

Useful information from the Expedition Network

Welcome!

Green forms and requests for assessment should be submitted to the Scottish Network Co-ordinator who can also assist with enquiries regarding routes and campsites:

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Eleanor works 9-5 Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Area advisor

The local area advisor is based in the area and can assist with enquiries regarding routes and campsites.

Steve McQueen

T: 07815135560

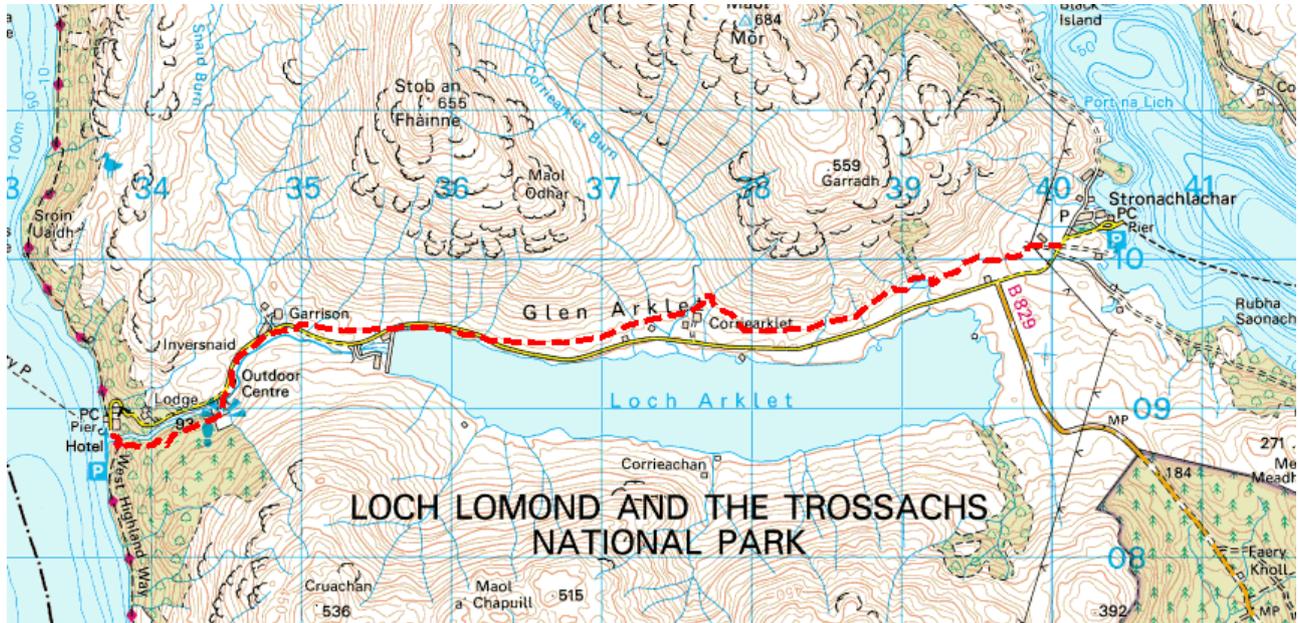
E: centralscotdofenetwork@gmail.com

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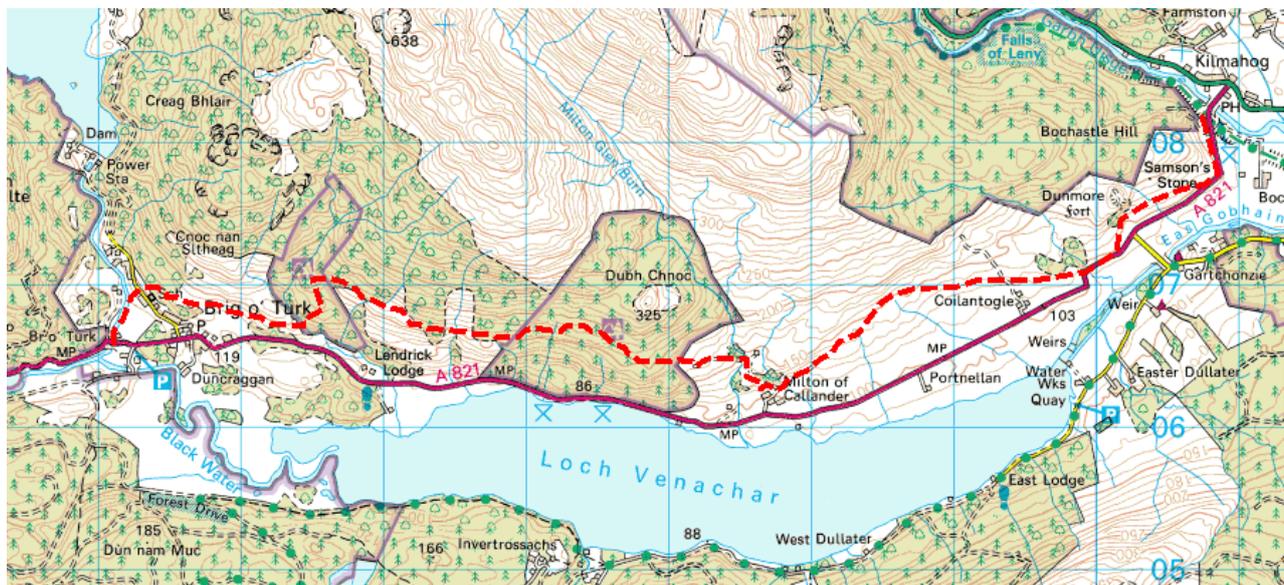
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Route updates

The Great Trossachs path is a new long distance path created recently, which may not be on all maps. There are two sections where useful new paths (shown as red dashes) have been created; Inversnaid to Stronachlachar via Glen Arklet



Brig o'Turk to Kilmahog



The forestry commission owns lots of the land in the Trossachs and also has lots of info: <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/forest-parks/queen-elizabeth-forest-park>

The path up **Glen Almond** no longer goes through Artalnaig farm, but is sign posted around it.

Glen Lednock request to be informed by groups wishing to travel through their estate. The contact details for the Estates can be obtained from the Area Coordinator.

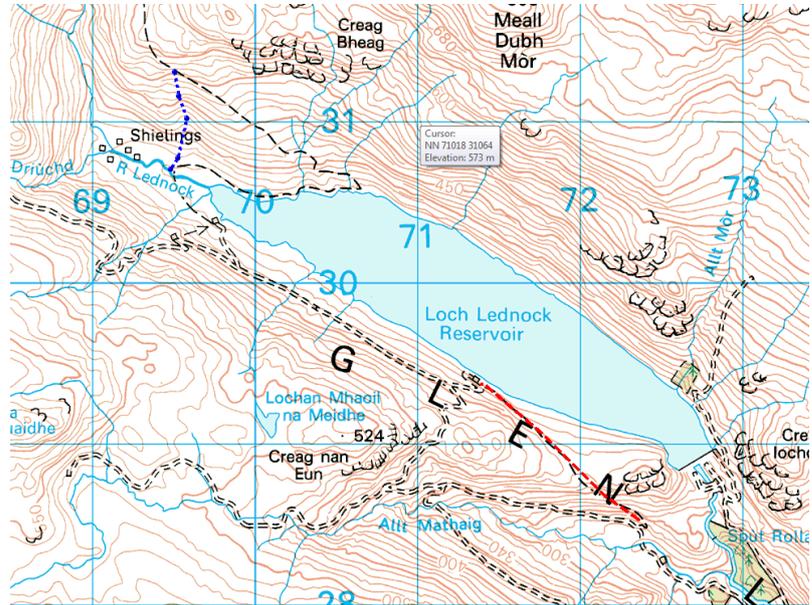
Calliachar Wind Farm is now completed and accessible. However, routes may have changed slightly due to the development of the wind farm and paths might not always correspond to what appears on the map! The

development is not shown on any OS maps yet (Feb 2016). This area lies 10km east of Kenmore, Loch Tay, between Glen Quaich and Glen Cochill.

A number of the towns in the area (Pitlochry, Dunkled, Crieff, Comrie, Blairgowrie and Aberfeldy) have networks of paths around them which are either not shown on OS maps, or not clear due to the complex cartography of urban areas. These paths are often useful to join routes up. Perth and Kinross council have leaflets showing the walking routes in these areas, these leaflets can be found in local tourist information locations, or **downloaded from the Perth and Kinross countryside trust website.**

The Forestry Commission's **Tay forest park** has maps with routes that may not be on OS maps.

Because of boggy ground along the loch **Glen Lednock** estates encourage groups to cut directly from NN 695 313 to NN 694 307 (the blue route), rather than following the path. The estate asks teams not to use the path from NN714 293 to NN 723 284 (highlighted red) during the ground nesting bird season, and instead go around by the tracks.



Vehicle access

All groups are reminded that vehicle access is not authorised unless specific permission has been obtained from the Estate Owner/Manager. Permission cannot, and will not, be given by the Area Advisor.

Bridges

Perth and Kinross Council have **updates on paths and bridges in the area.**

As of March 2018:

- The plastic bridge in Aberfeldy is closed for the foreseeable future
- The Chinese bridge (NN 782 467) on the Taymouth estate near Kenmore is closed for repairs, with this also restricting headroom for waterusers passing beneath

The bridge at NN 353 468 over the Water of Tulla in Crannach woods was damaged in winter 15/16. The river is crossable by fording just upstream, when the water is low. (reported February 2016)

- There are two extra paths by the Tulla (reported Feb 2016)
 - a track joining the end of the track shown on maps on the north side of the Tulla (NN 328 450) and meeting the track at Tulla croft at the A82 (NN 314 446).
 - A small path goes through Crannoch wood leaving the track by the bridge at Barravourich (NN 337 451) following the Tulla water east until crossing the Allt na Crannaich (NN345 456) then ascending to the bridge over the railway (NN 349 454) and following the railway north-east, crossing back under the railway at the Allt Coire an Lochain (NN 360 466) and descending back to the bridge at NN 353 468. This path is marked by yellow arrow waymarkers.

In Glen Almond there is no bridge at Dunan, NN 742 340. There is a safer crossing downstream at the weir, NN 757 334

Way marked and long distance paths

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a Registered Charity No: 1072490, and in Scotland No: SC038254, and a Royal Charter Corporation No: RC000806

The DofE *Expedition Guide* says “long distance footpaths should not be used, particularly by Silver and Gold teams, except in small sections to link up other paths.” (page 10, also see page 39). The quality of way-marked and long distance paths in Scotland varies considerably – some are concepts that don’t exist on the ground (for example the Skye and Cape Wrath trails) while others are clearly signposted heavily used routes (for example, the West Highland Way).

In some areas there are no alternatives to some way-marked paths. Teams may use these, but should not plan an expedition with more than half a day continuously on the same route. Heavily used way-marked paths provide little navigational challenge, undermine the sense of isolation, and potentially have negative environmental impacts, and therefore should be avoided by DofE teams as much as possible. Use of the West Highland Way for the whole of a practice or qualifying venture is considered inappropriate, however, the WHW may be used in short sections as a link between other parts of the Expedition Area.

Scottish Hill Tracks

Scotways, the Scottish rights of way and access society, publishes ***Scottish Hill Tracks***, a book listing rights of way across Scotlands uplands. This is an excellent resource for ideas for routes as some paths are not shown connecting on a map where historic routes exist. Scotways are also interested to hear about any issues with paths and routes.

Core paths

Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 every local authority and National Park authority (access authority) in Scotland was required to draw up a plan for a system of core paths that gives the public reasonable access throughout their area. Some of these paths do not yet appear on OS maps, and may help DofE teams link up routes. All core paths can be seen **on the SNH website**, with links to details from each council.

Campsites

Serviced sites:

Comrie Croft (NN 802 230) www.comriecroft.com

Invertrossachs scout campsite on Loch Venechar (NN 578 049)

www.stirlingandtrossachsdistrictscouts.org.uk/dev/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22&Itemid=34

Strathyre (Immervoulin) campsite (NN 560 165) www.immervoulin.com

Dounans outdoor centre in Aberfoyle (NN 528 011) lets lots of DofE groups camp by arrangements, even though it doesn’t advertise camping www.soec.org.uk/our-centres/dounans/

Balquhiddel braes (NN 577 212), Balquhiddel Station, Lochearnhead, FK19 8NX - www.balquhiddelbraes.co.uk

Cobeland (NS 530 988), Aberfoyle, FK8 3UX -

www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campsites/uk/stirlingshire/gartmore/cobeland

Cashel Forestry Campsite (NN 395 941), Balmaha, Rowardennan, G63 0AW -

www.campingintheforest.co.uk/scotland/loch-lomond/cashel-campsite

Trossachs Holiday Park, Gartmore (NN 537 967) Aberfoyle, FK8 3SA - <http://trossachsholidays.co.uk>

Keltie Bridge Campsite (NN 650 072), Callander, FK17 8LQ - <http://keltiebridge.co.uk/>

Wild camping

Scottish access rights (see the **Outdoor access code section** for further information) extend to wild Camping for small groups (i.e. individual expedition teams), although the DofE still recommends that, as a courtesy to land owners concerned and to maintain existing good relations, expedition teams inform them of their intentions. It is reasonable for owners to react by saying why a particular site might be unsuitable and to suggest alternatives.

If multiple teams from the same DofE centre intend to camp at the same location, this falls outside the definition of ‘Wild camping’ permitted under access rights. Therefore, centres planning to camp with multiple teams in the same location should always seek permission from the landowner.

Teams should consult the advice on camping in the *Expedition Guide* (page 101), there are also lots of useful information resources about wild camping;

- **Mountaineering Scotland** has lots of good advice, with links to their minimal impact and 'where to go in the outdoors' leaflets
- **The Outdoor Access Code website** has advice on responsible wild camping, including various information downloads.

Loch Katrine and Glen Finglas water catchment areas

There are restrictions on camping in the Loch Katrine and Glen Finglas water catchment areas. These reservoirs act as the main water supplies for the local area and Glasgow District Council and while groups are still permitted to pass through the area, camping near the waters edge is not permitted. However, if groups wish to camp in the area they should stay well away from the lochs. No distance has been defined but a fair estimation would be one kilometre.

Land on the east side of Glen Finglas is owned by the Woodland Trust Scotland (<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/wood/4878/glen-finglas/> T: 0330 3333 300) who are happy for teams to camp anywhere, within wild camping rights.

Camping Areas in Comer Estate

The Comer Estate is a strong supporter of the DofE in Scotland and groups on Expedition often camp in the Comer area. To prevent disturbance to nesting and lek grounds for the endangered Blackcock bird several suitable campsites within the Gleann Gaoithe have been identified, which all DofE groups are asked to use. Please see the **Camping on Comer Estate download** for full details.

Updated: 9/6/15

West Lomond and Trossachs new camping By-laws

From 1st March 2017 new byelaws governing camping in areas around Loch Ard, Loch Chon, Loch Arklet, Loch Venechar, Loch Lubnaig, Loch Voil and Loch Earn will come into force. These byelaws will restrict camping within the area covered every year between 1st March – 30th September (the majority of the DofE expedition season). Most of the area covered by the byelaws is close to roads, so analysis by DofE Scotland suggests only small numbers of DofE teams are likely to be affected.

A general map of the area covered can be downloaded from the **National Park website**, detailed 1:25k maps of the areas covered can be found in **the full byelaws document**, and GPX's of the areas are available from **the DofE website**. Camping outwith the narrow areas covered by the byelaws remains covered by the usual Scottish laws.

For teams planning to camp within the area covered by the byelaws the National Park recommends that groups plan to apply through the **'Group camping permit exemption' process**. This will have several advantages over the online permit system for the public;

- It will be free
- Groups will be able to apply for camping on sites outwith the publically permitted sites
- Groups will be able to apply to camp with larger groups than public permits are available for

Such applications will need to be submitted at least 4 weeks before the expedition. For DofE teams there is a shortened version of the application form (either an editable word version or a PDF version) which can be submitted along with green forms and route maps for the teams concerned. Submission details are in the form.

updated 27/2/16

Forestry commission youth campsites.

The Forestry Commission runs 4 youth campsites near Aberfoyle and Loch Achray. They have no facilities such as toilets, but offer camping space. For more information contact the Lodge visitor centre; Tel 03000676615 <http://www.ttg.co.uk/campsites/the-lodge-forest-visitor-centre-youth-campsite-aberfoyle-stirling>

- Renagour NN 498 008
- Craigie NN 492 002.
- Dalzell NN 494 004.

- Douglas NN 495 006

The nearest public toilets are;

- Visitor Centre Carpark, Aberfoyle 1000hrs to 1700hrs
- The Lodge Visitor Centre 1000hrs to 1800hrs June & July, 1700hrs all other months

Bothies

Bothies are basic shelters in the hills. Many are open to the public for use and managed by the **Mountain Bothies Association (MBA)**. If teams plan to use a bothy for lunch or shelter they should be aware of the **MBA's bothy code**.

DofE teams are generally advised not to camp within close proximity to a bothy without permission from the owner because of problems that come with the pressure of numbers. This often leads to issues with pollution from human waste, so risk assessment would suggest these sites are not appropriate as a campsite. You can find more information about use of Bothies, via the DofE **'Use of Bothies information sheet'**

Travel and transport to the area

There is a community owned filling station in Aberfoyle open Mon- Fri 0700-1900, Saturday 0800-1900 and Sun 0830-1900. The filling station at the east end of Callander is open 0700-2200 seven days. A 24hr debit card operated self serve facility is available at Lix Toll on the A84 between Lochearnhead and Crainlarich.

Road works

Road closures and works in the area can have a serious impact on the ability of team's and leaders to get to and from expeditions, and for supervisors and assessors getting around due to the lack of quick alternative routes. Information about current or planned noticed road works in Scotland is available at **the Scottish Road Works Register**

Local History

Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park

When the Scottish Parliament decided to create National Parks in Scotland, there was really little debate about where the first Park should be. For Loch Lomond and the Trossachs is, in every sense, the natural choice.

For centuries, people have come here to walk, climb, cycle and sail, to breathe fresh, clean air and drink in the views. Part of the attraction lies in the rich contrasts. The National Park stretches from Balloch in the south to Tyndrum in the north, and is bisected by the Highland Boundary Fault, dividing it into Highland and Lowland terrains. You can travel from the seashore to rich meadow and farmland, through oak forests and into steep, fjord-like glens in the space of a few miles.

These diverse landscapes in turn support a huge range of plants and animal life, with some 200 species of birds, 29 species of mammals and over a quarter of Britain's flowering wild plant species. The diversity of the area makes it a haven for wildlife, but it also makes a playground for people too. Walkers and climbers tackle great peaks such as Ben More, and there are hundreds of miles of paths ranging from gentle rambles to long-distance footpaths like the West Highland Way. Cyclists enjoy the Lowland / Highland Trail, quiet country roads, and countless forest roads and tracks. There are endless opportunities for water sport enthusiasts, and dozens of activities to be enjoyed, from canoeing to quad biking, water-skiing to wildlife watching.

But there's more to Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park than beautiful scenery and exciting leisure opportunities. The Park and the surrounding areas are part of a unique culture whose roots stretch back beyond the ability of history to tell.

From the crannogs of shadowy Bronze Age peoples to magnificent medieval castles and right up to the present, this area has played a pivotal role in the telling of Scotland's story.



Many of the nation's most stirring and romantic tales have been played out against the backdrop of this land – including the most famous of all, that of Rob Roy McGregor. There is an incredible wealth of heritage to explore in the museums and visitor attractions of our towns and villages, but this is very much a living area whose vibrant communities still live and work with the land, just as they have done for centuries.

Loch Lomond

At Loch Lomond's northern limit, the little village of Ardlui is tucked beneath mighty peaks, where the River Falloch flows from its Highland source into the north of the loch. Coming down the eastern shore, a beautiful, sheltered stretch of the West Highland Way hugs the shore, passing the RSPB Reserve at Inversnaid amidst the biggest area of oak woodland in the country.

The hamlet of Inversnaid is accessible only via the stunning drive from Aberfoyle to the east or by boat from Inveruglas. The beautiful waterfall and rock pools here have inspired many visitors – including William and Dorothy Wordsworth and Gerald Manley Hopkins.

Rob Roy once farmed here and eventually a garrison fort was built especially to suppress his cattle raiding exploits. The eastern shore of the loch is dominated by the towering mass of Ben Lomond, the most climbed mountain in Scotland and the most southerly 'Munro' (hills over 3,000 feet). Access is easy via a well-marked footpath from Rowardennan.

There are also many less challenging walks and trails to explore, particularly on the fringes of the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, north of Balmaha. The mixed woodlands support a rich diversity of wildlife such as buzzards, deer and Capercaillie.

The National Park Centre at Balmaha explores the area's natural history, especially the Highland Boundary Fault. The loch itself has more species of fish than any other – both game and coarse fishing offer great sport.

The Trossachs

The Trossachs (from the Gaelic Na Troiseachan, the crossing place, where boats were hauled between Loch Achray and Loch Katrine) is a beautiful and secluded area of craggy mountains and sweeping forests, mist shrouded lochs and lush glens. It is an astonishingly beautiful area, especially in autumn when the forests blaze in glorious colour, and the setting for some of Scotland's most stirring and romantic tales, both fact and fiction.

If Loch Lomond is the heart of the National Park, the Trossachs can lay claim to its soul. The ever-popular town of Callander on the banks of the meandering River Teith, is the eastern gateway to the National Park.

Rob Roy – hero or villain?

Rob Roy MacGregor (1671-1734) used knowledge of his Trossachs homelands to outwit the redcoat soldiers sent to subdue him. For almost 300 years, writers and film-makers have been fascinated by his story and today the Trossachs are still very much 'Rob Roy Country'.

The Rob Roy and Trossachs Visitors Centre in Callander uses modern technology to take the visitor back three centuries to discover his exploits.

The other main town in the Trossachs is Aberfoyle, a traditional community boasting some excellent walks. You can learn more about the area's landscape and history at the Trossachs Discovery Centre.

Above Aberfoyle, one climbs into the heart of the Trossachs through the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. The visitors centre includes some fascinating displays on the wildlife and landscape of the area, while the mixed woodlands provide a beautiful setting for over 60 miles of forest walks and cycle tracks.

To the east of Aberfoyle lies the only lake in Scotland, Lake of Menteith. Augustinian monks founded Inchmahone Priory on an island in the lake, in 1238. It proved an ideal refuge for the infant Mary Queen of Scots in 1547. It can be reached by ferry from Port of Menteith.

Doune Hill, popularly known as Fairie Hill, to the SE of Aberfoyle, is a popular attraction with an entertaining story attached, well worth researching for an Exped Aim.



Heading north from Aberfoyle over the winding Duke's Pass are some of the most spectacular views in the Expedition Area, with tranquil lochs Drunkie, Venachar and Achray reflecting majestic surrounding peaks. A short detour takes one to Trossachs Pier on Loch Katrine, where a private road makes for ideal cycling and walking. One can board the steamship 'Sir Walter Scott' as it sails close to Rob Roy's birthplace at Glengyle. Scott immortalised the area with his best selling poem, 'Lady of the Lake' and may have stayed in nearby Brig O'Turk, from where there is excellent walking up into Glen Finglas, an area used a lot by visiting groups.

West of Aberfoyle is peaceful Strathard, overlooked by the great Loch Ard Forest. One can walk for miles through the forest along the western shores of Loch Ard with its watersport centre and small village of Kinlochard. One continues on to Loch Chon and finally over open countryside to Stronachlachar on the north western end of Loch Katrine or to Inversnaid on the eastern shore of Loch Lomond with its stunning backdrop of the Arrochar Alps.

Breadalbane

The northern border of the Expedition Area is straddled by the ancient Celtic Earldom of Breadalbane. From the Gaelic meaning 'High Country of Scotland', Breadalbane is home to the grandest and wildest mountain scenery in the National Park.

The countryside is dominated by the near conical mass of Ben More in the south west, the highest peak within the panel area at 1171m (3,842ft), and in the north east by the even more impressive bulk of Ben Lawers which towers 1214m (3,983ft) above Loch Tay. Although it is not part of the panel area, Ben Lawers is renowned for having the richest mountain flora in the United Kingdom.

Besides some of the finest scenery in the area, Breadalbane has perhaps the richest folk history of any area in the Highlands, abounding in tales of mythical Celtic heroes and medieval saints. At Breadalbane Folklore Centre in Killin, one can discover the fascinating tales and legends of Breadalbane, from the ancient prophesies of the Lady of Lawers and the mystical St. Fillan to the magical deeds of the mythical giant Fungal.

Opposite the Folklore Centre, the Falls of Dochart are one of Scotland's most famous natural landmarks. As the River Dochart flows towards Loch Tay it tumbles and cascades over a series of scattered rocks in the heart of the village.

Below the falls is Ainchbuidh, the burial island of the Clan McNab. Killin itself lies just within the area. Climbing through the steep Glen Ogle – dubbed by Queen Victoria Scotland's 'Khyber Pass'- the path south from Killin eventually arrives at the picturesque village of Lochearnhead. This is one of Scotland's premier venues for water sports with superb setting on the shores of Loch Earn.

A few miles south of Lochearnhead, the attractive hamlet of Balquhidder is overlooked by the dramatic mountain terrain of the Braes of Balquhidder, at the head of the glorious Loch Voil. The churchyard is the final resting place of Rob Roy, his grave marked with the appropriately defiant motto 'Macgregor Despite Them'. He lies with the remains of his wife and two sons, the graves marked by three flat stones. Above the village Creag an Tuirc is a long treasured viewpoint, and well worth the short climb. One of the finest mountain walks in the panel area is the traverse of Ben More and its Siamese twin, Stob Binnein, starting in Balquhidder Glen and finishing in Crianlarich.

This is a small Highland community yet a key route centre for road, rail and the spectacular West Highland Way long distance path. Surrounded by towering mountains, it is understandably a popular base for hill walkers. A few miles south in Glen Falloch, remnants of the ancient Caledonian Forest can be seen.

Further west is Tyndrum, nestling amid some of Scotland's highest mountains. Recently, specks of gold have been discovered in these hills. However, if the weary prospector is unsuccessful, one can always enjoy the scenery and hospitality of this friendly village.

Surveying the landscape of this area from a lonely hilltop, it is tempting, and easy, to believe that it has always looked this way. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Natural features, such as the mountains and lochs, are only a few tens of thousands of years old in their present form – the mere blink of a geological eye. Many of the smaller lochs have been dammed and their waters raised well beyond their natural levels to provide drinking water and hydro-electricity.

The landscapes of this area are the result of hundreds of millions of years of geological activity. The most important feature is the Highland Boundary Fault, which marks the junction between Highland and Lowland Scotland. The fault slices across the south of Loch Lomond and continues on to divide the Isle of Bute in two. While the forces of geology created the raw materials, it was a more recent event that shaped what we see

today. A series of Ice Ages covered Scotland in ice miles thick, grinding the mountains into the form we know now.

These massive glaciers also gouged out hollows in the rock which left behind the typical steep-sided U-shaped valleys. In Loch Lomond's case, the ice smashed across the Highland Boundary Fault. When the Ice Age ended and the valley floor flooded, the water eventually spilled out onto the lowland plain, creating the loch as we know it.

The sheer range is remarkable: plants more usually found in the Arctic or the Alps cling to the highest ridges, summits and cliffs. There are deep, dark conifer forests, sun-dappled deciduous woodland, broad sweeping fields with bobbing meadow flowers, vast stretches of heather-swathed moorland, sheltered glens and forbidding crags where arctic-alpines grow.

Animals

The largest creatures in the area are red deer, which roam across open hillsides. Roe and Fallow deer can also be found, and there are herds of feral goats near the head of Loch Lomond. The most elusive animal is the Scottish Wildcat, most numerous in the forests of the eastern shores of Loch Lomond.

Pine Martens (pictured) have returned to the oak woods round Loch Lomond. Other mammals found in the area include badgers, foxes, rabbits and hares, otters, shrews, voles, stoats and weasels and at least four species of bats.



The rarest in the area is a fish, the Powan, often called a freshwater herring but actually a member of the salmon family. The Powan is found in Loch Lomond and Loch Eck, and nowhere else in Britain.

The bird life of the area is incredibly rich and varied. Over 200 species have been recorded –

in mountainous areas you might see peregrine falcons, buzzards, ptarmigans and, soaring above them all, the majestic golden eagle. The forests of Loch Lomondside and the Trossachs support a good range of forest birds including Capercaillie, a turkey-sized grouse. Herons stalk the rivers and lochsides and on freshwater lochs one might see an osprey fishing.

Hazards

Ticks

Ticks are small, blood sucking creatures found across the uplands of Scotland, especially in areas with lots of deer and sheep. Some ticks carry Lyme disease, which is treatable but can be tricky to diagnose. Teams should be made aware of the risks of Lyme disease and how to reduce the risk of being bitten. All teams should carry a tick remover and check themselves daily.

There are several useful information resources about ticks;

- The organisation Lyme Disease Action has useful downloadable [leaflets about ticks and Lyme disease](#).
- [Stop the tick](#) has lots of infographics (some a bit graphic, but informational)
- Lyme disease UK has posters and leaflets as part of their [Wake up to Lyme campaign](#), as well as detailed information about the disease

Midges

The biting midge is particularly prolific in parts of Scotland, and worst in late Spring through to early Autumn. The detrimental effect midges can have on an expedition is not proportionate to their tiny size, and should not be underestimated, especially with teams unused to them. During this summer period teams should carry midge nets, insect repellent and clothes to provide full coverage (including gloves and long sleeved tops) and first aid kits should include antihistamines to reduce discomfort. Teams should also be aware of how to reduce their impact including:

- choice of campsite (in direct sunlight and breezy, ideally in both morning and evening)
- choice of clothing (pale, bright, and smooth rather than dark, wooly, or fleecy)
- campcraft (menu planning, positioning of tents, keeping tent doors closed)

Snakes

There are Adders (the UK's only venomous snake) in the area. They are not aggressive or commonly seen, but they will bite if stood on, sat on, or picked up. Because of this teams who are wild camping should always wear shoes (which the snakes cannot bite through) and not walk around bare foot, in socks, or in sandals such as flip-flops. If anyone has the unusual misfortune to be bitten, then medical assistance must be sought urgently.

Drinking water

Watercourses across Scotland can contain a variety of waterborne infections. Therefore, when wild camping it should not be assumed that streams and rivers are clean sources of drinking water, especially due to the high density of livestock and deer across large areas. Leaders should refer to the DofE *Expedition Guide* advice on taking water from streams (pg 122). Other good sources of information about health and hygiene outdoors (including issues around drinking water) are the NHS advice about [avoiding bugs and germs outdoors](#), and the Mountaineering Scotland advice on [health and hygiene](#).

River crossings

Rivers and streams throughout the area rise quickly after rain, or during snow melt, and careful consideration should be given to any route which involves river crossings. Even small streams can quickly become completely impassable and larger rivers can become very dangerous even if the rain has not been falling in the immediate vicinity of the planned crossing.

All teams should understand what to do in case of streams rising – stream levels will fall as fast as they rise and often waiting overnight is all that is needed. In case of snow melt, peak levels are often late afternoon/evening, and the lowest levels in the morning. Teams planning river crossings must have an alternative plan in the event of continued wet weather.

Hours of daylight

All visitors, especially those from the south, need to be aware of the shortness of daylight hours in the expedition shoulder season; March has 11 hours of daylight and the October half term a little over 9 hours.

Emergencies and Incidents

Mountain rescue

In Scotland, responsibility for the provision of rescue facilities rests with the Police Force - who will call out/co-ordinate mountain rescue as appropriate. Teams must be clear that if they need to call for help they must ask for the police, and then ask for mountain rescue. Teams may not be connected to the nearest police control room to their location, so should be clear on the general area they are in, and their exact location. [Scottish mountain rescue](#) has advice about the process of calling for help, and the information that should be supplied.

Teams must be trained to supply the control room with a six-figure grid-reference for their location, including the two-letter prefix code e.g. NX 345 678 not 345 678. 'GR' is not the correct prefix for any location; it is a commonly used shorthand for 'grid refence'. There is information about six figure grid references [the Ordnance Survey website](#). Correct provision of a full six figure grid-reference is essential as the police computer system will not be able to interpret a grid reference without this two-letter prefix. Also, some Network Areas in Scotland have intersections of the letter labelled 100 km² grid squares in their centre, so a mistake may lead to significant delays in support from Mountain Rescue. DofE Scotland strongly recommend that all DofE route cards are prepared including two letter prefixes to avoid delays or uncertainty in emergency situations.

The teams that cover the expedition area are [Killin MRT](#), [Tayside MRT](#), and [Arrochar MRT](#).

Remember that in case of an incident both the team's Licenced Organisation and the [Scottish Expedition Network Coordinator](#) should be notified using the DofE Incident Report Form (available through the resources zone in eDofE).

Mobile signal

It should be noted that in many parts of the area telephone boxes are rare and the mobile phone network reception is limited/non-existent away from centres of population and cannot be relied upon for getting assistance. Therefore, teams must know how to deal with an emergency in a location without mobile phone signal.

Teams should be encouraged to **sign up for the 999 text service** in advance of their expedition to give them the best chance of contacting emergency services in an emergency.

Outdoor access code

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 has been implemented through the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This provides access rights for the purposes of recreation or education across most of the land and inland water in Scotland. This includes mountains, moorland, woods and forests, grassland, margins of arable crop fields, paths/tracks, rivers and lochs, and the coast. These access rights are balanced with responsibilities towards the environment and the interests of those who make a living from the land.

Three key principles of access

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment.
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For further information (including a downloadable e-book) visit www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

Any access issues should be reported to the **Scottish Expedition Network Coordinator** who will investigate.

Landuse

The **Countryside Calendar - Year** gives a month by month snapshot of typical activities and happenings in the farming and wildlife year in Scotland, any may be helpful in planning expeditions and thinking about appropriate aims.

Landowners

To identify the borders of estates see www.whoownsscotland.org.uk. There is a subscription option which gives access to see contact details.

Lambing

Sheep and lambing season can start as early as February and can continue until the end of May and lambing ewes must not be disturbed. If an apparently 'lost' lamb is seen - do not touch or intervene, as the mother will not be far away. At all other times it is advised that teams should pass through sheep quietly and if possible at a distance in an effort not to disturb and stress them.

Traps

Teams may observe traps on the high moorland. These should not be touched or disturbed as they have been set by the game keepers to catch predators to the ground nesting birds, typically the Hooded Crow.

Scottish game seasons

During the deer stalking season teams should utilise the **'Heading for the Scottish Hills website'** in addition to contacting landowners to find out where and when shooting will be taking place. Teams should stay on recognised footpaths whilst in these areas for safety reasons.

| Game | Season Opens | Season Closes |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Salmon/Sea Trout | Jan/Feb | October (dates vary) |
| Trout | 15th March | 6th October |
| Roe Deer (bucks) | 1st April | 20th October |
| Red & Sika Deer (stags) | 1st July | 20th October |
| Fallow Deer (bucks) | 1st August | 30th April |
| Grouse & Ptarmigan | 12th August | 10th December |
| Snipe | 12th August | 30th January |
| Black Grouse | 20th August | 10th December |
| Wild Fowl | 1st September | 30th January |
| Partridge | 1st September | 31st January |
| Capercaillie & Woodcock | 1st October | 30th January |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Pheasant | 1st October | 31st January |
| Roe Deer (does) | 21st October | 31st March |
| Red, Sika, & Fallow Deer (hinds) | 21st October | 15th February |

Weather forecasts

- The Met Office provides:
 - **Forecasts with summaries for the region and 7 day detailed forecasts for the chosen town/village.**
 - **Surface pressure charts**
 - **Mountain area forecasts for the Southwest Highlands and South Grampian and Southeast Highlands.** These include a forecast for the region, with forecasts for individual summits available. These summit forecasts are for the summit height of the mountain, which should be considered when teams interpret them.
- **The Mountain Weather Information Service (MWIS)** provides 72 hour forecasts for 5 Scottish regions. These forecasts are for the summits of the mountains which must be considered when interpreting them for DofE use. They provide some interpretation which can assist participant understanding. The forecasts that cover the area are **the West Highlands** and **the Southeastern Highlands**.
- Outdoor conditions forecasts are available on BBC Radio Scotland (FM: 92.8-94.7, MW: 810) at 18:25 Monday-Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday at 07:00 and 19:00.

DofE resources

The current DofE expedition kit list can be downloaded from:

www.dofeshopping.org/expedition-kit

A range of expedition downloads, such as the Green Form and spare expedition safety cards, can be downloaded from: **www.dofe.org/leaders/resources-and-downloads/expedition-downloads/**.

Further information of the Expedition section can be found at: **www.dofe.org/doing-your-dofe/activities-sections/expedition/**