



The road to the lighthouse between stone walls above the rocky shore, a white van on it, hills behind

Before you go

About 9 km (5.6 miles) round with the lighthouse, as gps-routes.co.uk gives it; without it, a loop of about 6 km, the AA's figure. No time is published for the whole walk. A faint moorland path, muddy and boggy in places, with a stile and gates, then a track and single-track road: wear boots. About 200 metres of climbing all told, by our working from OS heights.

Start at the small car park at the top of the Portuairk road, off the B8007 beyond Kilchoan; no charge is published, and parking in the village itself is difficult. The lighthouse's own parking is for the day only.



The walk online, with its photographs and map:

hiddenscotland.com/walks/a-walk-from-portuairk-to-ardnamurchan-point

It starts at the small car park at the top of the Portuairk road, off the B8007 beyond Kilchoan, NM 439 678.

In an emergency, call 999 or 112 and ask for the police.

There are no toilets at the car park or on the path; the lighthouse has them while it is open: 1 April to 31 October, Tuesday to Sunday, its own site says, with nothing stated for the winter. Ring 01972 510210 to book the tower. Sheep graze the crofts: keep dogs on a lead. On 21 December the sun sets here at 3.46pm.

After the walk

The Stables café at the lighthouse serves coffee, bakes and ice cream in its season. For dinner in Kilchoan, the Kilchoan House Hotel serves evening meals from 5.30pm to 8.30pm and is closed on Mondays.

A WALK FROM PORTUAIRK TO

Ardnamurchan Point



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

By Bay MacNeil to the Lighthouse, and Home by the Road

Ardnamurchan Point is the far western end of the mainland, a headland of black rock with a tall granite lighthouse of 1849 standing on it. The walk to it starts at the crofting township of Portuairk and goes round by the sandy inlet of Bay MacNeil, on moorland paths and a quiet single-track road, with the sea never far away.

words // Hidden Scotland photography // Hidden Scotland

The small car park is at the top of the Portuairk road, on the right just before the road zigzags down to the village. Portuairk is a crofting township, settled from 1843 by families cleared from elsewhere. Walk down through it to the end of the road, where a gate signed for Bay MacNeil leads onto the footpath.

A faint moorland path, marked by the occasional wooden post and rather muddy in places, runs west down a valley past a couple of old ruined houses. Over a stile in the deer fence, the small, sheltered sandy beach of Bay MacNeil, with machair behind, is a short detour through the dunes; the path stays inland, and can be very boggy here. A track behind the caravan

site brings you to a gate onto the single-track road at Grigadale.

Turn right: the lighthouse is 1.6 km along, a mile on the AA's page, past a cattle grid and traffic lights on the narrow causeway. It is a 35-metre tower of grey granite, built in 1849 by Alan Stevenson, its light 55 metres above the sea; the café is in the old stables and the exhibition in the former head keeper's house. Come back the same way to the gate and keep east along the road past Grigadale and its lochan. At the top of the hill the AA points out a small quarry, its basalt weathered into rounded lumps like fossil onions. On to the B8007, and up the Portuairk road to the car park.



A loop by Bay MacNeil and home by the road: about 9 km (5.6 miles) with the lighthouse, as
gps-routes.co.uk gives it, or about 6 km without it, the AA's figure. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors