



## Stage 3 : Port Bannatyne to Rhubodach (8.5 miles, 13.75km)

### Route Notes:

- If you are starting Stage 3 from the Port Bannatyne seafront, walk north to Kames Bay and turn left at the first road turning (beside the gateway into Kames Castle) along the A844 signed for Ettrick Bay.
- Soon you will meet, on your left, the end of the woodland path taken by walkers continuing from Stage 2 to Stage 3 without a break at Port Bannatyne.
- The pavement walk goes gently uphill. Bear right where the road divides and take the B875 signed for Ettrick Bay. You will now switch to an enclosed track that follows the line of the Tramway that once took holidaymakers from Rothesay to enjoy the sands and Tearoom at Ettrick Bay (which you can still do today with only a very slight diversion). Unsurprisingly, the Tramway section is very level and is easy walking.
- After about a mile, Ettrick Bay (and the Tearoom) will come into view. But just before it, at the fingerpost, turn right up the single track road heading inland. Keep straight on up this road, passing houses and farms on the way. Eventually you will reach a point where a road leads down to Achavoulaig Farm – but at this point you will continue straight ahead onto a rougher farm track leading to Glenmore Farm.
- Continue past the farm and through the gate. Your path is roughly straight ahead – but take care to look for the waymarkers. You will come to a dip and bend.
- Carry on for about half a mile – watch out for a fingerpost to guide you. You will come to an Interpretation ‘Swing’ Post that tells you about the site of a farmstead called Achavoulaig Butt.
- Next you will come to a bridge across a small burn and arrive at the ruins of another farmstead, Butt a’ Croit – another Interpretation ‘Swing’ Post tells you its history.
- Continuing onwards, you will reach a gate that leads down onto the open moorland. A small bridge lies directly ahead to take you across the Glenmore Burn. Follow the path towards the waymarker on the higher ground ahead of you.
- Continuing on this path you will soon reach a marker post and a ‘sliding’ gate that will take you into the forestry plantation.
- The path meets a forestry turning circle and track. Follow the forestry track northwards. After about one mile you will meet a turning to the right – ignore this and continue straight ahead.
- You will come to a junction signposted for the ‘Balnakailly Loop’. At this point you will have a choice of two options, **as shown on the Information Board at this Junction:**
  - [Option 1] The official West Island Way route to Rhubodach by gentle forestry

track and a short stretch of main road to finish.

- [Option 2] A more scenic but longer route To Rhubodach via the ruins of Balnakailly village and a native woodland walk – designated by Scottish Natural Heritage as a ‘Site of Special Scientific Interest’. (**WARNING: Allow at least an hour to cover the 2 extra miles**)

### [Option 1]

**The official Way route to Rhubodach by gentle forestry track and a short stretch of main road to finish.**

- Take the right hand track and continue on the official Way route on forest track.
- After about a mile and a half you will reach a junction. Turn left to walk the track down to the main A886 road and the short section to Car Park, Bus Stop and the Rhubodach ferry slipway and the **end of Stage 3**.

### [Option 2]

**The more scenic but longer route To Rhubodach via the ruins of Balnakailly village and a native woodland walk . (**WARNING: Allow an hour to cover the two extra miles**)**

- Take the left hand track (the Balnakailly Loop) an alternative and arguably more scenic route to Rhubodach. After a short distance you will arrive at a forestry vehicle turning circle. An information board and fingerpost will point the way down to the old Balnakailly settlement.
- At the forestry turning circle you may wish to break off the route and follow a signpost to visit the site of the World War 2 ‘decoy village’ and learn about its history (with the bonus of a comfortable seat on which to enjoy a break and a fine view of the Kyles of Bute, Loch Ruel and the Burnt Islands).  
Returning to the turning circle, follow the sign down a path and through the ruins of the old settlement. Leave the ruins at the lower end and take the path through a short stretch of dense conifers.
- Cross a low dyke and follow signs for the downward path through the native woodland of Balnakailly Wood, arriving at a bridge over Balnakailly Burn taking you towards the shore and a track to the **end of Stage 3 at Rhubodach**.