
Loch Fyne Hoverin 2012

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Location

Main launch site:

*Argyll Caravan Park
Inveraray,
Argyll & Bute,
PA32 8XT
www.argyllcaravanpark.com
Tel: 01499 302285:*

When arriving, check in at the reception office – they have the names of all hovercraft owners and will try to locate your pitch as close to the launch site as possible. If you are staying off-site there will be a £5 per day parking/launching/storage charge payable (if you are staying on-site then there is no charge). Once you have checked-in you will be directed to the hovercraft launch area. Remove your craft from the trailer on the grass area next to the touring pitches (see image below). Then move it along the path through the gorse bushes to the hover park area (see below). You will then be asked to move your trailer to the site trailer compound (trailers are not allowed in the touring pitch areas).



Unless you are using it on the water your craft MUST remain in the hover park area at all times!

When leaving your craft overnight, it's a good idea to remove any loose valuables and removable fuel tanks. Make sure you don't park below the tide-line – this area can flood on very high tides!

There is direct access to the Loch from the Hover Park Area (see below). When the tide is out, this area is mud and seaweed-covered rock – follow the semi-cleared route made by the stream (see above) that runs through the foreshore to the open water.

Be careful when manoeuvring around the hover park area as this is a popular walk for residents – watch your fan/prop blast!

IMPORTANT

To reduce noise impact **DO NOT** operate more than one or two craft at the same time in the hover park area – wait until a craft has left the area before starting your engine(s) and setting off. If you need to re-group then arrange to meet at one of the many isolated beaches close by.

You should aim to leave the caravan park area and not return there again for several hours - **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should you “mess-around” near to the caravan or hover park areas! If you want to “mess about on the water” then move to one of the many unpopulated areas on the Loch where you can play for as long as you wish without disturbing anyone at all!

We operate a voluntary curfew system with *craft operation restricted to between 9am and 9pm* to minimise disturbance to shore side property owners.

Thank you.

[illegible]

The legal stuff!

This is **NOT** an organised event and I am **NOT** an organiser. I am not responsible for what you do, where you go or where you stay whilst you are in this area. Rules, regulations or instructions are not available from me or anyone claiming to act on my behalf. All of the information given in this document should be treated as simple advice – what you do is entirely up to you.

This is a gathering of like-minded people at a public camp site in a public area where it is possible to operate hovercraft.

By using your hovercraft in this area you hereby agree to indemnify me, or anyone claiming to act on my behalf, against all damages and/or costs payable by myself arising out of any acts or omissions attributable to yourself.

Safety

Under maritime law you, as the pilot/captain, are fully responsible for your craft, its crew and passengers at ALL times.

The advice shown below is given in good faith – it does not relieve you of your responsibility. Please be aware that this area is open water and is subject to the full effect of tidal and weather conditions. If, at any time, you have **any** doubt as to the suitability of your craft or your experience for the prevailing conditions then please do **not** venture onto the water. If weather or tidal conditions suddenly change and exceed your craft (or your) capabilities, then take shelter until they have improved (in this area, weather usually passes over fairly quickly).

Safety equipment:

This basic list is a recommendation – it's mostly common sense!

1. Mobile phone kept waterproof (reception is very patchy so don't rely on it!) – contact numbers are listed below
2. VHF radio (we normally use Channel 72 for non-emergency use, Channel 16 for **any** emergency – monitor both channels if your radio supports dual channel watch).
3. Flares – day/night smoke flares are the most appropriate type. Make sure they are in date *and* you know where they are and how to use them!
4. First aid kit and clean water (a bottle of drinking water)
5. Some dry clothing (getting wet can be **very** dangerous).
6. And, lastly, enough fuel to get you home should the wind suddenly pick up or change direction!

Operating Considerations

As this is tidal water, there are no specific regulations (apart from the Collision Regulations) covering operation of watercraft. Technically, the entire loch comes under the jurisdiction of the Clyde Port Authority however, it is an isolated part of their huge area and doesn't contain any large military or commercial installations - you are unlikely to see any patrol vessels of any kind.

You are free to cruise at any time you want (see curfew restrictions above) – no permission or organisation is needed. If you fancy an evening spin (often the best time – also provides relief from midges!) around the loch then carry on! If you cruise solo then make sure someone knows where you are going and when you will return

(standard procedure). Take time to travel, stop and explore the area – a hovercraft can get you to places that no-one has probably ever set foot on!

Things to watch out for:

1. The Brewin Dolphin Scottish Series Yacht racing takes place on the weekend 1st to 4th June. This event is based at Tarbert and makes extensive use of the loch opposite. Getting into Tarbert harbour or using this part of the Loch at this time is virtually impossible.
2. There is a sonar-testing station moored near to the shore opposite Inveraray (a grey shed on a float!) which is used to monitor naval vessels – keep well clear of this area if you see any naval ships - they execute a fixed pattern course during these tests and are not inclined to change course for a little hovercraft!
3. Do NOT travel up the two small rivers in Inveraray bay (under the bridges)! There are no suitable cruising rivers anywhere in this area – they are all too small. Apart from rivers, you can travel to or stop any place you want – it's all tidal and freely navigable.
4. When operating close to the shoreline near houses or other populated areas, please try to avoid using full throttle - especially when leaving land (your noisy back end will be pointing directly onshore!). When coming onshore try to stay away from the shore edge during your run in (come on at right angles to the shoreline if at all possible).
5. Keep a lookout for anglers on shore (watch the end of piers or rocky outcrops!) – they can use very long lines, which are almost invisible from the water. Keep clear of fish three farms - stay outside of the **outer** orange marker buoys to avoid disturbance (one has shore-to-cage feed pipes floating just under the water).
6. Divers are often active in this area and they often don't use diver-down buoy markers so keep an eye out for dive boats or shore dive groups.
7. There are a fairly large number of creel marker buoys out on the water (usually orange) – watch out for them!
8. Keep clear of (and quiet around) the small islands to avoid disturbing nesting birds (these islands are very busy nest sites at this time of year).
9. Watch out for “rafts” of small sea birds (shelduck, etc) on the water surface and try to avoid them if possible.
10. Keep a very close eye on weather and tidal conditions – especially when attempting to cross some of the wider parts of the Loch
11. The lower part of Loch Fyne (around the corner from Otter Ferry down to Portavadie and further south can be VERY rough during some parts of the tide or if there is a westerly or south westerly wind. In particular the “corner” between Loch Fyne and Loch Gilp can be truly horrendous even when other parts of the Loch are flat calm! If you have any doubts then play safe and take shelter!

Operating times:

We operate a voluntary curfew system with ***craft operation restricted to between 9am and 9pm*** to minimise disturbance to shore side property owners.

Tide Times 2012

<i>Day</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Tide</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Tide</i>	<i>Type</i>
28	May	0.14	1.01	L	1	June	0.03	2.94	L
28	May	0.38	2.62	H	1	June	0.25	0.49	H
28	May	0.66	0.73	L	1	June	0.55	2.9	L
28	May	0.93	2.55	H	1	June	0.76	0.47	H
29	May	0.17	0.89	L	2	June	0.06	3.05	L
29	May	0.43	2.65	H	2	June	0.28	0.38	H
29	May	0.69	0.67	L	2	June	0.58	2.97	L
29	May	0.97	2.68	H	2	June	0.79	0.43	H
30	May	0.2	0.76	L	3	June	0.09	3.13	L
30	May	0.48	2.72	H	3	June	0.3	0.29	H
30	May	0.71	0.6	L	3	June	0.61	3.01	L
31	May	0	2.81	H	3	June	0.81	0.42	H
31	May	0.23	0.62	L	4	June	0.11	3.18	L
31	May	0.52	2.82	H	4	June	0.33	0.24	H
31	May	0.74	0.53	L	4	June	0.63	3.02	L
					4	June	0.84	0.43	H
					5	June	0.14	3.19	L
					5	June	0.36	0.23	H
					5	June	0.66	3	L
					5	June	0.87	0.48	H

When pulled up on shore, make sure that you leave your craft **above** the high tide mark (usually visible as a line of seaweed/debris along the beach or rocks). If the tide is going out (see above) when you land then don't leave your craft for too long as it may end up stranded above a rock field exposed by the receding tide!

The Plan!

This is the West coast of Scotland with it's "variable" weather therefore a fixed plan is pointless! At some point during the week, the intention is that the following *should* happen:

1. Group barbecue (free burger but bring your own drinks).
2. Overnight hover-camping trip to an island or beach.
3. Mass cruise(s) to some place that we aren't likely to cause a disturbance
4. Day cruise on Loch Awe (a 24 mile long freshwater Loch about 10 miles north of Inveraray). We have consent to use the boat yard for launching (there is a day launch fee of £6)

Hovercraft'able Filling Stations

These stations are all within 100metres of a suitable hover stopping point - see maps below for exact locations.

Note: NONE of the filling stations are 24hour!

Inveraray West- park on beach and cross main road

Inveraray East – stop in bay to right of statue – filling station is through right hand archway (A819).

Lochgilphead (Tesco station across main road from old harbour (see below), also has a mini-supermarket for human fuel!)

Tarbert – filling station is up hill from harbour

Those all there are so make sure you always have enough fuel!

Contact Info

John Robertson: **07738 279952** or **01499 500234**

Ian Brooks: **07913 387140**

Trevor Black: **07879 898798**

Steve Holland: **07803 936573**

All of the above are at:

The Log House , Furnace, PA32 8XU

Give one of us a quick call by mobile or radio (left on most of the day) when you arrive in the area so we can let you know what's going on.

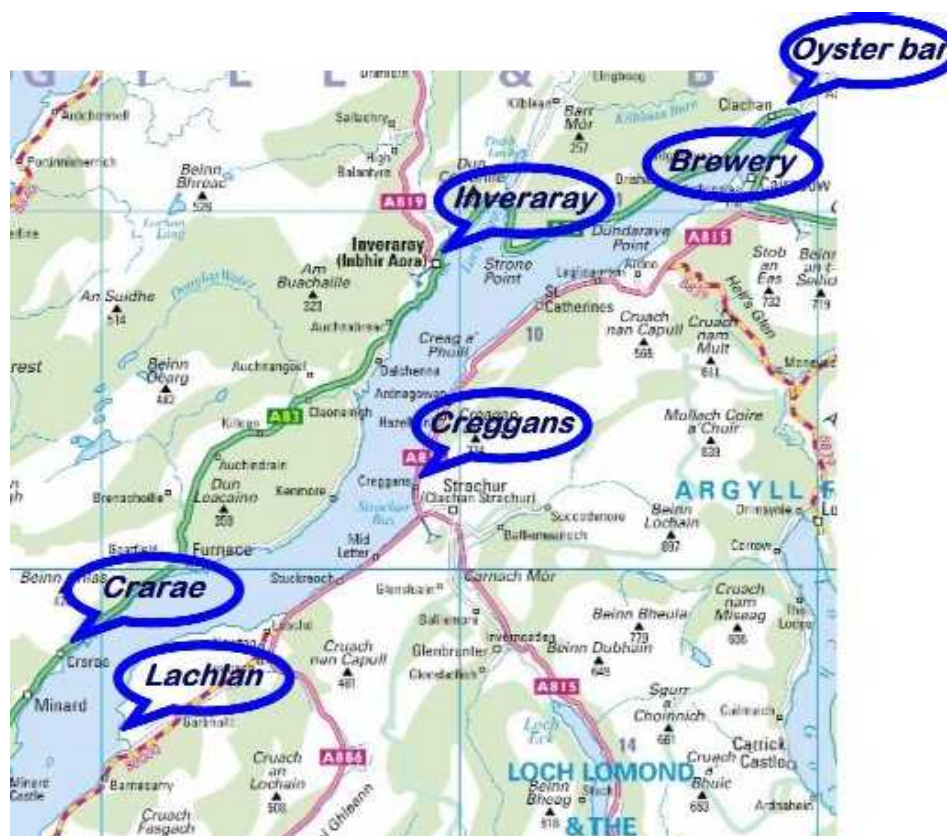
VHF Channel 72 should be monitored by *all* hovercraft users – ***if you think that there is ANY danger to life then use channel 16 to make an emergency call!*** If your radio supports it, then monitor both channel 16 and channel 72.

A recovery boat may be available at Furnace (half way down the Loch) if required.

Cruise Destinations

There are many interesting and diverse locations along the Loch side - here are a few that are suitable for visiting by Hovercraft (in other words, there is somewhere to stop out of the water!) - the approx. *one-way* distance from the caravan park is shown):

North end of Loch:



1. **Loch Fyne Ales (10 miles)** <http://www.fyneales.com/> . (see map below Oyster Bar). Follow the stream on the right hand side at the top of the Loch until you pass under the main road bridge then park up on the river bank on the right (watch the tide!!) Scramble up the bank through the woodland a few metres to onto the main trunk road, Walk left for a hundred meters until you reach the turn on the right for the Brewery (it's about 400meters along this road to the brewery itself so don't buy too much beer – you need to be able to carry it back to your craft!
2. **Loch Fyne Oyster Bar (10 miles)** <http://www.lochfyne.com/>. Park on the mud bank at the LEFT hand side at the top of the Loch (there is a sewage outfall in this corner so watch your step! Walk through the grass/reeds to the main road (10metres or so) and cross over to the Oyster bar complex.
3. **Ardkinglass House and Gardens** <http://www.ardkinglas.com/> . Park in the bay just to the south of the house itself – the roadway is along shore edge. Visit the tallest tree in Briatin – **212 feet high!**
4. **Castle Lachlan (12 miles)** <http://www.darkisle.com/l/lachlan/lachlan.html> - pull well up onto the shallow beach/mudflat to the *east* (right side) of the castle itself. Directly across the small bay to the south east is a pub that serves food – you can also stop on the shingle next to the car park:



5. **Creggans Inn (2.5 miles)** <http://www.creggans-inn.co.uk/> Straight across the Loch from the caravan park - pull up on small beach to the *right* hand side of the stone pier – you can climb up to the road next to the pier. If the tide is fully in then you may need to park further east on the beach and walk along the roadside



6. **Inveraray (1.5 miles)** – Jail (<http://www.inverarayjail.co.uk>), tourist shops, mini-market, filling station, chip shop, pubs, hotels, castle, etc (major tourist destination in the area!).



Pull up onto the southern point for easy access to one of the filling stations (directly over the main road) and Jail (the boulder beach can have some nasty debris on it at times). Use the northern point (next to the pier wall) for access to the ice cream/chip/sweetie shop and town centre (such as it is!). Pull up onto the right of the bay (past the pier) for access to the other filling station. There are often people fishing from the end of the pier end so give it a wide berth!

7. Crarae Gardens (11 miles)

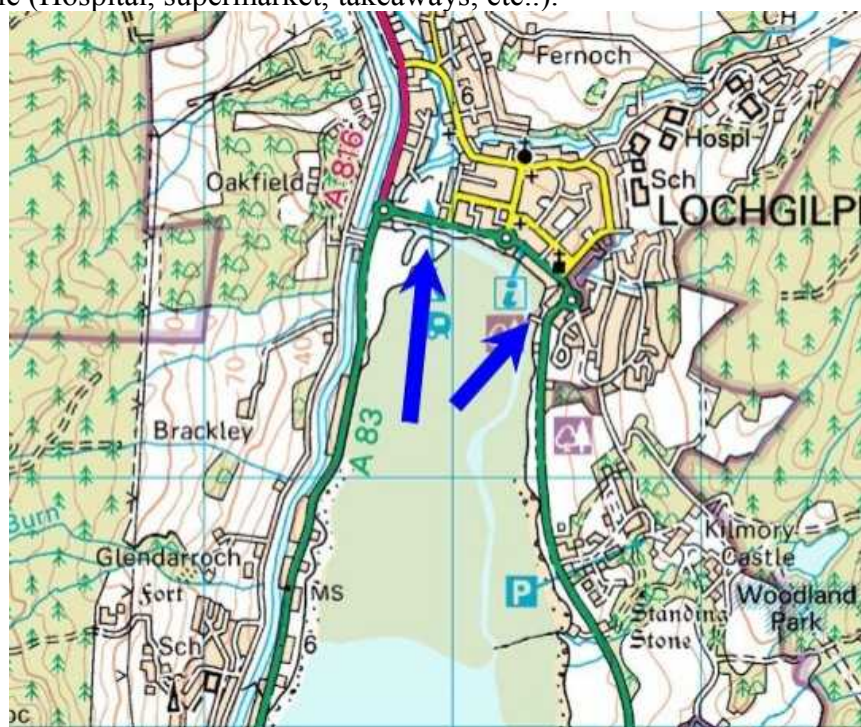
http://guide.visitscotland.com/vs/guide/5.en.SCH1/objectId.SIG57908Svs.curr.GBP.season.at1.selectedEntry_home/home.html - park on muddy beach and cross road to get to gardens



Middle Part of Loch:



8. **Lochgilphead (23 miles)** <http://www.lochgilphead.info/> Pull up into the small disused harbour (right hand side - see below) for access to the filling station (a Tesco mini-market) directly across main road. Alternatively, follow the stream (a LOT of spiky stuff so go slowly!) round to the left and park in grassy area for access to main town centre. This is the main town in Argyll and has a wide range of services available (Hospital, supermarket, takeaways, etc..).



9. **Tarbert (35 miles)** <http://www.tarbertlochfyne.com/> Pass through harbour (observing the 3 knot speed limit!) and park up next to the small slipway on the right of the old harbour area (mud flats when tide

out). Watch for ferry and other boat traffic at the very narrow harbour entrance. Filling station is on the right about 50meters up the hill.



10. **Otter Ferry (22 miles)** <http://www.secretscotland.org.uk/index.php/Secrets/OtterFerry> Park on beach. To the left is a superb pub that serves food. You can also visit the green marker at the end of the sand bar (if the tide is fully out).



11. **Port Ann (20 miles)** <https://www.yourlocalweb.co.uk/argyll-and-bute/port-ann/pictures/> (see map above) - land on beach.
12. **Loch Gair (18 miles)** – there is no easy parking on west and north part of bay – land on the beach to the east/north east (mudflats or gravel)



13. **Ardcastle** – (see right edge of last map) – stone pier with picnic spot in natural woodland – spectacular views up Loch. Pull up on onto beach on *left* side of pier
14. **Inverneill (26 miles)** – a small island outcrop on a sandy beach – it is obvious when you come across it!
15. **Castleton (27 miles)** – sandy beaches and mudflats in amongst islands



16. **Portavadie (34 miles)** <http://www.portavadiemarina.com/marina-local.html> - land on beach area next to harbour entrance (watch for ferry!).



19. **Skipness (42 miles)** – south-facing beach next to ferry slipway.
20. **Ettrick (44 miles)** – large south facing beach.
21. **Riddon (48 miles)** – mud banks at top of Loch Riddon – a lot of active wildlife in this area.