

Welcome to Tomintoul

The village was founded between 1775 and 1776 by the 4th Duke of Gordon to encourage scattered tenants to move into a planned village. The village still retains this 'planned' character with its attractive wide main street, village square and grid layout. On the village square you'll find the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Discovery Centre, with exhibitions and visitor information.



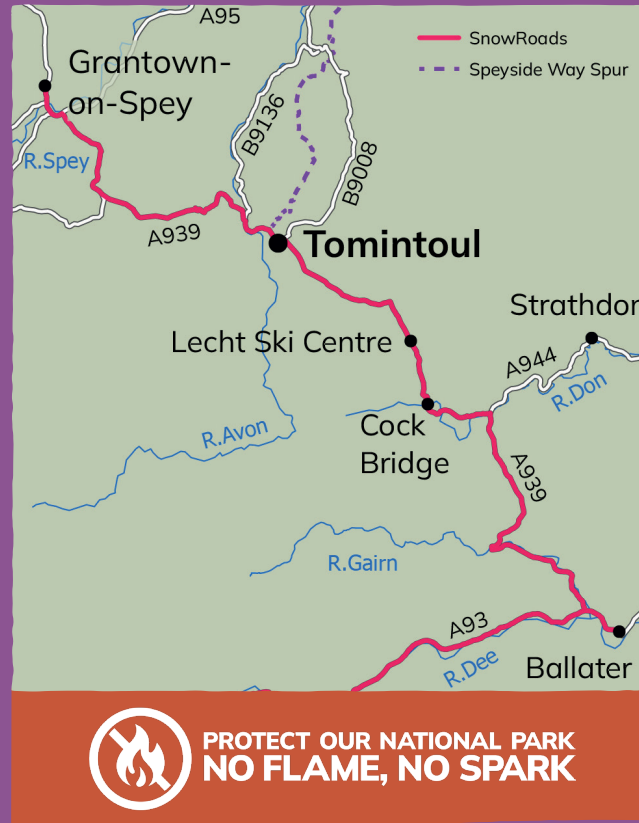
Tomintoul comes from the Gaelic *Tom an t-Sabhail* meaning 'the mound of the barn' or 'the barn knoll'. At 355m above sea level, Tomintoul is the highest village in the Highlands.

Tomintoul sits within Glenlivet Estate, part of Crown Estate Scotland, where visitors are welcome to explore the extensive network of waymarked paths in the wider countryside.

glenlivetestate.co.uk



If you enjoyed exploring the paths around Tomintoul, look out for other path leaflets in this series to help you explore more of the Cairngorms National Park. Pick up a leaflet locally or download from cairngorms.co.uk



Explore the SnowRoads, a 90-mile road trip, one of the best driving routes in the Scottish Highlands.



Visitor information is available at visitcairngorms.com

Produced by the Cairngorms National Park Authority, in association with the Tomintoul community.

Cover image: Victor Gaffney viewpoint © EJHope. Tomintoul © Rachel Keenan. Lapwing © Mark Hamblin/2020Vision. Sky hide © Cairngorms Astronomy Group. Still © VisitScotland / Kenny Lam

Paths around Tomintoul

The highest village in the Highlands



Cairngorms National Park
Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaigh Ruaidh

Landscapes and lapwings

In the spring and summer the wet meadows around Tomintoul are noisy with the calls of wading birds, such as lapwing and curlew. The Tomintoul bird hide situated a few minutes' walk from the village is a great spot to see the birds.



Next to the bird hide is the village wildflower meadow. The native flowers bloom in late spring and summer, attracting a range of pollinators including butterflies and moths. Each autumn volunteers gather to hand scythe the meadow, keeping this traditional skill alive.

The River Avon (pronounced A'an) flows close by Tomintoul, rising from Loch Avon, a mighty loch in the heart of the Cairngorm Mountains. There are several paths and viewpoints that allow you to enjoy the river, including the Victor Gaffney viewpoint (named after a local historian) and Queen's View.

Skies and stars

Tomintoul and Glenlivet are the heart of the Cairngorms International Dark Sky Park, the most northerly Dark Sky Park in the UK and one of the best places in Scotland to discover the wonders of the night sky.

The Tomintoul Dark Sky Discovery Site has a sky viewing hide, parking and information and is the perfect place to enjoy some stargazing (or daytime cloud gazing!). The Aurora Borealis (the Northern Lights) often put on a show for lucky stargazers too.



Discover more about the planets of the solar system by following the Glenmullie Planet Trail (starts Glenmullie car park, two miles south of Tomintoul off the A939).

cairngormsdarkskypark.org

History and heritage

The military road constructed by Major Caulfield in the 1750s descends from the Lecht mountain pass, carving a route through the landscape and linking the military forts at Corgarff and Braemar to Fort George on the coast. It brought occupation to these wild lands where cattle thefts and illegal whisky distilling were rife.

The road (today the A939) continues to bring travellers to Tomintoul to enjoy the warm highland hospitality of the village.

Forming part of the SnowRoads, there are art installations along the route, including "Still" by Angus Ritchie, just north of Tomintoul.



The Tomintoul Games is an important part of the village's cultural heritage. It is one of the oldest highland games in Scotland, taking place on the third Saturday in July. People come from all over to test their strength in the traditional events including the caber toss, hammer throw and tug o' war.

Paths around Tomintoul

We hope you enjoy exploring the trails around Tomintoul, but please do so responsibly. The Cairngorms National Park is a special place with beautiful landscapes and rare wildlife. You can help protect the local wildlife by following all signs and keeping dogs close by (on a lead where requested).

To help prevent wildfires and protect the National Park a seasonal fire byelaw is in place. It is not permitted to light a campfire or use a barbecue between 1 April and 30 September.

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE
outdooraccess-scotland.scot



Please note – not all routes are waymarked on the ground.

Tomintoul circular

An enjoyable loop through the countryside around Tomintoul. On your way you'll see the bird hide, the sky hide and the Victor Gaffney viewpoint – with stunning views over the River Avon to the peaks of Ben Avon in the distance.

A mix of firm grassy paths and tracks with numerous gates, quiet lanes and one main road crossing.



2½ miles / 4 km
 Allow 1½ hours

Mostly flat on the Conglass side, with moderate slope up to the viewpoint and steps to the road. On the Cults side of the road is a long, steep flight of steps.

Bridge of Avon

Scenic walk through grassland and woodland, passing the Victor Gaffney viewpoint and offering excellent views back to Tomintoul. A nice picnic spot awaits at the old Bridge of Avon, built as part of the military road in 1754.

Tracks and narrow, rough, undulating grassy paths. Can be muddy. One long, steep rough climb. Short section on road to reach bridge.



2.5 miles / 4 km
 Allow 2 hours

Distance / time is there and back

Mindfulness trail

A short accessible loop through the woodland at the Glenlivet Estate information centre with views across surrounding farmland. Stone artworks around the trail help engage users with their natural surroundings.

Mostly smooth, firm path with gentle slopes and bridges. Moderate slope from car park to trail.



¼ mile / 0.5 km
 Allow ¼ hour

Tomintoul country walk

A pleasant circuit along Glen Avon with an opportunity to take in Queen Victoria's viewpoint. Along the way there are lovely views and rich woodlands of native birch and juniper.

Minor roads and firm track which can be loose and uneven in places with moderate slopes. Steps up to Queens' View.



4¾ miles / 7.5 km
 Allow 3 hours

Squirrel trail

A lovely loop that heads up the old military road from the Glenlivet Estate information centre, before looping back through pinewoods, with an opportunity to discover about, and maybe glimpse, the native red squirrel.

Track and rough grassy, earthy and woodchip paths. Can be muddy. Long gentle slopes.



½ mile / 0.8 km
 Allow ½ hour

Old Military Road

March, walk or cycle in the footsteps of 18th century redcoats along a section of old military road. Lovely views over the Conglass valley and farmland to Ben Rinnes.

Track, loose and uneven in places and may have large puddles. Long (1km) gentle slope to viewpoint.



2½ miles / 4 km
 Allow 1½ hours

Distance / time is there and back

