from the water, rises and at its highest point with a log to the right, it's worth climbing the small bank on the right to look at a stone viewfinder set in the ground; of particular note is the inscription around the compass points reading 'Sense the past, Enjoy the present, Ensure the future'.

Continue on the track and with the end of the loch in sight, come to a track fork. Turn off right, signed 'Hill Path to Balquhidder' and 'Mell Trail' (3.1miles). The track gently ascends along lengthy Gleann Meann with its allt below on the left. Eventually, the track goes left, descends to cross a burn and soon branches right on a steeply ascending track (which is to the left of the burn). On a left curve, leave the track for a path off right signed 'Hill Path to Balquhidder' (6.1miles). The trodden (wet) contouring path still keeps to the left of the burn (so ignore a 4x4 grass track which branches off right to cross the burn) and follow the path to a stile. Cross and follow the descending path which follows the line of the left fence. The path is wet and (as usual) disappears in the bog but by looking ahead, it's route can usually be discerned; always keep the left fence in sight and if in doubt, head towards the farm buildings and trees ahead (across the river). As the path descends, it keeps right of a burn which becomes increasingly wider as the farm buildings get closer. Eventually the path curves right round crags and follows their lower slopes (also wet and boggy).

Follow the path eastwards and if the path is lost, make for the edge of the Calair Burn embankment. Eventually, climb over a field gate and go straight ahead over a small mound. Continue ahead to drop down on to a farm access track with a sign back to Brig o' Turk (8.8miles).

This is where the route choice occurs and both routes involve about the same mileage. The easier route is to turn left and cross a stone bridge over the Calair Burn to reach the start of a public road (more akin to a track) at Ballimore farm. Follow the 'lane' northwards (ignoring a lane off right to Stroneslaney) to a T-junction at Balquhidder (11.1miles); the outlaw Rob Roy Macgregor (described as a Scottish Robin Hood) is buried in Balquhidder's churchyard. Turn right (route 7 cycle sign) at the T-junction and follow the lane eastwards to Kingshouse on the old A84 road (which is very close to the present A84 road). The Kingshouse Hotel standing at this point is now the Mhor84 Motel (having accommodation and food). Just before crossing under the present day A84, note that cycle route 7 signed to Killin and other destinations turns off left; this is taken in the next stage of the route.

The more interesting, exacting and recommended route involving a stiff climb and descent into Strathyre is to turn right on the farm access track. Ignore a branch right to Lianach farm and continue to just before Immeroin farm where there is a path off left signed 'Hill Path to Strathyre'. Ascend the trodden path to a yellow post. Ascend beyond for a short distance then go half-right to a visible ladder stile. Beyond, follow the trodden path through a short stretch of bracken and then ascend the hillside half-right towards the forest. The path is trodden, tends to contour then steeply rises with the occasional yellow post to confirm the correctness of the path route; if in doubt, look for a yellow post. Eventually the path reaches more open hillside and contours. As a small rocky hump is approached, a yellow post is set too low. Keep slightly higher than the post to start passing close to the left of the rocky hump and look for a faint path off left. This soon curves right, improves and heads for a stile in a fence (around NN 5482 1667).

The original stile was a couple of metres to the right and here there is a path (away from the fence) towards the forest proper. Take this clear, improving path which curves generally left contouring the hillside. The path becomes a track which descends steeply. Keep descending and eventually the track reaches a forest road. Turn right for a short distance. After passing a turning area on the right and a blue marker post on the left, turn left down an unsigned forest path and descend to a lane. Turn left briefly and then turn right, signed as Cycle Route 7 to Kingshouse. Shortly cross Strathyre Bridge over the River Balvag (11.3miles) and almost immediately turn off left on Cycle Route 7 (but for refreshments continue on the lane to meet the main road in Strathyre village with a Post Office and general stores just to the right selling tea and coffee).

Follow the cycle track along the disused railway line and after just over two miles, the track reaches a lane. The route continues opposite right on Cycle Route 7 but for accommodation at what was the Kingshouse Hotel but is now called the Mhor84 Motel turn right on the lane for a short distance.

Stage 67: Kingshouse to Killin 12.3miles, ascent 606metres (1970ft), descent 622metres (2020ft). Explorer 365 (The Trossachs), 378 (Glen Lyon); Landranger 51 (Loch Tay).

This is a splendid day's walk on good tracks and paths throughout. It's mainly on open hillside so there are good and extensive views. It starts along the path provided for Cycle

Route 7 but leaves it when the cycle route meets the A84, in order to make its way onto the hill track up Glen Kendrum. The track follows the Kendrum Burn and rises to a height of about 600metres (1950ft) as it creeps round Creag Mac Ranaich hill. After contouring round the hill, the track continues into Gleann Dubh. The descent down the gleann is latterly by the Ardchyle Burn. The route keeps on the burn's eastern side to reach the old railway line which used to connect Killin to Crianlarich and this is followed into Killin. On reaching this small town at the western end of Loch Tay, the route passes the magnificent and picturesque Falls of Dochart where there is much to admire.

Route: From the Kinghouse entrance door, turn right briefly and at the 'Give Way' sign turn left, pass under the main A84 road and 100metres further on turn right on Cycle Route 7, signed to Killin and other destinations. Follow the cycle path to the old main road, turn left as directed then turn off it left after a short distance. Shortly after there's a track off left through a large metal gate which is along an old railway track. The gate is usually only padlocked at weekends so if unlocked, take this track going straight on at junctions. Pass under an elegant small bridge with decorative metal. As the next bridge is neared, don't pass under it but ascend to its left and meet a track T-junction (NN 57866 22654).

If the gate is padlocked stay on cycle route 7 and follow the cycle track to where it emerges on a lane with an Edinchip Estate sign (2miles); the main road is just to the right. Leave the cycle route here by turning left on the lane, descend to cross Kendrum Burn and follow the lane beyond to a T-junction. Turn right, signed to Edinchip Farm, Glen Kendrum & Disused Railway. Shortly turn left through a field gate into a field at a footpath sign to Glen Kendrum & the Railway. Follow the left fence up the field to a walkers' gate. Through, go half-left as directed then left to a field gate. Continue beyond to the bridge over the disused railway and the start of the Glen Kendrum hill track (NN 57866 22654).

Turn left and follow the steadily rising track which follows the line of the burn below on the left. The track eventually drops slightly to cross the burn and then ascends steeply winding its way to pass left of the crags of Creag Mac Ranaich; there are fantastic views looking back. The track continues over the col (5.7miles) into Gleann Dubh, curving its way down the hillside keeping right of its burn. Eventually when the track curves left to ford its burn, Ardchyle Burn, there is a route choice. The preferred and recommended route is not to ford but to go straight on along an old grass track which stays close to the east side of the burn. The track leads to a field gate into a plantation. Follow the clear track and shortly reach a small clearing. Curve left so as to stay near the clearing edge and the burn. A good and clear track is apparent on leaving the clearing and this is followed. The path turns right when a fallen tree blocks the way straight ahead and it soon meet the old railway line to Killin (8.2miles).

Whichever way is used to meet the disused railway, turn right along the disused line. Shortly after an entry to a house on the left, fork left at a track branch. Eventually, the track emerges on the main A85 road. Go opposite right onto an unsigned path and gently ascend to a path along the old railway embankment. Ignore a track off left to go straight on across a bridge over the Allt Lairig Cheile and pass through a Dochart Estate gate. About 200metres further on, the path emerges at a forest road junction (10.5miles). Go straight on by taking the forest road opposite, thereby joining the Rob Roy Way into Killin. Eventually, the forest road meets a track. Here, follow the sign left to shortly meet the A827 road at the western end of Killin. Turn right and then curve left over the bridge; the Falls of Dochart are seen to best advantage from the bridge. Over turn right through Killin's main street; it has shops (including a chemist) and a lot of accommodation. These are the last shops before Spean Bridge, three days away, so stocking up is advisable.

Stage 68: Killin to Bridge of Balgie 11.6miles, ascent 665metres (2160ft), descent 582metres (1890ft). Explorer 378 (Glen Lyon); Landranger 51 (Loch Tay).

This is another good day's walking using paths to reach the bottom of a large water pipeline up the hillside. The stone sleepers of the railway track used for the pipeline construction are used to ascend the steep hillside of Meall Liath hill; the pipeline is part of a tunnel and pipeline system used to transport water from the man-made Lochan na Lairige into Loch Tay. From the top of the pipeline at around 450metres (1460ft), its service track is taken to the remote (unfenced) lane over to the Bridge of Balgie. This lane, which is not gritted or cleared of snow in winter, is used to access the many surrounding Munros (mountains over 915metres/3000ft); Ben Lawers lies to its right.

The lane threads its way through the hills, itself reaching 549metres (1780ft) just after passing Lochan na Lairige. There's a route choice after passing the reservoir. Either the lane which slowly descends into Glen Lyon can be taken (with the grass on the left used to largely avoid the tarmac) or there is a slightly shorter (wet) hill path which parallels the lane for part of the way (recommended); the path is only shown on the Explorer map but it is clearly trodden so it is a puzzle as to why it is omitted from the Landranger map. The Bridge of Balgie crosses the River Lyon and there's a B&B some distance before the bridge; a telephone box and a (good) tea room are situated just after the bridge.

Route: Continue down Killin's main street and near the bottom of the town pass a Co-op on the left. Take the next road off right, signed to the Surgery. Turn right again almost immediately. Shortly turn left into a lane (to the sewage works) and immediately turn left on an unsigned surfaced path along a disused railway line; Loch Tay can be viewed half right. Eventually the path comes parallel to a minor lane (Pier Road) and this is joined as soon as possible. Turn left along Pier Road for about 200metres before turning right up an access drive carrying a Finlarig Estate - Private Road sign; the ruins of Finlarig Castle are to the right. Shortly at a track junction go straight ahead, between a barn and Finlarig Cottage, on a track which leads to a field gate. Through, follow the farm track across the field to another field gate and enter a long field. Follow the gently ascending farm track which comes close to and follows the left field edge. With the end of the field in sight, take a gate on the left in a slight dip; this is the second gate on the left in the field. Through, follow a path half-right but then leave it to turn right and follow a line of wooden telegraph poles. When a wall ahead is spotted, take a grass track half-left (which curves round the bottom of a small mound) to reach a wall with a wooden hut beyond. Turn left down the right fence to a field gate onto the main A827 road.

Turn right along the road for about 200metres crossing over the pipeline and just before the Perth & Kinross sign, turn left on a track. Pass through a gate and the ascending track soon comes alongside the pipeline and the pipeline is now followed all the way up the hillside along the railway track which runs beside it; the stone sleepers can be used as a set of steps; it's a long and steep climb but looking back there are excellent views over Loch Tay. On reaching the final tower at the top of the track (2.7miles), take the pipeline's service track to the right which contours across the hillside. When a track is met, go right (i.e. straight on). Eventually, the track moves away from the line of the loch and is followed to a lane (5miles).

Turn left on the ascending lane. Ignore a fork left to the dam and continue ascending to pass the dam. The lane contours along Lochan na Lairige; the scenery on both sides of the lane is very grand. Beyond the reservoir, at a distinct left bend, there's a route choice (7.3miles). Either continue on the lane on a steady descent towards Glen Lyon in the

company of Allt Baile a' Mhuilinn or (better) take the track off right and after a couple of metres turn off quarter-left on a short faint path to a cairn near the road. Continue past the cairn parallel to the road on a trodden path. The path seems to disappear but look ahead left for a grassy track and take this, still parallel to the road. The track starts to leave the road to contour round a boggy area and eventually the road is out of sight. The path appears to meander but is avoiding the worst of the wetness as it turns leftwards and starts to descend with the road becoming visible again.

The path very gradually descends becoming parallel to the road. A wall is crossed at NN 58101 42382 and from here continue on the obvious path on a ledge above the road. The path reaches a burn in a small cleft and it may be preferable to descend to the road to avoid this crossing but if crossing, higher up is easier. Beyond the ford look for the path continuation a quarter-left and follow the ledge path and on reaching a medium-sized rock (NN 57225 43853), turn left to re-meet the road just at the end of a layby. Turn right to continue the descent into Glen Lyon. The lane continues over the Bridge of Balgie spanning the River Lyon. Across at the T-junction, the route continues to the right soon passing a telephone box and (excellent) tea room.

Stage 69: Bridge of Balgie to Bridge of Gaur (west end of Loch Rannoch) 14.6miles, ascent 603metres (1960ft), descent 585metres (1900ft). Explorer 378 (Glen Lyon), 385 (Rannoch Moor); Landranger 51 (Loch Tay).

Navigationally this route is straightforward. It takes the hill track over the (relatively) low level pass of Lairig Ghallabhaich into Rannoch Forest. It is the Old Kirk Road which in former years brought folk from the Rannoch area to the church in Glen Lyon. Rannoch Forest like most plantations features forest road which are hard underfoot and provide limited views. The forest roads are left for a pleasant woodland path which follows the line of the Dall Burn to reach the lane along the south side of Loch Rannoch. The lane is followed to the Bridge of Gaur and keeps close to Loch Rannoch so there are views along and across the loch.

Route: After crossing the Bridge of Balgie, turn right at the T-junction and walk through pretty Innerwick. Just after the war memorial turn off left on a track signed to Loch Rannoch; this is the Old Kirk Road and Glen Lyon's church can be seen on the right. Follow the track to the gate ahead (not the one on the right). Through (marked 'No Unauthorised Vehicles'), follow the stony ascending track. On meeting a track turn right and shortly reach a track T-junction. Turn left here and follow the glen with its river, Allt Ghallabhaich, below on the left; there are open views here. Half-way along the glen, ignore a track off right. Further on, an ascending track joins from the left. The track continues to the head of the valley at around 490metres (1590ft) and then contours with Rannoch Forest visible ahead.

The forest is entered via a gate (4.2miles). Keep to the main forest road and reach a junction. Go straight on and shortly pass a lochan on the left. Continue to meet a forest road. Go left and keep to the main forest road. Ignore a minor track off right and then a more major track off right; the former is a short cut to the latter. Continue for a short distance to an insignificant grassy track going off half-right at NN 58675 54970 (6.4miles). Follow this descending track down to a bridge over Dall Burn. Over, the track turns right following the burn. When the track shortly turns left, go straight on along a lovely woodland trodden path which loosely follows the line of the burn; there are many birch trees and also bilberries along the way. After about a mile a track is met. Turn right here and shortly leave Black Wood of Rannoch (one of the few remaining old Caledonian Forests) via a gate.

Immediately fork left at a track branch and shortly meet an access track. Turn left and follow the track to meet the lane along the south side of Loch Rannoch (8.1miles).

Turn left and follow the quiet lane which closely follows the loch shoreline. It's a long loch but eventually the lane swings right to cross the River Gaur by the Bridge of Gaur; the river acts as an inflow to Loch Rannoch. Beyond the bridge the lane meets a B-road. The route continues to the left (towards Rannoch Station) but there's an excellent B&B a short distance to the right.

Stage 70: Bridge of Gaur to Loch Ossian Youth Hostel 12.7miles, ascent 462metres (1500ft), descent 289metres (940ft). Explorer 385 (Rannoch Moor); Landranger 42 (Loch Rannoch), 41 (Ben Nevis).

This eagerly anticipated walk over to the Loch Ossian youth hostel proved to be somewhat of a disappointment. Hydro schemes in this area have seen the expected hill tracks converted to construction tracks/roads for lorries and diggers. So after leaving the B-road, it's just a case of following the hard core to reach the Loch Ossian hostel. For a destination that makes a point of boasting about only being accessible by rail, bicycle or on foot, on our visit there seemed to be quite a lot of cars and other mechanised traffic whizzing up and down the constructed roads.

Rannoch Moor can be viewed in all its glory for much of the route by looking to the left. It seems odd to see what looks like the odd toy train trundling across the boggy landscape; it is indeed a train travelling between the stations of Rannoch and Corroul, and the white building seen across Rannoch Moor a quarter-left is Corroul Station. This currently operates as a restaurant with accommodation provided in the signal box. The eco (but comfortable) youth hostel is just over a mile from the station and provides a unique experience. It's electricity derives from a combination of wind, solar and hydro power while the heat from the fire in the common room provides hot water as well as serving to dry clothes and boots.

Route: Take the B-road westwards towards Rannoch Station (a 'No Through Road') using the verge to avoid the tarmac. The lane follows the line of the picturesque River Gaur and after about 2miles, ignore a turn-off left into Gaur Power Station. Continue along the lane for another mile and with Loch Eigheach to the left, pass under pylon lines. Shortly after, turn off right on a construction road with a Scottish Rights of Way sign to Fort William by Corroul (4miles).

Just follow the stony construction road but leave it briefly to take a footbridge left over the Allt Eigheach. Over turn immediately right to follow the allt and shortly re-meet the construction road. Turn left ascending beside a plantation. Follow the construction road as it turns right (north-westwards) away from the plantation and ascend to a significant branch where the main construction road turns right. Go straight on here (left branch). The construction track steadily rises along the left side of Sron Leachd a' Chaorainn (hill). After reaching the highest point at around 550metres (1790ft), the track contours up and down and passes to the left of what's left of the grey stone walls of Corroul Old Lodge; from afar it resembles a sheep fold. The building is reputed to have been used as a shooting lodge and also as a sanatorium; at 530metres (1725ft), it's debatable as to its health value.

Just keep on the track and eventually there's a gradual descent with a glimpse of Loch Ossian below. The track turns left passing to the right of Meall na Lice crags and descends towards the loch with Loch Ossian's youth hostel clearly visible. The track rises, passes a largish rock on the right and continues rising for a short distance. At the top, look for a

grassy track off right which descends onto a gravel path. Turn right briefly to meet a construction road. Take the grass track opposite left and on meeting a major track go right for the hostel (and left for Spean Bridge or Corroul Station).

Stage 71: Loch Ossian to Spean Bridge 16.6miles, ascent 511metres (1660ft), descent 843 metres (2740ft). Explorer 385 (Rannoch Moor), 392 (Ben Nevis); Landranger 41 (Ben Nevis).

This is a long walk with a lot of hard surface for the feet to negotiate! It starts with taking construction roads to the south-east end of Loch Treig where they thankfully end. There's a good track along the south end of the loch to an old lodge and then a path to the Allt na Lairige, an inflow of Loch Treig. The map suggests that there's a path on the east and west side of the allt and the Scottish Heritage web site recommends the path on the east side. However, there's no sign of the path on the east side and everyone has clearly opted for the path along the allt's west side which is well trodden. This long section ascending gently along the allt to a bothy is the highlight of this stage.

Beyond the bothy, its access track is taken all the way down to Coirechoille Farm. Initially from the bothy, the access track continues to gently rise to a height of 510metres (1660ft) before starting the descent to Glen Spean in the company of the Allt Leachdach; there are some serious Munros on both sides of the track rising to over 1100metres (3575ft). The access track is stony so progress along here is slower than might be anticipated. A forest road succeeds the stones and in the forest section, look out for the new wooden statue of the Wee Minister on the left; the original is thought to be of Dr Thomas Chalmers, the newly established Church of Scotland's first moderator. The statue is said to bring good luck to passing walkers and climbers, particularly those bearing money but nowadays money donations are for the Lochaber Mountain Rescue.

Once Coirechoille Farm is reached (or Corriechoille as the 1:50000 map calls it), a path is taken to a lane. The lane leads into Spean Bridge and loosely follows the line along the south side of the River Spean. The village is sizeable with a lot of accommodation and a small supermarket but not a lot else.

Route: From the hostel take the track out and meet the construction road. Turn right and branch right at a Scottish Rights of Way marker post shortly after the new pump house. After passing over a bridge, a construction road is met. Turn left here and just follow the this road which ascends and eventually descends to pass under the railway line; the white building visible behind to the left is the station building. Continue on the construction road which is now beside the railway line. As Loch Treig is approached the road diverges from the railway as it descends to the loch.

On reaching the loch, turn left along the construction road along the south end of the loch. The construction road ends at a footbridge and after crossing the bridge, ignore a path off left signed to Kinlochleven, so as to continue by the loch on a proper walkers' track. An old shooting lodge appears and the track leads to a substantial footbridge, signed 'Spean Bridge 12miles'. Cross and turn right to the lodge (5miles). There's a good path along the loch shore (at the bottom of a small loose-stone slope) but a lot of deep bog is in the way. So, go inland to avoid the worst of the bog then return to the shore edge to pick up the path and follow it to the left. The path follows the inflow, Allt na Lairige, up to and through a gate in a fence.

As mentioned previously, the path on the west side of the allt is taken. So, ignore the bridge over the allt across the inflow and continue along the excellent path ahead on the

west side. After passing through a small gorge, the path comes back to the allt in a calm phase and follows beside the allt; all the time there is a barely noticeable uphill gradient. The path leaves the allt when it becomes more active only to return. The path occasionally disappears in bog as everyone scatters to find their own way but look ahead to pick it up again; it is there. In particular as a waterfall is spotted, the path can be clearly seen ascending a mound on the left. When this path is followed, a significant side allt is met (the Allt Feith nan Sac). Turn left up this allt to use a footbridge and from here follow a boggy track which heads half-right back to the Allt na Lairige but then twists left to circle to the right of hummocks and becomes a good track. When this peters out in bog, go half-left (as best you can) making for a visible mountain track. Follow this to an allt (Allt Chuil Choirean) with a MBA bothy opposite (NN 282 736) (8.7miles).

Ford the allt and take the access track from the bothy; the pass over the col is named the Lairig Leacach. The track starts to descend between serious mountains following the line of Allt Leachdach on the left. After the allt is crossed (11.4miles), the track enters forestry, much of which has been cut down, so there are reasonably open views. The forestry road twists and turns, passes (to the right of) the Wee Minister and exits the forest. Continue on to reach a track branch. The left branch is signed to Spean Bridge via Wood whereas straight on is Spean Bridge via Road. The left branch appears to be a much longer route into Spean Bridge, so ignore it and keep straight on. When the forest road reaches Coirechoille Farm, the track swings left and shortly reaches a sharp right corner.

Here, leave the track on a trodden path off left which quickly veers left to contour close to a left fence. Eventually, the path turns right leaving the fence and descends. It becomes increasingly boggy lower down but just press on forward to shortly meet a lane with substantial Cour Bridge just to the left (14.1miles). Turn left and follow the lane westwards; the River Spean is to the right. After crossing over the railway line, Spean Bridge is shortly entered. Curve right to meet the busy A82 main road and turn right to cross the bridge over the river. Pass a Spar shop on the right and meet the junction of the A82 and A86 roads. The route continues left up the A82 (towards Inverness) but most of the accommodation seems to be along the A86 road.

Stage 72: Spean Bridge to North Laggan 16.9 miles, ascent 698metres (2270ft), descent 726metres (2360ft). Explorer 400 (Loch Lochay); Landranger 34 (Fort Augustus).

This is a very straight forward route. It starts by making its way to Gairloch but avoids some of the tarmac by using the recently constructed Highbridge Path. This excellent, scenic and informative path drops to the River Spean. The path then follows the old railway line to a viewing point of the fine and impressive ruins of General Wade's high bridge across the Spean. The General was responsible for building military roads in Scotland after the 1715 Jacobite rebellion, enabling the English army to respond quickly to any trouble north of the border. A small section of the Wade Road has been incorporated into the Highbridge Path but when the Path turns towards the Commando Memorial (dedicated to the commando troops who were trained in this challenging and desolate area during the second world war), the route leaves the Highbridge Path to continue on the Wade Road. This soon meets a road to the Caledonian Canal at Gairloch.

From here, the Great Glen Way is taken. Initially there are paths for walkers only and the one following the shore of Loch Lochy is particularly attractive. When the path ends, the route continues to follow Loch Lochy's shoreline but uses a lane to reach the hamlet of Clunes and then proceeds through Clunes Forest on a (hard core) forest road. On leaving Clunes Forest, the forest road becomes an access track and then a lane. At the head of

Loch Lochy, the Caledonian Canal is crossed and then followed until the A82 road can be accessed at North Laggan. South Laggan with its accommodation lies to the south and must be approached from this direction because the verge enables walkers to face the oncoming busy and fast-moving traffic.

Route: Turn left in Spean Bridge along the A82 (signed for Inverness). Just after the Aonach Mor Hotel on the right, turn left through a gate and follow the gravel path to the right, signed to the Commando Memorial via High Bridge. Follow the lovely path which wends round and drops to the River Spean. After a spell by the river, the ruins of the railway bridge over the river can be seen above and the path curves right ascending to meet and follow the old railway line. Continue on for a splendid view of the remains of General Wade's High Bridge over the river. Shortly after, the path leaves the disused railway line by ascending half-right. When the path shortly curves right to go back to the Commando Memorial, go straight on to a field gate. Through, find the Wade Road ahead left and follow the clear line of this grass track through the field to a gate onto a B-road. Turn left, pass the entry to Gairloch Caravan Park and go straight on descending (ignore the lane off half-right). Follow the road (more akin to a lane) into Gairloch.

Continue to follow the road across the swing bridge over the Caledonian Canal (4miles) and 50metres further on turn right on a lane at the Great Glen Way (GGW) national trail sign of a thistle. Follow the lane to a GGW sign off left which takes walkers on a pleasant path parallel to the lane. After re-joining the lane, go left for 5metres then turn right on a signed path which drops to Loch Lochy and then follows the shoreline. Eventually, when this lovely path rises to re-meet the road, turn right. Ignore a turn-off left up a drive to Achnacarry and go straight on along the B-road signed to Loch Arkaig. Eventually after passing through tiny Bunarkaig the road reaches the buildings of Clunes. Here, the road bends sharp left (8.1miles) but go right here on a forestry track (signed for the GGW, also for cycle route 78 and there's a Scottish Rights of Way signed '7miles to Laggan').

The track descends to the loch and then follows the line of the loch but all too often trees obscure the view. Pass a wild camping site and continue on the track. Near the top of a climb, a track is met. Turn right here as directed. Leave the forest at a gate (14.3miles) and follow it's continuation, now an access track which becomes a lane.

Shortly after a cattle grid, branch half-right (GGW sign) along a log cabin park access drive, curving right to pass along the end of the loch towards the Eagle floating barge pub & restaurant. Follow the GGW signage to curve briefly right then left round a building and cross the canal lock as signed. Turn left on the other side and follow the Caledonian Canal towpath which continues as a path through woodland with the canal below left. Continue to meet the A82 on the right at the first opportunity. From here (North Laggan), there is hostel and B&B accommodation three-quarters to one mile to the right at South Laggan.

Stage 73: North Laggan to Tomdoun 13.6miles, ascent 2020ft, descent 1660ft. Explorer 400 (Loch Lochy); Landranger 34 (Fort Augustus).

This section is navigationally straightforward and you should make good time. It takes the Great Glen Way (GGW) high level route through forest to Mandally, just west of Invergarry. From here, it's mainly forest roads westwards along the south side of Loch Garry to Greenfield farm, with the route visiting a stunning waterfall. The map does show a track continuing westwards from Greenfield on to Garrygualach (now deserted) and the bridge over the burn just beyond has now been replaced. However, the path continuation westwards offers very boggy, difficult to follow and rough walking conditions. In addition,

the Allt Choire a' Bhalachain has to be forded to access a bridge crossing point of the River Garry at Poulary and reach the no-through lane to Kinloch Hourn; the allt crossing is a problem particularly when in spate. For all these reasons, the (easy) option of taking Greenfield's access drive northwards to reach the lane along the north side of Loch Garry is chosen. There is now no accommodation along this part of the lane and the stage finishes at what used to be the hotel at Tomdoun from where a pick-up is required back to (good) accommodation in Invergarry; fortunately, Invergarry has a taxi firm (Great Glen Travel tel. 01809 501 222).

Route: Return to the GGW and continue to follow it along the canal. As Laggan swing bridge is approached, take to the grass path along the canal bank which ascends to a field gate onto the A82. Cross the main road to use the pedestrian footway across the bridge. Continue on the A82, shortly ignore a lane off left to Kilfinnan but a few metres further on turn off left at a GGW sign; this is the multi-user high level route to Invergarry. Follow the wide forestry track up a long and at times steepish ascent. Ignore a turn off left to keep on the GGW; there's occasional views of Loch Oich through the trees. Ignore the next track off left (again follow the GGW signage) and just keep on along the main track which descends to meet a lane at the scattered settlement of Mandally (2.6miles).

Leave the GGW for good here by turning left. Follow the lane and shortly after crossing a wooden bridge (which is just before meeting a cattle grid and cottage at the end of the lane), turn off right on a gravel path with a yellow route marker post; if you get to a 'No Through Road for Vehicles' notice, you have gone too far. The path leads to a footbridge and over, meet a path with a sign. Turn left signed to Allt na Cailliche Trail & Waterfalls. Follow the path by the burn with a forest road (which is required later) above on the right. The path leads to a footbridge over the burn (NH 277 005); taking the path to the right leads up to the forestry road and if this is taken turn left on the forestry road. However, crossing the footbridge and following the path on the other side of the burn is recommended. This path leads across to a path along the Allt na Cailliche and it reaches a stupendous waterfall down a rock face at a point where the path turns right. Follow the path and in a few metres meet a path. Turn right here, ford a burn (not difficult) and follow the path briefly before turning left on a more minor path which ascends to the forestry road and turn left.

Stay on the main forestry road ignoring a forestry road off left and much later a track off right. Some of the forest has been cut down so there are views! Immediately before a track off left (which is not taken), there's an open sided hut with a picnic table and benches (7.7miles); it's a good welcome lunch spot which from the inscriptions on the walls has been well used over many years.

Continuing on westwards, shortly cross a bridge over Allt Ladaidh and just after ignore a construction road off right. Shortly after, the forest road crosses a cattle grid into the Glengarry Caledonian Forest Reserve where highland cattle which look fierce but are generally very gentle animals can be seen. Cross a further cattle grid and continue to a forest road branch. Fork right here, signed to Allt Ladaidh Hydro Scheme and almost immediately cross a cattle grid. Continue for less than 0.5mile and ignore the track off right to the (Allt Ladaidh) hydro scheme to go straight on (left). The forest road becomes a construction road. Continue, cross a cattle grid with the buildings of Greenfield visible half-right. Leave the construction road briefly by taking the farm track ahead. After crossing a small bridge the track curves right (just right of a barn) and re-meets the construction road. Turn left following the road down to a substantial wooden bridge over a burn.

Beyond, ignore the construction road going left and descend gently. The construction road

soon ceases and becomes Greenfield's access track heading northwards. Ignore a track off left (to Garrygualach) by a new barn and follow the access track which becomes a lane. Cross the narrow part of Loch Garry on a metal bridge incorporating a cattle grid at its start. Over, continue to meet the lane along Glen Garry (11.1 miles). Turn left and follow the lane to Tomdoun; there are some good views of Loch Garry and its surroundings from the lane.

Stage 74: Tomdoun to Cluanie Inn 12.9 miles, ascent 785 metres (2550ft), descent 698 metres (2270ft). Explorer 399 (Loch Arkaig) (negligible), Explorer 414 (Glen Shiel); Landranger 34 (Fort Augustus), 33 (Glen Shiel)

The old A87 (Road to the Isles) went from Tomdoun to the Cluanie Inn but the enlargement of Loch Loyne caused the original road to be submerged. Thus from Tomdoun, the route continues on the lane along Glen Garry before taking a hill path over to Glen Loyne; the clear path ascends to the col between the hills of Mam na Seilg and Glac Raineach. The path down into Glen Loyne is not as well defined; however, all walkers need to end up at a stile in a deer fence to access the River Loyne which needs to be forded to reach a path along the north side of the river. Clear paths lead to the remnants of the old A87 road (now a rough lane) which is taken to the Cluanie Inn in Glen Shiel and the finish point of this particular section of the South Foreland to Cape Wrath walk; like many inns in the area, the Cluanie is an old droving inn offering accommodation and food. The Inverness to Skye buses run daily and stop at the inn (but clear signalling to the driver is advised).

Route: From what was the Tomdoun Hotel (but is now a private house) continue westwards on the lane for 2.9 miles to reach a Scottish Rights of Way sign pointing right to the 'Cluanie Inn 9 miles'. Follow the well trodden path which ascends between a deer fence on the right and a significant burn on the left. The burn is forded and the ascending path then gently diverges from the burn to cross a side burn. Continue to follow the still ascending path, recross the side burn and follow the obvious path up, ignoring any turn-offs right. In particular, near the top ignore a minor grass track off right at NH 10666 03377 (shown on the OS maps); the main (obvious) path swings left here to continue northwards. Follow the obvious path up over the top of the col (490 metres/1590ft) and beyond.

If just after the top you lose the path in bog, just curve right to find it again as the initial descent follows the curve of the hill on the right. The (reasonably clear) path curves left to ford the Allt Mam na Seilg and continues descending west-northwest down to a deer stile crossing at NH 10009 04727. The descending path is not as easy to pick up after this but it is there although tending to disappear in the bog. From the stile, the path continues west-northwest to a stile at the bottom of the slope in the bottom left corner of the deer fencing; to get there, start off a quarter-left before turning more left over the flank of the hill on the left to cross a small burn at NH 09396 05210 and beyond flog through the bog and undergrowth following parallel to the right fence to the stile by a gate in the deer fencing.

Over, the map indicates a path going north-west to the Allt Mialach which is then followed northwards to the River Loyne which is then forded. However, it appears pathless and tussocky beyond the stile so a bearing of 30 degrees east of north was taken to the river (keeping west of the Allt a' Choire Rainich). After fording, the hard work continues by going half-left to meet an obvious path. Turn left for about three-quarters of a mile to a small cairn on the right (NH 07884 06307) (7.1 miles).

From the cairn, turn right to ascend the hillside on a good gravelly path. It ascends to pass behind the crags (Creag Liathtais) viewed earlier from below. Here, the path levels off

around the 490metres (1590ft) mark before starting to descend. When a path is met at NH 09863 06903, turn right here; the Road to the Isles can be clearly seen and the path descends to meet it (8.8miles).

Turn left on the traffic-free rough tarmac lane. Gradually Glen Shiel and Loch Cluanie come into view. On rounding a left bend, the west end of the loch with the Cluanie Inn to its left become visible. Just after passing a barrier, a lane is met. Turn left here; right is the private road to Cluanie Lodge. Just before the lane turns right to cross the neck of Loch Cluanie, turn right into a gravelly turning area and take the track at the back of it; this is the route of the original Skye Road. When the track reaches the water, turn left on a path which re-meets the lane. Turn right to the main road and the Cluanie Inn is to the left.