



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter – April 2026

Secretary: Irene Jamieson, irenemjamieson@hotmail.com

Programme: Monday 13th April 2026 Scottish Charity Air Ambulance – Claire Bain Station Hotel Ellon 19:30	Sunday 19th April Creag an Dail Bheag/Culardoch Focal Point - Margaret Riverside Carpark – 07:30
---	---

Creag an Dail Bheag +/- Culardoch OS Landranger 43. Margaret

Start/finish grid reference: NO188912 (Keiloch car park)

Terrain.* moorland tracks and paths, pathless sections over boggy ground and peat hags and heather moorland and stony ground

Distance approx.** 20.8km

Ascent approx.** 691m

Walk time approx.** 7-7.5hours

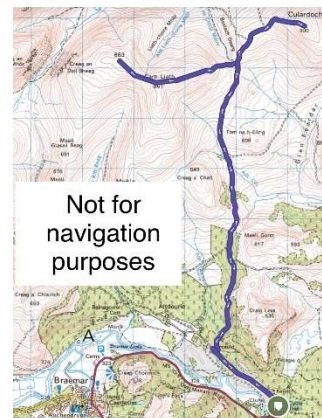
(Sources: *WalkHighlands, **OS Maps app)

Starting at the Keiloch car park, the track ascends through woodland to the open hillside towards the Bealach Dearg. I suggest that we climb Creag an Dail Bheag first because the club has climbed Culardoch more recently, in 2019. (I haven't found a date for when the club last climbed Creag an Dail Bheag or Carn Liath as it was previously known). From the Bealach Dearg the route turns westwards - this section may be pathless and boggy. The return from the summit would be made by retracing our steps.

Depending on time and the mood of the group on the day, we may include an ascent of Culardoch too. This would add an extra 4km and 250m of ascent approximately. Please see the WalkHighlands website for a full route description.

Please beware April can be cold and wintry, so bring waterproofs and warm clothing.

If you wish to join this walk then please contact Margaret by Thursday 16th April. If you already have Margaret's contact details then please text or email, otherwise email her at: margaret8412759@gmail.com



Bunkhouse Weekends 2026 Ingrid

April 10th to 12th, Tyndrum By the Way Hostel. Full

September 18th to 20th, Corran Ferry bunkhouse. £82 per person. Still space.

June 19th to 22nd (3 nights). Andy's compleation weekend on Skye. Let Andy know if you are planning to go so he has numbers for the celebration meal.

Hill of Cat/Gannoch. 15/3/2026 Irene

Mother's Day, a recurring injury and a delayed flight home from NZ due to the war – all contributed to only Andy McN, Brian, Margaret and I driving through Finzean to park at Balloch for the March walk.

Blizzards turned us back in February 2025 and March winds, low cloud and driving rain threatened to do the same. However, cosy in extra layers and waterproofs we walked carefully through grazing sheep down from the hill for lambing, and followed the Fungle road sign round the side of Balloch farm buildings aiming for a clockwise route.

The path was crossed by many quite deep and fast flowing burns, fortunately just narrow enough for a careful large stride or jump. From around 500 feet large patches of snow stuck to the slopes and surrounding higher hills were still quite white.

As we continued up the hill the rain gradually eased and the views we had been imagining came into focus.

A new road took us up the steepish climb to the summit of Hill of Cat. The tracks were very well maintained but, in some places, the thick layer of new gravel was saturated with water from rain and snow melt and quite 'porridgy' underfoot.

The views from the top were tremendous and Andy's app confirmed names of surrounding hills.



It was cold and blustery so we stopped for lunch in a sheltered dip on the return route to Tampie then on to Gannoch, the highest hill in the parish of Birse at 731m.

Although by now it was sunny with a clear blue sky the wind was still very strong and it was fine to have it mainly at our backs as we descended into the valley.

Charles Pearson, owner of Dunecht estates and the Forest of Birse, has had issues in the past with walkers following the old route past Birse Castle where he lives. We gave it a wide berth pleased that the path back to the car was a lot drier than last year. This route is not an easy walk and the weather made it slightly more challenging but definitely worth the effort!

Fortunately, there was enough space for us to squeeze in among the afternoon tea goers at the Finzean Farm Shop for the customary "fly" to finish a grand day on the hill. Thanks, Margaret, for driving.



Photos – Andy.

Walks and talks programme 2026

Month	Date	Event	Time	FC
Jan	12 18	A.G.M. Bennachie	19:30	MW
Feb	9 15	Dr M Reading. Meteorologist Dufftown Circular	19:30 07:30	AMe
March	9 15	Torres del Paine, Patagonia. Brian Gannoch and Hill of Cat	19:30 07:30	IJ
April	10-12 13 19	Bye The Way. Tyndrum Charity Air Ambulance -Claire Bain Creag an deal Bheag/Culardoch	19:30 07:30	MW
May	11 17	TBC The Stuic Càrn a' Choire Bhòidheach	19:30 07:30	BM
June	8 14 19-21	Evening walk Tappie Tower. Kirkhill Forest Bike and hike from Linn of Dee Skye		
July	19	Ben Mheadhion	07:00	
Aug	16	Carn Bhac	07:30	
Sept	14 18 - 20 13	Kintyre Way – Andy Me Corran bunkhouse Through walk	19:30 07:00	
Oct	12 18	Dharma Hill Trek Robert Mackay Gael Charn (Dorback)	19:30 07:3-	
Nov	9 15	Presentation – Andy McN Cairn Vachich and the Socach	19:30 08:00	
Dec	14 20	Christmas party Peterhill	19:30 08:00	