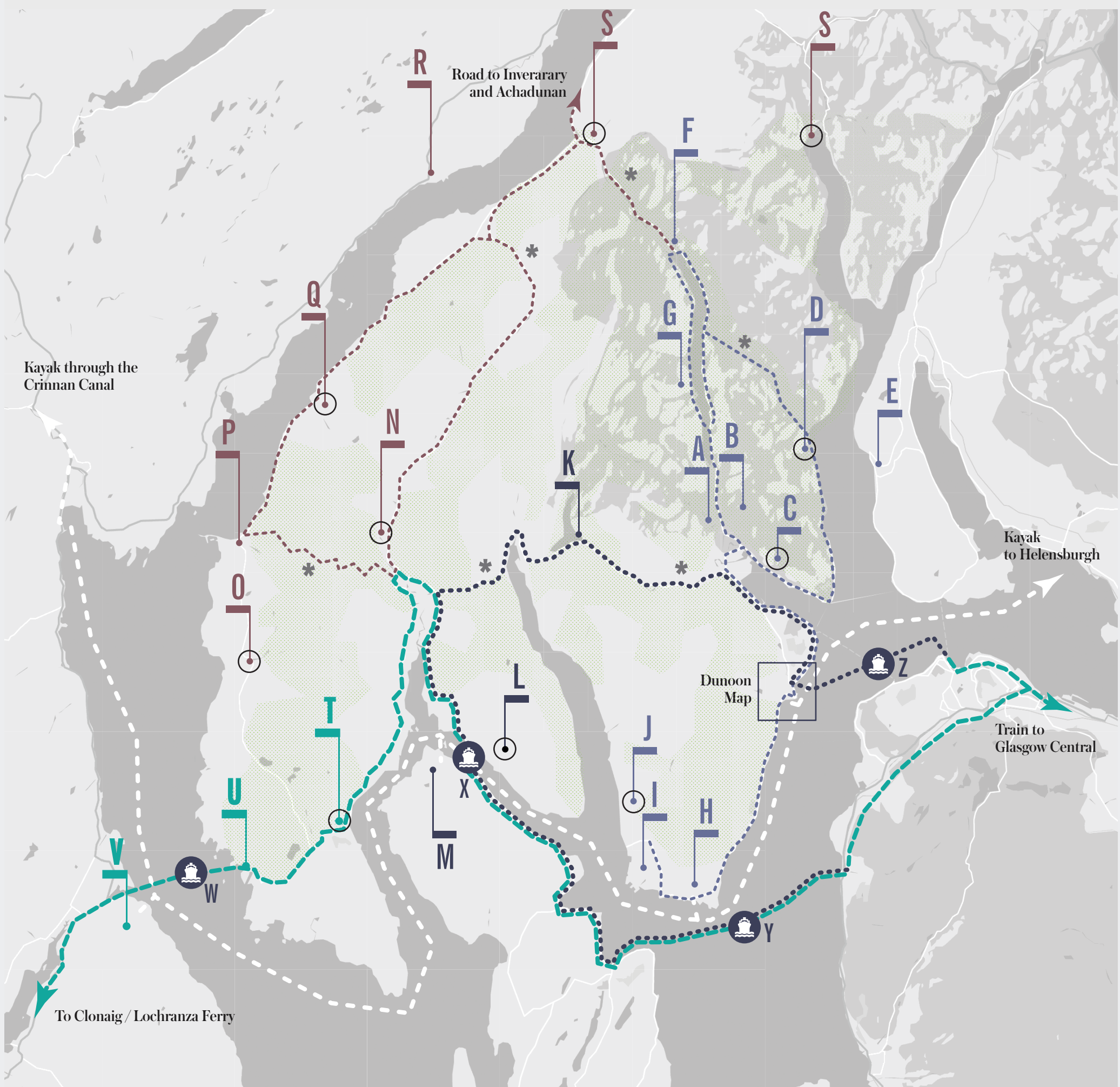


PENINSULA EXPEDITION: COWAL

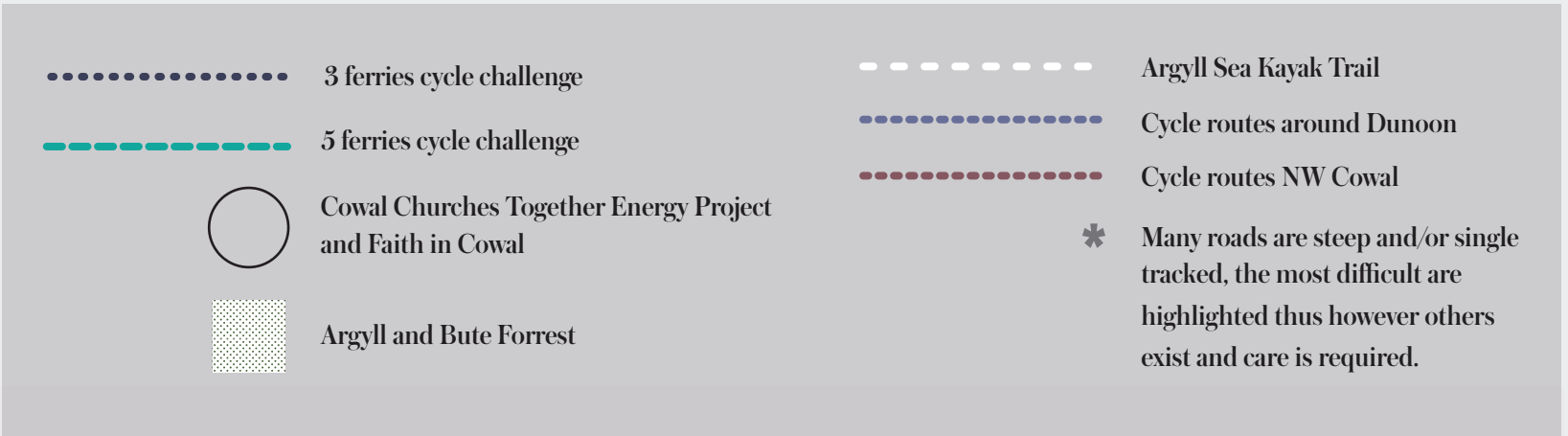
Sustainable, Unsustainable and Historic walks and cycling in Cowal



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150 YEARS



PENINSULA EXPEDITION: COWAL

Sustainable, Unsustainable and Historic walks and cycling in Cowal



Locations

North Dunoon Cycle

- A - Benmore Botanic Gardens
- B - Puck's Glen
- C - Kilmun Mausoleum, Chapel, Arboreum and Sustainable Housing
- D - Glenfinart Walled Garden, Ardentinn
- E - RNAD Coulport (view of)
- F - Glenbranter Forestry Centre
- G - Loch Eck Mountain Bike Loop

South Dunoon Cycle

- H - Toward
- I - Ardyne Point
- J - Knockdow (Inverchaolain)

3 Ferries Cycle

- K - Striven Hydro Power Station (Loch Tarsan)
- L - Colintrave
- M - North Bute Kayak Stop

Northern Loop

- N - Glendaruel (Kilmodan)
- O - Killfinan Church
- P - Otter Ferry
- Q - Inver Cottage
- R - Furnace
- S - Strachur / Lochgoilhead

5 Ferries Cycle

- T - Kyles Parish Church
- U - Portavardie
- V - Tarbet Kayak Station

Ferries

- W - Portavadie (Cowal) to Tarbet (Kintyre)
- X - Colintrive (Cowal) to Rhubodach (Bute)
- Y - Rothesay (Bute) to Wemyss Bay
- Z - Dunoon (Cowal) to Gourrock

Argyll Mausoleum - When Sir Duncan Campbell died the tradition of burying Campbell Clan chiefs and the Dukes of Argyll at Kilmun commenced, there are now a total of twenty generations buried over a period of 500 years. The current mausoleum was originally built in the 1790s with its slate roof replaced with a large cast iron dome at a later date. The mausoleum was completely refur-bished in the late 1890s by the Marquis of Lorne or John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland Campbell, 9th Duke of Argyll. Recently the mausoleum has again been refurbished incorporating a visitors centre where the general public can discover more about the mausoleums fascinating history. Local plebeian bodies were occasionally buried in the adjacent graveyard.

Arboretum - Part of the Argyll Forrest Park and home to over 150 tree species from around the world, each are planted in a separate grove to test their worth as timber producers. This includes, ornamental maples, Japanese cedars, Him-alayan spruces, redwoods, sequoias and monkey puzzles.

Sustainable Housing - Fyne Initiatives purchased the site from the Forestry Commission under the National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS) whereby housing groups could buy forestry commission land in return for enhanced community /environmental benefits. Fyne Initiatives, a subsidiary of Fyne Homes, built a mix of 2 and 3 bed homes for shared equity. All the houses are super insulated, clad with Scottish larch, have their own log burner, covered log store in the gar-den and superb views over the Holy Loch.The project was designed by CP Ar-chitects from Oban and the contractor was John Brown (Strone).

D GLENFINART WALLED GARDEN

Ardentinn, PA23 8TS

Established in 1845 the B listed site formed the kitchen garden for the Glen-finart Estate, it was purchased in 2012 by the Ardentinn Community Trust. Glenfinart House was originally within the Estate of the Earls Dunsmore before being passed to the Douglas family. It burned down in 1968 and was previously used as a holiday centre notably and is now used as a caravan park where only the tower remains.

The garden is a hidden treasure run by local volunteers from the Ardentinn Community Trust to provide leisure, arts and crafts possibilities as well as pro-ducing a variety of organic vegetables and fruit. For more information visit http://ardentinn.org/category/trust_walled_garden/ to discover more about this vibrant community. Accessible by bus from Dunoon.

E RNAD (ROYAL NAVY ARMAMENTS DEPOT) COULPORT

Loch Long, G84 0PD

Viewed from Ardentinn across Lock Long, Coulport was a holiday retreat for wealthy Glaswegians and the original site of the Kibble palace now relocated to Glasgow Botanic Gardens. Since the Nassau Agreement of 1962 it has been an integral part of the Polaris and Trident Works Programme centred around Faslane. Coulport serves as the storage and loading facility for the nuclear war-heads, incorporates up to 16 reinforced concrete bunkers and the Explosive Floating Handling Jetty is one of the worlds largest floating concrete structures.

F GLENBRANTER FORESTRY CENTRE

North Loch Eck on the A817 (accessible by bus from Dunoon), PA27 8DJ

The first trees of the Argyll Forrest Park were planted here in the 1920s on ground leased to the Forestry Commission by the entertainer Harry Lauder a local resident whose son was killed in action during WW1, a memorial statue exists within the grounds. The centre includes walks to waterfalls, the Allt Robuic Gorge and through native oak, birch & hazel woodlands. Glenbranter village was built for the forrest workers and the history is explained in the infor-mation room.

During the 20th century our area of woodland was 5% of Britain and falling. It is now 12% and rising. For more information on how the Forestry Commission are tackling sustainability please refer to <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/sustainableforestry>

G LOCH ECK MOUNTAIN BIKE LOOP

North Loch Eck on the A817 (accessible by bus from Dunoon), PA27 8DJ

Commencing at Glenbranter Forestry Centre the loop (generally completed counter clockwise) although not technically challenging is a demanding ride through remote terrain, make sure your equipment is in full working order. The route loops along the tranquil

A BENMORE BOTANIC GARDENS

Top of Holy Loch, PA23 8QU
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Formally known as Younger Botanic Garden after the brewing family, Benmore Botanic Garden is located at the foot of Beinn Mhor at the head of the Holy Loch. It is a magnificent mountainside garden surrounded by beautiful scenery and contains a number of interesting buildings including the B listed Fernery and Pucks Hut which originally sat in Pucks Glen and was designed by Robin Lorimer. The plant collection is world famous including numerous rhododen-drons and an avenue of 150 year old giant redwoods.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh considers the environment at the heart of their activities in the world of plants and minimise the impacts on the environment. For more information on how they manage energy and waste refer to <https://www.rbge.org.uk/collections/living-collection/sustainability-at-the-gardens/>

B PUCKS GLEN

Top of Holy Loch, PA23 8QT
Younger Family

The most popular short walk in the region, Pucks Glen is located across from Benmore Gardens on the A815 and is accessible by bus from Dunoon. There are a variety of walks however the red route is the most popular. The path up Pucks Glen was built by the Younger brewing family and care is required when using it as it follows many a water fall, tumbled down steps and criss crossing bridges through a dense, darkened forrest. Approx 1.5 miles long it will take 1 - 1.5 hours to complete.

C KILMUN MAUSOLEUM, KILMUN PARISH CHURCH, ARBORETUM AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Kilmun, Argyll, PA23 8SE

Kilmun is a very special place boasting a number of fascinating and important places of interest. 6 miles North of Dunoon on the banks of the Holy Loch, a place of worship for over 1400 years and home to St Fintan Munnu in the 6th Century.

St Munn's Church (Kilmun Parish Church) - The Irish St Munn, friend of St Co-lumba, settled in the shelter of what was to become the Holy Loch towards the end of the 6th Century sincee when the site has been a place of worship for 1400 years. In 1442 Sir Duncan Campbell endowed Kilmun Parish Church as a collegiate church or self governing body. It was closely linked with Paisley Ab-bey and St Munn was adopted as the patron saint of the Clan Campbell.

The church which can be seen today was built in 1841 by Thomas Burns after the collegiate church was demolished. The church is formed in a T shaped plan built of snecked, squared sandstone rubble with ashlar dressings. The interior is lit by single lancet windows and contains a number of stained glass windows by Alfred Webster and then his student Stephen Adam.

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western shore of Loch Eck to Benmore Botanical Gardens and returns via a series of markers along forrest tracks above the Eastern side of Loch Eck and the A 815. It incorporates beaches, forests and the Coire Ealt hydro scheme. The Coire Ealt Hydro Project is a 0.5MW scheme and the second of a number of hydro projects to be developed by Gilkes Energy on FCS (Forestry Commission Scotland) property. Commissioned in July 2015, the project is run by a Twin Jet Pelton Turbine producing a 500kW output.

Download Loch Eck Loop Card at https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/rr-content/uploads/2016/07/Loch_Eck_loop.pdf

TOWARD

Toward, Argyll PA23 7UD

The extreme western point of the mainland Highland Boundary Fault, Toward is best known for it's Lighthouse designed in 1812 by Robert Stevenson now converted to a private home.

It also sits in close proximity to Castle Toward built in 1822 to replace the medi-eval home of the Lamont Clan. Castle Toward underwent many various uses and owners including a clutch of C list nobilities, HMS Brontosaurus the training ground for D-Day amphibious landings, as a film location for the children's TV show Raven and gathering point for the bouncing bomb trials held on Loch Striven. However most importantly for Glaswegians it was purchased by their Corporation in 1948 and used as a residential school for children recovering from illness or living in deprived home conditions. It then became available for residential education for children from all Glasgow Primary Schools and operated for 50 years as an outdoor education centre for children. Unfortunately through local authority reorganisation it changed hands over to Argyll and Bute Council from which it has never recovered. It underwent a feasibility study in 2016 to consider a right to buy which although concluded, it's outcome is ongoing.

More information at <http://www.savecastletoward.com/single-post/2013/01/24/SCCDC-Right-to-Buy-Castle-Toward-Estate-approved>

Toward is also a stop off point for the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail and home to the Toward Sailing Club which incorporates kayaking please refer to <http://www.towardsc.org.uk/kayaking-section/>

ARDYNE POINT

Ardyne, Argyll PA23 7UD

Intended as a construction hub for multiple oil platforms, the docks and yards managed a total of three in its lifetime. A massive site operational between 1974 to 1978 mainly in the hands of construction giant McAlpine focused on concrete gravity platforms for the North Sea Brent, Cormorant and Frigg fields. This included the Cormorant Alpha which was the largest floating object created by man at that time, please decide yourself on it's ecological credentials.

Reasons for closure were blamed on poor labour relations and the recruited workers from the dying shipyards of the Clyde, more likely is that concrete gravity platforms ultimately proved uneconomic compared to their steel rivals and the yard was quickly abandoned. Although required by Argyll and Bute Council on closure to reinstate the yard back to it's original state, McAlpine have over the years made a succession of failed planning attempts to redevelop the site. More recently permission was granted to Ardyne Estate for a fish processing plant which never happened, one day perhaps it will.

INVERCHAOLAIN CHURCH (NEAR KNOCKDOW)

Knockdow, Argyll PA23 7UD

Dedicated to St Bride the church is the fourth version constructed since 1745 and is located in a remote and peaceful hamlet on the shore of Loch Striven. The Church formed part of the Cowal Churches Together Energy Study carried out by Wham Architecture and linked to Eco Congregation Scotland.

Christianity in Cowal dates back to the 6th century and the activity of St. Columba, St. Finan and St. Munn, today there are 19 active churches across the peninsula. The Cowal Churches Together Energy Study has managed to improve the sustainability of a number of these churches considering the use of renewables to keep energy costs at bearable levels. At the time of writing however Inverchaolain Church is up for sale being recently only used for Christmas and Easter services by the local congregation. It is always with sadness to see these delightful buildings moving on and we hope that a sympathetic use is found in the future.

STRIVEN HYDRO POWER STATION (LOCH TARSAN)

Striven, Argyll PA23 7UD
Reginald Fairlie

Officially known as the Cowal Hydro-Electric Power Scheme, it is one of the first generating schemes, developed by the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board under Tom Johnston (1881 - 1965), to become operational, opened in 1951 and has a capacity of 8MW. The scheme is centred around Loch Tarsan which collects water from streams and aqueducts mainly from the Corrachaive Glen to form the main reservoir. Water is then tunnelled and piped to Striven Power Station at the head of Loch Striven, the work of architect Reginald Fairlie (1883 - 1952), who was also responsible for the cottages for the staff. With a steeply pitched roof and large regular glazing pattern the building echoes vernacular forms and has been designed to fit into the landscape.

The work of Tom Johnson and their vision of the 'power from the glens' has been immortalised in Emma Wood's book *The Hydro Boys* published by Luath Press ISBN 1-84282-047-8.

COLINTRAVE CHURCH

Colintrave, PA22 3AS
Wham Architecture

Collintrive Church sits above the shores of the Kyles of Bute and is one of the four churches selected through the Cowal Churches Together Energy Initiative for improvement. It is a simple understated rectangular plan church dating from 1840 siting and while unlisted, is an important local landmark from both land and sea. The church had suffered from various issues relating to dampness not helped by the use of ineffective electric storage heaters. An air to air heat pump system was installed with three floor mounted fan outlets (designed to minimise disruption to interior finishes) connected to a double external unit mounted on the wall of the church. Since the system has been installed the minister has reported that the church has been warm for the first time he can remember. The Initiative is a great example of how renewable energy can help ensure longevity to what are beautiful and important cultural buildings.

The Caledonian MacBrayne ferry service across the Kyles of Bute to Rubidoch on the Isle of Bute runs from Colintrave. Refer to www.calmac.co.uk for more information.

NORTH BUTE KAYAK STOP

Isle of Bute

Lying within Bute Community Forrest the stop off point is for kayakers using the Argyll Kayak Trail which. The trail was provided by Argyll and Bute Council and comprises a route of 150km which starts in Canavan Sands and finishes in Helensburgh. For more information please refer to the Paddle Argyll Website as per the link below for further information <http://www.paddleargyll.org.uk>

The kayak stop is situated at the North end of the forest and comprises a shelter, composting toilet and barbecue area as well as space for a few tents. The shelter and toilet are clad with timber from the forest. There are 9 launch points along the trail (including Toward) and allows experienced paddlers and beginners alike to get into the water.

KILMODAN KIRK

Glendauruel, PA22 3AS
Wham Architecture

A Georgian T-plan building dating from 1783, Kilmodan Kirk was also selected through the Cowal Churches Together Energy Initiative for improvement. The church is B listed and sits within a scheduled graveyard with a small piended burial enclosure housing the Kilmodan Carved Stones which date from the 14th and 15th centuries. The present church replaces an earlier rectangular church of circa 1610 with evidence of settlement since the time of St. Columba (within close proximity to the site of St. Modan's Chapel). The layout is typical of a post reformation Scottish kirk with the pulpit on the well-lit south facing wall along with a three-sided gallery. The church was previously heated by aging electric storage and portable gas heaters which struggled to cope in the winter months. The gas heaters also produced a large volume of condensation which was damaging the internal fabric of the church. A new air to air heat pump system was installed with five floor mounted fan outlets powered by two double external units mounted on a concealed wall at the back of the church. The system is able to provide a source of background heating during the winter months for fabric protection with the heating boosted for services and other events.

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O KILFINAN CHURCH

Kilfinan, PA21 2EP

John Honeyman, Wham Architecture

There are a number of St Finan's who could be commemorated at Kilfinan Church including 'bright shining Finan the leper'. Built on and as part of a much altered medieval church, it's current appearance is in the main attributable to John Honeyman and sits in the middle of the village on a steep hill above a tight bend in a burn. Kilfinan Church although rebuilt post reformation retains the long narrow shape of earlier pre reformation churches when greater stress was placed on a preaching minister as opposed to dramatic ceremony. The church is the burial place of the Lamont Clan Chiefs.

One of the four churches refurbished by Wham Architecture in 2014 as part of the Cowal Churches Together Energy Project.

P OTTER FERRY

Otter Ferry, PA21 2DH

Baxendale Studio

Otter Ferry sits on the eastern shore of Loch Fyne and the site of an earlier ferry across Loch Fyne. At the centre lies a beautiful beach and the old pier, inspiration for the Otter Pier Association formed in 2003 by the local community to develop what was once flourishing access to the sea. The Pier Association now provide ten moorings and a landing pontoon for public use with no set charge and managed via the Oyster-catcher Bar utilising that West of Scotland 'honesty box' tradition, pay what you can.

In 2013 the Otter Ferry Pier Association constructed a self build structure, the Boater's Bothy designed by Baxendale Studio. Clad using locally grown and milled timber from the Baltimore estate the bothy. Cherry, Douglas Fir, Beech, Sycamore, Larch, Elm and Grandis Fir have all been used both inside and outside the structure.

Q INVER COTTAGE

Strathlachlan, PA27 8BU

The Inver Restaurant was once a cottage, built by the 7th chief of Clan Maclachlan as a croft and ferryman's cottage. In 1968 it was converted by Geof-frey Jarvis into a restaurant for the 24th chief, Madam Marjorie Maclachlan of Maclachlan. It has exchanged hands over the years and is now run by two ex-traordinary chefs (Pam and Rob) trained in New Nordic Cuisine with it's empha-sis on local produce and sustainability, literally cooking from what is foraged. The restaurant sits on the shores of Loch Fyne overlooking Old Castle Lachlan which dates to the 15th century. New Castle Lachlan a more comfortable man-sion built in the Queen Anne and Scottish Baronial Style lurks near by. Kilmorie Chapel a peaceful medieval ruin sits within a circular wall shared with the graves of the McLachlan chiefs. This includes Majorie their only female leader and original source of the Inver Restaurant building.

R FURNACE (VIEW OF)

Argyll, PA32

Viewed across Loch Fyne, Furnace appears fairly insignificant however was home to another link between Cowal and weapons of mass destruction. Home to Loch Fyne Powderworks, this was one of four sites producing black gunpow-der, the other mills were located at Millhouse, Clachaig and Kames. The gun-powder works at Furnace were established in 1841, form a scheduled monu-ment and were powered by a water mill. The mill closed in 1883 after a disas-trous explosion of which all four sites were prone. The surrounding woodlands provided a source of charcoal, which together with sulphur and saltpetre formed the ingredients of black gunpowder. The natural deep water berths then allowed the shipping of the gunpowder out of Argyll which has also attracted nuclear weapons to it's shores.

S STRACHUR AND LOCHGILPHEAD CHURCHES

Strachur PA27 8DF and Lochgilphead PA24 8AA

Two delightful churches on the edge of our map and accessible as part of our expedition only by the most serious of cyclists. Both form part of the Cowal Churches Together Energy Initial study and although have yet to receive any ecological improvements are both worthy of a visit as part of Cowals rich reli-gious heritage.

Strachur Church was built in 1789, while much of it's appearance today dates back to a major renovation carried out in 1902-3 by the local architect Archibald Fergusson. Like a number of the numerous historical churches in Cowal the building sits on a raised site within an oval

or circular graveyard which suggests that the site had previously been used as a focal point and the site of a much older religious foundation possibly relating to St Molaise. The ancient church of Lochgilphead stands in the centre of the village and incorporates parts of an earlier church dating back to the 1440s which may have been erected by Duncan Campbell of Lochawe. The church appears in early documents as 'the church of the [three] brethren', no one seems to know why.

T KYLES PARISH CHURCH

Kames PA21 2AD

The last of the four churches to be refurbished by Wham Architecture as part of the Cowal Churches Together Energy Project. Originally built for the Free Church, Kyles Parish Church stands above the pier. Built in local grey sand-stone with red sandstone margins the Church Hall was built in 1898 with Arts and Crafts detailing typical of the period. A more modern red metal belfry stands in the grounds.

Wham Architecture were formed in March 2014, specialising in conservation and sustainable design. They work extensively with church congregations and community groups to explore new and imaginative ways of safeguarding the future of their buildings and ensuring that they remain fit for purpose. The prac-tice has a particular interest in exploring how renewable technologies can be creatively employed to reduce the environmental impact of our historic envi-ronment.

U PORTAVADIE

Portavadie, Loch Fyne, Argyll, PA21 2DA

The Portavadie complex similar to Ardyne Point was created to construct con-crete platforms to extract oil from the North Sea. No platforms were ever con-structed as steel platforms quickly became the future for the oil industry in Scot-land. The complex lay redundant until 1985 when the enclosed port was used by a local fish farm company. Eventually Portavadie was acquired by the Bull-ock family and in 2016 was converted into a marina complete with hotel, apart-ments, restaurants and luxury spa.

It is also the starting or finishing point for the Cowal Way, a long distance, way marked, footpath to Inveruglas on the shore of Loch Lomond.

For more information on the Cowal Way <http://www.cowalway.co.uk>

The Caledonian MacBrayne ferry service across Loch Fyne to Tarbert on the Kintyre Peninsula runs from Portavadie.

V TARBET KAYAK STOP

For information on the Argyll Sea Kayak Traill please refer to <http://paddleargyll.org.uk/homepage.html>

WXYZ FERRIES

For information on all Ferries including timetables and fares please refer to www.calmac.co.uk or www.argyllferries.co.uk

For information on local buses please refer to West Coast Motors <http://www.westcoastmotors.co.uk/timetables/dunoon-cowal-peninsula/>

Much of the above owes credit to the publication North Clyde Estuary an illustrated architectural guide by Frank Arneil Walker with Fiona Sinclair who is a former president of the Glasgow Institute of Architects who kindly funded this map.

These cycle rides/walks are on public roads and cycle tracks so participants must exercise sound, mature judgement and be responsible for their own and others safety. It is your responsibility to carry out manoeuvres safely and adhere to the rules of the road. The cycle rides include sections of A roads and we recommend that you wear a helmet. Under 18s must be accompanied with a parent or guardian. Please note that it would not be possible to cycle to all these destinations in one journey, individuals have to personally plan their own trip taking into account their own abilities using an OS map for guidance. For additional information on the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail and the Sea Kayak Safety Code please refer to <https://www.visitscotland.com/blog/active-sport/argyll-sea-kayak-trail/>

SEDA was formed in 1991. Our primary aim is to share knowledge, skills and experience of ecological design. SEDA is a network and links those seeking information and services with those providing them. Members include academics, architects, artists, builders, planners, students, ecologists, landscape designers, materials suppliers, woodworkers, and many more whose work or interest is concerned with design for a sustainable future. SEDA is a charity and is run by a Board of Directors, who are elected at Annual General Meetings. The Board meets 4 times a year for discussion and for planning the activities of the Association. All members are welcome to take part in these meetings. SEDA registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in February 2011. For more information and how to join please visit our web site at www.seda.uk.net