

### 25 HIGHLAND SOUTH HARRIS

Distance: 8½ miles/13.7km Time: 4 hours Grade: Moderate







# CHOSEN BY... THEO FORD-SAGERS Of the many sights

these islands have to offer, the pristine white beaches on the west coast of South Harris should rank way up any visitor's list. The sandy soils that surround them (known as machair) were the final resting place for many inhabitants of the sheltered bays on the east coast, where the rock and peat offered few places to bury the dead. The fabled journeys to the windswept western cemeteries are what has given this track the sombre name 'Coffin Road' (Bealach Eòrabhat), but its usage for many purposes goes back centuries. Although not all of it features on OS maps, the old path is still there. Start on the west side and take this circuit clockwise to save the most dramatic scenery for later on. You'll also travel the coffin road in the same direction as those hardy pall bearers with their ponderous cargo.

### Start |

The first section is mostly Tarmac, single-track in places so take care. From the layby, walk east along the road for 600m. At road junction, take track on L. When it re-emerges at the road, continue along the road to bridge.

2¾ miles/1.25 km Immediately before the bridge, take firm track on

#### **PLAN YOUR WALK**



#### ROUTE

Start/parking Free parking at the roadside, grid ref NG090971 Is it for me? Navigation is simple and gradients aren't very punishing. Firm ground in summer, but some patches will become boggy in winter Stiles One

#### **PLANNING**

**Nearest town** Tarbert **Refreshments** The Machair Kitchen, hotel-hebrides. com, 01859 550333

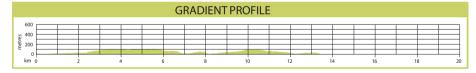
#### **Public toilets**

The Machair Kitchen (if you're a customer)

Public transport Bus W10 from Tarbert to Luskentyre (Mon-Sat). Operator: Hebridean Transport, 01851 705050

Maps OS Explorer 455; Landranger 14

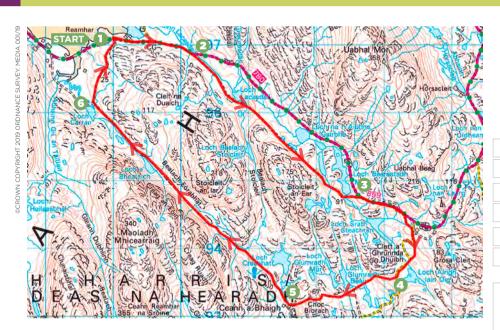
R to Lacasdail Cottage, keeping the river on your L. Enter gate immediately before the



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OS Explorer map 455 Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop



cottage, then another as you leave the cottage behind you. Approximately 1.8km (1.1m) after the cottage you'll reach a quarry; if in operation, notify the foreman before crossing. Follow track beyond the quarry to the road.

**7** 3 miles/4.8km Turn R at the road and walk 100m, then take track on L. Continue until it re-emerges at the road, turn L and follow Tarmac. After 60m turn R onto short track. When it meets the road again, turn R. If you're wearing good boots, turn L at the first hairpin onto grass path. Or, to avoid marshy ground, stay on the road (the

marshy path meets the road

after 270m). As the road approaches the shore of a small loch, take track on R.

4 miles/6.4km Follow the old path downhill. Cross the footbridge, continue straight at junction. Follow sign to Seilebost, You'll cross another bridge, then path climbs and follows the line of a fence. Enter gate and descend to houses between Aird Mhige and Liceasto. Enter gateway and proceed to footbridge.

5 miles/8.2km Immediately after bridge, turn R, walk on grassy path around buildings and past the ruined blackhouse on L. You're now on the old 'coffin road'.

About 400m after the ruin. enter gate. The path zigs-zags upwards from here and loses its identity on the map, but it's easy to follow. At the highest point the track straightens out.

73/4 miles/12.5km After long descent, at the iunction, enter gate, turn R and follow the track to stile at road. From here, the starting point is 60m away on your L. CW

#### VIEW THE WALK ON **OS MAPS ONLINE:**

Ifto.com/cwroutes IN ASSOCIATION WITH



TIME TAKEN

