

WELCOME TO THE CANAL

British Waterways hope that you enjoy cruising the Caledonian Canal and trust that the information contained in this Skipper's Guide will prove helpful. If you have any queries or suggestions for improving our service please do not hesitate to contact the canal office, or visit www.scottishcanals.co.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

MAXIMUM DIMENSIONS
45.72 m (150 ft) long; 10.67m (35 ft) beam; 4.11 m (13.5ft) draft; Maximum mast height in the canal is 35m (115ft) above the waterline, but clearance under the Kessock Bridge on the Inverness Firth is lower at 27.4m (89.8ft).

The Caledonian Canal is approximately 96.5km in length (60 statute miles or 50 nautical miles) of which 35.4km (22 miles) is man made, the remainder being formed by natural fresh water lochs. There are 29 locks and 10 swing bridges along the waterway, all of which are operated for you by British Waterways staff.

HOURS OF OPERATION
The canal operates on a seasonal basis as follows:
Winter: Monday to Friday 0900 – 1600
Spring & Autumn: Monday to Sunday 0830 – 1730
Summer: Monday to Sunday 0800 – 1800
Please note that locks and bridges may be closed during lunch break. Lock and Bridge operations take some time to complete, so try to arrive at each location in time for the operation to be completed before closing time.

Call the canal office on 01463 725500 for details of winter closures for maintenance work.

MAIN ROAD BRIDGES
The main road bridges at Muirtown, Tomnahurich and Banavie are used daily by people driving to and from work. British Waterways assists traffic flow by allowing road vehicles priority at peak times.

RAIL BRIDGES
To assist the flow of rail traffic, the bridges at Clachnaharry and Banavie are periodically closed to canal traffic. See local lock keepers for timings.

TIDAL OPERATION
Special note should be taken of the tidal restrictions at sea locks. Within normal operating hours Clachnaharry Lock is normally available 4 hours either side of high water. At low water and spring tides the sea locks are CLOSED 2 HOURS (or a little longer) either side of low tide. Within normal operating hours Corpach Lock is available with a tide over 1 metre.

This restriction is caused by the need for sufficient depth to float the sea lock gates, they are fitted with floatation tanks in order to lighten the loads required to open and close them.

PASSAGE TIMES
The absolute minimum time required to make passage is 14 hours, but why rush? Enjoy the delights of the Caledonian Canal.

CORPACH BASIN
Corpach Basin is at times used by large freight vessels which require room to manoeuvre, therefore it may not always be available for berthing leisure craft. Please follow the lock keeper's advice and berth where directed.

NAVIGATION
Information is contained in the following publications; Pilots: The Admiralty North Sea (West) Pilot (NP54) and the Admiralty West Coast of Scotland Pilot (NP66), both of which can be obtained from Admiralty chart agents.

Also in Yachtsman's Pilots published by Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson, and by Clyde Cruising Club. Charts: Eastern Approaches: – Moray Firth 115, Inverness Firth 1078, Caledonian Canal 1791. Western Approaches – Loch Linnhe (North) 2380, Fort William and Corpach 2372.

PILOTAGE
Pilotage is not normally required, however, in the case of very large craft this service may be arranged. Please contact the canal office for advice and allow a minimum of 48 hours for pilotage arrangements to be made.

NARROWBOATS
Skippers of narrowboats are requested to contact the canal office for specific safety advice in advance of arrival.

CUSTOMS CLEARANCE
A postal service can be arranged if you inform the Sea Lock Keeper on entry.

IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE
A telephone / fax service can be arranged if you inform the sea lock keeper on entry.

SLIPWAYS
A slipway is located at Caley Marina, Canal Road, Inverness. Access and use should be arranged directly with Caley Marina, telephone 01463 236328.

A British Waterways slipway suitable for small shallow draft vessels is located at Tomnahurich. Customers wishing to use this service should contact the Canal Office to arrange access.

Small craft may also be launched on to Loch Ness from the beach at Dores, and from a shallow slipway at Inchnacardoch near Fort Augustus.

JETTIES & TRANSIT MOORINGS
There are transit berths adjacent to most locks and bridges. Please seek the advice of the lock keeper as to the best place to berth, particularly if you plan a long stay. During the summer season, it is helpful if skippers of large vessels (LOA >15m) call the canal office prior to arrival, to allow planning of overnight berthing on passage.

FUEL
Diesel fuel is available at Seaport Marina, Caley Marina, and Corpach.

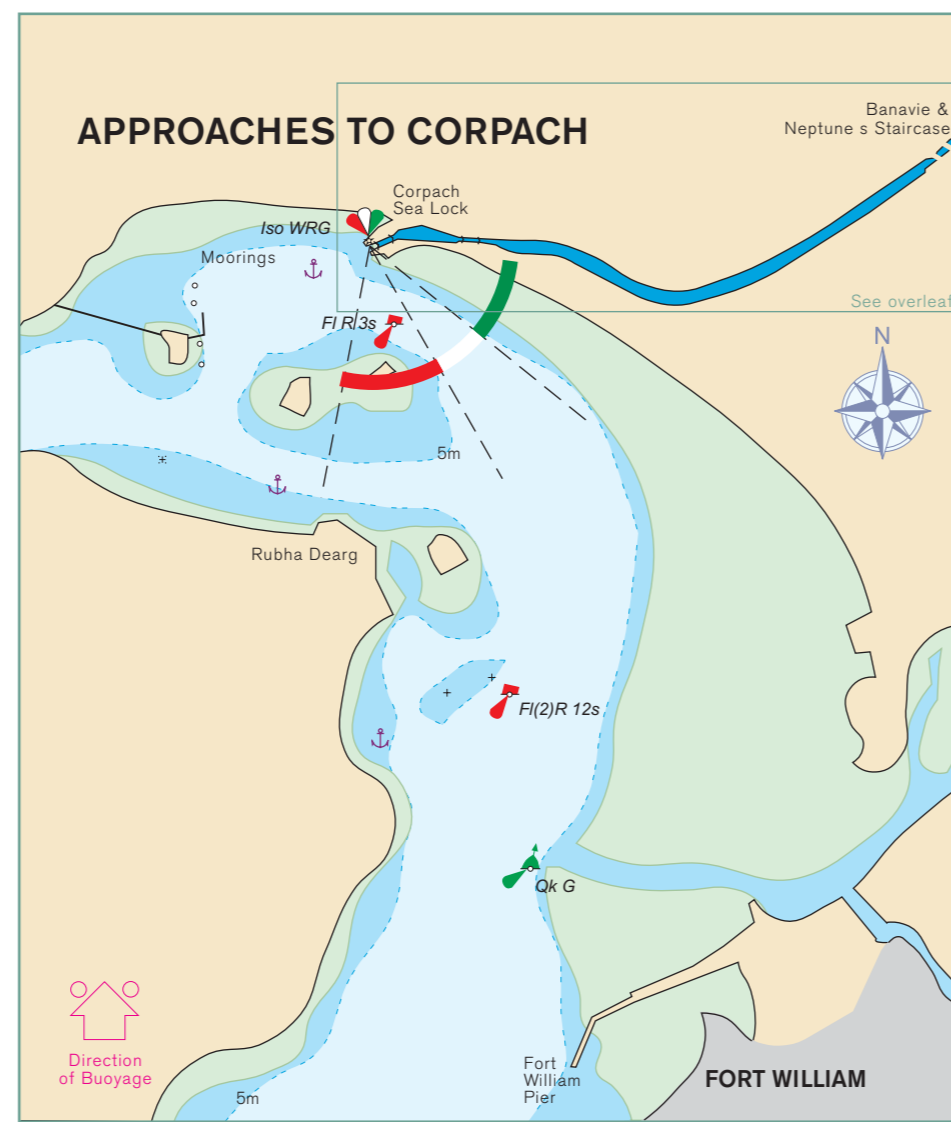
Garages may also provide fuel in small quantities - enquire as to opening hours.

Camping Gaz is available at many garages and local stores - please ask lock keepers for advice.

SOME PRIMARY SAFETY POINTS

- DO**
- Do relax and take your time.
 - Do take time to plan ahead, lay out warps, fenders, and clear decks before you set off.
 - Do check fuel and oil levels before starting the engine and also that all controls are working properly.
 - Do make sure that children and non-swimmers wear life jackets.
 - Do try and keep the canal tidy - dispose of litter in a thoughtful manner.
 - Do have an adequate number of competent crew aboard. Single-handed passage is only possible when sufficient staff are available to assist with ropes.

- DON'T**
- Do not speed in the waterway, this damages banks.
 - Do not allow pets to wander - keep them on leads and do not allow them to foul the canal banks.
 - Do not cruise after darkness.
 - Do not cruise near weirs, or attempt to shoot them in canoes.



- APPROACHES TO CORPACH**
- Admiralty Chart 2380 & 2372. Imray Chart C65.
 - HW Corpach is at Oban -0000 (sp); -0020 (np). Tidal range 3.5m (sp); 1.3m (np).
 - There is a holding pontoon outside the sea lock.
 - Yachts generally cannot lie in the sealock basin, and should continue through the next set of locks or to Banavie.
 - Marine diesel fuel is available at Corpach Basin.

CALEDONIAN CANAL INFORMATION

Length of natural lochs	38 miles (61.16Km)
Length of canal cuttings	22 miles (35.4 Km)
Total length of canal	60 miles (96.56 Km)
Summit level at Loch Oich:	106 feet (32.31m)
Number of Locks	29

SAFETY FIRST and the CANAL ENVIRONMENT

BOAT SAFETY SCHEME
All users of the canal must show us evidence that they hold insurance for a minimum of £1 million third party liability. Owners using the canal for more than 28 consecutive days must get a Boat Safety Certificate. Boats using the canal for less than 28 consecutive days may need to pass a (free) Dangerous Boat spot check carried out by a person authorised by British Waterways. The boat will be checked to see there is no: ¥ leaking fuel ¥ leaking gas ¥ damage to electrical cables ¥ no imminent danger of capsizing or sinking. We will require a Boat Safety Certificate to be produced for further licences.

SPEED LIMITS
The maximum speed permitted on the canal sections is 5 knots, but please plan your passage with leisure in mind since excess speed not only damages canal banks, but is hazardous to other users. Please slow down as you approach locks and bridges, and also whilst passing moored craft.

V.H.F COMMUNICATION
Sea locks and most locks and bridges are equipped with VHF and operate on Channel 74. Please keep your VHF Radio switched on!

RADAR
Masters should ensure radar scanners are switched off whilst craft are within or approaching locks.

LARGE VESSELS WARNING
Large commercial vessels operate on the Caledonian Canal. These craft normally have right of way and it may be necessary to stop smaller craft for short periods. For your safety please adhere to British Waterways staff instructions at all times.

SWIMMING
Please do not swim in the waterway, you could become entangled in weeds or rubbish, be hit by a passing craft or be drawn into a sluice when someone uses a lock. In each case the results could be fatal.

DRINKING WATER
Taps are available at Seaport Marina, Dochgarroch, Fort Augustus, Banavie, and Corpach. Please bring your own hose pipe for connection to the taps.

TOILETS AND SHOWERS
These are available at locations throughout the canal. Please see the maps overleaf. Keys are issued by sealock keepers on arrival and collected on exiting the canal. There is a £10.00 fee for keys not returned on exit.

PUMP OUT FACILITIES
Available at Banavie, Fort Augustus and Muirtown locks. If you require a pump-out please ask lock staff for advice on operation and service cost.

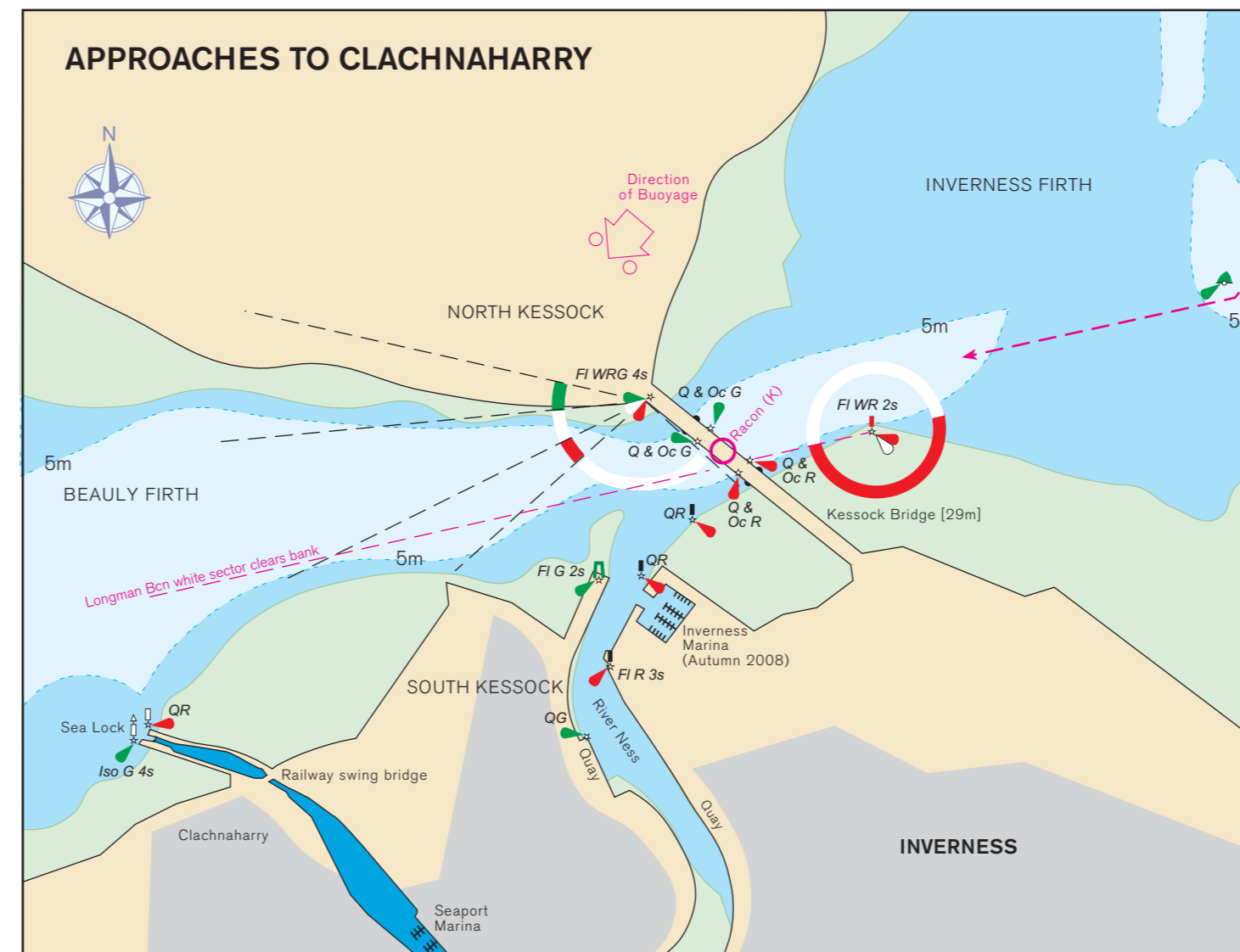
LITTER
Please respect the sensitive environment along the canal by using the refuse disposal points provided at locks, or retain litter until you can dispose of it in a thoughtful manner.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES
These are available at Seaport Marina, Fort Augustus, Gairloch and Banavie - please see local notices for advice on costs and operation. Be sure to bring your own washing powder or liquid detergent!

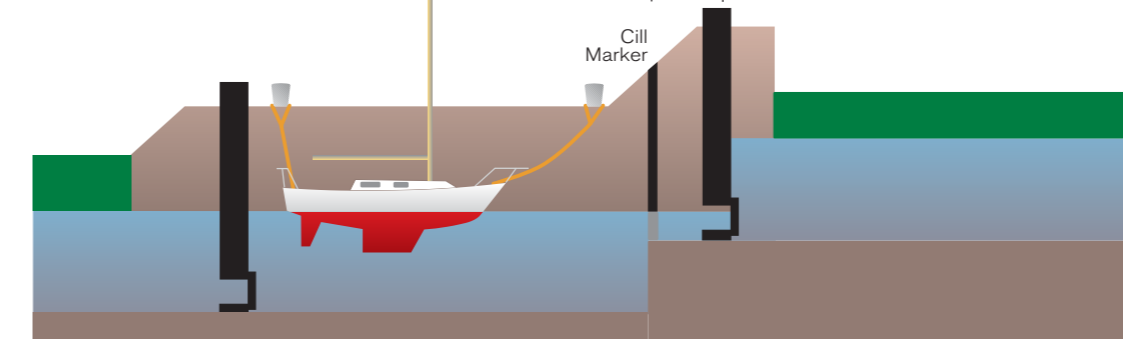
PORT WASTE MANAGEMENT
British Waterways has produced Port Waste Management Plans which are agreed with the Marine Coastguard Agency (MCA) and must be complied with at all times. Please note that no discharge of oil or bilge water is permitted either in the canal or its adjacent waters and any contravention of this ruling will result in notification to the MCA. As it is an offence to pump the bilges of your craft into the canal or the lochs, doing so may render you liable to prosecution by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). Emergency discharge facilities can be arranged using specialist contractors at additional cost - please contact the canal office for advice. There are disposal facilities for small amounts of waste oil at Seaport Marina and Corpach.

- SEA LOCK HOURS**
- The Canal Sea-locks operate HW-4 hours, and within operating hours.
 - VHF Ch 74 (16), call: Corpach Sea Lock or Clachnaharry Sea Lock.
 - Inverness Harbour VHF Ch 12 / 16 (office hours).

- APPROACHES TO CLACHNAHARRY**
- Admiralty Chart 1078, Imray Charts C22 & C23.
 - HW Inverness is at Aberdeen -0050 (sp); -0150 (np). Tidal range 4.1m (sp); 1.9m (np)
 - The final 3 miles of the approach from the NE to Kessock Bridge is shoal in places. A careful course should be maintained.
 - The tide runs strongly through Kessock Narrows and Kessock Roads. Approach the sea lock with care in these conditions.
 - Anchoring off the sea lock may be difficult due to the strong tidal current. It may be preferable to wait in Inverness Marina.
 - To avoid sandbank NE of canal entrance, (night) keep in white sector of Longman Point Beacon, or (day) keep beacon well open north of S bridge pier.



USING THE LOCKS



- GENERAL**
- Although the Caledonian Canal locks are large there is no need to be nervous about using them, as they are mechanised, and are operated by experienced canal staff who know the local conditions.
 - Follow the Lock Keeper's instructions, and do not hesitate to ask him or her for help.
 - Be prepared to share the lock chamber with other craft - this reduces the work load and saves water.
 - When approaching each lock, berth at the nearest transit jetty and put a crew member ashore to take your lines in the lock.
 - Ropes should be tended from on board, not from the shore, and should be led to a cleat or winch to aid control. However, at main lock flights ropes of small craft should be tended from shore, by an adult, to permit vessels to be "walked" from lock to lock on the flight. This avoids the need to start & stop engines and throw lines ashore at each lock.
 - To avoid a build up of fumes in the lock chamber please switch off engines once your ropes are secured ashore.
- LOCKING TIPS**
Those on board will need to control the craft during the locking process. This is not difficult if a few rules are observed:
- Approach the lock slowly and steadily, if the lock is not ready berth at a transit jetty while the gates are opened. Please do not hover outside the lock. Berth according to the Lock Keeper's instructions.
 - On single locks have a crew member positioned at bow and stern to manage ropes. On lock flights crew from small vessels should manage ropes on shore as directed by Lock Keepers.
 - Ensure ropes are clear from obstruction and can run cleanly through fairleads or stemhead roller.

- BASIC EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED**
- Three or four good quality ropes of sufficient length (13 metres) to reach the bottom of the lock chamber
 - Adequate fenders to protect your topsides - 3 or 4 per side should suffice.
 - In addition, a good tip is to lace a canvas sheet between the hull and fenders to avoid scuff marks.

www.scottishcanals.co.uk

Reference 2008

Caledonian Canal

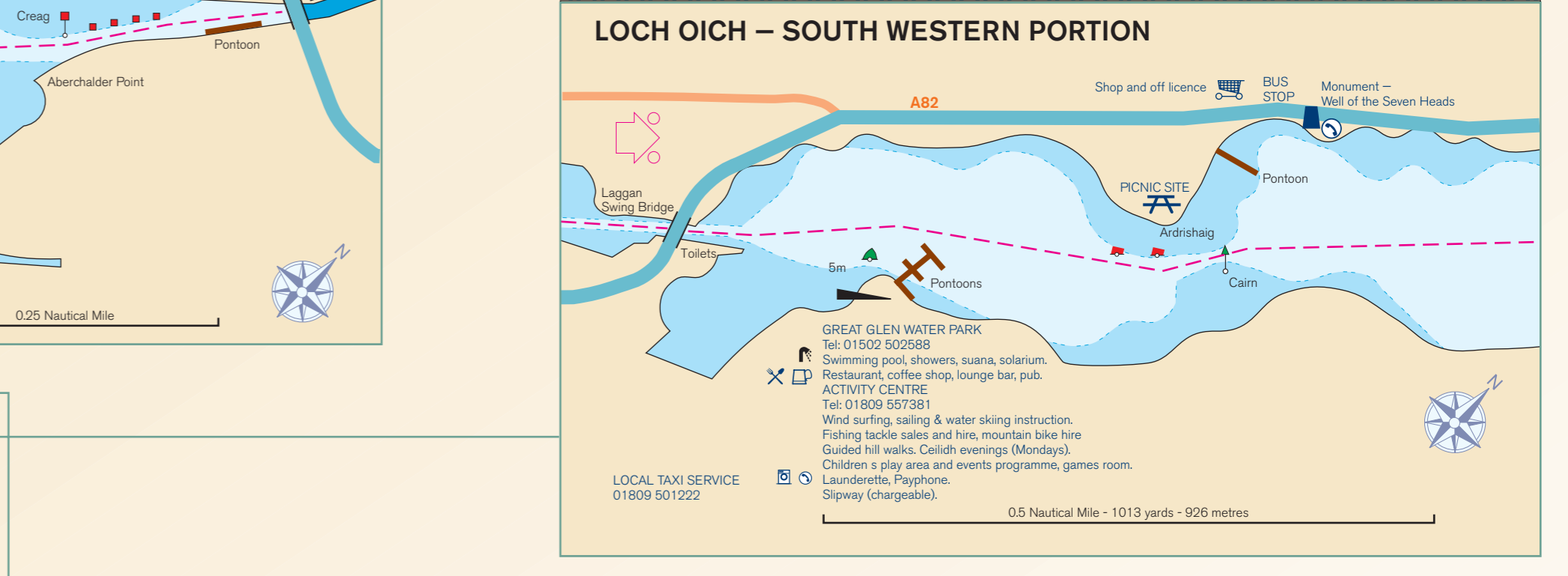
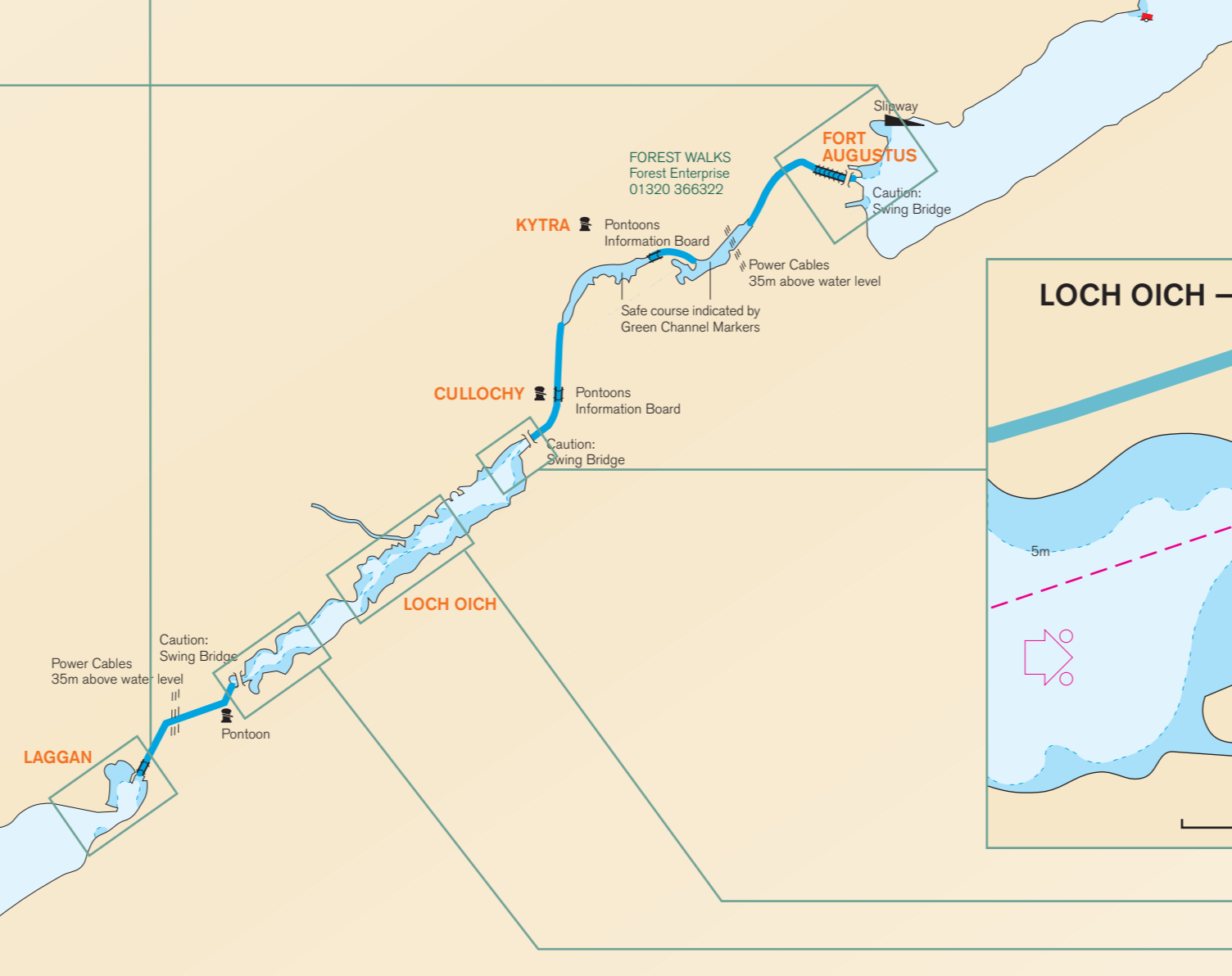
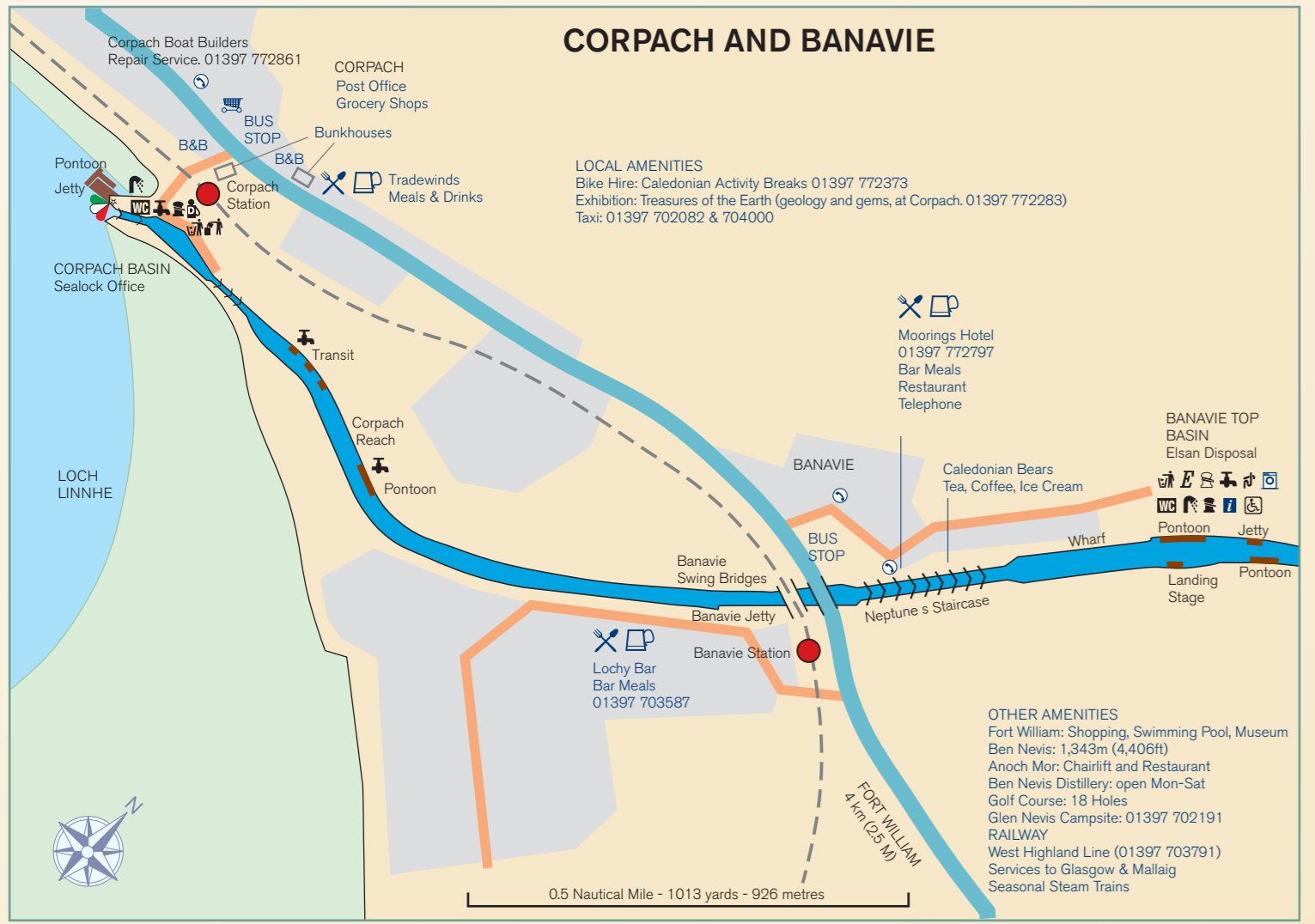
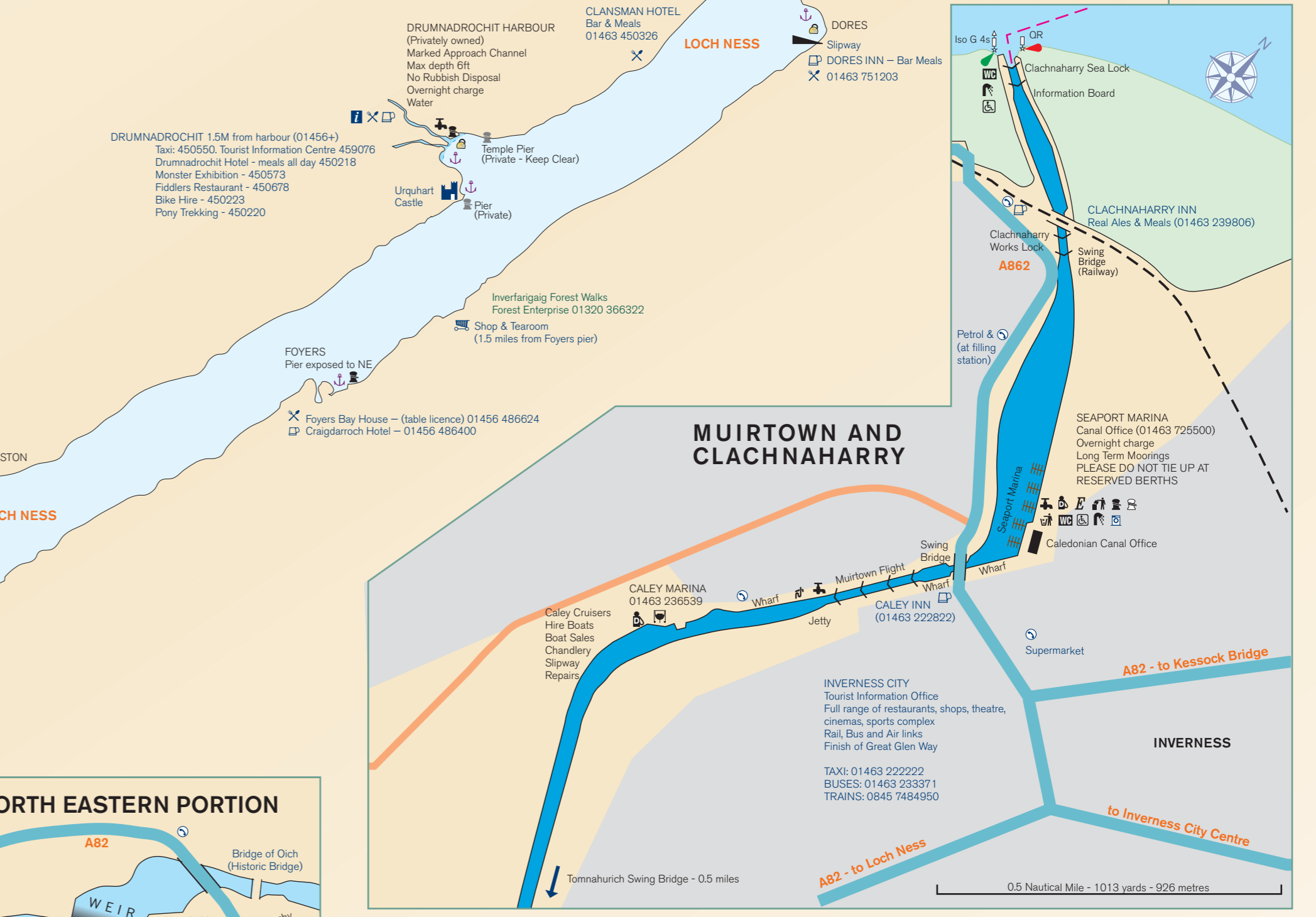
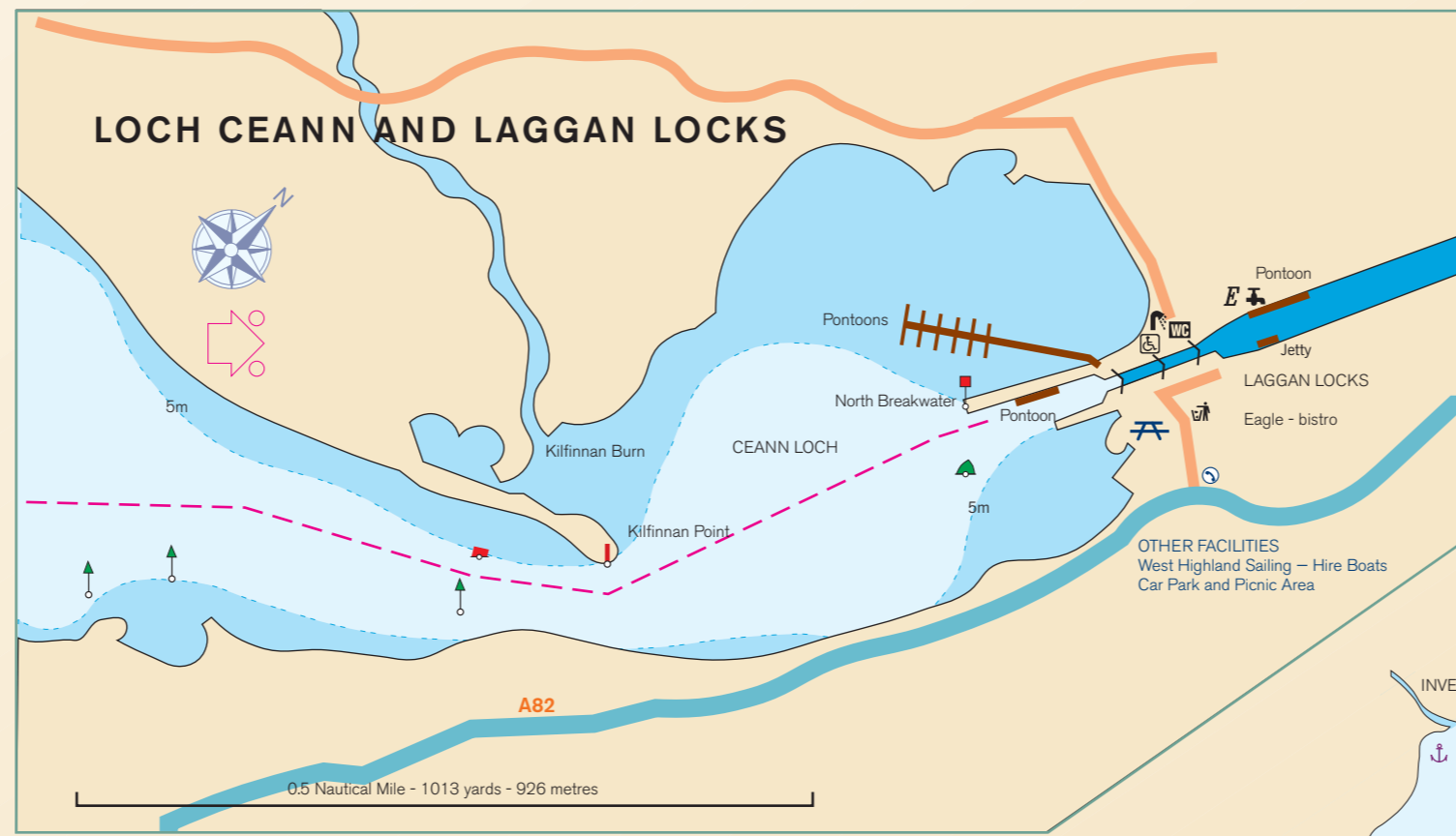
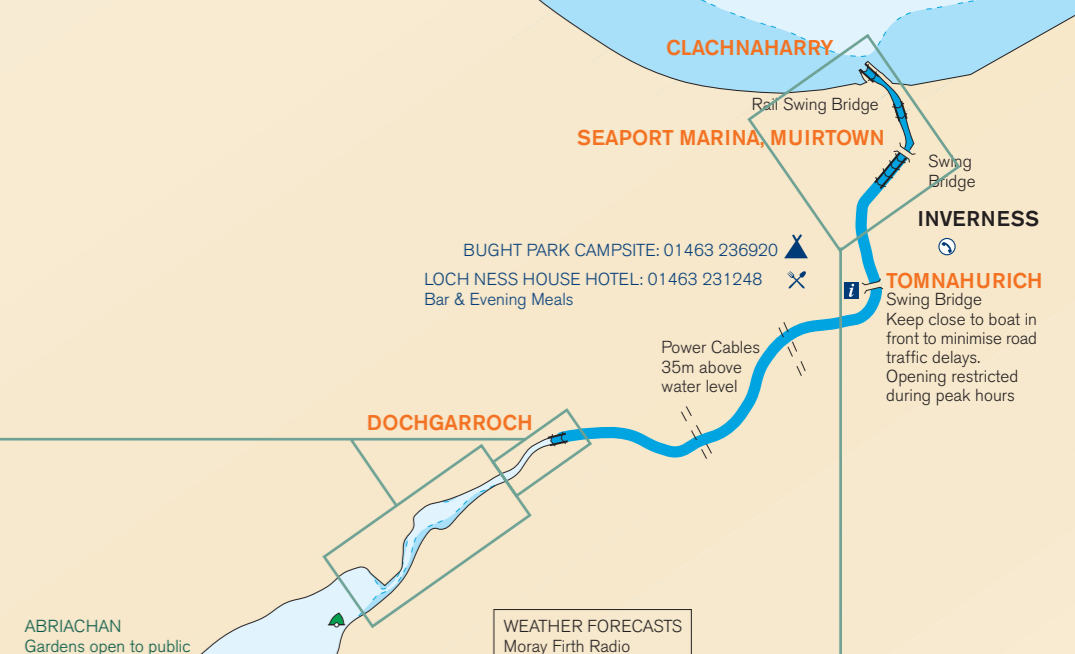
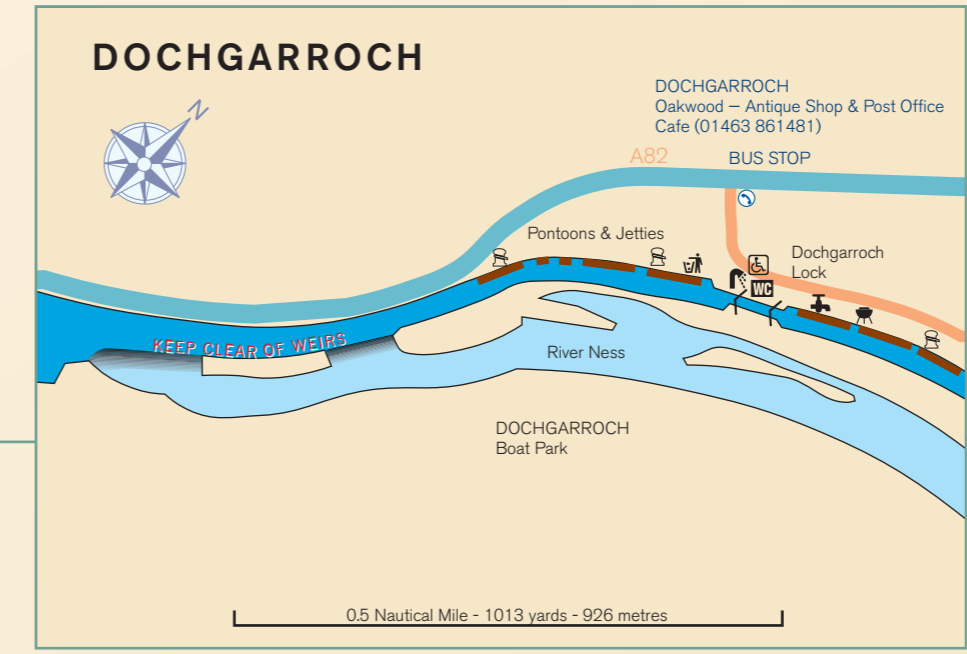
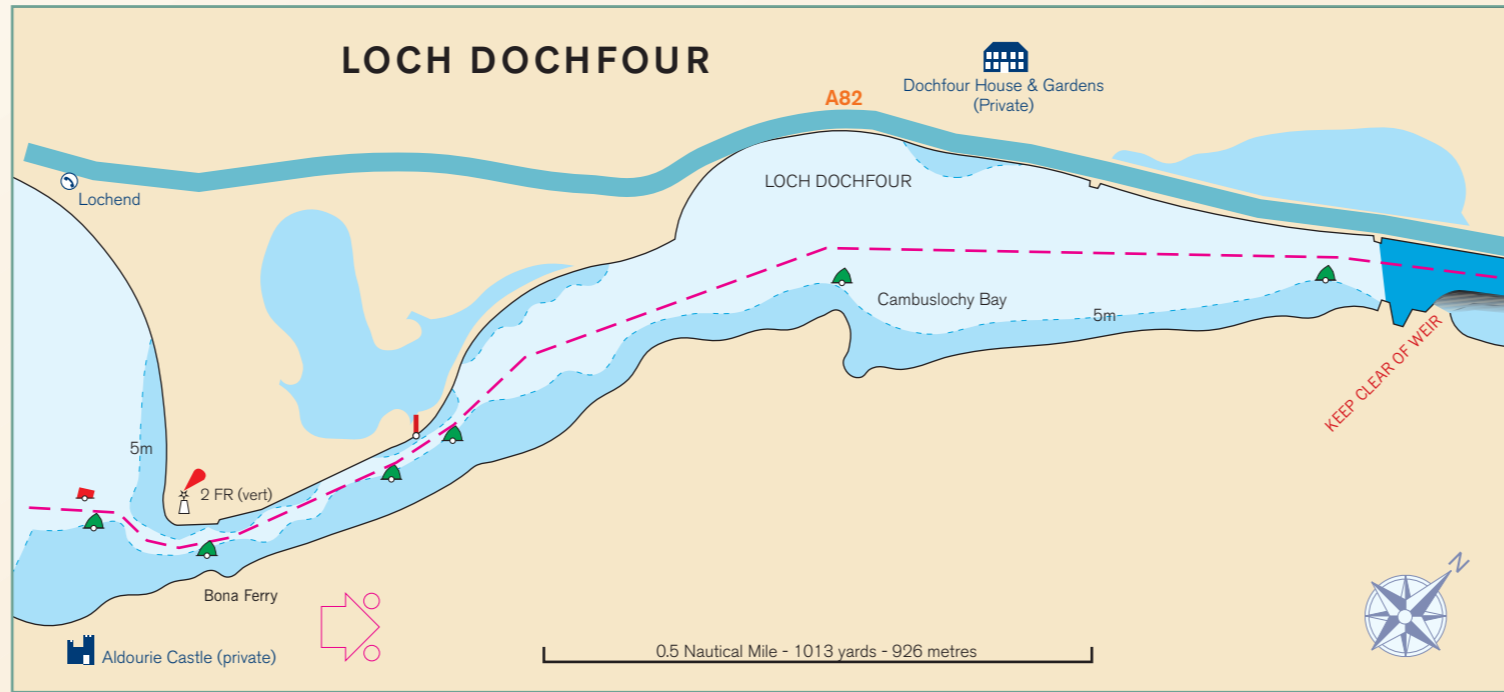
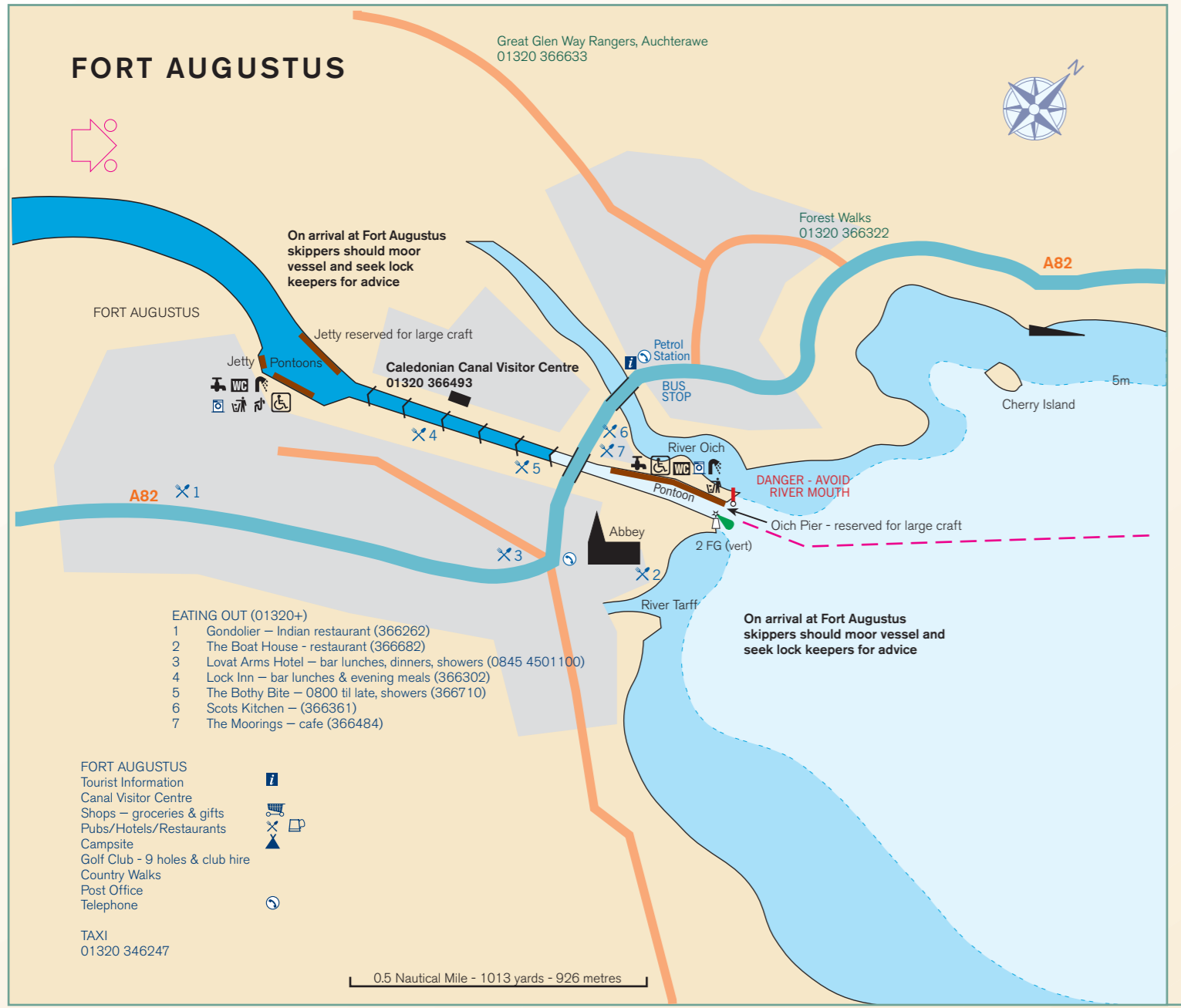


SKIPPER'S GUIDE

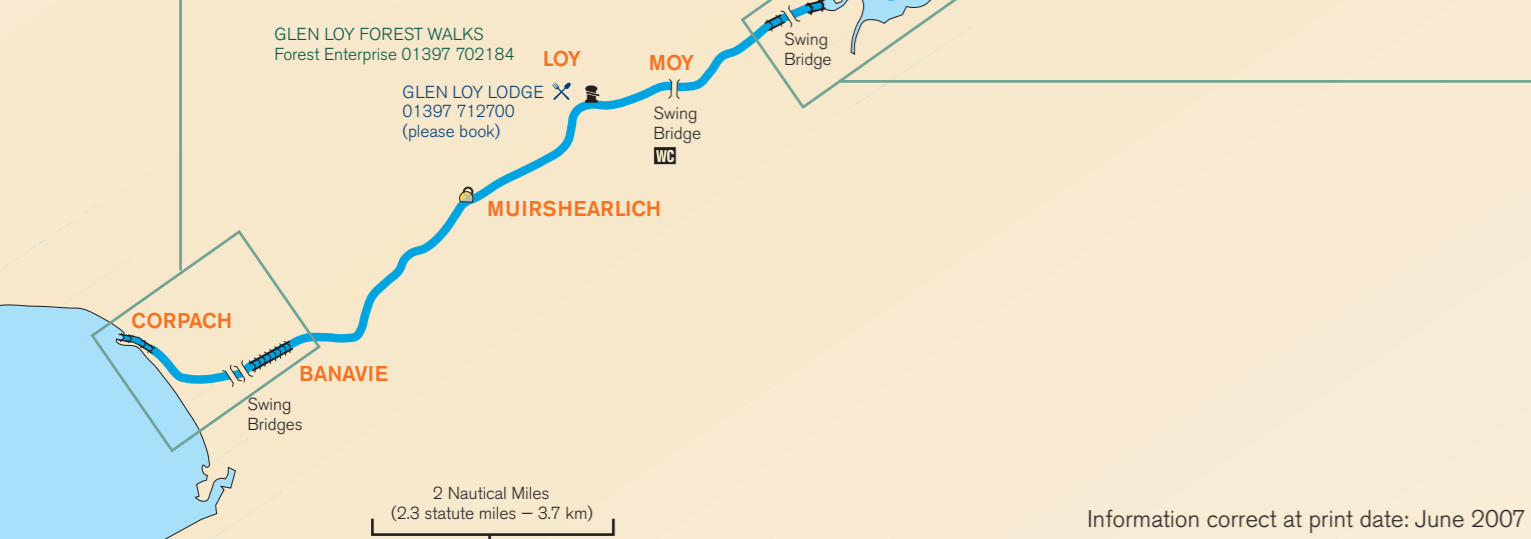
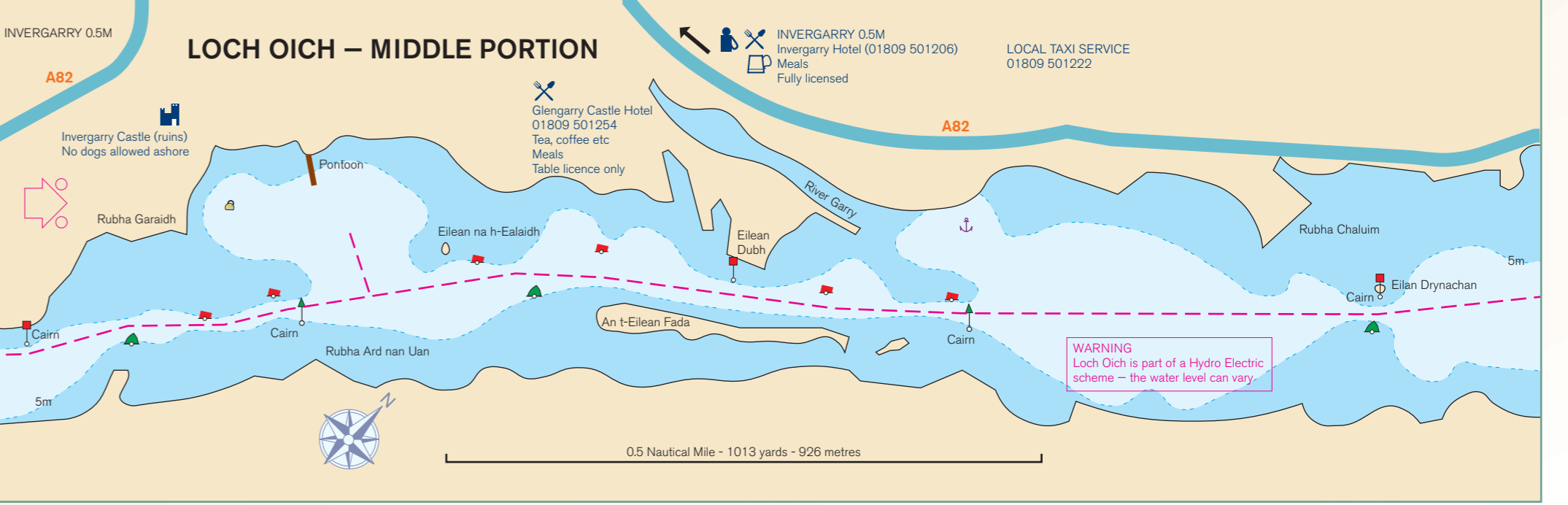
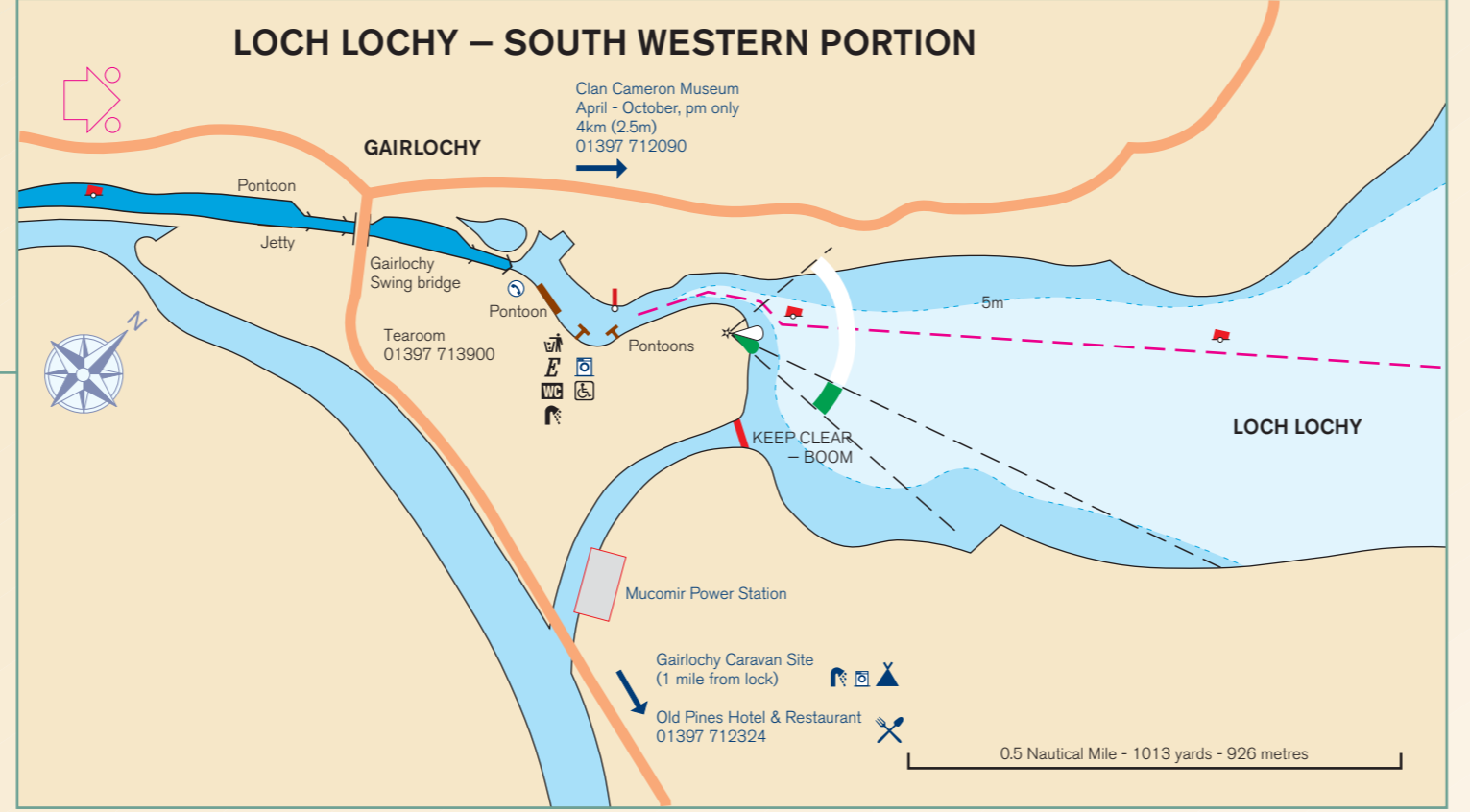
Caledonian Canal



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WATERWAY SYMBOLS	OTHER SYMBOLS
Mooring	Information
Pontoon	Public telephone
Drinking Water	Caf / restaurant
Diesel Fuel	Bar
Toilets	Petrol
Shower	Provisions shop
Shorepower	Campsite
Rubbish Disposal	Picnic site
Waste Oil Disposal	Laundry
Toilet Pump-out	Main road
Disabled Access	Minor road
Reserved mooring	NAVIGATION SYMBOLS
Private Mooring	Port hand navigation buoy or mark
Boat Host	Starboard hand navigation buoy or mark
Slipway	Direction of navigation marking
Visitor's mooring buoy	



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