

3·7 Aviemore to Newtonmore

65

69

73

75

Distance 19·5 miles 31·4 km

Terrain roadside paths, unsurfaced tracks, minor roads, purpose-built paths, shared ways, forest roads and tracks

Grade undulating gently to Kincaig, then less gently with a few short steepish sections, finally almost flat from Drumguish to Newtonmore

Food and drink Aviemore, Kincaig (café), Kingussie, Newtonmore

Side-trips Insh Marshes NNR, Ruthven Barracks, Highland Folk Museum and Wildcat Centre (Newtonmore)

Summary open woodland and grassland to Kincaig, then Scots pine forest, farmland, and the open floodplain of the Spey



- From Aviemore station cross the busy Grampian Road (B9152) at the pedestrian lights. Walk south to a Speyside Way sign just past the B970 junction on the left. The dedicated path, shared with cyclists, starts a little further on. Follow it beside the minor road for 0·8 miles (1·2 km), then cross with care.
- Continue down a vehicle track, through an underpass beneath the railway and around to the right. The railway is your companion most of the way to Kincaig. Ahead to the south-west, a monument to the Duke of Gordon stands on the wooded summit of Torr Alvie.
- Continue through open fields and woodland and cross the footbridge over Allt-na-Criche at mile 67·3.
- Continue through open woodland, with the slopes of Torr Alvie rising to the left. Soon there are glimpses of Loch Alvie through the trees on the right.
- Beyond the woodland, after an open field and more woodland, pass a vehicle track leading through an overpass (mile 69·5). It leads to Dalraddy Holiday Park.

Footbridge near Dalraddy



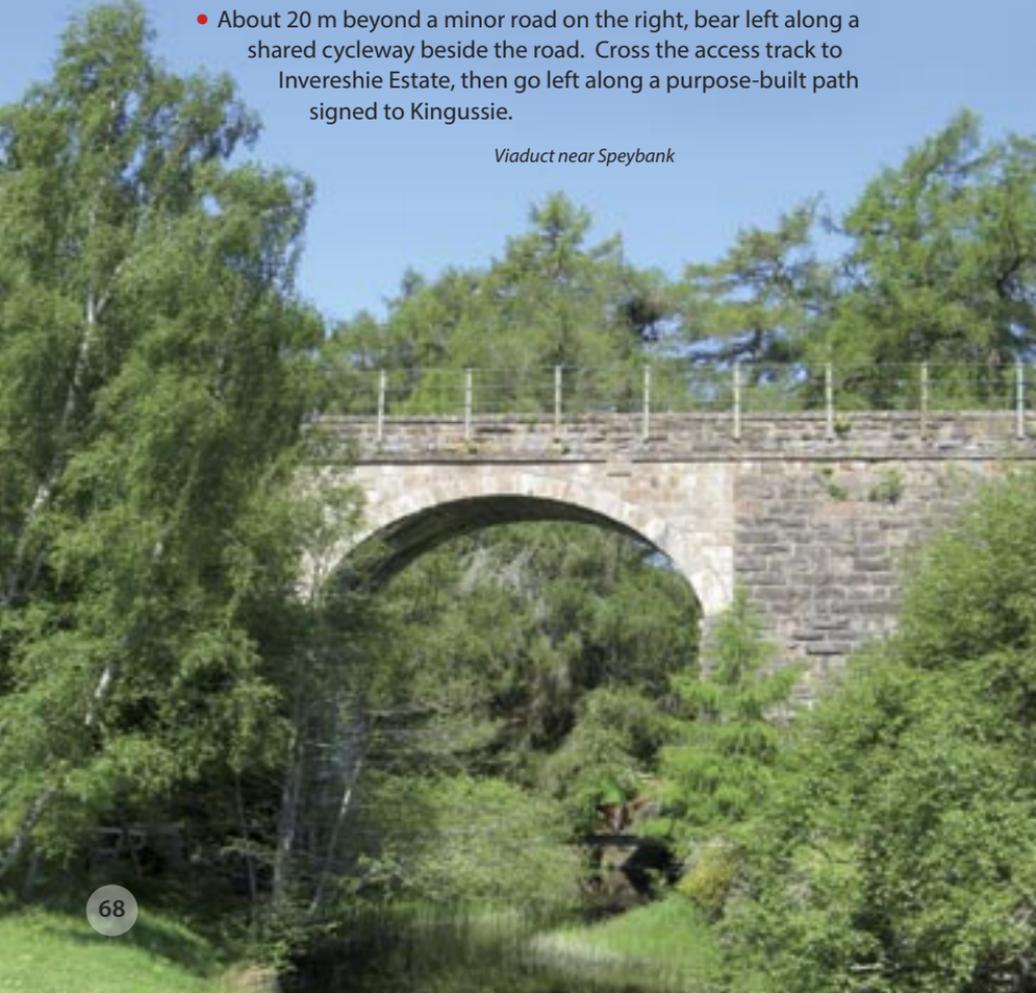
- After an open, straight stretch, continue through a small conifer plantation. Then follow a short section of tarmac road through the hamlet of Speybank (mile 70.6). Where the road bends right, veer left along a path through woodland, soon with the River Spey below, at the foot of a steep bank.

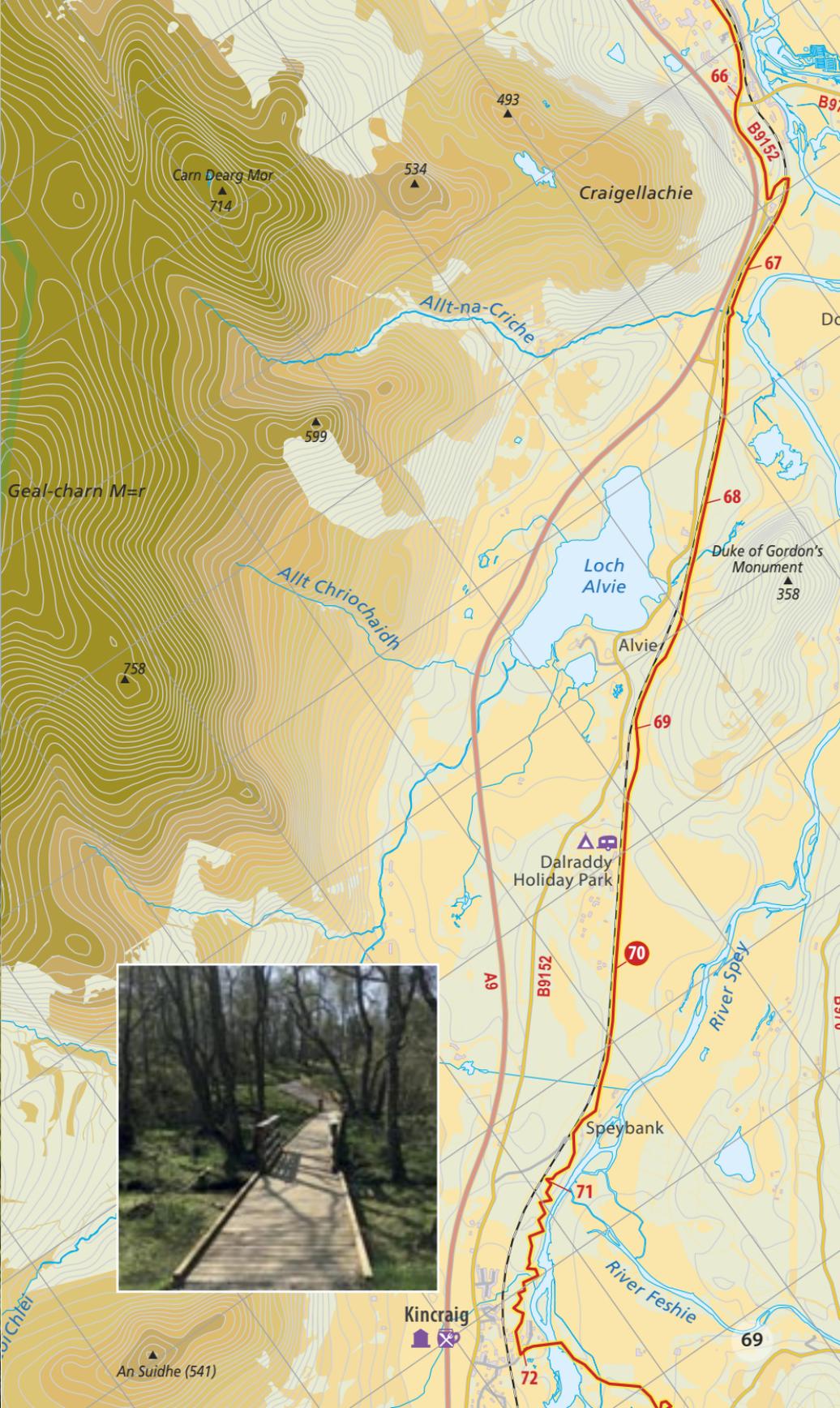


The Way between Aviemore and Kinraig

- The path soon swings away towards the railway and becomes sinuous and undulating. Follow the signs carefully through woodland to reach houses and the tarmac of Speybank Walk. This takes you to a T-junction at mile 72.
- If you're returning to Aviemore, reach Kinraig's bus stop by turning right up The Brae from Speybank Walk for 350 m to a T-junction with the B9152 and cross to the stop on the right.
- Otherwise continue from mile 72 by turning left down The Brae and go past the café on the roadside path to the narrow road bridge across the River Spey. Cross with care and continue along the road for 0.5 mile.
 - About 20 m beyond a minor road on the right, bear left along a shared cycleway beside the road. Cross the access track to Invereshie Estate, then go left along a purpose-built path signed to Kingussie.

Viaduct near Speybank





- Gain height through grassland to a good view of Loch Insh with its Outdoor Centre below. Cross the Inverdrue road directly at mile 73.3 to follow a path which leads into a signposted vehicle track on the right.
- Climb slightly around bends up to a forest edge above Balnaspick Farm. Bear left through a stone wall, then descend to go parallel to a road. Cross it about 100 m before a signed right turn to Uath Lochans.
- Turn right to follow the forest road to a car park with picnic tables near the first of the lochans. There's information about their glacial origin (they're also called kettle holes), and their wildlife, notably damselflies and dragonflies.
- The sinuous forest road gains height past another lochan, then descends directly to a forest clearing. Continue downhill to a T-junction and turn right. Go past a gate and, a few metres short of a road, turn left along a path at first beside a fence, muddy in places.
- At the start of a climb, continue along a forest track, past signs by the Scottish Rights of Way Society (SRWS). Go straight ahead on a track affording wide views southward.
- After passing through Inveruglass, at mile 77.9 follow a vehicle track through a gate and across moorland now on a purpose-built path. Here you'll find the best panorama of Strathspey so far.
- The good path ends in the forest, and you continue on a track. Go through a gate and on, along a track then a road, past the scattered houses of Drumguish.
- At a crossroads with more SRWS signs, continue straight on along a vehicle track through mixed woodland. Descend to a T-junction and turn right to cross Bridge of Tromie at mile 79.6.



Insh Marshes NNR

Insh Marshes is one of Scotland's largest areas of floodplain vegetation and one of Europe's most important wetlands. It is protected as a National Nature Reserve and more than half its area is owned and managed by the RSPB. There are waymarked paths and bird hides.

Many breeding species of birds live here during summer, including osprey, snipe and curlew. In winter it's a haven for greylag geese from Iceland and whooper swans. It's open all year; entry is free (donations welcome):

www.rspb.org



The Way south of Bridge of Tromie

- Go right along a signed path. It takes you through birch woodland to a car park. Cross a farm access road and go on, parallel to the tarmac road. Turn down to another car park at the RSPB's Insh Marshes National Nature Reserve (mile 80-6).
- It's well worth a short detour (about 260 m round trip) on the signed path from here to the Lookout for an expansive vista of the marshes, with Kingussie beyond.

Uath Lochans





Ruthven Barracks

- Afterwards, follow a track from the car park. Cross a minor road to a purpose-built path parallel to the road. After 0.6 mile descend to the road opposite Ruthven Barracks. We recommend another short detour to this prominent historic site.

- Continue beside the B970 towards Kingussie. The road passes beneath the A9 trunk road then crosses the River Spey. At mile 81.9, bear right along a path, then follow the roadside path to the A86 junction where the Way turns left.

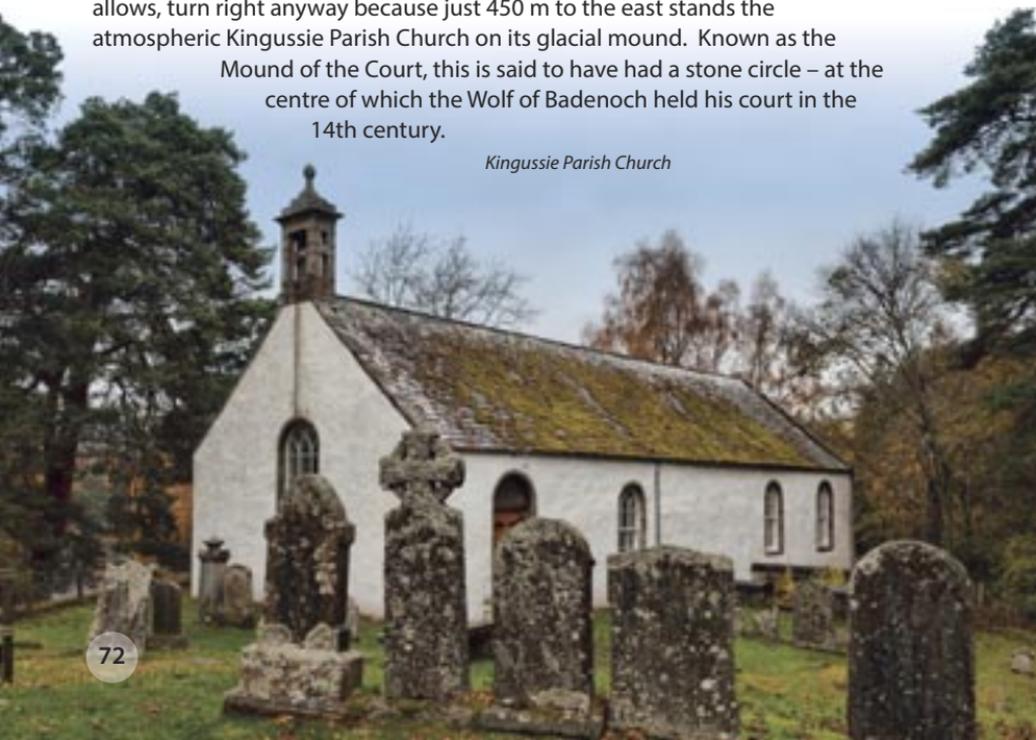
- If you are overnighing here, instead turn right for B&Bs and cafés. If time allows, turn right anyway because just 450 m to the east stands the atmospheric Kingussie Parish Church on its glacial mound. Known as the Mound of the Court, this is said to have had a stone circle – at the centre of which the Wolf of Badenoch held his court in the 14th century.



Ruthven Barracks

Ruthven is one of four sets of barracks built in 1719 by the Hanoverian government to maintain control after the first Jacobite uprising (1715). It was besieged twice in the second Jacobite uprising (1745-6), and fugitives rallied here after their defeat at the Battle of Culloden. After 1746 it fell into disrepair.

It comprises an enclosing wall, two large three-storey blocks for troops' accommodation, plus two towers for officers, bakehouse, brewhouse, prison and guardroom. Some repairs have been made since the 1960s. Managed by Historic Environment Scotland, it is open all year and entry is free: www.historicenvironment.scot.



Kingussie Parish Church



Lock Insh
Outdoor Centre

Loch
Insh

Balnespick

Farr

Inshriach Forest

Uath
Lochans

Dunachton Burn

A9

Insh

Inveruglass

Lynchat

River Spey

Insh Marshes
National
Nature
Reserve

River Tromie

Bridge of
Tromie

Drumguish

B970

Burn of
Ruthven

Ruthven
Barracks

Ruthven

River Tromie

Allt Chomhrain

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- After half a mile continue along NCN7 leading westward from the edge of town at varying distances from the A86. This is a popular route so be aware of fast cyclists.
- NCN7 winds through farmland with extensive panoramic views. At mile 84.5 (at the Highland Folk Museum: see below) the cycleway ends. Cross the road to follow a roadside path for the last 0.7 mile into Newtonmore.
- The terminus is marked by a sculpted, waymarked stone on the right. To its right are symbols of Newtonmore's heritage – Scots elm benches shaped as shinty sticks and a stone circle with Pictish carvings surrounding a water feature to symbolise the mountains around the River Spey. The entire landscaped area was the outcome of an art project won by a local sculptor.



Newtonmore

There is little record of a settlement at Newtonmore before the late 18th century. The construction of a bridge over the River Spey from Ruthven improved access to Kingussie. The village has been a popular holiday resort since the 1880s, with outdoor activities now its mainstay. It is also home to the Clan Macpherson Museum: www.newtonmore.com.

Call into the Wildcat Centre for local information including about the Wildcat Experience (a treasure hunt for colourful model wildcats) and the Wildcat Trail, a 10 km circular walk: www.wildcatcentre.org or tel 01540 673131.

The Highland Folk Museum at mile 84.5 is Britain's first outdoor museum. Founded by Dr Isabel Grant on Iona in 1935, it contains 25 buildings with authentic contents that bring alive the Highland way of life since the 1700s. One is an entire traditional Blackhouse from the Isle of Lewis. There's an evocative 1930s schoolroom complete with inkwells, slates, bell and tawse. The museum is open daily from Easter to October, there's a café and shops, and entry is free: www.highlifehighland.com or tel 01349 781 650.

Terminus of the Way, Newtonmore





Highland Folk Museum, Newtonmore