

A modern and developing transport network

Lìonradh còmhhdhail ùr a tha a' leasachadh



Car ownership is usually a necessity rather than a luxury in the Highlands. The main A9 trunk road, which stretches from Dalwhinnie in the south to Thurso/Wick in the north, has been significantly upgraded over the years. This has improved safety and reduced journey times.

Rural areas do have stretches of single track road, although improvements to these are being made. A courteous attitude and giving way to oncoming and faster vehicles is always appreciated with a friendly wave.

Rail services run regularly from Inverness. Travelling north to Thurso/Wick, south to Edinburgh, Glasgow and London, east to Aberdeen and west to Kyle of Lochalsh, the rail network is comprehensive and well maintained. Improvements to railway commuter services in the Inverness 'travel to work area' have been made and a direct rail link from Fort William to Glasgow helps connect the west of the area with conurbations in the rest of the UK. Train sleeper services run from London to Inverness and Fort William.

There are regular bus services between major population centres in the Highlands and efficient

connections with major UK towns and cities. Thanks to an extensive network of subsidised routes and post bus services, rural areas are also well served.

Inverness Airport - the major air hub - is situated at Dalcross, half way between Inverness and Nairn, and has recently been modernised with the addition of a light and spacious terminal building. With passenger numbers increasing each year, a wider and more varied range of flights is available within the rest of the UK and internationally, including charter flights to the Algarve, Malta and Sardinia.

Commuting from the Highlands to Gatwick, Heathrow and Luton as well as Manchester and Birmingham and, from the summer of 2005, to Belfast and Bristol allows the best of both worlds. The Highlands are a great place to live without losing the wider range of working opportunities available elsewhere in the UK.

Wick Airport in Caithness provides flights to and from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Inverness and Sumburgh as well as acting as a helicopter base for oil related operations.

Sustaining life in the 'Small Isles'

A' cumail nan Eileanan Beaga a'dol

*Highland Spotlight
Sùil air a' Ghàidhealtachd*

The 'Small Isles' of Canna, Eigg, Muck and Rum which lie between the Lochaber mainland and the Isle of Skye are some of the remotest parts of the Highlands. Thanks to major investment in the transport system, these islands are enjoying a renaissance.

As part of a £30 million development, a new car ferry - the Caledonian MacBrayne-operated Lochnevis - now gives safe and reliable links to the mainland. New ferry terminals have been built at Eigg, Muck and Rum which can accommodate cars for the first time. At Inverie on the Knoydart Peninsula a new ferry terminal is also imminent and there are plans for an upgrade at Canna.

The Lochnevis is a modern 190 passenger, 12 vehicle ferry - a far cry from the 19th century facilities of not so long ago. The previous passenger-only ferry was met by a 'flit' boat as it could not land at the Island jetties. This involved passengers transferring to the smaller boat at sea, making for unsafe and very wet journeys for those living on and visiting the islands.

