



Argyll Sea Kayak Trail  
Slighe Curcachan Earra-Ghàidheil

# Helensburgh

## ADDITIONAL TRAIL ROUTES & DEVIATIONS

Using Helensburgh as a starting point allows for exploration of Gare Loch, Loch Long and Holy Loch as additions to this section of the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail. Whilst Holy Loch provides a short addition, Gare Loch would give an additional 20km round trip if going to the head of the loch. Loch Long is an expedition in itself, as a round trip is over 50km, and Loch Goil is only accessible after paddling up most of Loch Long.

A shorter, more direct option, is to head to Kempock Point in Gourock Bay, then directly across to the access point in the West Bay of Dunoon. This reduces the overall section distance to 14km, but does involve longer open water crossings and is therefore only suitable for those with relevant experience.

The River Clyde is accessible to the south-east, with Dumbarton Castle 14km away, and Erskine Bridge 20km away.

The wreck of the Captayannis, commonly known as 'the Sugar Boat', lies directly between Helensburgh and Greenock, so easily visited before your onward journey.

## HAZARDS

Numerous ferry routes are encountered, with terminals at Helensburgh, Kilcreggan, Hunter's Quay, Dunoon and Gourock to be negotiated – please exercise caution at all times, as some ferry routes have frequent sailings. The pier at Helensburgh is used on an occasional basis, so please be mindful of this on approach.

Holy Loch is an area used extensively by sailing vessels, with both a marina and berthing's found in the vicinity.

Faslane in Gair Loch is an operational Naval Base.

## HELENSBURGH TO DUNOON 16km / 9Nm

56°00.071'N 4°44.219'W to 55°56.534'N 4°56.002'W

Grid Reference 294821 to 169760

OS Landranger Map 56 & 63

OS Explorer Map 347 & 363

## DESCRIPTION OF ROUTE

The section starting from Helensburgh follows the Firth of Clyde down to Dunoon.

From the access slipway paddle around the pier, and when clear to do so, paddle across the mouth of Gare Loch towards Perch Rock and Culwatty Bay. A shorter crossing is possible by heading into Gare Loch and crossing from Cairndhu Point to Castle Point.

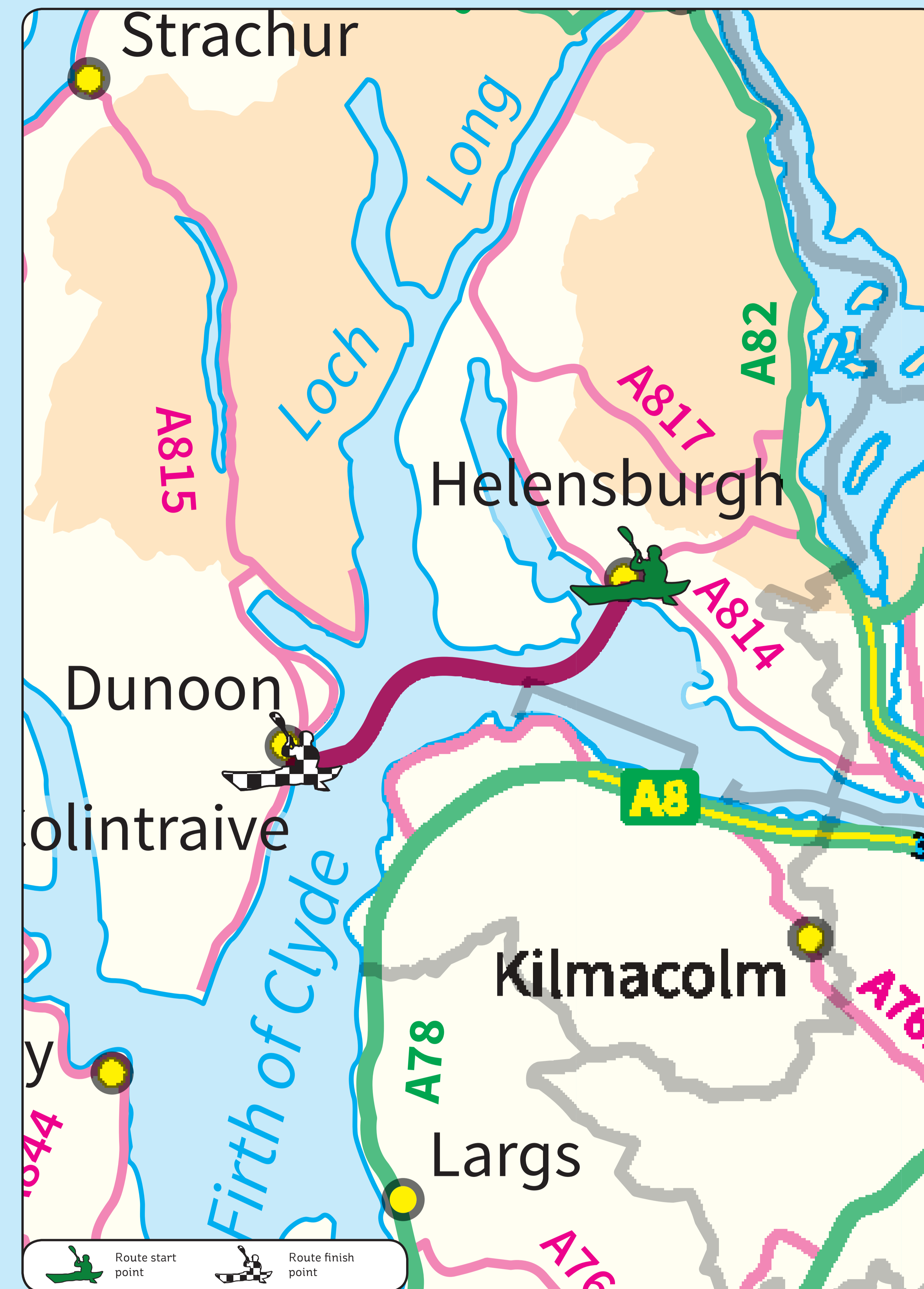
Follow the coastline around to Rosneath Point, and then Portkil Point, passing Meikloss Bay and Portkil Bay.

As you approach the eastern end of Kilcreggan, be aware of the ferry terminal and the potential for ferry movements. The coastline around Kilcreggan is a mixture of rocks and stones, but egress is possible for a rest stop.

Once you arrive at Barons Point in Cove, you will need to paddle across the mouth of Loch Long to Strone. From here, a short paddle around Strone Point into Holy Loch brings you to an old pier, and a gently sloping single beach providing a good stopping point.

Next, paddle across Holy Loch. Some may wish to paddle further into the Loch, possibly crossing between Graham's Point and Lazaretto Point, others may head to the west of the ferry terminal at Hunter's Quay. Once safely navigated past the terminal, continue following the coastline south, passing the East Bay of Dunoon, and the Dunoon Ferry Terminal.

When entering the West Bay, aim for the first slipway, which marks the access point. There are various loactions nearby where you can secure your kayak.



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## TIDAL DIFFERENCES

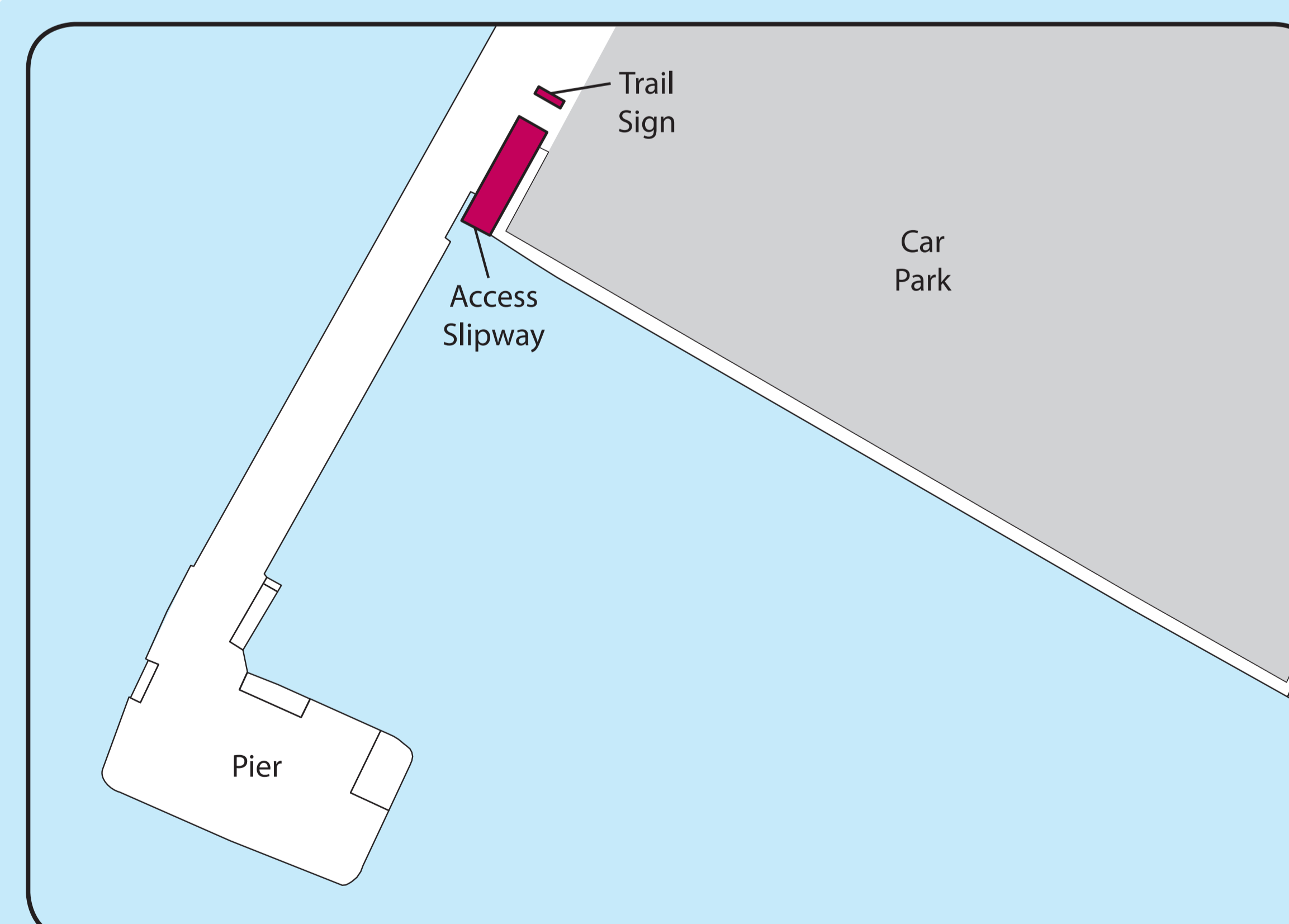
### HIGH WATER TIMES

Helensburgh & Gareloch – Same as Greenock

**Rhu Marina**  
High water -0007 HW Greenock  
Low water -0007 HW Greenock

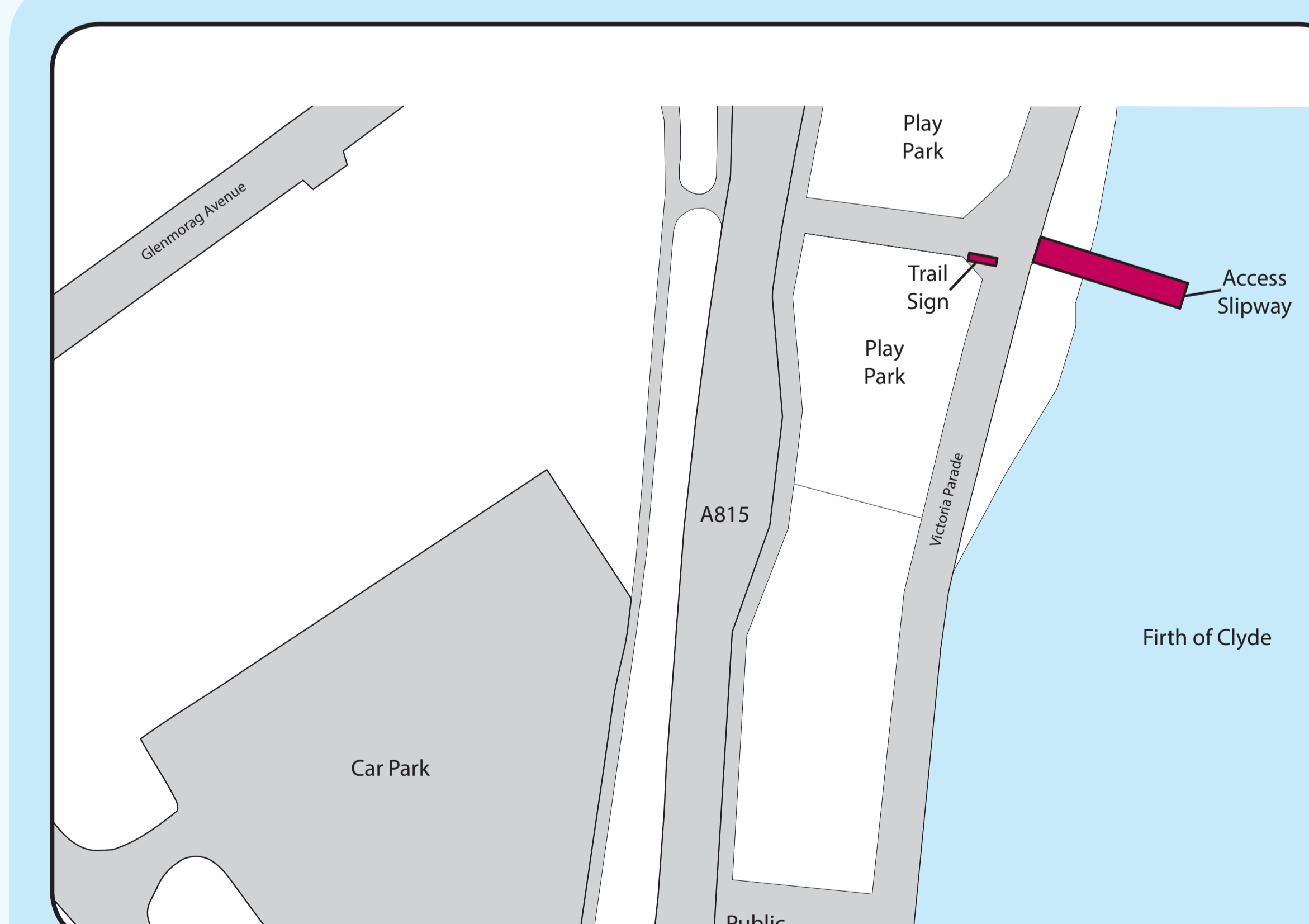
**Rosneath & Arrochar**  
High water -0005 HW Greenock  
Low Water -0005 LW Greenock

**Lochgoilhead**  
High Water +0005 HW Greenock  
Low Water -0005 LW Greenock



## Helensburgh LOCAL FACILITIES

- Accommodation
- Bank/Cash Point
- Food & Drink
- Public Toilets
- Shops & Supermarkets
- Showers (available for a fee in swimming pool)
- Tourist Information



## Dunoon LOCAL FACILITIES

- Accommodation
- Bank/Cash Point
- Food & Drink
- Public Toilets
- Shops & Supermarkets
- Tourist Information

## PARKING

Parking is available in Helensburgh and Dunoon in the public parking areas next to the access points.

## LITTER

Paddlers visiting any of the access points on the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail are asked to follow the Leave No Trace principle. Please use litter bins where provided, and remove all rubbish and dispose of responsibly where not.

## SAILING

The Argyll Sea Kayak Trail follows the Argyll coastline, used extensively by sailing vessels. Please be mindful of other water users at all times, and act responsibly.

## Please follow the seven Leave No Trace principles

- 1 Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2 Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- 3 Dispose of Waste Properly
- 4 Leave What You Find
- 5 Minimize Campfire Impacts
- 6 Respect Wildlife
- 7 Be Considerate of Other Visitors

The member-driven Leave No Trace Centre for Outdoor Ethics teaches people how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. This copyrighted information has been reprinted with permission from the Leave No Trace Centre for Outdoor Ethics:

[www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org)

## HM Coastguard

Maritime & Coastguard Agency - [www.dft.gov.uk/mca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca)

Stornoway 01851 706796

**Operational Area:** Cape Wrath to Ardferrn (Mainland) including South to and including Isle of Mull, Luing and Scarba. Barra Head to Butt of Lewis and St Kilda

Belfast 02891 463933

**Operational Area:** Mull of Galloway to Ardferrn, including the Islands (North to and including Jura and Colonsay)

## Useful organisations and contact details

Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code - [www.marinecode.org](http://www.marinecode.org)  
Providing guidelines and advice when watching wildlife in Scotland.

### THE THREE PRINCIPLES

- 1 **Be Aware** by learning as much as you can about the animals
- 2 **Take Responsibility** for you actions
- 3 **Have Respect** for other people, wildlife and the environment

Marine Conservation Society, the UK charity for the protection of our seas, shores and wildlife

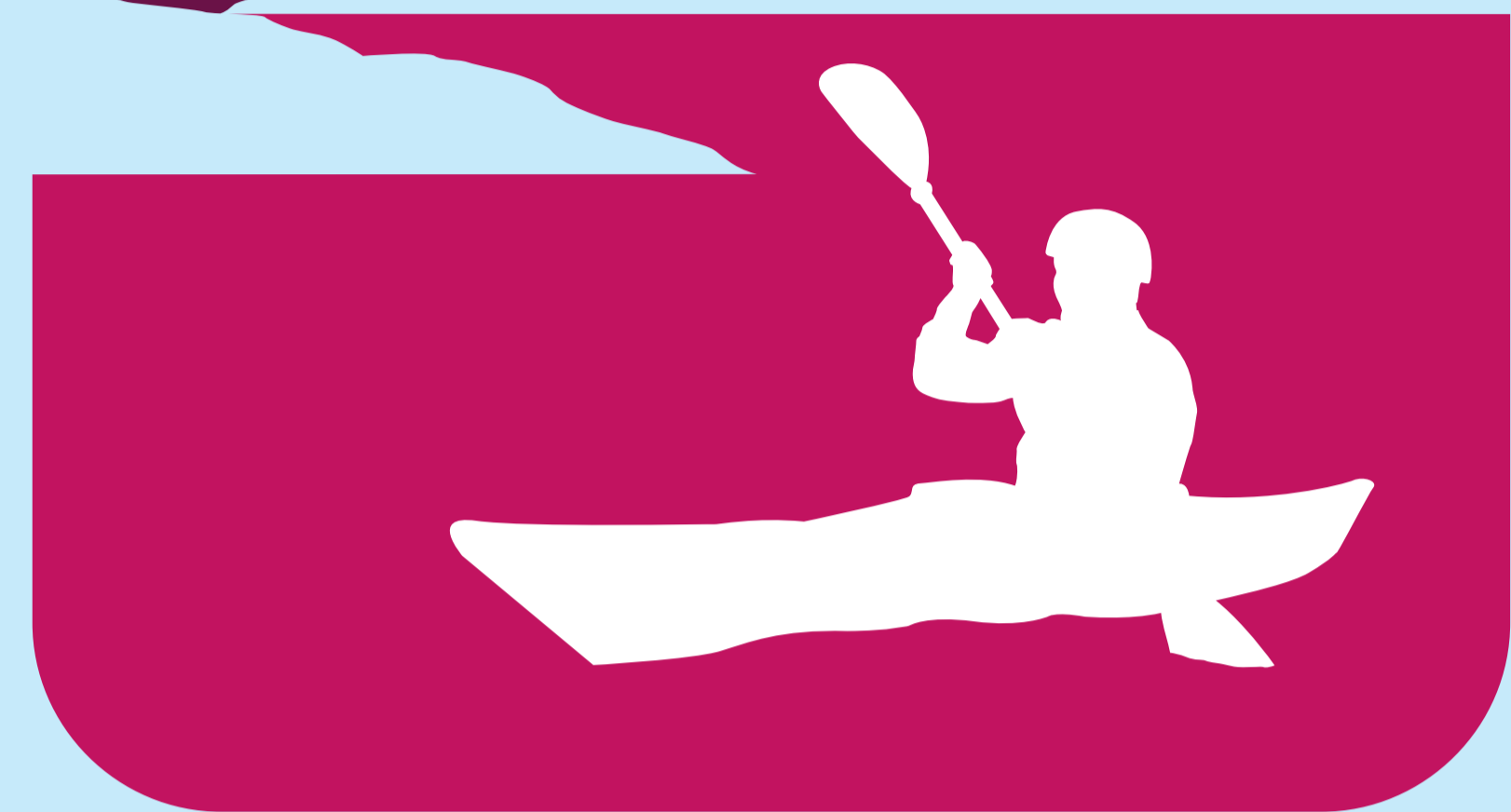
[www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org)

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, pollution hotline 0800 80 70 60

[www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)



# Argyll Sea Kayak Trail



# Helensburgh

Argyll Sea Kayak Trail - Slighe Curcachan Earra-Ghàidheil

This access site is part of the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail.

The 150km trail runs between Ganavan and Helensburgh, incorporating ten access points and the Crinan Canal. It has been provided for all people to enjoy the waters around Argyll, whether for a day of fun, or a multi-day expedition. If you wish to make a comment about any aspect of the trail, please use the contact us page on [www.paddleargyll.org.uk](http://www.paddleargyll.org.uk). You will also find information about other associated trails on the web site.

The table below details the routes, their distances, and potential time required to complete them based on personal ability and fitness levels. Times provided are based on totally flat conditions, and do not take into account tidal or weather conditions encountered, which can greatly affect them.

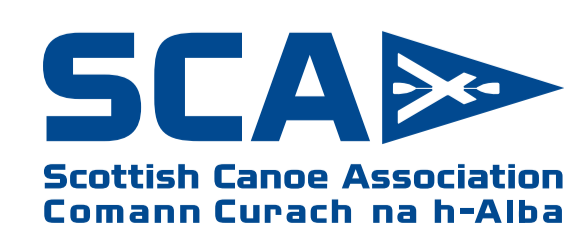
Route	Distance	Beginners	Intermediate	Advanced
Ganavan/Ellenabeich	21km	7hrs	5 hrs 15 mins	3 hrs 30 mins
Ellenabeich/Arduaine	11km	3 hrs 40 mins	2 hrs 50 mins	1 hr 50 mins
Arduaine/Crinan	19 km	6 hrs 20 mins	4 hrs 15 mins	3 hrs 10 mins
Crinan/Ardrishaig	13 km	4 hrs 20 mins	2 hrs 50 mins	2 hrs 10 mins
Ardrishaig/Tarbert	19 km	6 hrs 20 mins	4 hrs 15 mins	3 hrs 10 mins
Tarbert/North Bute	29 km	9 hrs 40 mins	6 hrs 25 mins	4 hrs 50 mins
North Bute/Toward	13 km	4 hrs 20 mins	2 hrs 50 mins	2 hrs 10 mins
Toward/Dunoon	13 km	4 hrs 20 mins	2 hrs 50 mins	2 hrs 10 mins
Dunoon/Helensburgh	16 km	5 hrs 20 mins	3 hrs 30 mins	2 hrs 40 mins
Total	154 km	51 hrs 20 mins	35hrs	25hrs 40 mins

## Safety

This site is provided as a coastal access point on the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail. Persons use this access point, and the trail, entirely at their own risk. The providers of this access point shall not be liable for any damage or injury occasioned to persons or their property by virtue of their use of this access point.

Please ensure that you have researched the sections of the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail that you are intending to paddle, including tide and weather information. Always undertake your own risk assessment based on the conditions before you. Wear a buoyancy aid at all times, paddle within your limits, let someone know where you are going and what time you are likely to return, and have another option in case of un-expected conditions. Anyone new to the sport, or indeed a beginner, is advised to seek proper instruction from a paddlesport club or a commercial paddlesport provider.

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Paddle Argyll is a web-based resource designed to highlight the world class paddling opportunities that exist within the region of Argyll & Bute. Providing details of paddling trails and routes, on lochs, rivers and the sea, as well as key information about paddlesports in general. This will allow paddlers, whether new or experienced, to be introduced to all that is available to them on the water.



Pleadhagaich Earra-Ghàidheil - [www.paddleargyll.org.uk](http://www.paddleargyll.org.uk)

THIS PROJECT WAS PART-FINANCED BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ARGYLL AND THE ISLANDS LEADER 2007-2013 Programme.

Working in Partnership with Scottish Canals. [www.scottishcanals.co.uk](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk)

For more information about paddlesports in Scotland. [www.canoescotland.org](http://www.canoescotland.org)