



# Discover the lost kingdom of the Highland Picts

## Lorg dùthaich chailte nan Cruithneach Gàidhealach

Discover what Pictish carved stones can tell us about life in the Highlands more than 1,000 years ago.

Use the Trail map inside this leaflet to plan your visit. Most Trail locations are carved stones set outside in superb Highland scenery while others are displayed in marvellous museums where you can also explore the local area's wider history.



## Discover the lost kingdom of the Highland Picts

### Lorg dùthaich chailte nan Cruithneach Gàidhealach

Enigmatic carved stones, important religious sites, a hillfort with exhilarating views, finely-worked jewellery, stories of kings, battles and faith... all part of the amazing legacy of the Highland Picts which you can experience on the Highland Pictish Trail.

Add beautiful Highland scenery, distinctive towns and villages where you can enjoy local food, drink, shops and craic\*, and the Trail is the perfect way to leave the stresses of daily life behind for an hour, a day – or even a week.

Use this leaflet and the Highland Pictish Trail website [highlandpictishtrail.co.uk](http://highlandpictishtrail.co.uk) to start planning your Pictish escape now!

\*Craic (“crack”) – local conversation, news and things to enjoy.

#### Did you know?

#### An robh fios agad?

The Picts lived in Scotland around 300AD - 900AD. Recent discoveries have revealed that the Highlands were an important centre of Pictish power, with links across Britain and Europe.

## Plan a visit

### Cuir tadhal air dòigh

Whether you are a visitor to the Highlands or live here, you could easily spend a week or longer exploring our area’s Pictish museums and outdoor sites – and enjoying the amazing scenery, fantastic fresh air and welcoming communities along the Trail.

But even if you only have an afternoon or day free, you can still immerse yourself in Pictish heritage. Just choose one or two locations along the Trail – and enjoy!

Use [highlandpictishtrail.co.uk](http://highlandpictishtrail.co.uk) and the useful links listed on this leaflet to plan your trip. Many local areas also have their own websites for visitors.

For car journeys, if you are new to driving in the Highlands, especially on single track roads, please visit our website for hints and tips.

Why not plan a bike ride or walk to a museum or site to make the most of the fresh air and beautiful scenery along the Trail? Cycling, walking or using public transport will also help reduce your carbon footprint.

Many sites on the Trail are in the countryside so please make sure you ‘Know the Code’ before you go. [outdooraccess-scotland.scot](http://outdooraccess-scotland.scot)

Please also help protect our precious Pictish heritage by not touching carved stones or climbing on them.



Learn the lingo  
Tog an cànan  
“Cross slab”  
– a Pictish stone  
which has a Christian  
cross as its  
main feature.



## Useful links

### Ceanglaichean feumail

[visitscotland.com/destinations-maps/highlands](http://visitscotland.com/destinations-maps/highlands)  
All sorts of useful Information, including things to see and do and accommodation.

[northcoast500.com](http://northcoast500.com)  
Information on the North Coast 500 (NC500) route which overlaps with much of the Highland Pictish Trail.

[travelinescotland.com](http://travelinescotland.com)  
Information about public transport in the Highlands.

[scotrail.co.uk](http://scotrail.co.uk)  
Rail travel and timetables Scotland.

[citylink.co.uk](http://citylink.co.uk)  
Coach and bus travel information.

[chargeplacescotland.org](http://chargeplacescotland.org)  
Details of electric vehicle charge points in the Highlands.

[visitscotland.com/see-do/active/cycling/national-routes](http://visitscotland.com/see-do/active/cycling/national-routes)  
Ideas for touring by bike.

[hial.co.uk](http://hial.co.uk)  
Air services to/from and around the Highlands.



**01. Strathnaver Museum, Bettyhill**

**The Farr Stone** A finely-worked cross slab with two intertwined birds – perhaps swans (symbolizing faithfulness) or doves (symbolizing friendship).

**02. The Red Priest's Stone, Strathnaver**

Stone with deeply incised cross, linked with St Maelrubha (the "red priest"), an early Christian missionary.

**03. Reay Cross Slab, Reay**

Skillfully carved cross slab with intricate key and interlace patterns.

**04. The Priest's Stone, Strathay**

Stone with a simple but striking cross, linked with local stories. The original is on rough moorland or see the replica in Strathay Village Hall.

**05. North Coast Visitor Centre, Thurso**

**The Skinnet Stone, The Ulbster Stone, The Watanan Stone** Three different but equally impressive Caithness Pictish stones, including a rare carving of a Pictish chariot and horses.

**06. Caithness Broch Centre, Nybster, Auckengill**

The extensive Nybster Broch near the Broch Centre may have been used by the Picts. The Centre also tells the story of the 19th century archaeologist, Sir Frances Tress Barry.

**07. The Lybster Stone, Lybster**

A large boulder carved with a double outline cross. Perhaps used as a baptismal font.

**08. Dunbeath Heritage Centre, Dunbeath**

**Ballachly Cross Slab** An unusual and intriguing cross slab with carvings which may represent the sun, moon and stars.

**09. Timespan, Helmsdale**

**The Borrobol Stone** Found in Kildonan, with carvings of part of a stag or boar along with Pictish symbols.

**10. Dunrobin Castle Museum, Golspie**

**Pictish Stone Collection** Outstanding collection of Pictish carved stones, mainly from East Sutherland.

**11. Kyle of Sutherland Heritage Centre, Kincardine**

**Kincardine Gravemarker** Detailed gravemarker stone showing biblical scenes including David killing the lion.

**12. St Demhan's Cross, Little Creich, Ardgay**

Large stone with carved cross. Linked with St Devenic, an early Christian missionary to the east Highlands.

**13. Clach Biorach (Clach Chairidh), Edderton**

A large carved stone said to mark the grave of a Danish prince killed in a battle with local Picts.

**14. Edderton Cross Slab, Edderton**

Imposing carved stone showing three horsemen. May commemorate a battle between the Picts and Vikings.

**15. Tain and District Museum, Tain**

**The Ardjachie Stone** A stone with unusual Pictish symbols as well as cupmarks dating back to the Bronze Age.

**16. Tarbat Discovery Centre, Portmahomack**

**Pictish Collection** A nationally and internationally significant collection of intricately-carved stones and other finds from the important Pictish monastery at Tarbat.

**17. Hilton of Cadboll Stone, By Balintore**

Full-size replica of the original Hilton of Cadboll stone (now in the National Museum of Scotland) with fabulous carvings including a hunting scene watched by a, perhaps royal, woman. One of the three great Pictish stones of the Easter Ross (Tarbat) Peninsula.

**18. Hilton of Cadboll Stone - base, Balintore**

The original, ornately-carved base of the Hilton of Cadboll stone.

**19. The Shandwick Stone, Shandwick, Balintore**

Fabulous large cross slab carved with birds, beasts, people and angels along with patterns of snakes and interlace. One of the three great Pictish stones of the Easter Ross (Tarbat) Peninsula.

**20. The Nigg Stone, Nigg**

Magnificently-carved stone said to be one of Scotland's greatest art treasures. One of the three great Pictish stones of the Easter Ross (Tarbat) Peninsula.

**21. Groam House Museum, Rosemarkie**

**Pictish Stone Collection** A spectacular collection of Pictish stones, including the Rosemarkie cross slab, from the time when Rosemarkie was an important Pictish religious centre. The nationally-significant George Bain Celtic art collection is also held here.

**22. The Thief's Stone, Rosskeen, Alness**

Large pillar with Pictish carvings on both sides.

**23. The Ardross Symbol Stones, Ardross**

Replicas of three Pictish carved stone fragments found in Ardross, including the well-known "Ardross wolf" stone and a carved deer. The originals can be seen in Inverness Museum and Art Gallery

**24. Dingwall Museum, Dingwall**

**The Conan Stone** Discovered in 2019 and carefully conserved, the Conan Stone is carved with a large ornate cross and numerous Pictish designs.

**25. The Dingwall Stone, Dingwall**

Pictish stone with various carvings including a double-disc and Z-rods with crescents and V-rods.

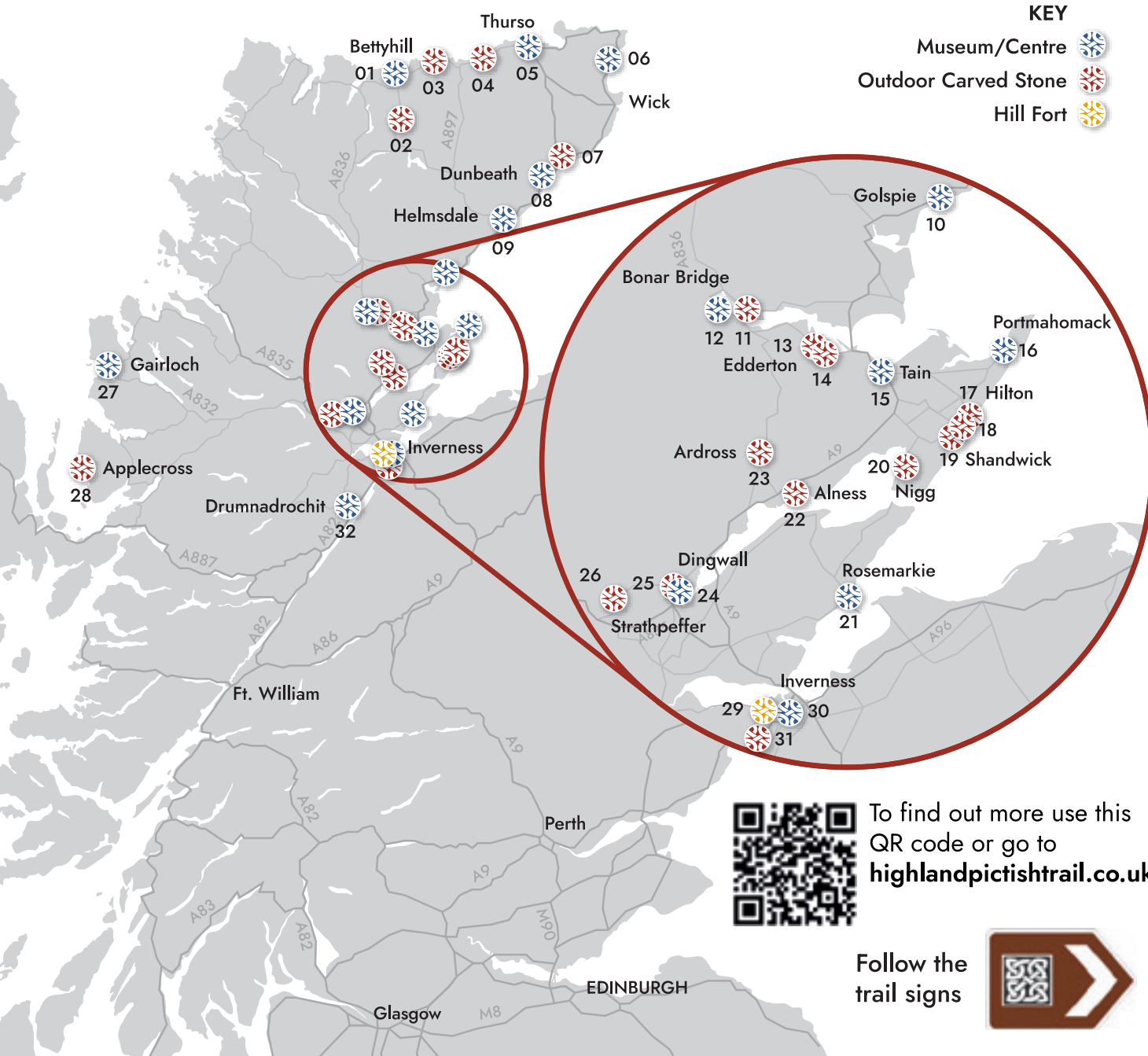
**26. The Eagle Stone, Strathpeffer**

Pictish stone with a detailed eagle and horse-shoe/arch carving. Linked with later stories about Clan Munro and the Brahan Seer.




# Slighe Chruithneach na Gàidhealtachd



# Highland Pictish Trail



## KEY

- Museum/Centre 
- Outdoor Carved Stone 
- Hill Fort 

### 27. Gairloch Museum, Gairloch

**Pictish Symbol Stone** See the first Pictish stone found on the West Coast, with its detailed carving of a salmon.

### 28. Applecross Heritage Centre, Applecross

**Applecross Cross Slab** See parts of the intricately-carved cross slab which once stood in St Maelrubha's 7th century monastery in Applecross.

### 29. Knocknagael Boar Stone, Inverness

Large stone showing a strongly-carved boar, complete with bristles, and a "mirror and case" carving.

### 30. Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, Inverness

**Pictish Stone Collection** One of the most important Pictish collections in Scotland, with ten carved stones and some finely-worked Pictish jewellery.

### 31. Craig Phadrig, Inverness

Hillfort where St Columba is said to have met the Pictish King Bridei in the 6th century AD. Superb views over the Beaully Firth and the Great Glen.

### 32. Urquhart Castle, By Drumnadrochit, Loch Ness

Ruined medieval castle overlooking Loch Ness which is the site of an earlier Pictish fort visited by St Columba in 580AD.



To find out more use this QR code or go to [highlandpictishtrail.co.uk](http://highlandpictishtrail.co.uk)

Follow the trail signs



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