



**DOG FRIENDLY
THINGS TO DO
NEAR TIG COTTAGE
& SOUTH AYRSHIRE**

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“Woof, woof, woof, woof, woof.”

Five woof review of Tig Cottage from it's first doggy guest, Albert.



Tig Cottage, 1879 (spot the two dogs!)

CHAPTER 1

DOGGY HOLIDAYS!

Scotland is pretty dog friendly these days.

Lots of us like going on holiday with our dogs, and if you're visiting Tig Cottage, you might be one of the people who like doing that too!

But if you're in a strange place, how do you know where to go, or what to do? After all, turning up somewhere and discovering that they won't let your furry friend come in, can be pretty miserable.

So, here's some suggestions about things to do and places to go, where Fido will be welcomed.

TIG COTTAGE AND YOUR DOG

TIG IS DOG FRIENDLY!

As dog owners ourselves, we've tried to make Tig Cottage as doggy friendly as possible.

Dog supplies.

Under the sink you'll find dog bowls, a dog towel and a "doggy disaster kit" containing poop bags and cleaning supplies should your dog have an accident in the house.

Dogs on sofas and beds.

We don't mind if your dog sits on the sofas or chair, but please try and make sure that your dog is clean and dry.

Dogs are allowed in the bedroom and on the bed, should you wish, but again please make sure your dog is clean and dry. There is no need to crate your pet.

If you do crate your pet, and take the crate upstairs, please be careful of bashing the walls on your way up, as this damages the paint work.

Dogs in the garden.

The garden is lovely but it is not securely fenced, and there

is a steep drop down to the river. There are also rabbits, mice and other wild animals that visit the garden, all of which are wonderful fun to chase. Some of the nearby fields can have sheep in them.

With all this in mind, we strongly suggest keeping your dog on a lead in the garden.

If your dog poops in the garden, please clean up after them. Dog poop can go in the General Waste bin by the front fence.

There is decking in the back garden but this isn't fenced off. We sometimes get asked why this isn't fenced off, as it would make a (very small) secure area for a dog outside.

We haven't done this because the gaps between the slats are big enough for a small dog to squeeze through, and secondly the decking is ridged. This allows for water to drain away easily, but it would also mean if Fido does poop on it, it would be very difficult to scoop it all up.

We appreciate that *your* dog wouldn't do this, but other people's might!

Thank you for your understanding.

DOG EMERGENCIES

VET INFORMATION, ADDERS AND PESKY CRITTERS.

We hope you never need this section, but better to know about it than not!

The nearest, and most recommended, vet in the area is

Alan Jeans, 5 Westley Road, Girvan, KA26 9DB.

His telephone number is **01465 714418** (this is a 24 hour number).

The biggest risks to your dog in South Ayrshire are adders and ticks.

It's important to know that Scotland has adders, the only venomous snake in the UK. Adders are unlikely to bite unless they feel threatened - which they can do, if poked or prodded or stood on by a blissfully unaware doggo.



Adders will normally bite a dog on its face or legs, and the bitten area will immediately swell up. You might even be able to see the two small puncture marks in the middle of the bite.

Other signs your dog might have just been bitten include howling in pain, bleeding or bruising, suddenly being lame or suddenly appearing very nervous. They may start to experience tremors, too.

Smaller dogs can be worse affected than big dogs.

If your dog is bitten by an adder, they need immediate medical assistance. If possible, carry your dog rather than let them walk, in order to try and slow the spread of the venom through the dog's bloodstream.

Keep your dog as warm and calm as possible (again, trying to slow the spread of venom by keeping your dog heart rate slow).

The vet will likely treat the dog for shock, give them pain relief and anti-histamine depending on the swelling, and they might even use anti-venom.

Adder bites aren't often fatal, but they can be severe, and you really do need to seek that immediate medical treatment. Some websites suggest simply giving dogs human anti-histamine; we'd say "go to the vet urgently!", because safe is always better than sorry.

Ticks in Scotland are no different from ticks anywhere else, but you're more likely to find them in the countryside than in urban areas.

Ticks look like small beans that get bigger and bigger as they gorge on your dog's blood. The tick will be firmly attached to your dog; it has sank its rather unpleasant jaws into your dog's skin.

The tick needs to be removed by being twisted off - if you try to just pull it off, you'll remove the body but leave the tick's head and jaws stuck in your dog's body, which can be an infection risk.

There are special tools to remove ticks from your dog. They can be bought from pet shops or vets, but if you've never used one before, please consider asking a vet to show you how to do it.

There is a Tick Removal Tool in the utility room cupboard next to the first aid kit. If you use it, please let us know so we can replace it.

Sand fleas aren't fleas, they're actually **sand hoppers**, and are found in wet sand as the temperature drops (so early mornings and evenings as it gets cooler). They eat decomposing vegetation, and are eaten by birds.

When disturbed, sand hoppers can jump up several inches, and even though they are only a couple of centimetres long, they can be quite visible when they jump.

They don't bite, but they're not pleasant for your dog, and they're not nice to have in your car (or in the cottage), so please be careful when walking on wet sand in the early mornings or later evenings.

Sandflies are also found in beaches, and they do bite. They'll bite both people and dogs, and whilst their bite is not poisonous, it can be itchy. Sandflies can attach themselves to people or dogs.

Humans can use mosquito repellent, but for dogs, there's not much you can do other than move if you see sandflies (they tend to congregate in groups). Dogs that have been bitten will scratch, just like if they had a flea bite, and bites tend to affect dogs' feet and their underbody as these are closer to the sand.

We recommend cleaning and washing your dog if they've been splashing around in the beach, especially if they've picked up salt and debris. If you decide to do this, please use the bath rather than the shower!

Washing the dog will often soothe any bitten or itching areas, and you can use special flea shampoo (check with the pet shop that it's suitable for sand flea bites) to help soothe any bites even more.

If your dog has been severely bitten, you may wish to go to the vets and have your dog checked over.

The best time to walk your dog on the beach is when the tide is out, and the sand is dry. The warmer the weather, the less sand hoppers and sand fleas there are. The best time is likely to be late morning and early afternoon.

If you lose your dog, we recommend using the Dog Lost website at www.doglost.co.uk - they also have a large number of links to different resources.

You can also post on the Drone SAR For Lost Dogs Facebook page - this is a free service using drones to look for lost dogs at www.facebook.com/groups/DroneSARForLostDogsUK

You may also wish to check Facebook (depending on your location) for any local Facebook groups where you can post about your dog being lost.

In Ballantrae, the main group is Information Ballantrae Scotland at www.facebook.com/groups/801292689987164 and in Girvan it's the Girvan Community Group at www.facebook.com/groups/773479956537309

THINGS TO DO

THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR DOG

Whether you're looking for heroic hikes across the countryside or lazy lunches at the pub, there's something for everyone.

South Ayrshire and the adjoining Dumfries and Galloway has some of the most lovely scenery in Scotland, even if it's not quite as famous as the Highlands (yet!).

Rolling hills, picturesque lochs, rugged coastlines and beautiful beaches are yours for exploring, but if hikes aren't your thing, there's a variety of historic towns and villages to visit, too.

HIKES AND WALKS

THE RIGHT TO ROAM

Scotland's right to roam comes with responsibilities.

In Scotland, the right to roam means that you can walk your dog across most land - even if there's not a path - as long as you follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

The Code requires people walking their dog to keep their dog under control, and the easiest way to do this, especially if your dog is in a strange area, is to keep your dog on a lead. This will help stop your dog from bumping into an adder, too.



As a dog owner, your responsibilities are:

Never let your dog worry or attack farm animals. Your dog can “worry” nervous animals like sheep just by being present - your dog can cause pregnant ewes to miscarry.

Don't take your dog into fields where there are lambs, calves or other young farm animals. If you go into a field with farm animals in it, keep your dog on a short lead and keep as far away from the animals as possible.

Scotland has many birds that nest on the ground. Their main breeding season is April to July, and during this period dogs should be kept on a short lead in their nesting areas (moorland, forest, grasslands, loch shores and sea shores).

Don't take your dog into fields of vegetables or fruit unless there is a clear path, such as a “core path” or right of way, and make sure your dog keeps to the path. Dog urine and faeces is not the same as fertiliser.

If your dog defecates, pick it up and take it with you (Tig Cottage has a supply of dog poop bags under the sink if you've forgotten yours). Their poop can spread disease to animals and other people.

People have been hurt and killed by cattle that have reacted aggressively to dogs.

Should cattle start to react aggressively and move towards you, you should keep calm, let go of the dog and take the shortest, safest route out of the field. Your dog will likely

outrun the cattle, but you won't, which is why you should let go of the dog.

You can find out more information about the Scottish Outdoor Access code at www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot and www.ramblers.org.uk/scotland



HIKES AND WALKS

BEACHES AND COASTLINES

Tig Cottage is less than five minutes drive from the coast at Ballantrae, but there's lots of other coastlines to explore.

The best time to walk your dog on the beach is when the tide is out, and the sand is dry. The warmer the weather, the less sand hoppers and sand fleas there are. The best time is likely to be late morning and early afternoon.

All the beaches mentioned here are dog friendly, although it is worth noting that Ballantrae beach will have nesting seabirds in nesting season.

Ballantrae Beach

The beach at Ballantrae is a very rugged beach, and it's also an area of Special Scientific Interest. It is a mix of sand with a wide, stony area, and is a nesting area of birds.

Washed up jelly fish (and occasionally deceased sealife or bird life) can often be found on the beach. Sand hoppers

are rampant when the tide is in, the sand is wet or the weather is cool. The views across to Ailsa Craig is stunning.

Many people choose to walk their dogs from the Kennedy Pass end of the beach, which has space for parking a few cars. This is also part of the Ayrshire Coastal Patch; to reach this area by car, head towards Girvan from Ballantrae, and take the turning on the left just before the road goes up the hill (it is marked for the Ayrshire Coastal Path).

Girvan Beach

The town of Girvan is rightly proud of it's beach, which is dragged clean every morning. Much sandier than Ballantrae Beach, it is close to the town's park, which is regularly used by dog walkers too.

The beach is also near the harbour, where you can pick up an ice cream or even rent a beach friendly bike to explore the area around the seafront. The harbour is where you can catch a (pre-booked) boat ride around Ailsa Craig.

Girvan recently won an award for being the most dog friendly town in the UK, and dogs are allowed in many shops and restaurants; there is generally a "dog friendly" sign in the window.

There's plenty of free, on-street parking in Girvan, both near the beach and further away should you wish to explore the town a little more.

The town's local bike hire company, **Biosphere Bikes**, rents bicycles and dog trailers from two premises in Girvan, including its beach hire location, so you can cycle along the two miles of beach, or explore further afield, with Fido putting his paws up while you do the cycling (contact BioSphere Bikes on 01465 479 503)

Maidens Beach

The village of Maidens - a former fishing village - has a mile long sandy beach that curves round Maidenhead Bay.

Dogs are welcome on the beach, but it is worth knowing that the beach is often used by horse riders from the nearby riding school, if your dog is afraid of horses.

Like Ballantrae beach, many species of wild birds can be seen around the beach.

Maidens Beach has a patch that connects to the Culzean Castle Estate, which is owned by the National Trust for Scotland.

Culzean Castle Parkland

Culzean Castle is one of the major landmarks of South Ayrshire. It sits atop a cliff overlooking Maidens beach, and is surrounded by lush, rich parkland.

Although dogs cannot be taken into the castle, they can go into the parkland areas, which are huge and lovely to explore.

It's possible to drive to Culzean Castle and park there in order to explore the parkland and the beach. As a National Trust for Scotland property, there is an admission fee to the grounds and the castle, but it's possible to buy a ticket just for the grounds.

Culzean has some retail outlets; but dogs are not allowed into the retail outlets or the catering outlets (there are tables outside where you can sit with your dog, but there is not table service, so really you need to be with someone else you can leave your dog with, or who can place your order).

HIKES AND WALKS

OTHER WALKS AND HIKES

It'd be a shame to come to South Ayrshire with a dog and not explore some of the local scenery on foot.

But seeing some of the most fabulous scenery doesn't mean you (or your dog) has to be super fit! Many of the walks mentioned in the main guidebook have trailheads with parking areas that allow exploration of beautiful areas with gentle walks.

Please check out the **“Hikes and Walks”** area in the **main Tig Cottage book**. The Stinchar Valley Trails section has nearby walks from Tig Cottage itself.

For instance, a lovely Sunday could be spent walking from Tig down to Ballantrae by following the Laggenhouse to Ballantrae walk in reverse, stopping at Craigiemains for a coffee and cake, before walking back to the cottage via the Ballantrae to Pinwherry old coach route.

If you'd like to go on any of these walks, please just take a photo of the map, rather than tear the page out of the book.

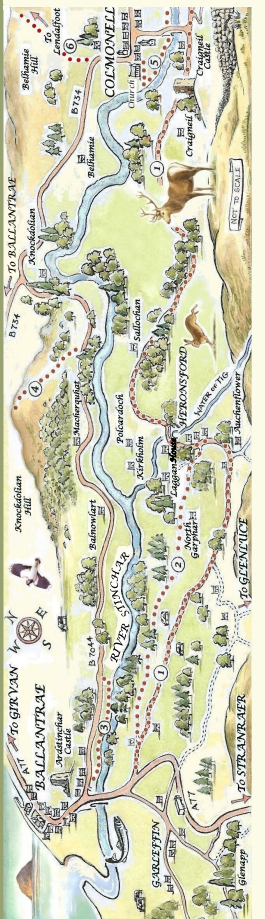
WALKS AROUND THE STINCHAR VALLEY

Walk 5 Colmoneill to Landisfort 3½ miles
 S.M. Trail sign "Via Knechtbornal" at first corner
 rock known as the Deer Stone. Continue on track
 to waymarker post, then follow arrow straight
 uphill till reaching a tall stile over wall at back of
 hill. Cross a short boggy area to a stile at the east
 end of field. Follow track to the left, then take
 leading down over the burn, View of Pinnacled Loch
 on your right. Follow track to the Carnaburn road,
 to either turn left to Landisfort or return to
 Colmoneill. Usually cattle on this wall. **3/3**

Walk 6 Carnaburn River Walk 1 mile
 Take the track downhill opposite the Carnaburn
 road and follow it to the gate. Turn left to the Carna
 burn and the river. Stile over fence between the 2
 fields. Another stile, marked "Kelly's Way", **3/3**
 takes you onto the road at the end of wall. **3/3**

Walk 8 Kilmoneghel River Walk ¾ mile
 Starts at the gate opposite the road junction. It
 follows a track to the river. Turn left to the
 wall. Under the River Duke at the Stachan, then
 turn into a grass path beside the river bank. **3/3**

*There are also good woodland walks at Glenappa
 near Ballintrae, and longer ones over the hills to
 Clenchee. Fine views are to be had on the
 Carnaburn and Barndrochar Hill roads.*



View from the Old Coach Road

Walk 1 Ballintrae to Pinewy - The Old Coach Road 3½ miles
 Leaving Ballintrae on the A77, walk south across
 the River Stinchar. Take the first left, a quiet,
 meandering, single track road, enjoying wonderful
 views of the hill of Fionnabhadra and back to Aila
 from the west. The main moon grassy path beside the
 river is now on the old coach road that drops
 down to the hamlet of Heronford in the beautiful
 Tig Valley. Continue along the road, through
 both open countryside and oak and birch
 woodland, passing the ruins of Croaghneill cells on
 the left. Turn left to the gate, then right to cross
 the valley on your left, where the church has
 outstanding stained glass windows by Louis Davis.
 The road continues up the valley, becoming a
 narrow after Dalcooch Farm, and eventually a
 muddy. Some of the finest views of the whole
 valley, looking back down to Knechtobolinn, can be
 seen from this stretch. Pass by Pinewy Wood
 before descending to join the main road (A74) just
 before the gate. Turn right to the gate. Bus
 stop on the right of the road. Return to
 Ballintrae to start of walk. **3/3**

Walk 2 Ballintrae to Loughane 3 miles.
 Start out on far walk 1. About ¼ mile from the
 main road, after Loughan Dairy and a lodge house
 entrance on the left, leading down through the
 Loughane Country Park where you can turn
 right to follow the lane back to Ballintrae. **3/3**

Walk 3 Ballintrae River Walk ¾ mile
 A "Stinchar Valley Trails" signpost is on the right
 of the road on the BR044, about 3 miles from
 Ballintrae. Turn right to the gate, then left on
 the open hill to make your way to the top. **3/3**
 Great view to Arran, Ailko Craig & Inland. **3/3**

Walk 4 Stinchar Valley Walk 1½ miles
 Signposted on the gate between two houses at the
 top of the hill. The path leads to the right and
 then left above these are gate upon. Go down on the
 other side of the road—the Clachanoneill Walks then
 continue along the riverbank, round a field, and back up to join the main
 road next to the gate of the cemetery. As well as wildlife, look out for many different kinds of fruit trees on these walks. **3/3**

Walk 5 Colmoneill River Walk and Clachanoneill Walks 1½ miles
 The road leads to the right and then left above these are gate upon. Go down on the
 other side of the road—the Clachanoneill Walks then continue along the riverbank, round a field, and back up to join the main
 road next to the gate of the cemetery. As well as wildlife, look out for many different kinds of fruit trees on these walks. **3/3**



View from Ailmoat

PAWSOME DOG FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

OTHER THINGS TO DO

It's not just all about walking!

Take a boat trip to Ailsa Craig

The island of Ailsa Craig is visible from most of the South Ayrshire coast, but there's only one boat that travels to the island, and that's the M.F.V. Glorious. The island is currently a RSPB Nature Reserve, famous for its gannets; it is the third largest population in Britain, but there are many other seabirds including various gulls and puffins.

Seals can sometimes be seen on the journey over to Ailsa Craig, and both a Minke whale and a Killer whale have been seen in the area.

You can schedule a boat journey by calling Mark McCrindle, who operates the M.F.V. Glorious, on 01465 713 219 or emailing mccrindlem@aol.com. The boat holds up to 12 people (dogs are allowed on board) and departs from Girvan harbour.

Visit Stumpy Tower

In the heart of Girvan, near the harbour, stands the

unmistakable Stump Tower (also known as Stumpy Jail, due to being used as a jail at one point in its nearly 200 year history). Built in 1827, it's survived both World Wars and now has four floors of exhibits inside. While Stumpy Tower is dog friendly, its lack of lift means it's not friendly to humans who may have issues with its steep, stone steps.

Lawrence's Amusements

The amusement arcade in Girvan is a lively, traditional style entertainment and gaming centre in the harbour area. It is dog friendly, although with its many lights and noises, it may be best suited for more confident dogs.

Shopping in Girvan

Many of the shops in Girvan are dog friendly, including the large DIY / homeware store and the eclectic "Girvan A Damn" store that sells everything from handprinted Girvan themed furniture to unusual home decorations and everything in between. Look for the Dog Friendly signs - or pop your head in through the door and ask!

Tourist Information Point

Girvan has a team of local volunteers who run the Tourist Information Point, situated in the Girvan Town House near the harbour. It's a good first stop in Girvan - you can chat to the volunteers to see if there's any special events that are on during your stay. It's open during tourist season, starting this year on 1st April 2024.

PLACES TO EAT

WHERE TO EAT

Sure, you can eat at Tig Cottage, but if you'd like to go out to eat, here's some dog friendly places you all go for food

Although we try and keep this list as up to date as possible, owners and policies change, so if you're thinking of making a special trip, or planning a day out around where to eat, it's always best to give the restaurant a call to check that dogs are still welcome.

If you're travelling as a family, it's often worth one person just popping into a venue to ask. Often there is an outside seating area that the dog is welcome to use, and this will often extend to coffee shops and street cafes in towns and villages around the area.

The Kings Arms, Main Street, Ballantrae

This popular, community owned pub allows dog in the family or saloon area, but not in the bar. There is an outside seating area too. The pub is trying out various food options, so it's worth checking out their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/thekingsarmsballantrae> or calling them on 01465 757060.

Trae Bakes at Craigiemains Garden Centre, Ballantrae

Craigiemains Garden Centre is a pretty, local garden centre with plenty of plants, but for visitors to the area, the big attraction is the restaurant serving regular soup of the "trae", lighter meals, cones, cakes, tea and coffee. Dogs are welcomed, and they're open 10AM to 4PM, but closed on Mondays. Find out more at their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TraeBakes> or call the, on 01465 831052.

The Restaurant at Woodland Bay Hotel, Girvan

Woodland Bay Hotel (postcode KA26 OHP) is about fifteen minutes from Tig Cottage, on the way to Girvan. Facing towards the beautiful coastline, their licensed restaurant is open to non-residents and is dog friendly, although you need to call and book to confirm. You can find their menu at www.woodlandbayhotel.co.uk and their phone number is 01465 710700.

The Commercial Inn, 123 Dalrymple Street, Girvan

A local pub on Girvan's high street, The Commercial Inn is known for it's friendly atmosphere and it's Tuesday afternoon karaoke! With a wide range of beers and spirits, it's a traditional pub in the best possible way.

Brew Ha Ha Cafe, 48 Victoria Street, Newton Stewart

A lovely, friendly cafe and coffee shop, the Brew Ha Ha is dog friendly with a secret garden in the back for sunnier days. You can call them on 01671 404203 or visit their website at <https://www.facebook.com/brewhaha.ns>

The Vaults Kitchen, 32 Glendoune Street, Girvan

A dog friendly restaurant serving traditional Scottish food sourced locally where possible, the Vaults has been in business for nearly a decade, no mean feat and a testament to it's popularity in the town. It's worth ringing up to book at more popular times, on 07816 535810, and their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TheVaultsKitchen often has their latest menu and pictures of their current Specials board.

Girvan Gelateria, 17 Bridge Street, Girvan

No trip to the seaside is complete without an icecream, and Girvan Gelateria is the dog friendly ice cream parlour you never knew you needed. Girvan Gelateria makes it's authentic Italian gelato with local ingredients, in a range of both traditional and modern flavours. Their Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/girvangelateria

The Driftwood Cafe and Bistro, Agnew Park, Stranraer

This popular bistro style cafe is highly rated and offers a wide range of meals, from burgers to waffles, cake and coffee across breakfast and lunch with views across both Agnew park and the sea. They're dog friendly and they can be called on 01776 706361. Please be aware they're closed on Wednesdays.

The Royal Cafe, 27 Castle Street, Stranraer

If you're travelling as far as Stranraer, then stopping for something to eat on the high street might be a good idea. The Cafe Royal is dog friendly, but as always, it's worth calling to check that nothing has changed. You can call

them on 01776 258100.

If you make the journey across to Belfast (the Stenaline ferry service allows dogs to travel, and even has a special, separate “pet lounge” for owners to travel with their pets), Belfast city centre has a variety of pubs and restaurants that are dog friendly (far too many to list individually here).

However, we would recommend the fabulous **Taylor and Clay at the Bullitt Hotel** in the city centre for very well priced food with a dog friendly area. If you’re staying overnight, Bullitt have some dog friendly rooms, but these sell out quickly, so book early in advance!

PLACES TO GO

NEARBY TOWNS AND VILLAGES

If you fancy exploring further afield, there's lots of wonderful places to go!

South Ayrshire is filled with beautiful towns and villages, with some of the more picturesque towns in Dumfries and Galloway within easy driving distance.

It's worth checking out the main Tig Cottage book for more information about other places to visit; if you're thinking of stopping in a restaurant or making a special visit to somewhere with your furry friend, it's always worth ringing up in advance to check they're allowed in!