

EXPLORE THE BIOSPHERE

LOCH DOON AND CARRICK FOREST DRIVE

Explore Loch Doon and Carrick Forest Drive to discover the UNESCO Biosphere where you can discover nature and landscapes as well as the big Biosphere ideas of conservation, learning and development that inspire a positive future.

WHERE TO GO...

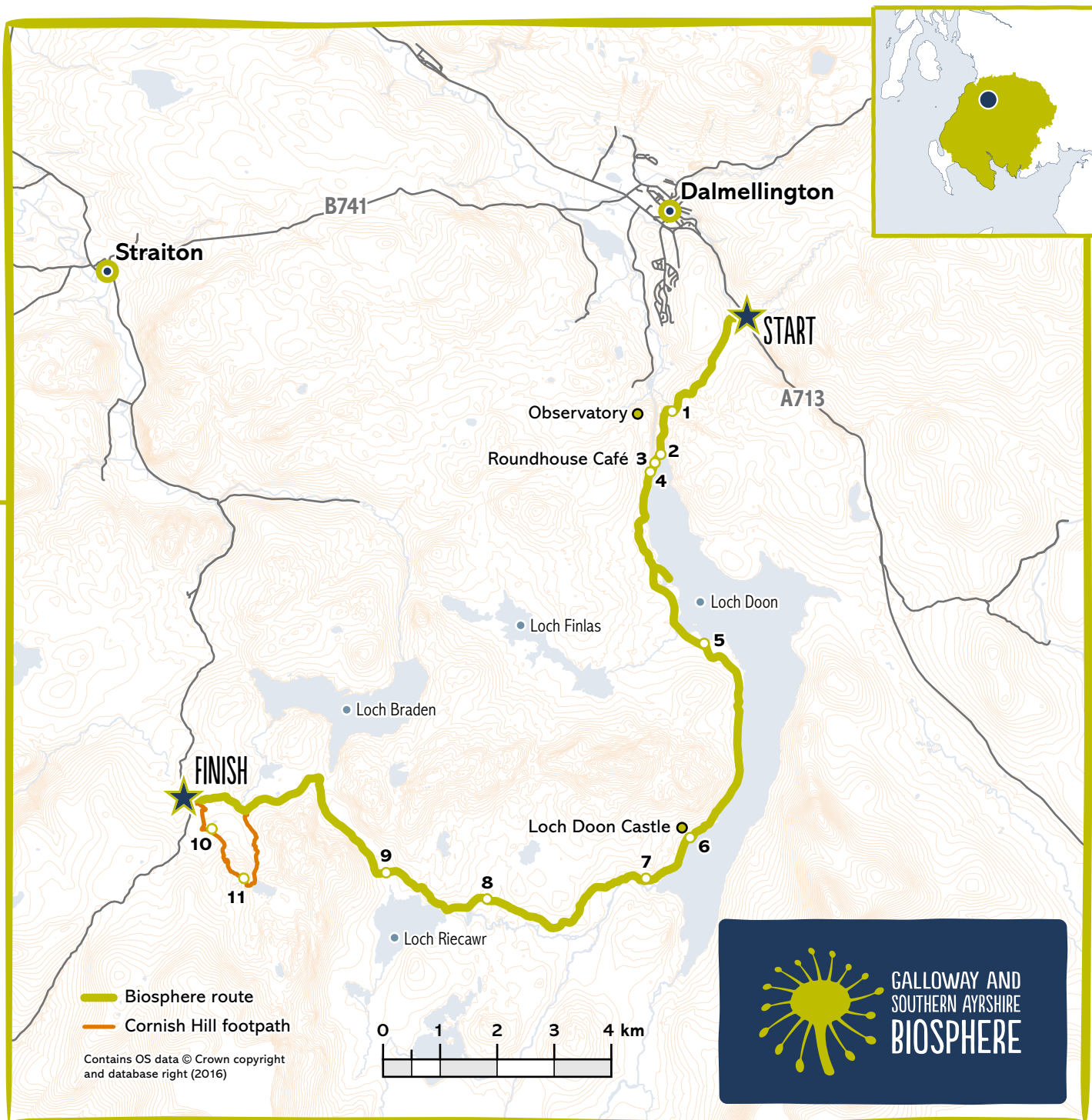
The Carrick forest drive is a two-way route about 11 miles (18 km) long linking Loch Doon with Stinchar Bridge.

The forest drive is suitable for most vehicles and is open from May to October. Walkers, cyclists and horse-riders are welcome year-round, however this is a working forest and when felling is underway there may be restrictions to public access. There is a small charge for vehicles to use the forest drive, so make sure you have some change with you.

Find Loch Doon by taking a sign posted minor road from the A713 south of Dalmellington. (NS49370 04033)

Find Stinchar Bridge entrance by turning at the signs to Carrick Forest about 7 miles (11 km) south of Straiton. (NX39642 95627)

Facilities are available in the settlements of Straiton and Dalmellington at either end of this route.



1 INTO THE DARK

Perched on a hillside the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory can be seen from the road. It makes the most of the natural asset offered by the world status dark sky but a visit to the observatory must be pre-booked.



5 FISH CONSERVATION

Research has shown that Arctic Charr, a genetically unique fish living in Loch Doon, may be threatened by the water becoming more acidic. Some fish have been moved to establish a genetic refuge in reservoirs in the Scottish Borders.



6 MOVING CASTLE

Built in the 13th century on an island on Loch Doon the castle was the ancient seat of the Lords of Carrick. It was taken down and rebuilt on the banks of the loch in the 1930s when the water level was raised as part of the hydro-electric scheme.

7 RETURN JOURNEY

The Carrick Lane is a shallow upland burn used by migrating fish such as Atlantic Salmon and Sea Trout. An ingenious circular fish ladder has been built in the dam to enable fish to continue their journey upriver at any time regardless of the water level.



3 GREEN SPONGE

The narrow wooded gorge of Ness Glen has trees and rocks covered by a green carpet of mosses. The soft green cushions in this precious habitat act like a giant sponge that slows the flow of rain into rivers and help protect us against flash floods.



4 OSPREY ATTRACTION

The Roundhouse Café serves refreshments to the visitors who come to experience the wild upland beauty of the Galloway Hills and view the nesting Osprey that catches fish in nearby lochs and rivers.



9 LOOK FOR SIGNS

Water voles are an indication of good quality water habitats. They are very secretive so to help understand more about where they live a volunteer-based survey is being undertaken to inform future projects to manage suitable habitats.



10 GET CONNECTED

From Stinchar Bridge Car Park a path takes you across a wooden bridge over the water falls towards Cornish Hill to discover two Rosnes Benches. The low seats are designed to help you experience the sights, sounds and smells of the forest.



11 POINT OF VIEW

Discover the head waters of the River Stinchar and Water of Girvan by exploring the Cornish Hill footpath. The strenuous walk to the top of Cornish Hill is rewarded by great views giving you a taste of the wilderness of the Galloway Hills.



8 SONG AND DANCE

A Black grouse viewing platform provides views across the open moorland. In the spring the males put on a display in order to attract a mate but you will have to be up around dawn to catch this stunning performance.



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Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
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Registered Charity number SCO44137

