

Walks around Mallaig, Morar and Arisaig

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HIGHLAND COUNCIL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Walks around Mallaig, Morar and Arisaig



A Selection of walks in the local area



1) "The Circular Walk"

A short walk from Mallaig to Mallaig Bheag.

This walk, from the centre of Mallaig, offers excellent views of the harbour and the 'Small Isles'. The walk is signposted "Circular Walk" near the start of the East Bay car park, (O.S. grid ref. NM 679 968), and follows a clear, well surfaced, track to the hilltop viewpoint, and onwards to "Mallaig Bheag", (Little Mallaig), before returning by road to the start point.



Distance: Approx. 3.25kms (2 miles).
Height of Viewpoint: 110 metres.
Walking time: 1 hr. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).

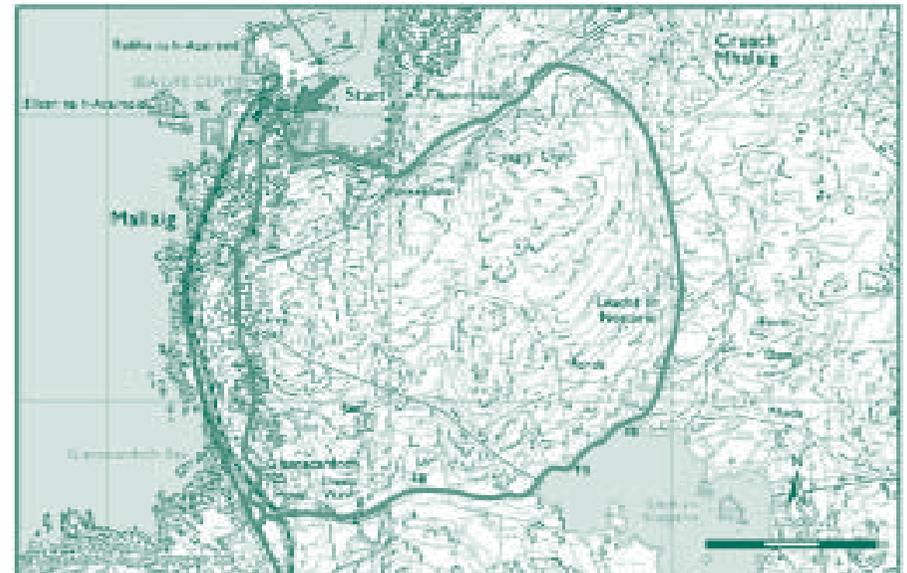


2) "Loch an Nostarie Circular Walk"

A longer circular walk skirting the shores of a hill loch.

Although this walk is lovely in either direction, it is probably easiest to utilise the East Bay car park and start the walk from the "Circular Walk" signpost (O.S. grid ref. NM 679 968) at the west end of the parking area. Follow the path to the viewpoint at the top of the hill. Close to this spot there is a "finger post" reading "Loch an Nostarie and Loch Eireagoraidh". From here the red and green topped way markers can be easily followed through the gully, over the hill and down towards the Loch. Near the Loch side, another finger post will direct you along the shore of Loch an Nostarie towards "Glasnacardoch" following way markers which now bear the colours red, green and white. On leaving the Loch, some ten to fifteen minutes will take you as far as "Glasnacardoch House" and on to the "old" road, which winds its way past the swimming pool and secondary school back into Mallaig.

Distance: Around 7kms (4½ miles).
Max. Height: 140 metres.
Walking Time: Allow at least 2½ hrs.
(Add time for sight seeing and photography).
Important: Proper footwear/clothing, map and a snack.



3) "Loch an Nostarie"

A short walk to this pretty hill loch.

Begin this walk at Glasnacardoch, (O.S. grid ref. NM 676 956) one mile south of Mallaig on the A830 at the entrance drive to the "Glasnacardoch House". Here a "finger post" points to the Lochs "Nostarie and Eireagoraidh". Once through the gate close to the House, (please leave the gate as you find it), way markers, with tops painted white, green and red, can be followed all the way to the Loch side where pleasant surroundings will lull the viewer into a sense of peace. To return, simply retrace your steps to the start point.

Return Distance: Around 2kms (1½ miles).

Max. Height: 30 metres.

Walking Time: 40 mins. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).

Important: Reasonable footwear.

See Map on Page 4.



3

4) "Loch Eireagoraidh"

A good hill walk to the loch that supplies the local villages with their water supply.

Begin this hill walk at Glasnacardoch, one mile south of Mallaig (O.S. grid ref. NM 678 956) on the A830. At the entrance drive to the "Glasnacardoch House", a finger post points the way to "Loch Eireagoraidh". Once through the gate close to the Hotel, (please leave the gate as you find it), way markers with tops painted white, green and red will show the route. For this Loch Eireagoraidh walk, you must stay with the red markers as the other colours lead elsewhere. A further finger post will be passed, around one third of the way, and a gate in the deer fence roughly marks the half-way point. A steady climb brings you to the Loch hidden in the valley below the might of Sgurr Eireagoraidh. (548 metres). The return journey is almost all downhill and will be completed in around half the time of the outward trek.

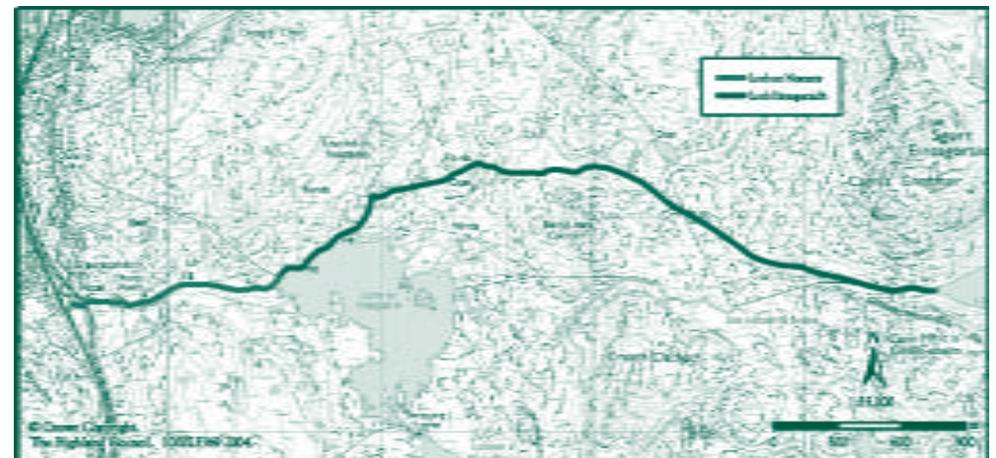
Please remember that this is a hill walk in the highlands, and although not over a great distance, all the usual precautions should be taken, with at least one person advised of where you are going, and your likely time of return.

Return Distance: Approx. 9kms. (5½ miles).

Max Height: 210 metres.

Walking time: 4 hrs. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).

Important: Proper clothing/footwear, map and packed lunch/picnic.



4

5) "Loch a' Bhada Dharaich"

(Loch of the Oak thicket)

A short walk to a pleasant low-lying hill loch.

This short walk begins at the "Fishing Permit" hut on the B8008 Bracara road (O.S. grid ref. NM 698 932), which runs along the shores of Loch Morar. The path follows the Allt an Loin (Burn of the pools), before heading north on the old woodcutters track (likely to be muddy in parts), which ends in sight of the group of Birch and Scots Pine which now grace the outlet of the Loch, and hide the perfect picnic spot. Return by retracing your steps.



Return Distance: Approx. 3kms.

(Just under 2 miles)

Max. Height: 30 metres.

Walking time: 1½ hrs. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).

Important: Good footwear.

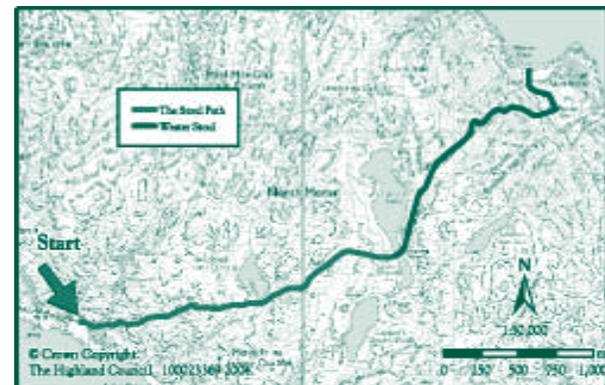


6) "The Stoul Path"

A very popular but relatively hard long walk.

This walk begins at the extremity of the B8008 at Bracorina (O.S. grid ref. NM 725 927). If parking here, please keep the gateways and bridge entrances clear to allow access. The walk is very popular, as can be seen from the amount of erosion on the path! On crossing the wooden bridge, immediately take the narrow path on the left, and pass through the new gates, taking care to leave them as you find them – either open or closed. The clearly defined, but rough path continues uphill and skirts Lochan Innis Eanruig (Henderson's Loch) before crossing the peat hags to the stepping stones on Lochan Stole (The peaceful Loch?). The track then continues along the east shore of the Loch before dropping down steeply to the old village of Stoul on the shore of Loch Nevis (Loch of Heaven). Having enjoyed the requisite picnic, the trek up the "Bealach nan Sac" – some 235 metres from sea level in only 1km, begins the journey, with weary legs welcoming the descent to Loch Morar and the start point.

Please, again remember that this is a hill walk in the Highlands, and although not over a great distance, all the usual precautions should be taken, with at least one person advised of where you are going, and your likely time of return.



Distance: Around 8kms. (About 5 miles).

Max. Height: 235 metres.

Walking Time: Allow at least 4 hrs. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).

Important: Proper clothing/footwear, map, food and very important, a fair degree of fitness.

7) "Loch Morar side to Tarbet"

A beautiful and very popular walk.

The most popular form that this walk takes, is that of walking as far as Tarbet, and linking with the "Bruce Watt" ferry down Loch Nevis back to Mallaig. It should be noted however, that the ferry passage must be booked prior to setting out. Tel/Fax:01687462320. E:Brucewattcruises@aol.com. This walk begins at the extremity of the B8008 at Bracorina (O.S. grid ref. NM 725 927). If parking here, please keep the gateways and bridge entrances clear to allow access. After crossing the wooden bridge, the path continues on the old county road, which follows the north shore of Loch Morar. With its many view points and places of interest, the walker would be well advised to allow plenty of time to complete the distance and catch the ferry. Although there is a clearly defined path all the way, the fact of advising at least one person of your plans is a sensible precaution.



Distance: Signposted generously as 12kms (7½ miles).

Max. Height: 70 metres.

Walking Time: To Tarbet. 2½ to 3 hrs.
(Double if walking back to start point, add time for sightseeing/ photography.)

Important: Ensure booking for ferry, and have proper clothing/ footwear, map and adequate food.



8) "Bourblach Beach"

A short walk to a secluded beach.

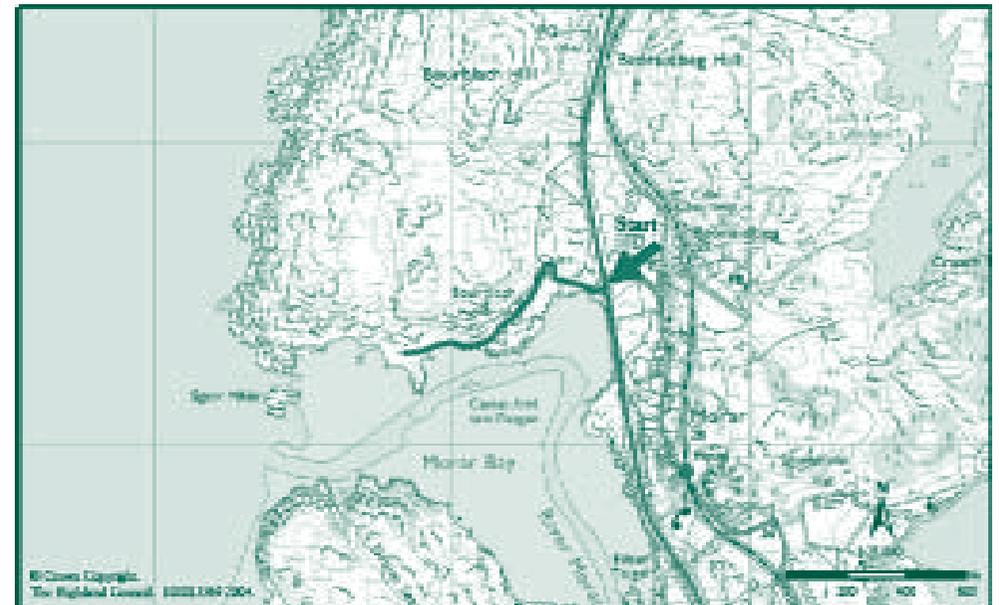
This very short but interesting walk follows the north shore of the Morar estuary below the "Bourblach" houses. The walk starts at the road end to the houses (O.S. grid ref. NM 677 934) and develops into an obvious path along the shore to the beautiful white beach near the "Sgeir Mhor" (the Big Rock). Should the tide be out or ebbing, it is well to be careful of some patches of sand near the low water mark, as these can be very soft, and although safe enough, can be quite frightening.

Return Distance: Some 2kms (Almost 1½ miles).

Max. Height: 10 metres.

Walking Time: Only 35 to 40 mins. (Add time at beach).

Important: No problems on this one!



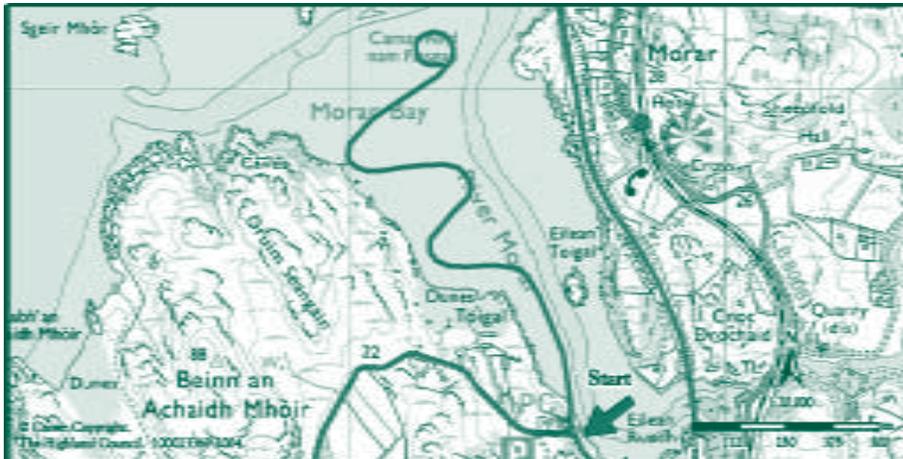
9) "The Silver Sands"

A visit to the area is not complete without this walk!

Famous worldwide, the "Silver Sands of Morar" border the sweep of the River Morar to its meeting with the Atlantic swells which break over the sand bar at the estuary. Although many cars are left parked close to the beach at Kinsadel (O.S. grid ref. NM 678 919) it is better to use the car park at the top of the hill close to the public toilets. Obviously there are no paths on the beach, but apart from tides, neither are there any restrictions, so why not take your time and wander the full length of this glorious beach. Stick on your "wellies" and zig-zag from the soft upper sands to the tide ripples where little pools hide some tiny sea creatures. If your timing is good, and you are lucky enough to catch a "spring" tide at full ebb this is a lovely walk amid peaceful and photogenic surroundings. Well worth the time!



- Return Distance:** 2kms (Almost 2 miles, if you follow the river).
Max. Height: Sea level.
Walking Time: As long as you fancy.
Important: Make the most of low tide.



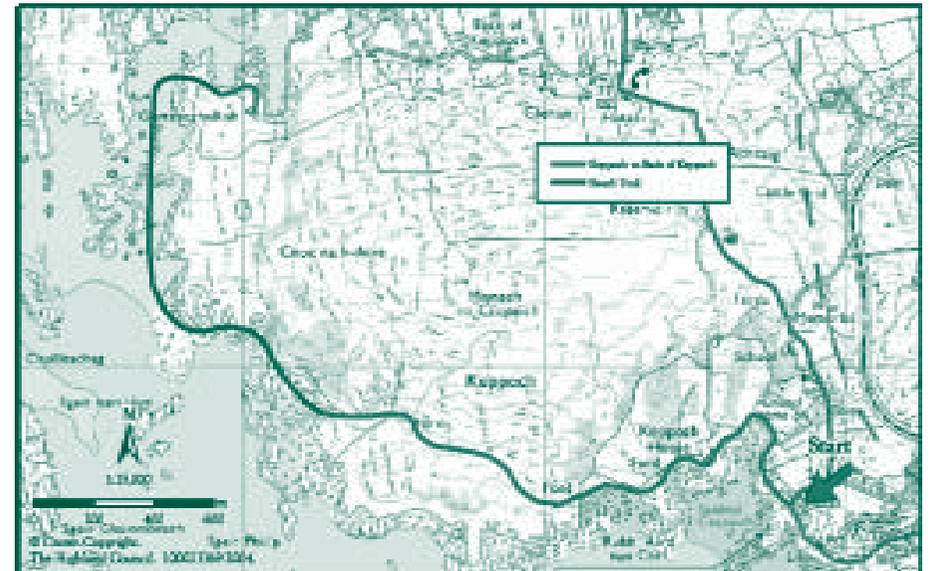
10) "Keppoch to Back of Keppoch"

A different shoreline walk.

This walk, although clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey maps (Landranger sheet 40) is not easily found in its entirety. However, with a minor adaption and utilising the low tide, it becomes a very enjoyable and varied walk.

Start the walk by taking the tarred road towards the cemetery from the Arisaig Hotel, and continue past Keppoch House on the clear, but sometimes muddy, path. After some 2kms, the walker will come to a grassy field, where a stone stile allows access to the shore (O.S. grid ref. NM 644 868). It is here that the low tide assists, as one should continue to walk along the sand, disregarding the route marked on the O.S map, and take the easy option to "Gorten" and "Eilean Ighe" where a "Dun" and a "soap kiln" (or corn kiln) can be found. From here the walk must now follow the road to Back of Keppoch and further return over the hill on the B8008 to Arisaig and the start point.

- Distance:** Around 7kms (About 4½ miles).
Max. Height: 50 metres.
Walking Time: Allow 3 hrs. (Add time for sightseeing and photography).
Important: "Wellies" or good boots as sand will be wet, and note that doing the walk in this manner is only possible at low tide.



13) "Port nam Murrach"

A lovely walk to the beach at Rhu point.

This walk begins at the car park at the old pier store where the Rhu road ends. (O.S. grid ref. NM 627 851). From here, follow the metalled track to "Rhu House", taking first the left fork and then the right, which brings one round the rear of the house, where a way-mark arrow points to a gate. (Always leave gates as you find them, either open or closed). Pass through this gate and on through the next, following the well trodden path to the lovely secluded beach at "Port nam Murrach" (Bay of the Sand Dunes). The return is merely a retracing of the steps back to the pier.

Return Distance: Some 4kms. (About 2½ miles).

Max. Height: 40 metres.

Walking Time: Around 1½ hrs. Plus a good amount of beach time!

Important: Stout footwear (and a picnic?).



13

14) "Peanmeanach"

Sometimes referred to as the "Ardnish" walk.

You will never be alone on this very popular trek, which starts at the long lay-by at "Polnish" on the A830. (O.S. grid ref. NM 742 836) some 2½km west of Lochailort, and signposted "Right of Way Peanmeanach". The track, on its first section, has suffered much erosion from both feet and weather, and is as well to be tackled with care. This climb allows the walker, from the high point at some 218 metres, to open up the magical view from "Loch nam Uamh" (Loch of the Caves) to the distant Hebridean islands. From here the steady descent takes us past Loch Doire a Ghearrain (Loch of the Moaning Thicket?) through a gentle wooded area, then over the flats of the old drained fields, to the bothy, idyllically situated on cropped grass in the middle of the bay. The return over the hill leaves one wondering at the hardy souls who finally vacated their birthplace in the early 1940's.



Return Distance: Some 9kms. (Around 5½ miles).

Max. Height: 218 metres.

Walking Time: About 4 hrs. (Allow further time for stops and food).



14

15) "Borrodale to Kinloid"

Be prepared for a full days walk.

This is a longer walk but please be advised that it involves a considerable climb, and the path in places is not too obvious. The walk begins at Borrodale farm, some 3 miles on the Fort William side of Arisaig on the A830, (O.S. grid ref. NM 695 850) and is signposted as "Right of Way to Kinloid". Walk through the field (leaving both gates as you find them), and through the Rhododendron bushes, continuing uphill into the open. At this point, you will likely lose the path, carry on until you reach the deer fence, traverse left towards the burn and you will locate the gate. Once through, the track can be relocated by following the east side of the burn, and from here a steady climb, with one tributary crossing, will find one, with care, locating the main burn crossing close to "Loch Bheallaich". The path climbs slowly onwards, - there are marker cairns all the way - until the top of "Carn a' Mhadaidh-ruaidh" (The Hill of the Fox) can be seen. Don't shirk the last few metres climb off the track to reach the top (503metres.), as the view is absolutely stunning. From here it is downhill all the way to Scamadale, but make sure you hit the stile over the deer fence at the south east corner of the forestry block. From Scamadale, there is a good track past Sunisletter, Creag Mhor and the Kinloid campsite, to exit near the Arisaig primary school. The only problem remaining is how to get back to the car, left so long ago at Borrodale! However, with use of local bus or train timetables, this problem should not arise.

Please, again remember that this is a hill walk in the Highlands, and although not over a great distance, all the usual precautions should be taken.

Distance: Approx. 3kms.
Signposted as 8 miles.

Max. Height: 503 metres.

Walking Time: Suggested minimum 6 hrs.

Important: Proper footwear/clothing, map and adequate food.

See map on page 17

16) "Arieniskill to Meoble"

Not a walk for the faint hearted!

Although not too far distance wise, the climbs on both sides of the Morar hills are steep, and the path at best is rough!

The walk begins at Arieniskill, some 2km on the Fort William side of Lochailort on the A830 (O.S. grid ref. NM 785 832) and is signposted "Right of Way Meoble". After ducking under the railway bridge, the path up the hill, behind the house, becomes obvious, if a little rough, and follows the west side of the "Allt na Criche" (Boundary Burn). At the 230 metre contour, the path splits, and although either will do, if the walker wishes to pass "Prince Charlie's Cave" then take the low road, the right hand fork. The descent to Loch Beoraid is very steep and so the consequence of the return trek up the slopes should be considered. If the weather is fine, the easy track from Loch Beoraid to Meoble House alongside the river is very pleasant, as is the continuation to the side of Loch Morar. Nevertheless, the return hike must be tackled with time in hand, lest one be caught by falling darkness or weather change. Please, again remember that this is a hill walk in the Highlands, and although not over a great distance, all the usual precautions should be taken, with at least one person advised of where you are going, and your likely time of return.

Distances: Arieniskill to Charlie's Cave. Approx. 2½kms (1½ miles).

Charlie's Cave to Loch Beoraid. Approx. ¾kms. (½ mile).

Loch Beoraid to Meoble. Around 2½kms. (1½ miles).

Meoble to Loch Morar. Approx. 2kms. (1¼ miles).

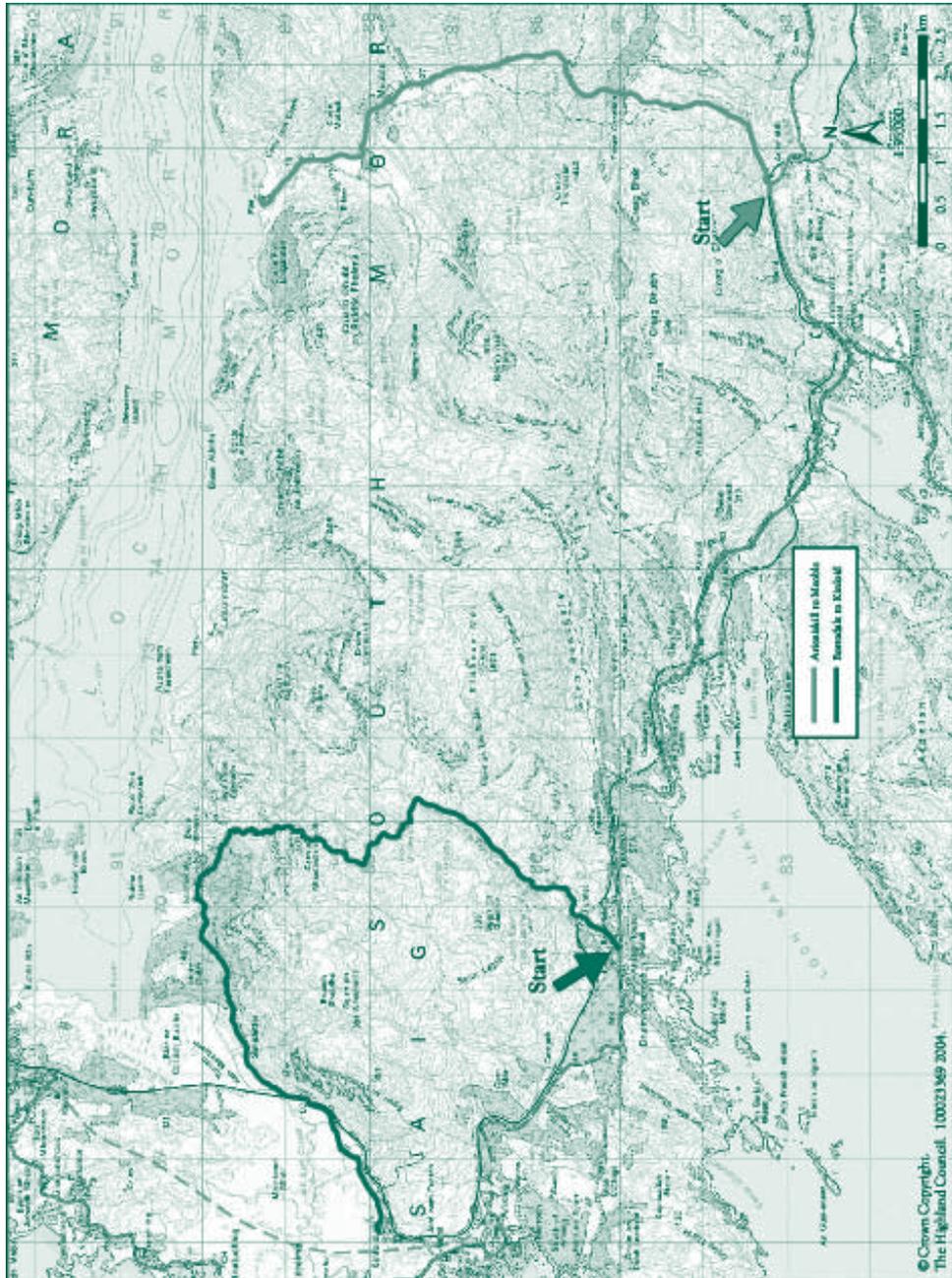
Total Return Distance: Approx 15kms. (Around 9 miles).

Max. Height: 280 metres.

Walking Time: Suggested minimum 5½ hrs.

Important: Suitable clothing/footwear, map, compass and adequate food for a hard day's hike.

See map on page 17



As has been emphasised throughout this leaflet, when walking in the hills in the Highlands, adequate preparations and precautions should be foremost in the mind of the walker. But please, do not be put off by these warnings, as there is a wealth of enjoyment to be had, and an abundance of memories to be stored on film. As the majority of the hills are in private ownership, please heed warnings of shooting seasons etc. and remember that most Estate Managers are very approachable, and can give advice on where it is safe to walk during the stag and hind shooting periods. Remember also to leave gates as you find them, either open or closed, and take care to follow the “**country code**” (Copies of which can be obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage).

It should also be noted that all times are estimates and will vary according to conditions, and further, all translations are the author's reading of the ground, and may be subject to alternative interpretation.

Please note the maps in this booklet are indicative only. Ordnance Survey maps covering all of these walks are readily obtainable locally, as are books of the area's historical interest by a local author.

See:-

Landranger sheet 40 1:50,000 scale (Mallaig and Glenfinnan)

OS Explorer sheet 398 1:25,000 scale (Loch Morar and Mallaig)

Many thanks go to the following for assisting in the publication of this booklet:-

