

AFFRIC KINTAIL WAY - Notes on multi-use access

One of the newest of Scotland's Great Trails, the Affric Kintail Way is a spectacular 44 mile long distance route across the Highlands. Starting at Morvich, on the west coast, the Affric Kintail Way winds its way up across the mountains along old drove roads, narrow rocky mountain paths, farm and forest tracks to Drumnadrochit, where it links to the Great Glen Way. Further information on the route, including route maps and links to route guides, is available from <http://www.affrickintailway.com/>. These notes have been produced by British Horse Society Scotland to help horse riders and other potential users identify restrictions on multi-use.

Although the Affric Kintail Way website suggests the route is only for walkers and cyclists, and the Scottish Rights of Way Society signs at the western end suggest the route is only a footpath, horse riders enjoy exactly the same legal access rights as other non-motorised users. Most of the route is passable with care with a horse, with fords providing an alternative to the footbridges which have steep steps either end. However, this is not a route for the faint hearted, at any time of year. The section between Glenlicht House and Camban is remote, challenging and in places steep and rocky. Many other parts of the route include rough ground, open cross drains, gates which can only be opened or closed if dismounted, sheep and cattle. Between late autumn and spring snow is often still lying on the higher parts of the route, and the exposed rock can be particularly treacherous when icy.

Although the route is waymarked for some of the way, at places various other paths branch off which can be confusing. If you do decide to venture out on the Affric Kintail Way, make sure you have a map with you, and know how to read it. A compass is also advised in case the weather closes in.

Remember that whether on foot, cycle or horseback, rights of access in Scotland depend on access takers and land managers accepting individual responsibility for their actions. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/> offers guidance on what this means on the ground. Guidance for horse riders can be downloaded from <http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk/responsible-riding.html>. It's up to you to decide for yourself which, if any, sections of the Affric Kintail Way are suitable for your intended use, taking account of your own abilities, skills, fitness and experience, as well as season, weather conditions etc. Event organisers, groups or commercial operators considering using the route are urged to contact the route managers (see route website for details).

Morvich to Camban Bothy

Clearly waymarked stony farm track to Glenlicht House, several field gates with no evidence of being locked.

The bridge immediately east of Glenlicht House over Allt an Lapain is 1.4 m wide with no steps and is multi-use accessible. The next bridge over the Allt Granda is only 0.8 m wide and is impassable with a horse and tricky with a bike because of steep steps either end. Horses can ford the river downstream.

The path east to Camban is mainly narrow and rocky, with some sections stone pitched, some stone steps and stretches of exposed bare rock, passable with care only with a sure-footed horse – see pictures below.



Camban to Dog Falls

A broad, stoned farm track links Camban, Alltbeithe and Athnamulloch, with fords in the line of the track providing an alternative to footbridges, and a bridlegate adjacent to the cattle grid across the track at the forest boundary fence east of Athnamulloch. Stoned forest road continues to Dog Falls.

Dog Falls to Cannich

There is a locked gate across the forest road which leads north from the public road above Dog Falls at OSGR NH283283. Although it looks reasonable on the photo below, the gap around the end is too narrow for a horse, and there is no obvious alternative. There are no other restrictions along this track all the way to Cannich.



Cannich to Shenval

Busy public road A831.

Shenval to Drumnadrochit

Fully multi-use accessible apart from the easternmost section of forest path between Creag Dubh and the forest road below Craig Mony which has five narrow wooden footbridges between 90cm and 1.1 m wide south of Allanmore, which may be passable with a horse but were not designed to bear a horse's weight.



At time of survey (October 2016) fallen trees in two places across this section of path had been sawn across to allow pedestrians to pass but height clearance too low for some horses.



VWG
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