



# **Cycling in the Straths**

*Siubhal tro na Srathan*

**Saturday, 24 May 2025**

Tongue, Sutherland

## **Rider Information Pack**

**48**

Ben Hope Trial

**63**

Strathnaver Challenge



@CyclingStraths



## **Welcome to Mackay Country!**

*Fáilte gu duthaich MhicAoidh!*

Cycling in the Straths is back for 2025; are you up for the challenge?

Join us on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May for a fun filled day of cycling and Mackay Country hospitality. Early arrivals can enjoy a relaxing evening sampling the hospitality on offer in the local hotels.

Riders will be able to choose from two routes which will take you through some of the most beautiful countryside in the world.

The longest route, the Strathnaver Challenge, will take cyclists on a 63-mile trip. Leaving Tongue riders will head east to Bettyhill before heading inland through Strathnaver to Altnaharra, along Strathmore before heading back to Tongue.

The Ben Hope Trial is shorter but still a challenging 48-miles with riders starting and finishing in Tongue on a circuit via Altnaharra and Strathmore.

Although the event will be timed, it is not a race. Both routes will give riders a challenge with plenty of opportunity to demonstrate cycling skills and stamina. It is expected that both routes will be completed in 5 hours.

All profits from Cycling in the Straths will be used to support Strathnaver Museum's programme of activities.

**The team look forward to welcoming you to Cycling in the Straths 2025!**



## **Schedule**

### **Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> May**

8.15am to 10am Registration, Tongue Village Hall

10.15am Cyclist briefing

10.30am Staged starts

## **Location and Parking**

Cycling in the Straths HQ will be Tongue Village Hall which can be found beside the local primary school. Here you will be able to register for the event and access toilet facilities. Please try and avoid parking at the Hall if possible, there is adequate parking in the village close by.

Bags and labels will be given to entrants who wish to leave personal belongings in the Hall for the duration of the event. Items left will be at your own risk.

## **Registration**

Registration will open on Saturday at 8.15am.

Entrants briefing will take place at 10.15am for a 10.30am start. Please note times may vary slightly if we have to accommodate a large number entering and registering on the day.

## **Refreshments**

Tea and biscuits will be available on Saturday morning prior to the start of the event. You'll find Feed Stations along the route and soup and sandwiches will be served at Tongue Village Hall on your return.

## **The Routes**

Approximately 90% of the route is single track. The routes are sign posted and motorists will be warned about the event. Please remember to use passing places to minimise disruption to other road users. As much of the route goes through common grazings please take care around sheep and lambs.

The Ben Hope road is in a poor state of repair and caution should be taken on this section of the route. There will be maps in the hall in the morning showing where to expect potential hazards.

Do remember that although the event is timed, it is not a race.

## **First Aid**

First Aid will travel the route with you and transport will follow picking up any breakdowns. Feed Stations will also carry First Aid and puncture repair kits.

## **What to bring with you**

To make your day easier and more enjoyable, you'll need a few essentials:

### **Clothing and kit**

It's compulsory to wear a helmet at Cycling in the Straths. Consider the likely weather conditions in advance and plan accordingly so you'll be as comfortable as possible. Ideally, try out your kit on a couple of test rides, rather than turning up with brand new, untested gear.

### **Basic toolkit**

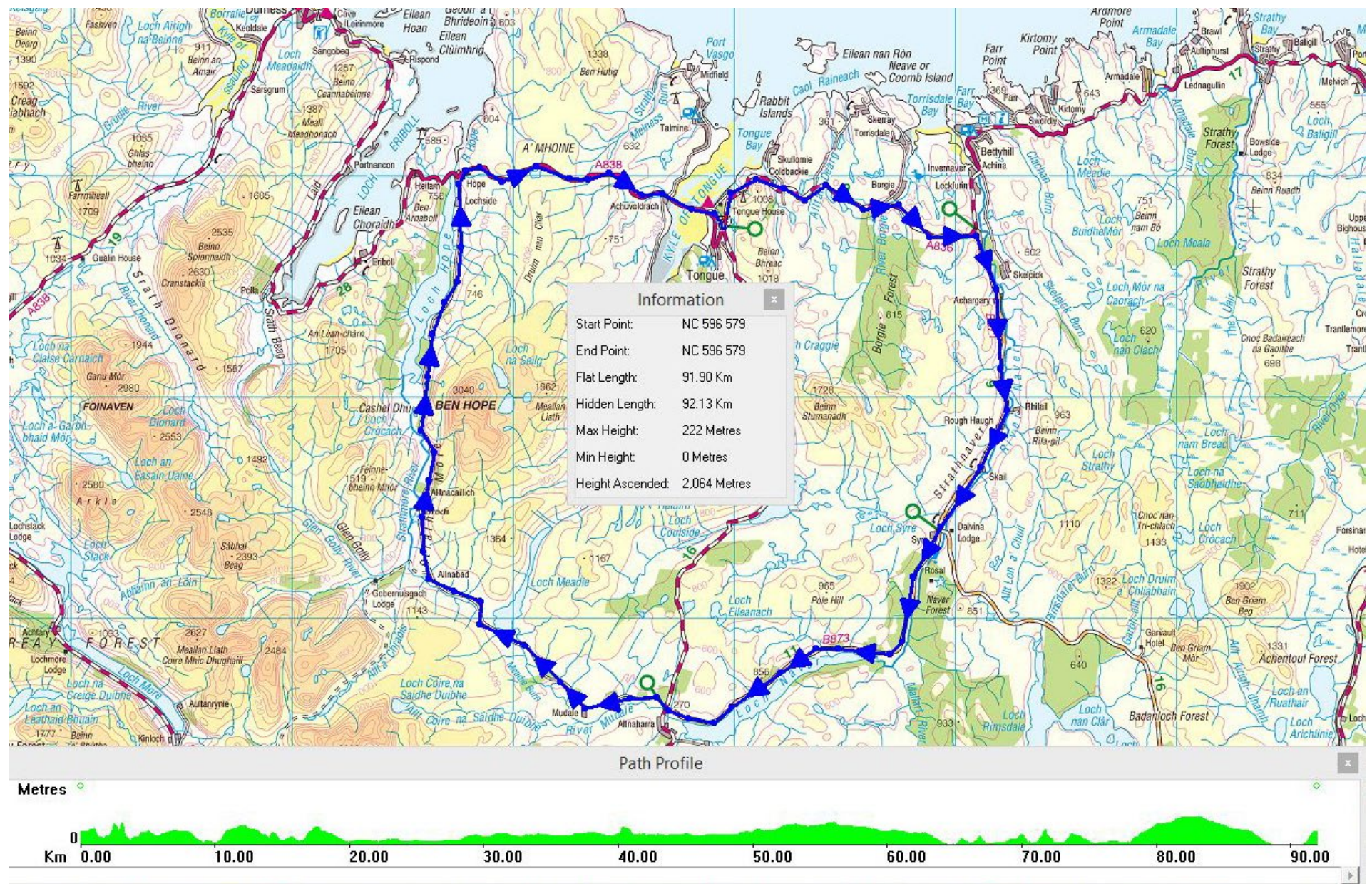
While routes will be supported by our staff, with puncture repair kits at feed stations, being self-reliant and able to keep yourself going is always a good idea. Bring a couple of spare inner tubes, tyre leavers, a pump and a multi-tool, as well as anything else you normally carry with you.

### **Our recommended must-haves are:**

- Your bike
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Padded cycling shorts
- Track mitts or cycle gloves
- Filled drink bottles (these can be replenished at feed / water stations)
- Snacks
- Glasses
- Cycling shorts
- Helmet
- Bike lock
- Sun cream
- Medication (if required)
- Baby wipes
- Mobile phone
- Route map, directions or GPX.



## Route 1: Strathnaver Challenge





## Route 2: Ben Hope Trial



## Accommodation Providers

### **The Ben Loyal Hotel**

Main Street  
Tongue  
IV27 4XF  
Tel: 01847 611 216  
Email: [info@benloyal.co.uk](mailto:info@benloyal.co.uk)  
[www.benloyal.co.uk](http://www.benloyal.co.uk)

### **The Tongue Hotel**

Tongue  
IV27 4XD  
Tel: 01847 611 206  
Email: [info@tonguehotel.co.uk](mailto:info@tonguehotel.co.uk)  
[www.tonguehotel.co.uk](http://www.tonguehotel.co.uk)

### **The Bothy**

18 Varrich Place  
Tongue  
IV27 4XG  
Tel: 01847 611 293  
Email: [silkeatthebothy@btinternet.com](mailto:silkeatthebothy@btinternet.com)  
[www.thebothytongue.co.uk](http://www.thebothytongue.co.uk)

### **Cloisters B&B**

Church Holme  
Talmine  
IV27 4YP  
Tel: 01847 601 286  
Email: [reception@cloistersbandb.co.uk](mailto:reception@cloistersbandb.co.uk)  
[www.cloistersbandb.co.uk](http://www.cloistersbandb.co.uk)

### **Kyle of Tongue Hostel and Holiday Park**

Tongue  
IV27 4XH  
Tel: 01847 611 789  
Email: [kothostelandhp@btinternet.com](mailto:kothostelandhp@btinternet.com)  
[www.tonguehostelandholidaypark.co.uk](http://www.tonguehostelandholidaypark.co.uk)

### **Post Office Flat**

Talmine  
Melness  
IV27 4YT  
Tel: 07876 382 717  
Email: [margaret.mackay2@btinternet.com](mailto:margaret.mackay2@btinternet.com)

### **Borgie Lodge Hotel**

Skerryay  
KW14 7TH  
Tel: 01641 521 332  
Email: [stoviecastle@gmail.com](mailto:stoviecastle@gmail.com)  
[www.borgielodgehotel.com](http://www.borgielodgehotel.com)

### **The Crask Inn**

Crask  
Sutherland  
IV27 4AB  
Tel: 01549 411 241  
Email: [thecraskinn@gmail.com](mailto:thecraskinn@gmail.com)  
web: [www.thecraskinn.org](http://www.thecraskinn.org)

### **Altnaharra Hotel**

Altnaharra  
Sutherland  
IV27 4UE  
Tel: 01549 411 222  
Email: [office@altnaharra.com](mailto:office@altnaharra.com)  
Web: [www.altnaharra.com](http://www.altnaharra.com)

### **Craigdhu Bettyhill Caravan & Camp Site**

Bettyhill  
Sutherland  
KW14 7SS  
Tel: 01641 521 273  
Email:  
[bettyhillcaravanandcampsite@gmail.com](mailto:bettyhillcaravanandcampsite@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.bettyhillcaravanandcampsite.com](http://www.bettyhillcaravanandcampsite.com)



## Charity Challenge



All profits from Cycling in the Straths will be used to support Strathnaver Museum's activity programme. This includes training opportunities for young people and health and wellbeing activities for vulnerable people in our community. But we also want to give you the opportunity to raise money for the causes close to your heart.

### **Want to organise sponsorship for your own charities?**

If you have a fundraising page why not share the link with us on Facebook or Tweet us @cyclingstraths with the hashtag #StrathsCycling and we will help to share your fundraising pages.

Or if you'd like to raise money for Strathnaver Museum you can find us on Total Giving:  
[www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/Strthnaver-museum](http://www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/Strthnaver-museum).

### **Strathnaver Museum**

Strathnaver Museum is a fully accredited volunteer led independent museum in Bettyhill which first opened its doors in 1976. It explores the story of the people, landscape and culture of north west Sutherland in the context of the Highland Clearances. The only Mackay Centre in Scotland is located on the first floor so it is a hub for all those with Mackay ancestry.

Recently refurbished the museum provides a valuable cultural and heritage centre for visitors and locals alike. It runs an innovative programme of activities from school visits to community boat building projects!





# Cycling in the Straths 2025

## Entry Form

Route 1: Strathnaver Challenge (63 miles) £40

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Route 2: Ben Hope Trial (48 miles) £40

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**\*ONLY THE FIRST 100 ENTRIES CAN BE ACCEPTED\***

Online entry available at: [www.cyclinginthestraths.co.uk/entries](http://www.cyclinginthestraths.co.uk/entries)

### DECLARATION

I agree to participate in this event entirely at my own risk and I understand that no liability shall attach to the organiser or any officials at the event, for any injury, loss or damage suffered by me in or by reason of the event however such may be caused and whether by negligence or otherwise. Entrants should note that this event is held on a public highway and they should be aware of the usual hazards such as other traffic, roadworks and poor road surfaces. You should ride safely according to the rules of the road and within your own capabilities. You must consider yourself as being on a private excursion and rely on your own arrangements in the event of failure to complete the course, whether through mechanical failure or accident. Applications are strictly personal, firm and binding. Entry fees will not be refunded under any circumstances. Once entry is accepted it cannot be transferred to another person for any reason whatsoever.

I understand that this event is not a race; it is a challenging cycle ride and the object is simply to complete the course within the allotted 5 hours. I am over the age of 16.

Please sign to say that you have read and accepted the terms and conditions of the event.

SIGNED..... DATE.....

### Rider Details

Name.....

Address.....

Email Address..... Contact Number.....

Entry forms should be returned with the entry fee to:

Fiona Mackenzie, Achins, Reay, KW14 7RL

Please make cheques payable to "Strathnaver Museum"

## **Other events**

### **Marty Mackay Memorial Fund Sponsored Cycle Walk**

**19 April 2025**

Cycle from Lairg to Durness or walk from Rhiconich to Durness in aid of various cancer charities and good causes in the north.

Contact: [kk60@btinternet.com](mailto:kk60@btinternet.com)

Search for Marty Mackay Memorial Fund Sponsored Cycle / Walk on Facebook.

### **Golspie 3 Peaks Challenge**

**31 May 2025**

Golspie 3 Peaks Challenge - hike or hike & bike across Silver Rock, Ben Bhraggie & Ben Horn.

Web: [www.facebook.com/groups/936148414074662](https://www.facebook.com/groups/936148414074662)