

Culkein and Sutherland Tour Guide

Version 1 – 12th November 2020

Nice places to stop on the journey up/down

There are lots of nice stops up the A9 but these are places we usually stop to spend a few hours to break up the journey:

- **Kings Park – Stirling (Postcode: FK8 2FA)** - A bit off the main road (go in from junction 10 rather than follow sat nav through town) but you can park on the side of the park at tennis court/café end (Kings Park Road). There is a nice dog friendly café, big park and loos.
- **Dunkeld (Postcode – PH8 0AR)** – Go over the bridge and through Dunkeld main street and there is a main car park on the left with loos. From here there is a nice walk around the cathedral/church and through the woods along the river. Back near the bridge there are some nice pubs along the river too.
- **Pitlochry (Postcode PH16 5LB)** – Just north of Pitlochry is Faskally woods which is a nice little walk around a pretty lake. Loos but no café (although lots in Pitlochry).
- **Rogie Falls (Postcode – IV14 9EQ)** - Just north of Inverness (the moths in the ladies loos are amazing!). About 5-10 min walk to waterfalls. No café.

The cottage and how to get there (Postcode – IV27 4JG)

From Ullapool you take the A835 and then A837 to Lochinver, just before you get into Lochinver you take a right on the B869 signposted to Clachtoll, Achmelvich etc. You then follow the road – this is the fun bit lots of bends on steep bits! – until Stoer village hall when you take a left (basically just follow the signs to the Jammery). Be careful not to continue past the village hall which takes you to Culkein Drumbeg which is a completely different Culkein. Going into Culkein Bay you go over a cattle grid and then the first turning on the left and the cottage is the first on the right. You can just google map it – Vodafone mobile data in Culkein is really good (rubbish in Lochinver – although EE is good).

There is a petrol station in Ullapool and Lochinver (slightly more expensive).

Things to take:

- Sheets, pillow cases, duvet cover (king size) and towels
- I usually take tea towels, dish clothes and dish scrubber too (there are probably already some there but I like to have clean/new ones!).
- Tick remover and insect repellent (there should be tick removers already there as we bought new ones but just in case). Ticks and midges are not a big problem at the cottage, they are worse in Lochinver or inland walks.

Beaches

Our favourites are:

- Achmelvich (Postcode - IV27 4JB) – for blue water and swimming (if you go to the right from the car park there is a little secret cove as well)
- Culkein Bay (because it is next door!)
- Clashnessie (Postcode – IV27 4JF) – big beach and usually pretty quiet, great for body boarding if conditions right. Parking is through the village and out the other side on the right.

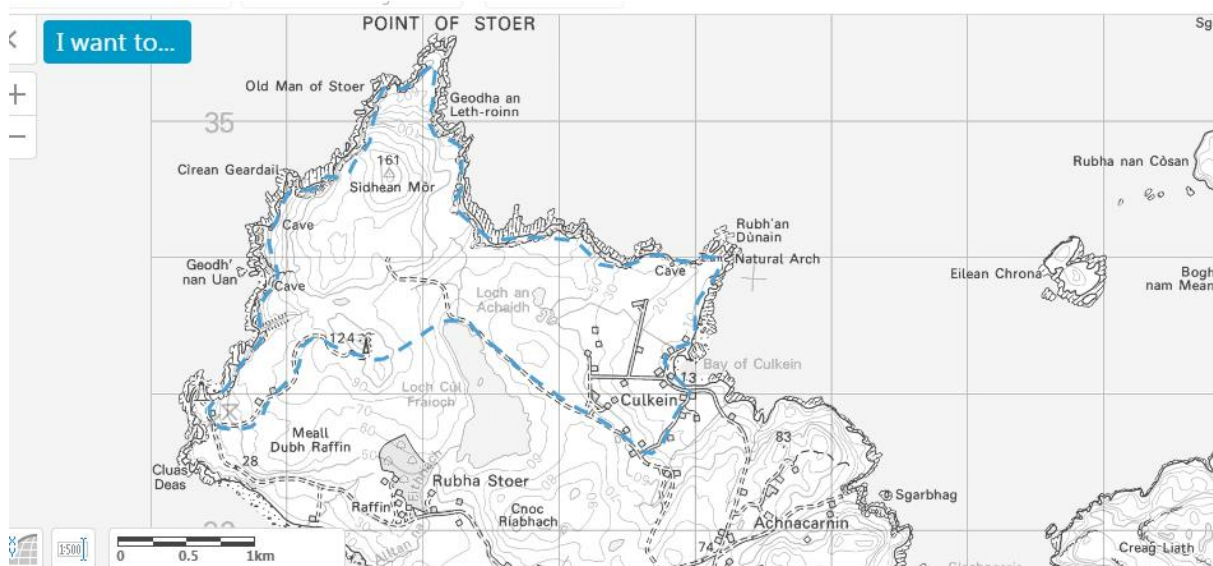
Our favourite walks

From the cottage

- To the point at Dunain – 20 mins.



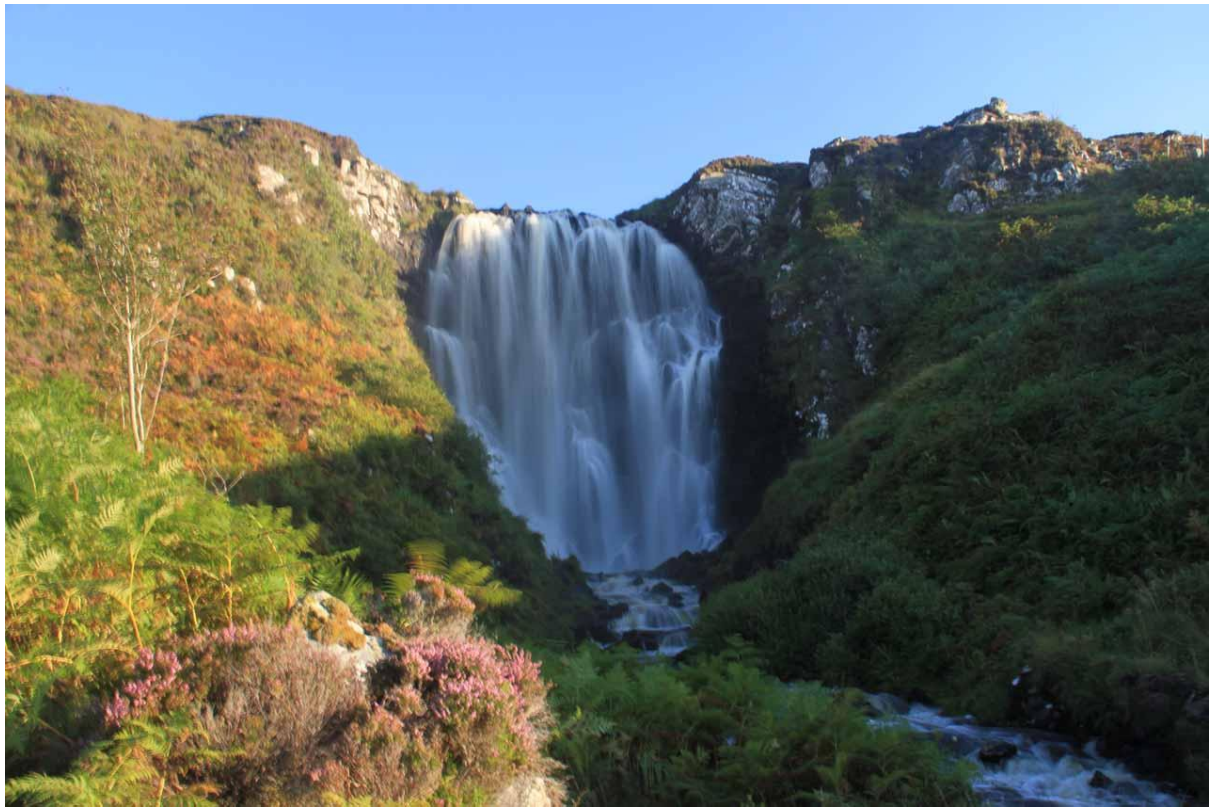
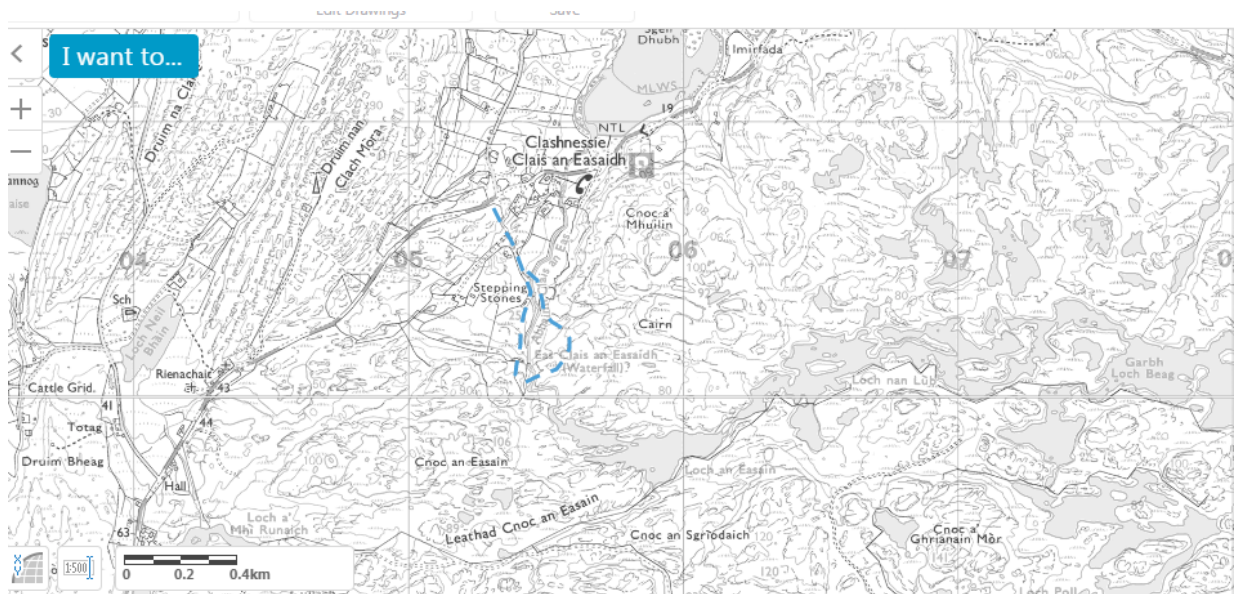
- Also nice is just walking up the road and then along the track to the loch for an evening stroll
- You can walk all the way around the headland to the old man of stoer (a sea stack) and the lighthouse and back round although probably about 4 hours or so. If you drive to the lighthouse and walk to the old man of stoer its probably 1.5/2 hour walk there and back.





From Clashnessie

- Waterfall walk. The start of the walk is back up from the bay on the side of the road (there is a little sign) – you can walk up both sides of the river so you can do a little loop to the top of the waterfall then walk across the river at the top and back down the other side – maybe 45 min walk.

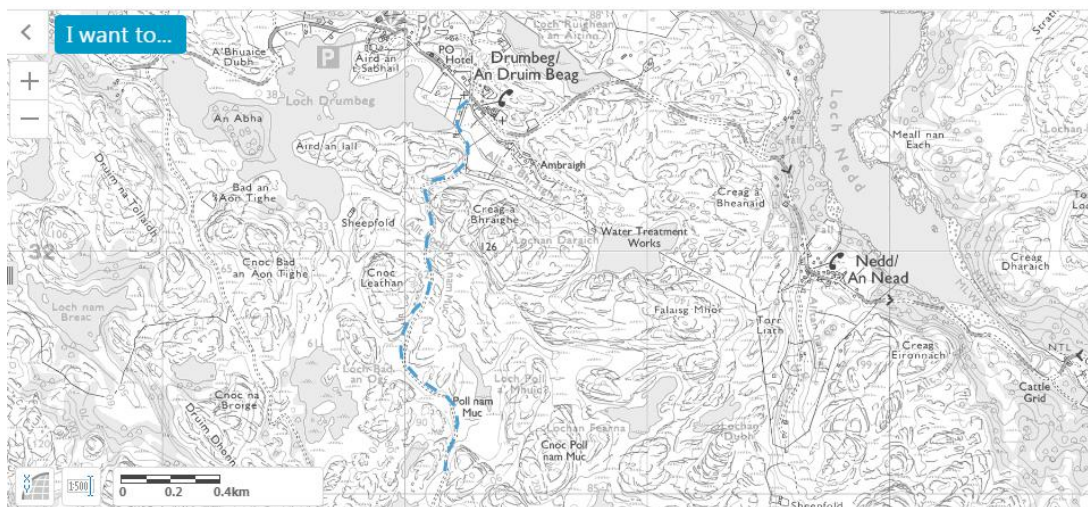


Old peat roads

- These don't really go anywhere or up anything but you feel like you get lost a bit in the wilderness and usually nobody else around. You could do these as a loop and walk back along the road.



- There is also a peat road path from Culkein Drumbeg which is quite nice – start is at entrance to the candle shop/tea room.

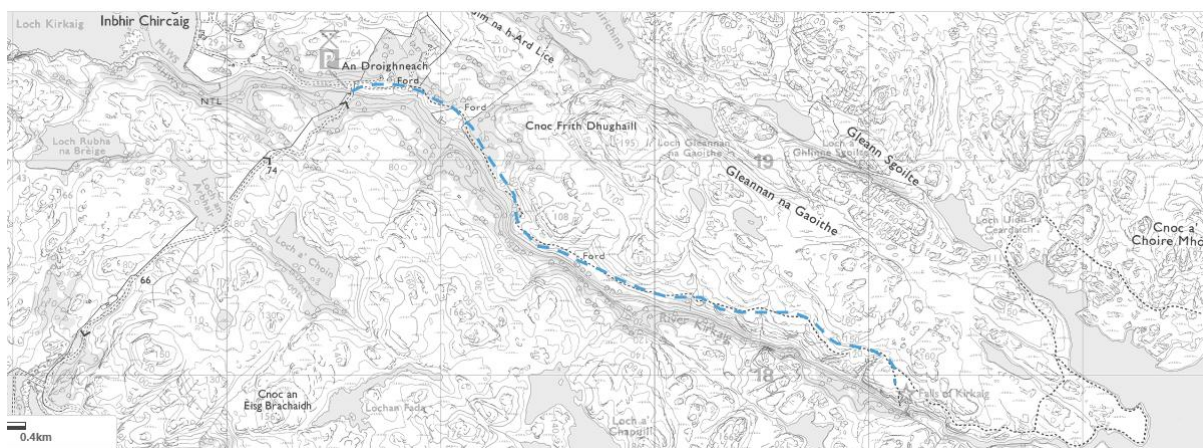


From Lochinver

- Culag woods and white shore – go to the car park that is past the school and follow signs to white shore path – nice short walk through pretty woods and white shore is good for swimming. Look out for the dragonflies 😊



- Inverkirkaga waterfalls – probably 2 hours there and back – if you keep going past the waterfall there is a good view of suilven. There is a nice bookshop and café at the start if it's still open.

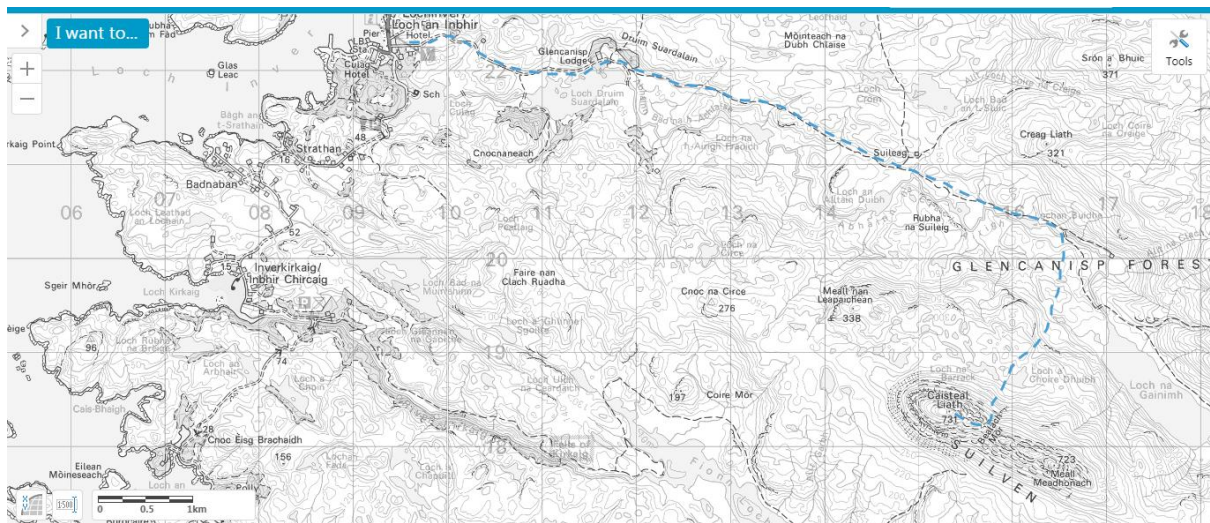




- River Inver walk – lovely loop (salmon jumping in the river at right time of year) – 2.5 hrs ish. Glencanisp lodge used to have a little honesty tuckshop which was great for chocolate refuelling on the way back.



- Suilven – if you are feeling energetic and the weather is good! Most amazing views and impressive mountain I have ever been up although took me a good 9 hours there and back. You can go up the other side from Inverkirkgaig as well.

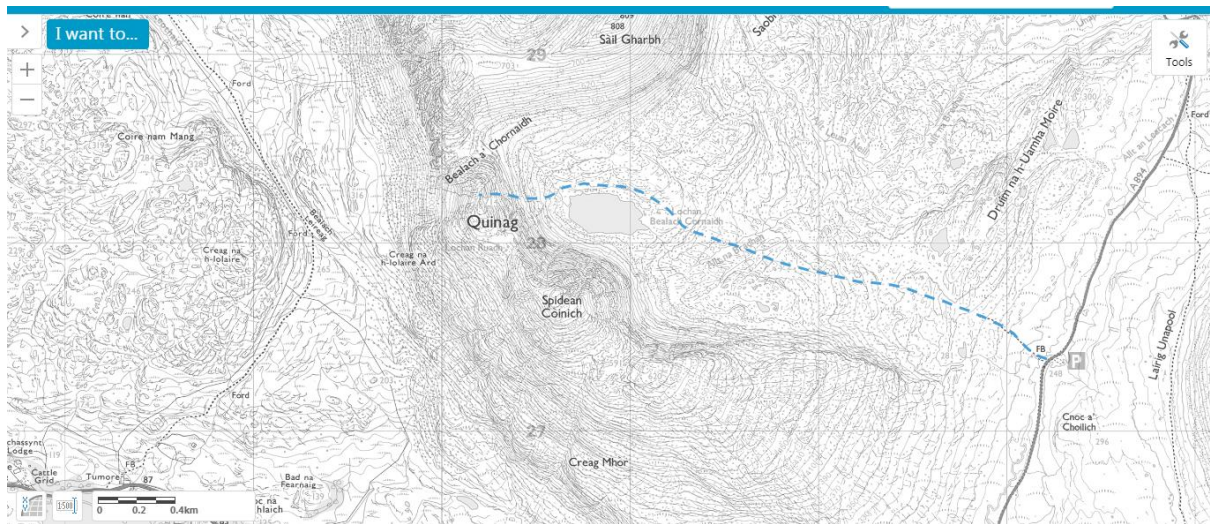


A bit further afield:

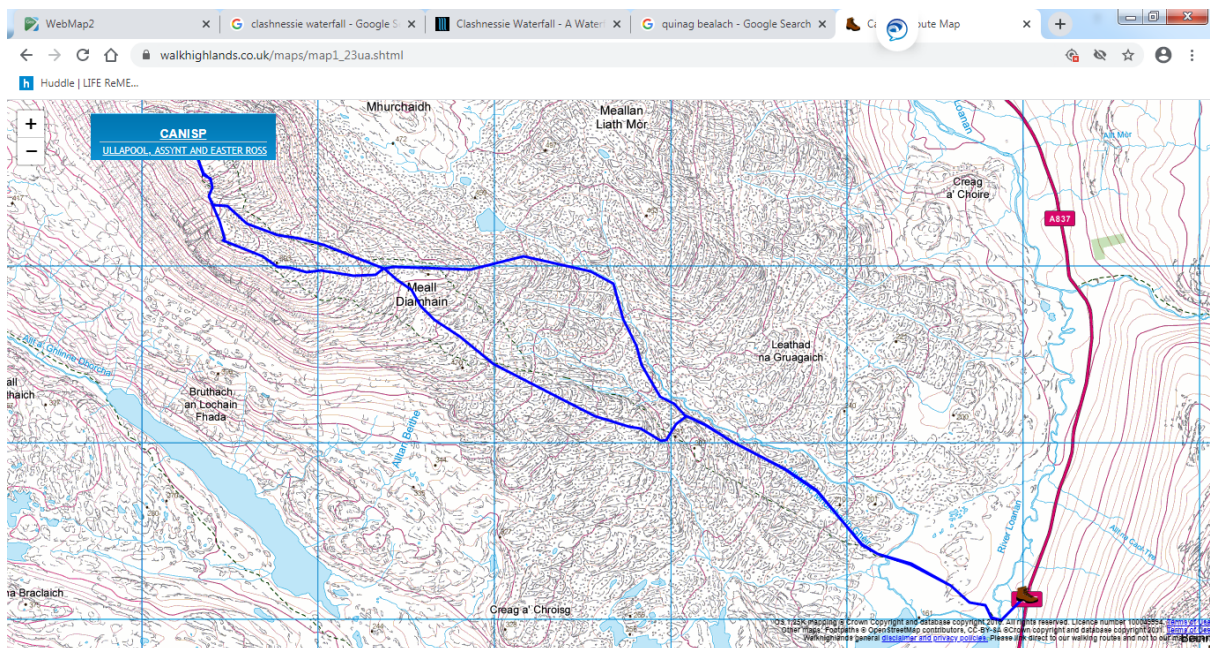
- On the way to Kylesku - Tallest waterfall – 3 hours ish – listen out for golden eagles! Husbands used to push their wives off the top of this...eek!



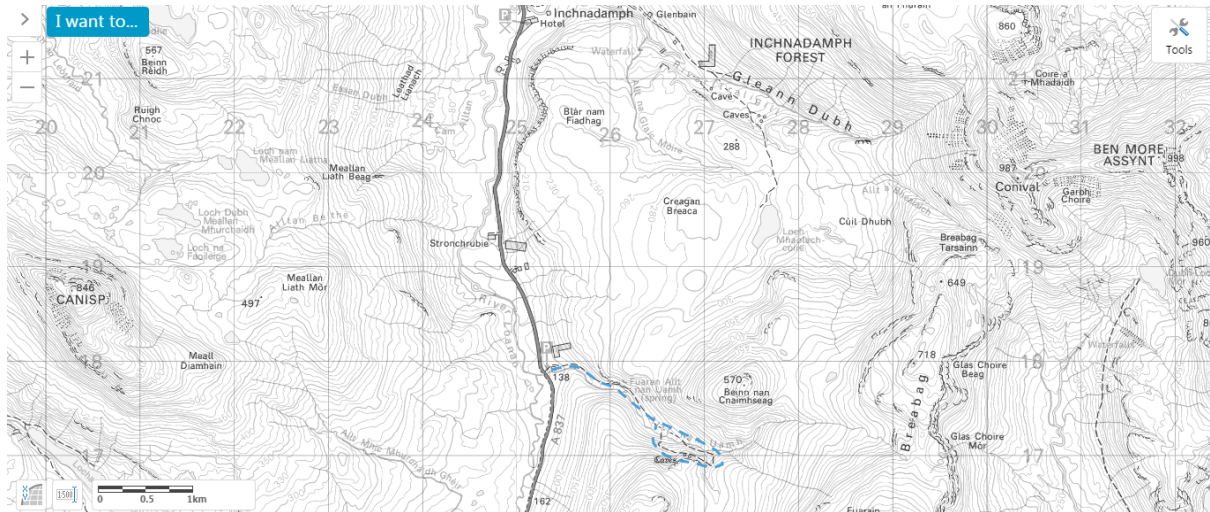
- Ridge (bealach) at Quinag – 3/4hrs – On way to kylesku. I can't remember which way around the loch you go but there is a path. Amazing views just from the ridge (see photo) but you can keep going up to the peaks. Turn right from the bealach though (we turned left and I got stuck on a cliff with vertigo!).



- Canisp – you get a great view of Suilven from the top. On road to Ullapool beyond Inchnadamph – 4/5hours.



- Bone caves (Postcode of car park - IV27 4HN) – named for the bear, lynx and wolf bones found in them from the last ice age! Located back towards Ullapool beyond Inchnadamph - an hour – although there are lots of walks past the main bone caves to more caves/little waterfalls etc. Look out for sinkholes!



All these walks are probably much better described with more detailed info (and accurate timings/distance!) on <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/>

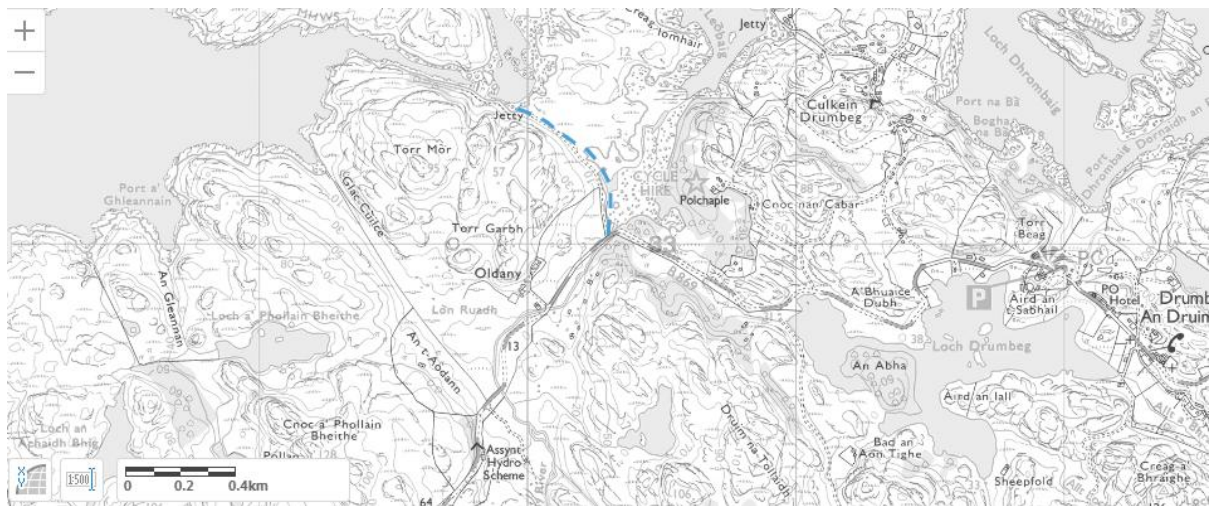
Wildlife

Look out for the deer around the fields in Culkein, otters and seals in the bay. There are always lots of oystercatchers as well.

We have spotted harbour porpoise from the point at Doonan on a calm day.

Stoer Lighthouse – we used to spend hours sitting on the cliff with binoculars and a telescope, gets very addictive! We have seen pods of common dolphins, bottlenose, porpoise, minke and even fin whale and killer whales (at a distance!) over the years on calm days. Still want to see a basking shark!

If you ever go to Culkein Drumbeg (another place called Culkein that is located along the road if you were to turn left when coming from the cottage to Stoer village hall) there is a short walk on the side of the road to a little bay opposite Oldany Island which always has lots of seals chilling out on the rocks:



Start of walk:



Parking a little further up the road:



I follow [Assynt Field Club](https://www.facebook.com/AssyntFieldClub) on facebook (I know am a geek...for latest sightings!). Also their website is <https://www.assyntwildlife.org.uk/>

Food

We usually stock up for the week in Ullapool Tescos (Postcode – IV26 2XB)

Lochinver: A good Spar and also a good butchers (venison sausages are their speciality). Eating out – Pete’s Restaurant at the harbour is good. The Caberfaidh pub and Lochinver Larder (famous for pies) wasn’t open when we were there but I think they were just starting up outside takeaway - apparently both are under new management so not sure what will be like now. Inver Lodge hotel restaurant is good - the food is good although a bit fancy/expensive and lovely views from dining room across the bay.

Culkein Drumbeg: Little shop with fruit and veg etc. Also does cake and coffee. There is a candle shop/garden tea rooms there too.

Clachtoll: Flossies (blue shed on side of the road) – little shop with basic provisions and does coffee/bacon rolls.

Kylesku hotel: A bit further away but really good food for a treat (amazing mussels) they have outdoor seating as well.

Jammery: Next to the cottage – they do a baking day on a Thursday and you can pre order bread (they sometimes do things like quiches/pasties etc as well). They do toasties/filled rolls, coffee and cakes. Also pizza takeaway on a Saturday.

We hope you have an amazing time and enjoy it as much as we do!