

# Sea kayaking guide to the Isle of Bute and surrounding waters



## About the author

Roddy McDowell has sea kayaked for some 25 years and is owner of the sea kayak coaching and guiding company Kayak Bute. He is a BCU 5 Star Leader (Sea,) Level 4 Coach and certified by the Centre for Outdoor Ethics as a trainer in Leave No Trace and accredited Safe Wildlife Operator. In addition to journeying in Scottish waters he has paddled in such diverse locations as the Isles of Scilly, Shetland, the Mediterranean, and North West Iceland. He thinks journeys are made all the better by the great people we meet along the way.

## Beachwatch Bute

If you find this guide useful, please make a donation to our local charity, Beachwatch Bute.

Beachwatch is a charitable company (Sco29603) based on the Isle of Bute and fund the work of a beach ranger to monitor and remove pollutants from the island's shores. Just text BWBC12 to 70070 and give anything from £1 to £10. Remember to reply 'Yes' to the Gift Aid text you will get from Vodafone as this means that Beachwatch Bute will receive an extra 25% from your donation. Thank you.



## **Introduction**

The Isle of Bute has been my home for 30 years. I have paddled round it, from it to the Cumbraes, to Arran and to the shores of Kintyre. I count myself lucky to live on an island in the world-class sea kayaking location that is Scotland.

You can circumnavigate Bute and keep the land on your right or you can go round it and keep the land on your left; it's an island thing. Whichever way round you go the distance is about 60km (see table of distances below), a few more if you explore all the bays and beaches. How long you take for the circumnavigation, hours, or to my mind even better, many days, is up to you. Bute also makes a great jumping off point for the islands of Great Cumbrae, Little Cumbrae, Arran and the Kintyre Peninsula.

I have written what follows in response to requests over the years for 'local knowledge' from individuals and groups planning a sea kayak trip to Bute. This guide has more detail than the experienced expedition sea kayaker will need but I hope it will encourage those making the transition from day paddler to multi-day trips to visit Bute and the Isles of the Clyde.

## **Location**

Bute is situated just 33 miles from Glasgow as the crow flies but the short distance from Scotland's Central Belt only enhances what the island has to offer. Protected paddling in the scenic Kyles of Bute contrasting with the more open waters to the south and west where the jagged outline of the Arran Ridge dominates the horizon offer a great variety of conditions and journey options

## **Starting points**

There are two ferry crossings to the island, both operated by Caledonian Mac-Brayne. Wemyss Bay to Rothesay is a 35 minute ferry crossing and the crossing from Colintraive on the mainland to Rhubodach at the north of Bute is only 3 minutes, a crossing of less than a 1 km. Other options are to paddle from Wemyss Bay or Largs over to Bute, but if this is your choice, work out the distance to your first nights camp site and remember camping is limited on the east side of Bute where the road pretty much follows the coast.

It's a very different story on the north, south and west facing coastlines where there are plenty of sites. Note that camp sites are identified as 'CS 1, CS2,' and grid references are based on experience cross referenced with my OS Maps, not all as yet are 'double checked' with my recently acquired GPS.

If you choose to leave from Wemyss Bay for the 10km crossing to Bute you can use the slip on the right of the Cal Mac car park at the ferry terminal to access the beach then move your car to the car park opposite the BP Garage about three hundred meters to the north of the ferry. There is a small charge for parking payable at the BP Garage. If you choose to bring your kayak over on the ferry to Rothesay without a vehicle, a trolley is well worthwhile as there is 300m carry from the car deck to your nearest launch site.



*Rothesay Harbour and Ferry*

Your launch point is at the dingy slip in the outer harbour via the pedestrian access swing bridge and then passed the 'Cabbies Rest,' an old Victorian glass roofed walkway at the front of the ferry terminal. Note that entry and exit from the harbour is controlled by traffic lights, these indicate no passage for vessels (red) when a ferry is approaching or leaving the main berthing on the seaward side of the harbour.

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to weigh up when choosing your mainland jumping off point: Wemyss Bay, Largs or Colintrave. Which is more easily accessed by road for you, the cheaper ferry costs on the shorter route at Colintrave or whether you are using the excellent transport links to Glasgow Central Rail Station or Glasgow Airport to hooking up with a commercial provider such as Kayak Bute or Sea Kayak Argyll?

In addition one of the great advantages of the island with its many put in points is that if you bring a vehicle it is possible to find a sheltered section of coastline and go for a day paddle in pretty much any weather.

## **Round Bute from Colintraive**

The best access to the water at Colintraive is via the old slip at GR031744. It is at the end of the 200m access road immediately to the left of the Caledonian MacBrayne Ferry Terminal when looking out to sea. Do pop into the office to let staff know that you intend to use the old slip to get loaded up and that you will be moving your vehicle back onto the public road for the duration of the trip.

Unfortunately some years ago a group of inconsiderate sea kayakers parked at the old slip and left their cars blocking the turning / short term parking while they were away, so there is a little local sensitivity about parking.

If you need to fortify yourself with tea, coffee, cake or strong drink then the excellent Colintraive Hotel is just a couple of hundred meters up the road from the Cal Mac offices. The hotel has superb bar meals and also supports a small community shop where basic provisions may be bought if you have forgotten anything. Patricia, the hotel owner, is a kayaker and very welcoming to all.

## **The north coast of Bute**

We are going to head directly over to Rhubodach on Bute being mindful that the Cal Mac ferry makes the same journey twice an hour, departing on the hour and half hour from Colintraive and from the Bute side at ten past and twenty to the hour, with more frequent sailings at peak periods, see Cal Mac timetable.



*Colintraive Rhubodach crossing with Cal Mac ferry in background*

Having made the short crossing from mainland Scotland to the Isle of Bute, head north following that shore line past Balnakailly Bay where there is excel-

lent camping at the shore and around the rocky outcrop immediately to the north of the Balnakailly (CS1).

On our starboard quarter lie the Burnt Islands. While I offer no proof the islands really did get their name from the Viking dead being burned there, after the Battle of Largs in 1263, it makes for a good story. Regardless of fact or fiction images of those Viking Longboats lie waiting to ambush your imagination as you journey here and further to the west.

Look at your kayak sometime and take in the perspective from sea level looking from bow to stern, then think of a Viking long ship. Perhaps we have more in common with those Nordic seafarers than just sometimes shared genotype?



*Front view of a Viking Long Ship*

We might take an hour or so to explore the Burnt Isles and drift with any seals that choose to come and check us out. If we do that around any spring tides (see TI 1) remember that the flow in and around the Burnt Isles can be faster than we can paddle our kayaks, 5 knots in the North, 3 knots in the south channels and in places distinct eddy lines form. This tidal flow can be avoided by staying close into the Bute shore.

If you follow that shore towards the evocatively named Buttock Point at the northern most tip of Bute you will be passing the new shelter for sea kayakers, provided by the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail.

Not many islands boast a dedicated stop-off point for kayakers. The shelter is open on one side to seaward and has its own fire pit plus a log store at the side. Looking from the sea and slightly to the left a 100 meters or so up the hill is the compost toilet, practically 'en-suite'!

Space for camping adjacent to the shelter is limited but you could manage 2 or 3 small tents around what makes for a very nice social area.



*The sea kayak shelter and composting toilet*

As you journey to Buttock Point clearly the shortest route south will become the western shore of Bute in the west Kyle. But if time permits and the inclination takes, a quick trip back to the mainland is an enticing alternative.

A kilometre or so NNW of Buttock Point back on the mainland lies the little sheltered Caladh Harbour nestling behind the island of Eilean Dubh. There is an ideal get out point in the bay just north of the cottage with adjacent boat shed at the clearly marked public access slip (004756). I have often run kayak skills courses in this beautiful sheltered location, or just enjoyed the pleasure of journeying there on my own.

## **The west coast of Bute**

If you have paddled over to Eilean Dubh then it can be an attractive option to stay on this coast of the West Kyle and continue down the 4 kilometres or so past the small boat yard at Port Driseach to Tighnabruaich. As you head south look out for the brightly painted rocks half way up the hills on the Bute shore, The Maids of Bute. Half the fun of seeing them is in trying to spot them!

One of the best landing sites in Tighnabruaich is immediately to the north of the slip at the clearly marked RNLI Inshore Life Boat Station and there are cafes and a small supermarket on your left as you go up the slip. From this point the crossing back to Bute is slightly less than 1 km SE to Rubha Dubh headland.

Continuing south along the Bute shore you will see Kilmichael farm up on the hillside (993 708). You will have paddled past an old chapel that is not readily visible from the water. As is the way of such religious sites it is accompanied by a graveyard where folk from Kames, on the other side of the Kyle, were laid to rest. It is said that amongst them was a shepherd who was survived by his dog which often swam the Kyle to lie by its masters grave. A wee west coast Grey Friar's Bobby!

The short section of rocky coast here is home to sea anemones that can be clearly seen under the water on a calm sunny day. Looking directly south you will see the island of Inchmarnock 9km hovering in the distance. As you journey south down the West Kyle and beyond look out for porpoise, and on rare occasions dolphins. Occasional basking shark are also beginning to be sighted once again towards the southern end of the island; a welcome reappearance after being all but hunted to extinction in the Clyde.

To the south of Kilmichael farm, your OS map will indicate Chambered cairns and the stonework of the entrance to these can be clearly seen in the field as you paddle past. Two kilometres south along the coast the map will show a parking spot below Glecknabae farm and there is a conveniently placed bench seat at Clate Point if the mood for a break takes you.

From here it is south round Kildavanan Point to Ettrick Bay where the tea-room (306664) comes complete with fine food and some of the best cakes in the known universe. This triumph of home baking may have some coincidental link to the fact that the grounds surrounding the tea-room are home to the Women's Scottish Sea Kayak Festival.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/579266552126320/>

Ettrick Bay (CS2) makes for good camping but pay attention to the tide, it's a long, long carry on Spring tides when it's out! It is worth noting that there is a very well constructed bird hide positioned just off the road at the southern corner of this bay.

From Ettrick Bay there is a bus service (infrequent, times available in tea room) to the main town of Rothesay where there is a large Co-op supermarket, shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants and public showers at the ferry terminal and marina.

As you proceed south and out of Ettrick Bay you will enter Inchmarnock Sound (see TI2). The gentle slope of the land as Bute merges with the sea should alert you to the possibility of shallows and submerged rocks off the points for the next

section of coast. The land either side of the Inchmarnock Sound and indeed the Isle of Bute has a rich and well researched history dating back through early Christianity to Iron, Bronze, Neolithic and Middle Stone Age.

In one of the Bronze Age cists on the island of Inchmarnock was found the well preserved remains of 'The Queen of the Inch', together with her flint knife and magnificent jet bead necklace which are on display in Bute Museum, complete with a forensic reconstruction of the face of the young woman. The museum notes that the necklace had originated in Whitby and the woman lived some 2000 BC (see Bute Museum web site).

As you approach Inchmarnock from the north there is a good landing on the shingle beach with camping sheltered from any westerly winds (see CS3)



*Shingle Beach, north end of Inchmarnock Isle*

A kilometre or so south from here a large colony of seals often haul out, and being inquisitive will often come and check you out. Please let them come to you rather than disturbing them.



*Seals off Inchmarnock Isle*

Consideration should be shown to the many birds that nest on the island and the shores of Bute, particularly during the nesting season. However the heard of organic beef cattle on Inchmarnock will be quite happy to assert themselves if they think you are being intrusive!

The island is not inhabited at the present time but is worked as an organic farm. The owner, Lord Smith, has a house on the southern shore of St Ninian's Bay in front of which there is a concrete slip. The slip can be a great get out if the tide is out, it can be the best part of a kilometre carry up the beach to the grassy foreshore.

If for any reason you use the slip do not block it or the access to it. It is used daily by the stockman to launch his boat which is kept in the boat shed next to the house for the journey to and from Inchmarnock. Cars should not be left for any length of time other than for launching and landing pick ups.

If you are going to camp in the vicinity of St Ninian's Bay, I opt to do so out towards the point on the north side of the bay near the cottages (see CS4). The cottages are used for very occasional holiday accommodation and are only accessible to motor vehicles at low tide via the beach. The ruined cottage nearest to the shore was a fish curing station used before lack of regulation and over fishing all but wiped out marine life in the Clyde. The ruins of an early Christian chapel lie just little to the north of the ruined fishing station.



*At the pull out point below the old fishing station, St Ninian's Point.*

It is worth noting that the foreshore at the head of the bay is very popular locally for those camping from their cars and can become just a little on the 'high density' side during good weather in the summer.

But back to Inchmarnock; the island is just over 3km from north to south and about 1 km east to west at its widest point. Before you set of from the north end it is worth considering whether time permits a circumnavigation. The island is

a great wee paddle and in addition to the seals mentioned above you may be lucky enough to see the peregrine falcons around the cliffs on the west side.

Camping on the west facing shore affords a real feeling of remoteness, albeit it's not that far from anywhere. The only point on the west side that gives easy access to landing at low tide is about half way down the coast ( CS 5). The rest of the coastline often looks deceptively attractive for landing at mid to high water only to become a difficult and possible dangerous carry over rocks at low water. Beach access for camping is easy on the southern shore line of the island (CS 6) but again take care not to disturb ground-nesting birds.



*The southern shore of Inchmarnock*

Crossing back to Bute from the south end of Inchmarnock, the chart shows a large submerged rock at about the mid way point which creates an area of shallows half way between the two islands. With wind against tide it can create 'moments of interest' for the kayaker, and an expensive trip to the boat yard for yachts caught unawares.

While many of the beaches on the west side of Bute are stunning they do have that heart break moment when the length of the carry becomes apparent and you are tired out after a long day.

Not so Port na h-Aille (CS7), and the giveaway is in the word 'Port'. The steep incline of the shingle beach makes it a short journey to security above the high water mark and once more the location has a remote feeling out of all proportion to its location just some just some 30 miles west from Glasgow. I have often used this camp site as a staging post on the way to or from Arran via the Sound of Bute.

As you head south out of Inchmarnock Sound Ardscaipsie Point with its rocky skerries marks the beginning of Scalpsie Bay opening up on your port side, (see TD3) another glorious sandy beach with great spots for camping. You can also

overnight further south at Stravanan Bay on the shoreline beneath the golf course and I would suggest this is your last option before rounding the south westerly point of Bute at Garroch Head.

The map might tempt you to overnight at Dunagoil Bay 2 km before Garroch Head, but it is often frequented by the cows from Plan Farm. These beasts are friendly and sociable, and having thoroughly checked out your kayaks to lick the salt off they will happily move into your tent with you! Take a very big tent or avoid camping at Dunagoil Bay would be my advice. Dunagoil Bay does however make for an ideal lunch spot beneath the imposing crags that were home to Iron Age fortification where vitrified walls can still be seen.

The next 2 km south to Garroch Head are a peach of a paddle with the natural harbour and boat shed (087528) being both interesting and a welcome rest point if this section of coast is in a 'testing' mood. The tide can run strongly north of and around Garoch Head (see TI 4).

## **The South and East Coasts of Bute**

Once around Garroch head the coastline leads us north east for 2 km to Glencalum Bay where the foreshore can provide camping (see CS 8).



*Lighthouse at Rhubh' an Eun*

The lighthouse (decommissioned) at Rhubh' an Eun marks our heading changing north to take us up the east side of Bute with a landscape its more inhabited and built up shore line.

The small village of Kilchattan Bay lies 3 km north where the OS map indicates that a hotel is situated across the road from the quay but this building is now a private residence. The quay itself boast an excellent slip and a minimal carry required to access the main road where there is pretty much unlimited parking.

The community came together to renovate this quay and provide picnic benches and toilet facilities and have even sighted a public access defibrillator here, an act of community spirit which it is hoped you will not have need to benefit from. Do put a contribution to the upkeep of the area in the collection box attached to the wall of the old weigh-bridge office.



*The old quay and slip at Kilchattan Bay*

With its ease of access to the water and good parking, Kilchattan Bay makes an attractive alternative starting point for a circumnavigation of Bute or indeed for the crossing over to North Sanox on Arran. If you decide to overnight in this area, the foreshore on the north side of Kilchattan Bay or slightly further north at Bruchag Point (see CS 9) make for a passable camp site for a night. If you had paddled over to Bute via Great Cumbrae, Bruchag Point would be your first available camp spot.

Further north the magnificent stately home and grounds of Mount Stuart House are clearly marked on your OS Map at 107596 but the house is not readily visible from the water. You can however land at the old boat-house and jetty below Mount Stuart at 112597 and walk the short distance up to the main lawn in front of the house where the sudden appearance of the building heightens the impact of its Gothic architecture.

The house, complete with domed ceiling, signs of the zodiac and marble heated indoor swimming pool, is a day's visit in itself but the cafe might be a welcome diversion. The house is open to the public from Easter to September.

Once past Mount Stuart the next bay is Kerrycroy, another excellent landing and put in spot although not recommended for leaving vehicles as parking is on the busy (by Bute standards) main road.



*The beach at Kerrycroy*

Heading further north, Bogany Point is reached before Rothesay Bay (see TI5) opens up with the island's main town on your port side. As already mentioned, access to the harbour is controlled by a traffic light system. Once you are into the outer harbour there is a convenient, but very slippery, slipway in the NW corner of the outer basin. Kayaks can be pulled out here leaving you free to cross the road and explore the town centre complete with cafes and a 12th century castle.

If you choose not to stop in Rothesay itself and proceed northward from Bogany to Ardbeg Point keep a careful watch for vessels approaching Rothesay Harbour, especially the Cal Mac ferries MV Argyll and MV Bute, as you will be crossing

their routes. These two ferries leave Rothesay and Wemyss Bay regularly and at the same time from opposite directions and do not take kindly to having to alter course for kayakers.

Port Bannatyne, my home port, is the last settlement before your passage takes you into the East Kyle. ‘The Port’ as it is known locally has two pubs, a tea-room that does take-out fish and chips, a Post Office and a marina. There are public toilets at the north end of the village and the marina has showers. The large public park to the north of the village would not be my first choice for an overnight camp but it has been pressed into service more than once on a ‘needs must’ basis by paddlers.

Your passage north from Port Bannatyne takes you past Ardmaleish ship yard, where commercial craft are built, renovated and maintained. Loch Striven lies off your starboard bow. This 12km long loch was used in WW2 by the RAF, ‘Dambusters’ to test versions of the Barnes Wallis bouncing bomb used to destroy dams in raids in Germany 1943. The 12th Submarine Flotilla of midget submarines was also stationed at Port Bannatyne and trained beneath the waters in which you are paddling.



*Port Bannatyne*

The end of your circumnavigation is in sight, some 8km north up the East Kyle at Colintrave. I hope you have enjoyed the journey around Bute, but perhaps a few more days are available to you to explore the surrounding waters and the Isles of the Clyde?

## **Surrounding waters and the Isles of the Clyde**

If you have made a long journey to visit Bute it may be worth extending your stay. The nearby islands of Great and Little Cumbrae to the east, and Arran and the Kintyre peninsula to the west make a great area to explore over a week or so.

The Cumbraes make ideal day paddles from the south end of Bute launching at either Kerrycroy or Kilchattan Bay. The seas on the southern shore of Little Cumbrae can be challenging in a southerly and conditions of Farland Point on Great Cumbrae and in ‘The Tan’ are to be respected.

But for those wanting a real ‘expedition’ feel to their week, a trip round Arran is a great option. The crossing from Garroch Head to Sannox Bay on the eastern shore of Arran is 9.5 km. Here a short carry over a gently sloping shingle shore gives to access a large area of flat grass and excellent camping (CS10) with views and routes up into the hills and the Arran Ridge, one of the finest walks in Britain. Camping near the shore around Arran can be challenging due to the proximity of the road which follows the coastline for much of the island. However North Sannox is an exception and this site in combination with some of those mentioned below make for a fine route round Arran.



*Heading out from Bute to Arran*

The commercial campsite to the south east of Arran, ‘Seal Shore’ at Kildonan (CS11) is one I have used on a number of occasions. It is excellent but forward booking is advisable, as it gets quite busy.

If you journey along the south coast you can choose to head up the Arran coast, past Blackwaterfoot and round Drumadoon Point where a couple of long narrow cuts in the rocky shore open up about 500m north of the point. Although not obviously welcoming it is quite possible to camp here ( CS12).

There is also camping to be had 13 km further north in the vicinity of Imachar Point. Although the rocky foreshore does not look too inviting there are indents that allow access to grassy areas. Further north still lies Catacol Bay where you can camp.

An alternative to following the coast of Arran is to cross over to the Kintyre Peninsula. 20km west of the south western tip of Arran lies Island Davaar in the mouth of Campbeltown Loch where camping is possible (CS13). It is then a great paddle for the 45 km north past Carradale Point. There is a commercial camp site at Waterfoot by Carradale Bay and limited camping is possible north of Carradale and before Skipness Point if that is necessary. Skipness Point itself is a great camping spot (CS14.)

From Skipness Point two options for crossing back to Bute are possible. You can paddle north into Loch Fyne and cross to Bute via Ardlamont Point or go further north to East Loch Tarbert and paddle or get the ferry over to Portavadie and then head back south to Ardlamont Point. You can camp at Portavadie (SC15) and also at many locations between there and Ardlamont Point from where it is back into the West Kyle and a short crossing to Bute. Camping is also available in the West Kyle on the foreshore at Carry Point 3.5 km North of Ardlamont Point (see CS 16).



*Portavadie Marina*

### **A wee word of caution**

Before setting off, it is important, as ever, to note wind strengths and directions when planning any trip and Bute is no exception. Wind direction and which way to go round Bute is an obvious consideration but do not be lulled into a false sense of security by Bute's location in the relatively sheltered Firth of Clyde. Both the East and West Kyles of Bute can act as a wind funnel producing gusts much more severe than the base line forecast might indicate.

Inexperienced paddlers caught unaware have been capsized in gusts in and around the Burnt Islands, although due to the proximity of Bute to the mainland here the fetch is short and seas do not build appreciably.

However at the south west end of Bute the seas can build and particular caution being needed if wind is against, or across the tidal overfalls that run off Garroch Head. Respect should also be shown at the South eastern tip of Bute near the lighthouse at Rubh' an Eun where the tide can also run strongly, although I have often found it calmer close into the shore here rather than further out. It is also worth mentioning that the waters at northern point of Kilchattan Bay, Kerrytonlia Point are shallow and a strong southerly wind can kick up some impressive seas.



*Off the south end of Bute*

Any open sea crossing are to be treated with caution and taking in Arran and Kintyre from Bute are no exception to that rule. The shallow waters off Carradale, Skipness and Ardlamont Points are to be treated with respect.

### **Get going!**

Enough of the cautionary tales; you have a great weather forecast and ideal conditions for a circumnavigation of Bute. Light winds accompanied by bright sunny skies are predicted and Arran and Kintyre beckon beyond Bute... make a week of it - enjoy your trip!

*Thanks to Simon Willis for editing and to Alice McInnes for proof reading*

**Camp site locations Bute**

CS1 Balnakailly 021744

CS2 Ettrick Bay, the entire centre 1 kilometre or so of foreshore is good.

CS3 North End of Inchmarnock Isle 022611

CS4 St Ninian's Point, camping in area near cottages situated at or around 035614

CS5 West Coast of Inchmarnock Isle

Look out for the dry stone dike that bisects the hill from top to bottom running right to a rocky outcrop on the shoreline. There is a narrow access between the jagged rocks to a small shingle beach immediately north of the dry-stone wall at about 017592. The grass above the shingle provides good pitches for camping.

CS6 South Coast of Inchmarnock Isle Camping on the southern shore at 022582 and 026587.

CS7 Port na h Aille 043581

CS8 Glencallum Bay 113527

This camp site is, however, at the top of a fairly steep storm beach where, from mid to high tide, landing is easy but at low tide the shingle gives way to large rounded boulders which makes taking boats off the water difficult. It is also worth keeping in mind that this bay becomes something of a trap in in a strong southerly with large waves rolling in.

CS9 Bruchag Point 118577

**Camp site locations Arran**

CS10 North Sannox 015466

Large flat grassy area at the north side of the river comes complete with public toilets and makes a great camp site with views up through North Glen Sannox to the Arran Ridge.

CS11 'Seal Shore' commercial camp site at Kildonan 033206

CS12 North of Drumadoon Point

The northernmost of two cuts into the rocky shore line at 883291 gives access to some flat ground either side of the rough path below the golf course and it is possible to pitch tents here.

**Camp site locations Kintyre**

CS13 Island Davaar Camping is good up from the north eastern shore line at 754204

CS14 Skipness Point camping is excellent at 913574.

**Camp site locations Loch Fyne**

CS15 Portavadie 928699 from which it is a short walk to the marina, bar and restaurant.

CS16 Carry Farm 993673 This is the shore line adjacent to a commercial camp site and sailing school. The best camping is at the southern end of the bay out on the peninsula. I always make myself known to the camp site owners and pay a small fee to use the toilet facilities.



## Tidal information

**TI 1 Burnt Islands** Const. -0020 Greenock. The incoming flood tidal streams from East and West Kyle do not meet at the north end of Bute as you might imagine but in the area off the small Church 1.5 km south of Colintrave on the north shore of the east Kyle. Tidal flow in the Kyles themselves is not strong but in the area around the Burnt Isles at spring tides it can reach 5 knots in the North and 3 knots in the South Channels. These flows can be avoided by keeping tight into the Bute shore.

**TD 2 Inchmarnock Sound** Const. 0015 Greenock

**TD 3 Waters to the North of Garroch Head** Stream sets N and S between the E coast of Arran and the SW coast of Bute from Garroch Head to Inchmarnock Sound at 1.5 kn in springs, both directions.

**TD 4 Garroch Head** Wind against a spring tide can produce overfalls just off shore in the area South and West of Garroch Head.

**TD 5 Rothesay Bay** Const. + 0010 Greenock

## Approximate distances around the Isle of Bute

Rhubodach Slip - Buttock Point 2 km

Buttock Point - Rubh-Dubh 3.5 km

Rubha-Dubh - Clate Point 4.5 km

Clate Point - Kildavanan Point 3 km

Kildavanan Point - St. Ninians Point 5.25 km

St Ninians Point - Ardschalpsie Point 6 km

Ardschalpsie Point - Dunagoil Bay 6 km

Dunagoil Bay - Garroch Head 2.5 km

Garroch Head - Rubh an Eun 2 km

Rubh an Eun - Kilchattan Bay 3 km

Kilchattan Bay - Kerrytonlin Point 1.75 km

Kerrytonlin Point - Bruchag Point 1.5 km

Bruchag Point - Jetty at Mount Stuart 2.25 km

Jetty at Mount Stuart - Quay at Kerrycroy Bay 1.75 km

Quay at Kerrycroy Bay - Ascog Point 2 km

Ascog Point - Bogany Point 2 km

Bogany Point - Outer Harbour Rothesay 2km

Outer Harbour Rothesay - Ardbeg point 2.5 km

Ardbeg Point - Marina, Kames Bay 1.5 km

Marina, Kames Bay - Undraynain Point 1.5 km

Undraynain point - Ardmalish Point 1 km

Ardmalish Point - Rhubodach Slip 6.5 km

Total 61.5 km

### **How to pack a sea kayak for multi-day trips**

How and what to pack video by Roddy McDowell in association with Lomo Water Sports:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvD59n3AWRY&feature=youtu.be>

### **Commercial sea kayak providers in the area**

Kayak Bute [www.kayakbute.co.uk](http://www.kayakbute.co.uk)

Sea Kayak Argyll [www.seakayakargyll.co.uk](http://www.seakayakargyll.co.uk)

### **Useful links**

Argyll Sea Kayak Trail <http://www.paddleargyll.org.uk/>

Bute Museum: <http://www.butemuseum.org.uk>

Cal Mac <https://www.calmac.co.uk/>

CalMac Wemyss Bay 01475 520521

CalMac Rothesay 01700 502707

CalMac Colintrave 01700 841235

Dentist 01700 502041

Mount Stuart House <http://www.mountstuart.com/>

Seal View Camp Site Arran: <http://www.campingarran.com/>

Some Accommodation Links <http://www.kayakbute.co.uk/contact.php>

Victoria Hospital (A&E available ) 01700 503938

Visit Bute: <http://www.visitbute.com>

