

Welcome to Strathdon

Strathdon sits at the meeting of several rivers. Indeed, the village was once known as Invernochty, so called from the original church being situated where the waters of the Nochty and the Don meet.

The immediate area around Strathdon is one of contrast with a fertile strath (low lying land beside a river) leading into the wilder, more rugged landscape of the Cairngorms.



Strathdon Trails

A network of paths and tracks lead out of the village, providing a variety of routes to enjoy with fine views, a rich local history and abundant wildlife. Each colour-coded trail is shown on the map and there are also corresponding waymarkers along each trail to help guide you. Please take a few minutes to read the route descriptions on the map before you set out, just to make sure that your chosen route is suitable for you and any others in your group. You can also join paths and minor roads together to make your very own, longer, expedition route!



For information on paths, local events, facilities and accommodation:

Visitor Information Centres:

Tomintoul: 01807 580 285

Ballater: 01339 755 306

Alford: 01975 562 052

Useful web sites:

www.upperdonside.org.uk

www.visitcairngorms.com

www.cairngorms.co.uk

www.walkhighlands.co.uk

If you enjoyed using 'Strathdon Trails' Then look out for other Community Paths leaflets to help you explore more of the Cairngorms National Park.

Cairngorms Paths

Strathdon Trails

Where rivers meet...



Strathdon Trails



half mile

one kilometre



Bellabeg to Roughpark via Doune of Invernochty

A varied walk with lots of interest that takes in a memorial avenue of lime trees, the Doune (a fort), some wildlife ponds, forest and farmland.

Distance: 1 mile (1½ km) one-way

Approximate time: 1 hour

Start: War Memorial

Terrain: Grassy paths, built path with gentle gradients, and a short un-surfaced section with gradients.

Bellabeg Plantation

A short circuit through forest plantation with good views over Strathdon. Watch and listen out for small forest birds such as siskins and coal tits.

Distance: 1 mile (1½ km)

Approximate time: ¾ hour

Start and finish: Off A941 road just to the east of Bellabeg Post Office

Terrain: Steep grassy path to start then forest track.

Ben Newe

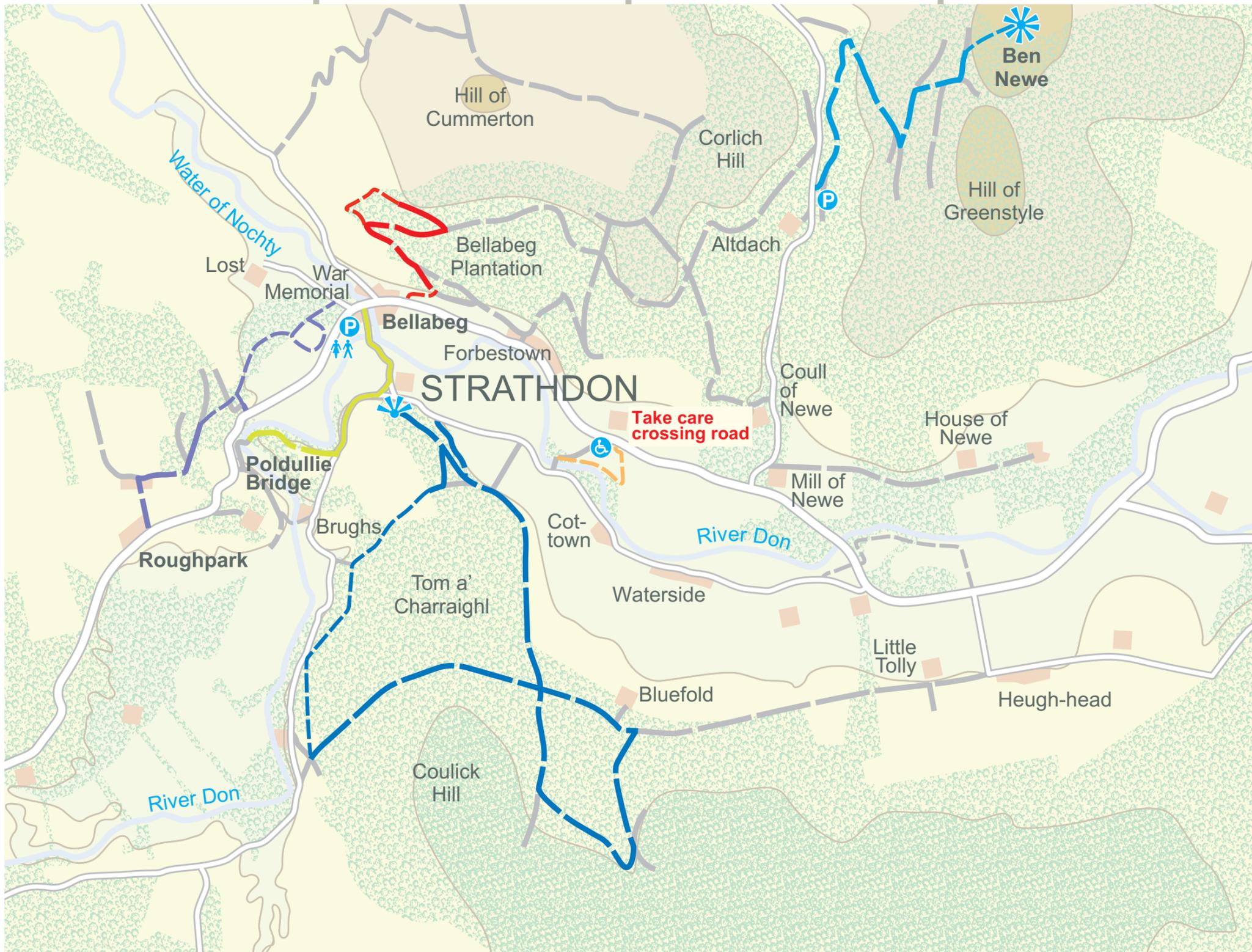
A good half-day hill walk. Ideal for adventurous families. Starts off in forest before coming onto open hill at summit where there is a large rock outcrop incorporating a medieval well and a trigpoint with a bench from which to take in the superb views in all directions.

Distance: 1¼ miles (1¾ kms) one-way

Approximate time: 1 hour

Start: Ben Newe car park (see map)

Terrain: Mostly forest tracks which can be very muddy then rough, steep hill path to summit.



- road
- track
- path
- toilets
- car park
- bus stop
- viewpoint
- all-abilities trail

Poldullie Bridge

A ramble through the 'backstreets' of Strathdon! The route goes past Strathdon Kirk around Kirk Hill and then down to reach the picturesque Poldullie Bridge over the River Don.

Distance: 1 mile (1½ kms) one way

Approximate time: 45 mins one way

Start: From Bellabeg village or car park

Terrain: Minor roads, sometimes with no verge or footway. Some short, steep sections.

Bunzeach Trail

Although primarily a forest trail this route has plenty of open views of Strathdon. The trail can be extended by taking in an additional loop.

Distance: up to 4 miles (6¾ kms)

Approximate time: 2 hours

Start and finish: Car park at Bellabeg (see map)

Terrain: Mostly forest track with steep sections and rough, unsurfaced paths.

Lonach Hall Path

Short walk through farmland to the banks of the River Don. Watch out for butterflies on path verges and dippers flying and salmon leaping on the river.

Distance: ¼ mile (300m) one way

Approx. time: 15 mins one way

Start: Opposite Lonach Hall

Terrain: Flat surfaced path.

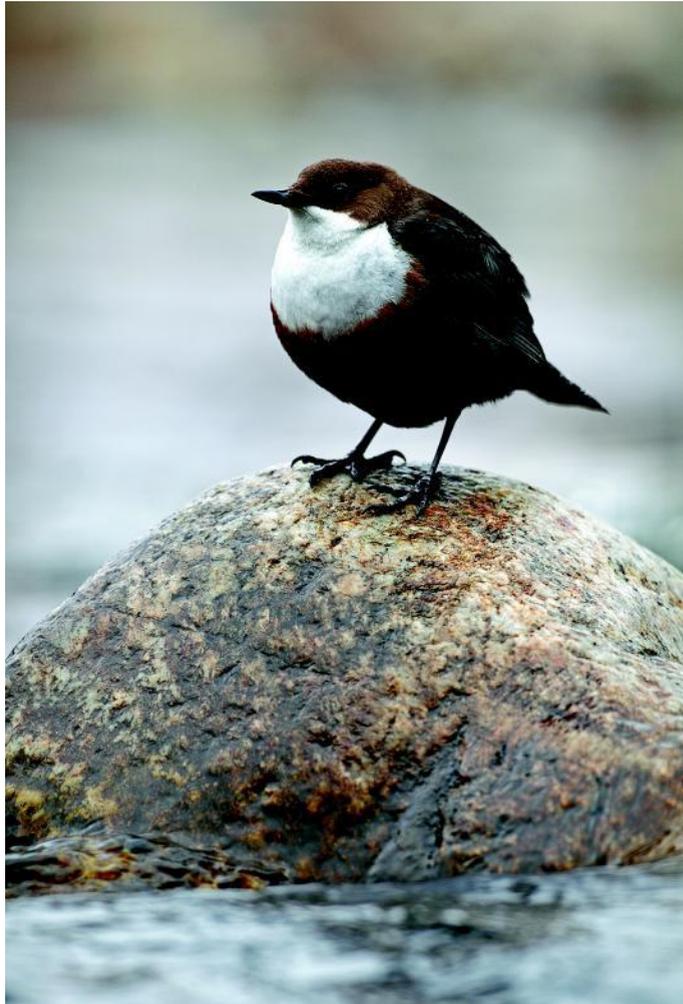
This leaflet has been produced by the Strathdon community.

Based on Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. © Crown Copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100040965.

Map and text © CNPA 2012. Photographs ©: Neil McIntyre, Dave Gowans & David Warnock / Tourism and Environment Consultancy.

The River Don

The River Don has always been at the heart of Strathdon. Fed by waters from the surrounding five glens it has both nourished and divided the strath presenting a challenge for travellers. Exploring the area you'll cross many bridges. Poldullie Bridge, one of the oldest, was built in 1715 and spans Poll Doille the Gaelic for 'pool of blackness'.



History

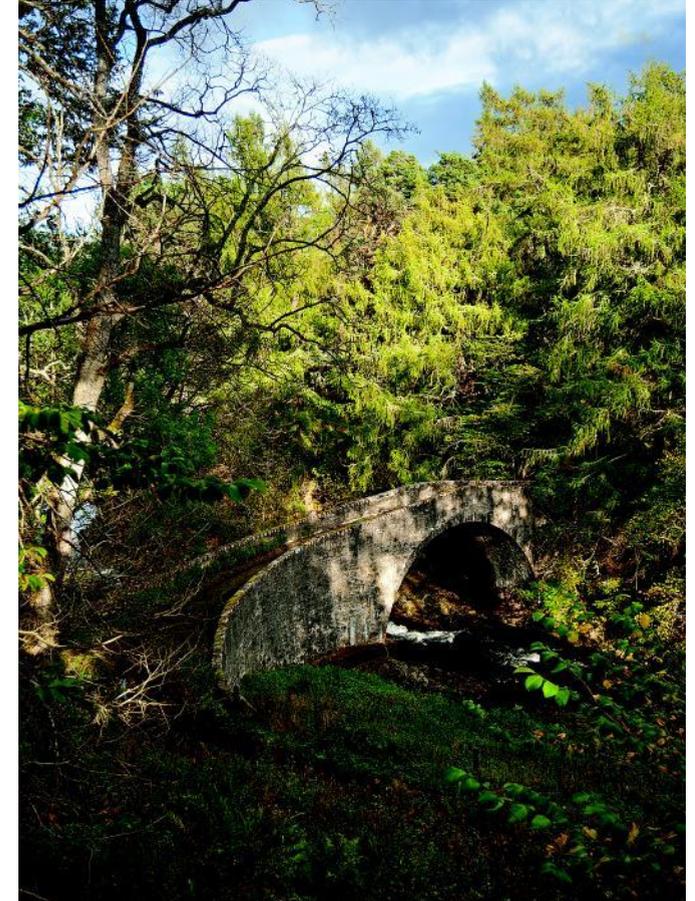
The Doune of Invernochty, near the car park at Bellabeg, is a step back in time. The Doune (fort) was the stronghold of the Mormaers of Mar in Norman times. The old Norman chapel which served the parish up to the 17th century is thought to have been within the old walls of the fort.



On the 4th Saturday of August the Men of Lonach march out with their pikes and Lochaber axes at the Highland Gathering and Games. One of the oldest games traditions in Scotland these local men of the Lonach Highland Friendly Society keep alive the Gaelic language and highland dress.

Farming and Forestry

The underlying geology of the area and relative richness of the soil makes the strath good for farming and forestry.



Forestry has a long tradition in the strath. The earliest planting dates from 1815, the year of the Battle of Waterloo. Trees are felled for timber but this can reveal stunning views, remember to obey any warning signs about forestry work.