



For events on Loch Ness, the MCA Organised groups are very welcome on the canal but it is the responsibility of organisers to ensure that there is adequate supervision and that group leaders are suitably qualified. Safety arrangements. Their phone number is 01463 220577 (Inverness). 24 hour contacts : Aberdeen Coastguard 01224 592334 and Clyde Coastguard 01294 469213.

GROUPS, CHARITY CANOE MARATHONS & OTHER EVENTS

We class a group as any party using 6 or more canoes at one time. At these numbers, navigation of the man-made stretches of canal requires more co-ordination between paddlers. British Waterways staff and other boaters. To assist us with this co-ordination and to ensure that appropriate safety measures have been taken, we request group organisers to contact us well in advance of the planned visit, so that we can take relevant information. Our contact details are:

British Waterways
Seaport Marina,
Muirtown Wharf,
Inverness IV3 5LE,
email
enquiries.scotland@britishwaterways.co.uk
or phone 01463 725500.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- British Waterways: www.waterscape.com
- Scottish Canoe Association: www.canoescotland.com
- British Canoe Union: www.bcu.org.uk
- Visit Scotland: www.visitscotland.com
- Great Glen Way: www.greatglenway.com
- Scottish Youth Hostels Association: www.syha.org.uk
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency: www.mcgo.gov.uk

Canoe licences are issued subject to the following conditions:-

- You agree to comply with navigation rules, relevant Acts, Byelaws and regulations, and to follow any of our lawful directions, spoken or written (including signs).
- Canoeists on the Canal must have appropriate personal protective and safety equipment.
- All canoes must be suitable for the conditions of the canal and lochs.
- Canoeists should be prepared to give way to all other craft on the Canal by keeping to the sides.
- For safety reasons shooting of canal weirs is not permitted.
- Licences are issued subject to the Caledonian Canal Byelaws, a copy of which may be inspected at the Caledonian Canal Office.
- British Waterways makes every effort to provide a safe environment for all its users, including canoeists but you are expected to behave responsibly and will be responsible for any damage or difficulty caused by you or the canoe because of anything you have carelessly done or not done.
- We recommend you have insurance sufficient to cover your use of the Canal and associated Lochs.

Although every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, British Waterways cannot accept responsibility for any error or omission.

Photographs kindly supplied by Ghyll Head Outdoor Education Centre and Inverness Canoe Club.



Don't assume that the helmsman of the larger craft has seen you and it's worth bearing in mind that many of the cabin cruisers are holiday hire boats and may have inexperienced crews aboard. Keep to the side of the Canal when approaching bends or bridges - you never know what will be coming the other way!

OTHER CRAFT ON THE CANAL
As we mentioned in the section on a variety of craft including yachts, motor cruisers, large fishing boats and passenger trip boats. As a canoeist you are expected to give way to all other craft. Please move to the side of the canal because larger vessels need to stay in the middle where there is adequate depth for them. Don't assume that the helmsman of the larger craft has seen you and it's worth bearing in mind that many of the cabin cruisers are holiday hire boats and may have inexperienced crews aboard. Keep to the side of the Canal when approaching bends or bridges - you never know what will be coming the other way!

SWIMMING
Please do not swim in the canal. It's dangerous and very cold - you could get entangled in weed, be hit by a passing boat or be drawn into the powerful sluices at a lock gate. The result could be fatal.

BRITISH WATERWAYS SCOTLAND

CANOEING

THE CALEDONIAN CANAL



Welcome! The Caledonian Canal offers an exciting and varied sea-to-sea challenge for the long distance canoeist alongside many opportunities for attractive day paddles.

This beautiful waterway, which was designed nearly 200 years ago by Thomas Telford, is 60 miles long and follows the length of the Great Glen from Corpach near Fort William in the west, to Clachnaharry near Inverness in the East, passing through some spectacular Highland scenery.

Of the canal's 60 miles, only 20 are in man-made canal cutting whilst the remaining 40 miles are formed by open lochs : Loch Lochy at 12 miles, Loch Oich at 5 miles and Loch Ness a huge 23 miles in length. The waters of the lochs are always cold and in a strong south westerly wind waves up to 1.5 m (5 feet) high can develop, particularly on Loch Ness.

BRIDGES
All the bridges on the canal have adequate headroom for canoeists. Please check with the local lock keeper before passing under Muirtown Bridge as water levels and clearance may vary.

LOCHS
As large expanses of open water, Caledonian Canal, can be formidable paddling challenges and are not to be approached lightly. The waters of Lochs Ness and Lochy are rarely warmer than 4 °C, and strong winds or dense fog can make navigation inadvisable for larger boats, let alone canoes and kayaks. Canoeists should take preparation seriously by ensuring that they have adequate personal protective and safety equipment, heading the local Access Code

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

This means that it is necessary to portage around each of the locks and lock flights - it is advisable to transport the canoes. pack a stowable trolley to help than from sea to sea we recommend to Inverness or vice versa rather intending to travel from Fort William position of the locks. If you are portage around each of the locks and lock flights - it is advisable to transport the canoes.



AND WE'RE OFF!
To really enjoy the magnificent scenery of the Great Glen we recommend that you allow at least 4 days to make the complete passage. Bear in mind that it will take longer than you expect if you are canoeing into the wind. The prevailing wind is south westerly, but it can and does blow from the east at times! And lastly, before you set off, remember to cover any cuts or grazes to guard against the risk of water-borne diseases and maintain good levels of hygiene whilst on your trip.

ABOUT US
The Caledonian Canal is operated and maintained by British Waterways, a public corporation that cares for the 2,000 miles of canals and rivers in Scotland, England and Wales. Our role is to ensure that the inland waterways can be used for all to enjoy, now and for many years to come.

LICENCES
To assist us in our duties to our users, we ask all canoeists to collect a free of charge licence before using the canal. This means we can ensure that everyone has received a copy of this leaflet and understands the safety requirements for what is a less-than-ordinary waterway. Importantly it also allows us to track the number of canoeists using the canal, enabling us to target funding applications to provide improved facilities!

Licences can be obtained from the main canal office: British Waterways, Seaport Marina, Muirtown Wharf, Inverness, IV3 5LE Telephone : 01463 725500, or

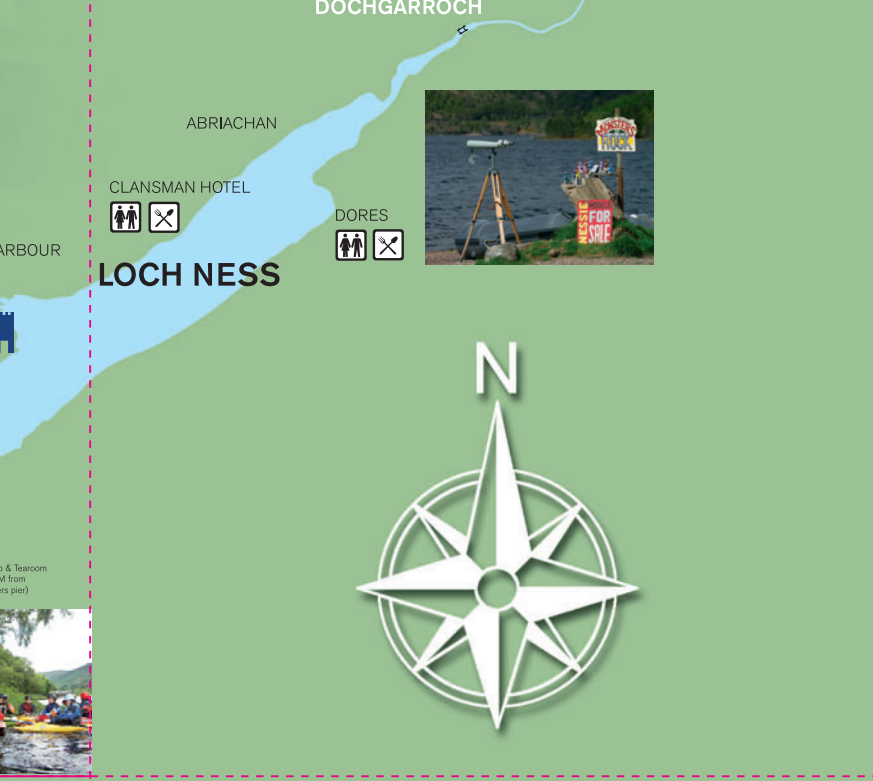
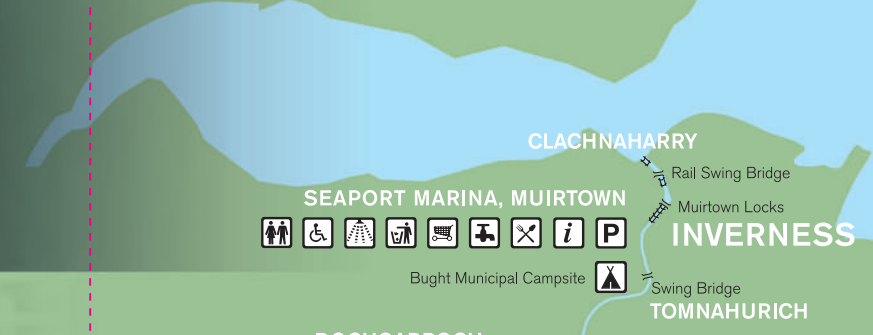
from either of the sea locks. Along with your licence, you will also receive a Skipper's Guide chart, which has details of all the locks and bridges and where to find our toilet / showerblocks and local shops, pubs, chandleries etc You'll also be given a key for accessing our toilet / shower blocks. This key should be returned at the end of your visit. Alternatively, if you would like to keep a key permanently, one can be purchased for £7.00, and this includes a floating keyring.

Finally, we prefer canoeists to call at one of the sea locks or speak to one of our lock keepers before 'hitting the water' so that we can make other boaters aware that they will meet paddlers on their transit through the Glen. Other canal users include novice boaters in hire craft and skippers of large sea-going vessels and it can be very useful to remind them that canoeists are around!

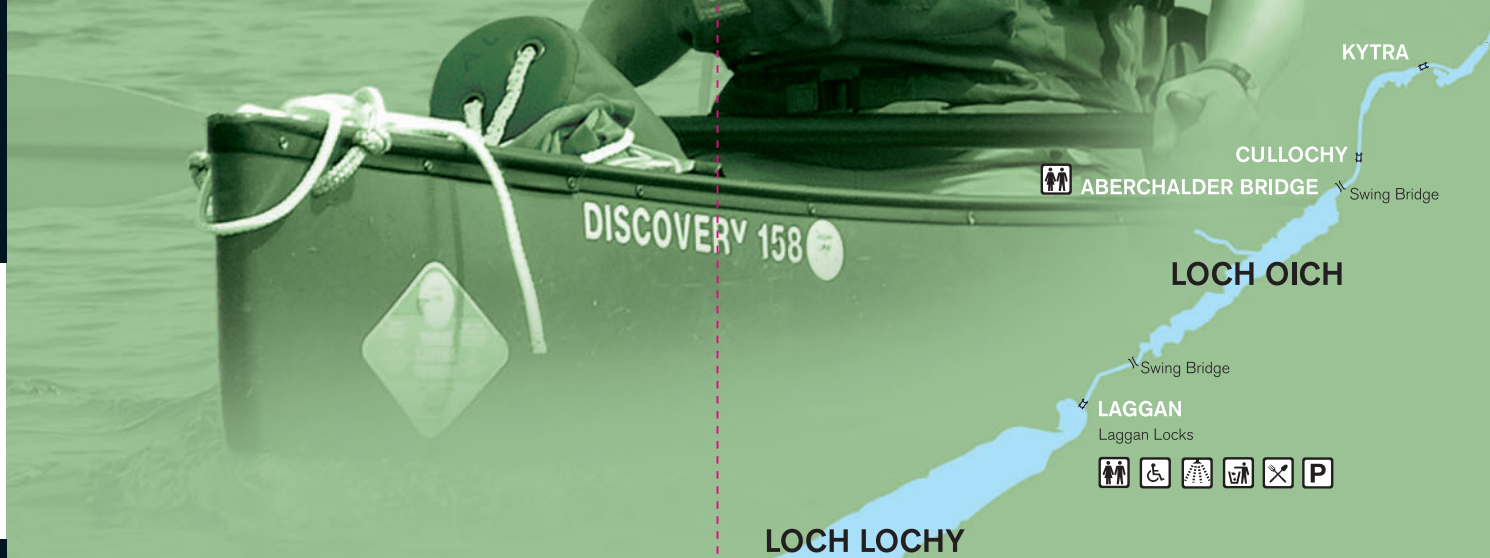
THE CALEDONIAN CANAL

ACCOMMODATION AND CAMPING

There are SYHA Youth Hostels at Loch Lochy and Loch Ness as well as various camping or caravan sites, hotels and British Waterways toilet / shower blocks along the route. Further information about accommodation and facilities along the Great Glen can be found on the Great Glen Way website www.greatglenway.com or by visiting the VisitScotland website at www.visitscotland.com



FORT AUGUSTUS
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, Info, P]



LAGGAN
 Laggan Locks
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, P]



Letterfinlay Lodge - bar meals & showers - 01397 712622
 Corriegour Lodge - "Taste of Scotland" - 01397 712685



Many canoeists choose the option of a fully 'outdoors' experience on their visit to the canal and choose to 'wild' camp overnight along the waterway. We welcome responsible wild camping and have made some suggestions for suitable sites, below:

MOY BRIDGE West Side
 [Icons: People]
 April - October; During canal opening hours

GAIRLOCHY East of lock keeper's cabin, by picnic area
 [Icons: Toilet, Shower, People, Wheelchair, Boat, X]
 Toilets & showers due to open late Summer '07

LAGGAN LOCKS South shore
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, P]

ABERCHALDER BRIDGE South side
 [Icons: People]
 Apr-Oct; During canal opening hrs

KYTRA LOCK South side
 No facilities

FORT AUGUSTUS Top lock; next to BW toilet shower block
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, Info, P]

FORT AUGUSTUS Bottom reach by Inverloch Pier
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, Info, P]

FORT AUGUSTUS Camp Site (commercial)
 T: 01320 366618
 Facilities as advertised

INVERNESS Camp Site (commercial)
 T: 01463 236920
 Facilities as advertised

SEAPORT MARINA Outside marina fences
 [Icons: People, Wheelchair, Shower, Toilet, Boat, X, Info, P]

