

Shortest distance 214km, suggested route 216km.

I've found the footpaths over the Kessock and Cromarty bridges useful.

Otherwise the A9 can generally be avoided, until you leave it for good near Alness for the fine ride over the Struie.

After Lairg the country is very remote, only the Crask Inn

and Altnaharra Hotel before you get to Kinbrace. There is no easy proof of passage here, a small garage with no shop, a school that might be open.

A GPS fix is one way, another is to hope that the hotel at Forsinard is open, it doubles as a post office.

I stayed at <http://www.sandras-backpackers.co.uk/>.

Log from 2007, now use Inverness for control instead of Westhill.

E12 (220km). Thurso, Kinbrace, Altnaharra, Bonar Bridge, Westhill.

16/09/07 (Sunday) , 134m on clock, 12hr35, 0707-1942, It had stopped raining and the wind had veered to become a Westerly.

I retraced thru Reay and turned south on the Helmsdale road. I had not found much information about Kinbrace, so at Forsinard Hotel I begged a stamp. The other side of the level crossing I found an RSPB visitors centre which according to its notice should have been open but wasn't. When I got to Kinbrace there were about 20 houses, a school and an MOT garage. At a pinch I could have had to make do with a signature from a resident.

I got a signature from the barman at Altnaharra Hotel but soon pressed on to the Crask Inn for butties. On reaching Bonar Bridge there was a Londis shop open. A short run along the A9

leads to a shortcut on the B9176. Good views from up there. After Evanton I had to rejoin the A9 and stayed with it to Inverness altho I used the pavement on Kessock Bridge.

I controlled at a garage in Inverness, but couldn't book a bike on as the booking office was shut.

I got a meal at a real ale pub near the station and retired

to the YH for the night. The next day I couldn't get the first train because bikes were booked on further down the line at Pitlochry, but I got the next one and so back home.

