

## ROWARDENNAN

I have for many years been tantalised by the West Highland Way (WHW). In the late 1980s my husband and brother walked it together. In 2004 and 2005 my daughters ran it in the Caledonian Challenge. Oh how I wanted to do at least part of it. At last my opportunity came. In August 2005 I was holidaying in Rowardennan Scottish Youth Hostel which is situated on the WHW and used by many walkers as an overnight stop. Needless to say, perched on my scooter, off I went exploring.



*West Highland Way at Rowardennan*

Heading south I took the unlisted road towards Balmaha. Half a mile later at the pub, "The Clansman", I followed the WHW up a narrow, steep hill. Unfortunately, this proved a little too challenging and before reaching the hilltop I had to return to the safety of tarmac. I continued down the road and after a further half mile I once again meandered off towards the loch side and found the other side of the hill and the WHW but likewise, this was too steep.

And so I continued, for 5 miles, down the unlisted road taking occasional detours to explore more accessible paths on the WHW. Had time permitted I could have kept going in this manner until I reached Balmaha, a further 2 miles. However, I had the northern route of the WHW still to explore.

At last I found what I consider "proper rambling" on the WHW. For a mile my wheels took me blissfully along a stable, flat trail running along the side of Loch Lomond. Unfortunately, at the Ptarmigan Lodge not only does the path become steep 1:7 but a Forest Enterprise gate, with a sadly too small kissing gate, was a barrier. By this time I

had met up with the National Trust for Scotland Ranger and he thought that I could have possibly continued at least another mile of the WHW.

#### Notes from Ben Lomond Ranger

- for car access through the gate it is best to phone a couple of days before your visit.
- With prior arrangement we can accompany visitors as guides for a time, to help better inform them about many aspects of the Rowardennan area - donations accepted!

Further information from:

National Trust for Scotland: Ben Lomond Ranger, 01360 870224

FACTFILE	
MAP	Ordnance Survey map 56
GRID REFERENCE start/finish	NS 360989
PARKING	NTS Ranger Centre - by arrangement
TOILETS	NTS Ranger Centre - W/C accessible
DISTANCE	6 miles (or more)
LANDSCAPE	Waterscape/ Ben Lomond/ forest