

3-3 Sannox to Lochranza

42 43

Distance 9-8 miles 15-7 km

Terrain rocky sections with easy scrambling; path muddy in places, especially after rain; stepped path makes boulder-field passable at all states of tide

Grade coastal path with negligible altitude gain, but the terrain makes it strenuous, especially in wet conditions

Food & drink none between Sannox and Lochranza (hotel, sandwich bar near ferry, Casks Café inside distillery and Stag's Pavilion restaurant near golf course)

Summary a glorious day of off-road coastal walking, with many points of interest; in normal conditions this section is no longer very challenging



- Just beyond the car park on the right, look for the waymarked fingerpost 'North Sannox' that points straight across Sannox Burn by concrete cuboid stepping stones. The route seems to lead directly towards the beach, but, just short of it turns left along a sandy path between gorse bushes, parallel to the shore.
- The path passes the garden gates of a few houses, and at first seems narrowly channelled between hedge and fence. You pass a tall white post, the southern end of the Sannox Measured Mile, which many famous ships have used for their timed trials. The path broadens out and runs parallel to a cliff face.
- About 1 mile (1-6 km) north of Sannox you need to cross North Sannox Burn. Follow the waymarkers inland and cross by the bridge, afterwards heading right on the minor road back to the picnic area near the coast.



Fallen Rocks

- Pass through a gate, along a pleasantly wooded path with intermittent sea views, and large boulders to the left. After a picnic bench, you get your first glimpse of Fallen Rocks, an impressive landslip where colossal boulders tumbled from the cliffs to the sea. However there's no difficulty about picking your way through.
- Later the path opens out, with bracken-covered hills set back to the left and wide, open views over the Firth of Clyde to your right, with the islands of Bute and the Cumbraes prominent. There are fine rock formations in this section, and also some caves up to your left.
- About 2.5 miles (4 km) after Fallen Rocks, you reach the wonderfully isolated white cottage at Laggan. The Way keeps right along the shore, within 800 m reaching the ruins of Duchess Anne's Salt Pan.
- Built in 1710, this Salt Pan fell into disuse after only 20 years. Salt was vital to preserve meat and fish, and heavily taxed by the government. The discovery of coal nearby made it possible to extract the salt from seawater. Arran salt was particularly pure, but the process proved uneconomic. The ruined building below is the pan-house, where the furnace and iron pans were. Smaller buildings nearby (of which traces remain) stored fuel and salt, with workers' cottages inland. Coal was dug from scattered pits, now water-filled.



Laggan Cottage

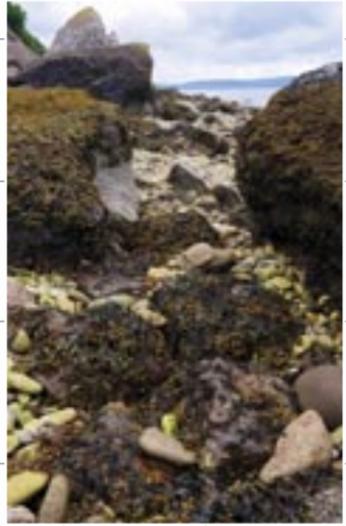


Duchess Anne's Salt Pan

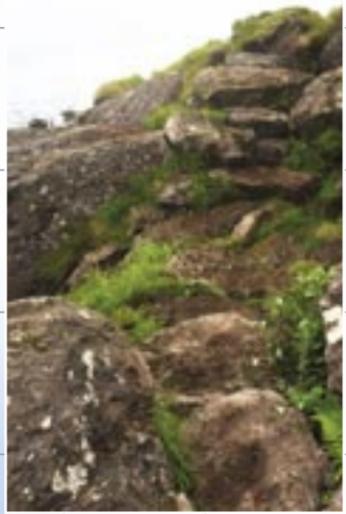


- One mile (1.6 km) after the Salt Pan, you reach the Cock of Arran, named after a huge sandstone boulder which, until its head fell off, resembled a crowing cockerel. There are caves up to the left, one known as Ossian's Cave or the Picture Cave, with ship carvings and dates.
- Beyond the Cock lies An Scriodan Rock Fall **1**, a boulder-field that makes for slow, strenuous going. This section has been greatly improved by major works to convert the largest single obstacle into a rock staircase. However, expect slow progress and take great care if traversing this section in the wet. Slipping could lead to an ankle-wrenching fall.





1 Terrain and rock staircase, An Scriodán





Marker stone seen from the south-west

- After An Scriodan, you pass a white-washed stone cottage (Fairy Dell) and shingle beach gives way to a mostly grassy path. Soon you start to see the headland beyond Lochranza. You're approaching Hutton's Unconformity, the geological feature noticed by James Hutton in 1787: see page 17. The path turns right towards the shore, and at a waymarker post the Way turns left to resume the coast towards Newton Point.
- Here, instead turn right for 10 m on a trod path to reach the best viewpoint for the Unconformity, looking across the stream (Allt Beithe): see the photo below, taken near high tide. In 2017 the Arran Geopark project put signage in place here. Until then, people used to walk past this landmark, oblivious to its role in the history of thought. As of 2021 the Unconformity was still not marked on either OS or Harvey maps: its grid reference is NR 936 521.
- After the Unconformity, follow the constructed path south-west for 600 m to reach Newton Point: keep to the rocky shoreline to avoid the boggy saltmarsh of the raised beach. The Point has a good location finder, dedicated to 'those who have done so much for geology and walking on Arran'.

The Unconformity from the north-east

