

FORCES Manor



Forces, Veterans & Families Respite

Stay - Activities - Social

Together

2024





FORCES Manor

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Winners and Inspirations - Together



The Forces Manor COOL BLUE AWARD

A means of showing gratitude and repaying favours, the Forces Manor Cool Blue Appreciation Award is presented to those who have distinguished themselves. A person or group will be commemorated and recognised at Forces Manor on an annual basis for their achievements, contributions to causes that are helpful, and efforts towards personal development.



COOL BLUE AWARD Winner 2021 - **Anthony Campbell**

Anthony, the initial awardee, was granted a monetary reward, a trophy, and a certificate in recognition of his exceptional contribution to Forces Manor. Anthony has been a long-standing fixture at Forces Manor since its inception. He is the originator of the game room concept and has a room named after him. At the beginning of Forces Manor, Anthony served as a student and Army cadet. During weekends and school breaks, he was employed at Forces Manor. The programme, which was initiated by his diligent efforts, has greatly benefited Forces Manor.

We anticipate that this award will motivate Anthony to acknowledge and appreciate his own value.



COOL BLUE AWARD Winner 2021 - **Angel Services**

After a successful 2021 fundraising campaign, Aviemore's Angel Services Rhona and Marie raised £13,000 for Forces Manor, which really helped at the outset. Forces Manor expresses gratitude for their service and dedication. Thank you, Angel Services, Rhona, and Marie.



COOL BLUE AWARD Winner 2022 - **Mark Bradley**

Mark served in the army with Tony, the founder of Forces Manor. They are close friends. Mark and his cycling crew completed a 600-mile journey from Bridgewater, Somerset, to Forces Manor, Kinraig. The group includes Mark, Andy Chapell, Dave Bromme, Nigel Gulliford, Matt Draper, Nic Edmonds, Russ Nurcombe, Karen Brennan, Jerry Wallis, Jerry Palmer, and Chris Whitefield. After receiving a diagnosis of Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL), Mark made a positive decision and his team successfully raised approximately £14,000 for Forces Manor.



COOL BLUE AWARD Winner 2023

Veteran Royal Marine Blake Owen won the 2023 Forces Manor Cool Blue Award. Blake, a gifted pianist, moved Forces Manor with his story.



Acknowledgments.

HRH Prince William Duke of Cambridge

On two separate occasions, His Royal Highness Prince William has written to thank Forces Manor through his offices at Kensington Palace.

Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin, KCB CBE.

Forces Manor has gained the firm backing and moral support of Poppy Scotland's President, Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin, KCB, CBE. Forces Manor honored Sir Alistair with the military library named in his honor.

Major General Capps CBE

Major General Duncan Capps, then GOC, met with Tony and gave his full support for Forces Manor. Forces Manor honored General Capps with the study named in his honor.

Scottish Parliament

There was a motion to support Forces Manor that was presented to the Scottish Parliament, read aloud, and gained complete support from Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Scottish Veterans Awards 2023: Runner-up in 2023

Forces Manor was unexpectedly nominated for the Military Veterans Awards. We were nominated for the Scottish Veterans Awards community category. The nomination was unexpected, so thanks to everyone who helped Forces Manor. This includes Anthony, Angel Services, Stewart, Nick, Mark, Connor, Kaden, and many others. The nomination will give military personnel and veterans new opportunities, which is promising. and were finalists for it.

Scottish Veterans Awards 2024: Bronze Winner 2024

As was the case with our experience in 2023, we were taken aback when we learned that we had been recognised as the Veteran Owned Business of the Year for the second consecutive year with this award. It was quite wonderful that we were able to get this award once more the following year, considering that we had only been open for nine months at that point.

Armed Forces Covenant

In the year 2023, Forces Manor accomplished the dual goals of signing the Armed Forces Covenant and simultaneously obtaining a Bronze accreditation certificate.

What



The Army gave me a home, now it's my turn to give the Army a home



Together



Forces Manor is a three-service, non-profit resort. The concept for Forces Manor originated in 2019, but the first formal guests arrived on June 20, 2023, and they happened to be and RAF Flight Sergeant. Unofficially, Junior Para Travis Marshall was the first guest (we can't let the RAF take the honour, lol). Anyway, since our inception, we have had about 5000 guests from all three services, with the majority coming from the army. During one army visit, soldiers assisted us by completing the kitchen and other jobs. Representatives from several regiments and corps have stayed, including Paras, Marines, Royal Engineers, Army Media Corps, and even SAS. We had the pleasure of welcoming Colonel Wells, Coldstream Guards CO. Members of the 14 Signal Regiment remained on a bicycle expedition, as did several students from Harrogate's Junior Soldiers College. We've had visits from RAF pilots, Royal Navy submarines, and crew of HMS Queen Elizabeth. Not only have British personnel stayed, but we have also welcomed veterans from all across the world, notably Colonel Gupta of the Indian Army. We have also had personnel from the foreign armed forces and navys.

Guests come and stay for a variety of reasons, including outdoor activities, adventure sports, and more. We provide overnight accommodations as well as week-long vacation packages.

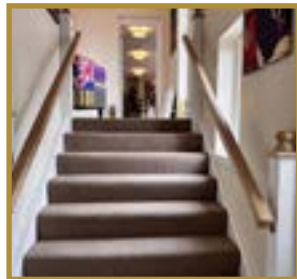
British forces have always engaged with the Scottish Highlands. Forces Manor is supposed to be something exceptional. Forces Manor, located five minutes south of Aviemore in the village of Kincaig on the banks of the River Spey, is part of the Cairngorms National Park in the central Scottish Highland.

Forces Manor is dedicated to providing a break from the grind for troops, veterans, and their families. Anyone can stop by and relax; veterans and service members can join a breakfast club, meet and greet one another, share, and simply be together.

Forces Manor can host over sixty visitors in parties, companies, or as individuals.

Every room has a TV and a reliable Wi-Fi connection; attention to detail is essential. In addition to a study and conference room that serves as a military library, there are two communal guest kitchens. We also have a large Veterans Lounge with a 75-inch television and a self-service bar, which may be reserved for military meals, mess events, meetings, conferences, small military weddings or simply relaxing. There is also an internet and gaming room equipped with Playstations, a PlayStation 5, and a driving simulator.

Future plans call for a garden lodge, a mountain biking facility, safe bike storage, and a workshop.



Together



Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Veterans, Cadets, Children in Care



Together

The United Kingdom's regular and reserve forces have a combined strength of around 175,000 personnel, comprising the Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force (RAF). Furthermore, Britain is home to a large number of veterans, contributing to a total military family of approximately 2.7 million in the UK.

Forces Manor aims to provide a distinctive experience and primarily caters to the needs of the military community, providing a year-round activity centre with self-catering amenities. It offers a place where individuals, families, and units may spend quality time together in an inclusive environment.

Over 2500 charities in the UK provide exceptional services to military personnel who are homeless, grappling with mental health challenges, or have sustained injuries during warfare or training. But Forces Manor is not a medical facility with specialised staff or direct social care services. However, being at our facility will indirectly enhance your well-being due to our location and the nature of our establishment. Forces Manor is a multifunctional facility that offers the military, their families, and associated civilians the opportunity to relax or engage in training activities around a military-themed environment.

Fortunately, not everyone is afflicted with mental health disorders; nonetheless, there are individuals who have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) either during their military service, after their service has ended, or throughout their youth. Within the United Kingdom, there are specialised facilities that are specifically tailored to provide assistance and support for service personnel with distinct mental health requirements. Forces Manor does not fall into the category of such places. Only around 6% of service personnel necessitate specialised medical attention upon their departure from the military. The surviving ones successfully transfer into civilian life and prosper. Nonetheless, the remaining 94% of individuals who successfully transition to civilian life after military service have a profound and enduring connection with their lifelong comrades. That is where Forces Manor comes in. Regardless of their physical well-being, both veterans and active military people will discover a shared connection at Forces Manor. This establishment provides a comforting environment for anyone experiencing anxiety, as they can find solace in the presence of fellow military personnel and familiar military-inspired surroundings.

Veterans and those serving individuals frequently desire autonomy and the pursuit of their personal interests, yet many value the chance to be back within an environment that embraces a robust military culture. Forces Manor is suitable for both parties due to its discreet military connections that foster independence.

Forces Manor is a serene and invigorating destination.



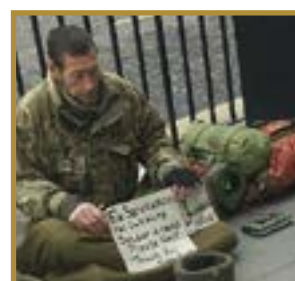
All Forces Manor Personnel
The General Forces Population
& those with special needs.
And Children in Care



Military Personnel with
Mental Health Problems



Injured Military
Personnel



Homeless Military
Personnel

History



Forces Manor is a Victorian Villa built back in 1880



In the year 1880, a physician from Edinburgh erected the Ossian, a conventional stone-built Victorian villa made of three floors, with the intention of using it as a getaway home in the highlands. For a very long time, it has been regarded as a charming historical property that possesses a personality that is typical of the time period. A large number of bedrooms, a number of reception spaces, a sizeable kitchen, and staff quarters were all incorporated in the initial building. Located in the grounds, there was a stable building that was used as lodgings for the servants. There were a number of outbuildings, as well as a tennis court, that were included in the expansive garden space.

The Ossian has been used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to a shooting lodge, a modest rural inn, a hotel, and certain restaurants. Even though there have been some modest adjustments made, the most of the property is still in the same excellent condition that it has been in for more than 136 years.



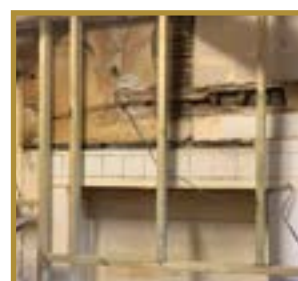
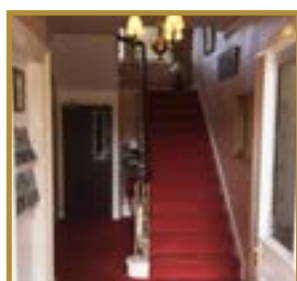
In 1973, the Ramage and Rainbow families made the decision to purchase The Ossian with the purpose of establishing a hotel and restaurant that offered a la carte dining options. A very high reputation was acquired by the Ossian as a result of this accomplishment. The restaurant was frequented by a large number of wealthy and well-known individuals that included members of the Royal Family as well as celebrities from the worlds of television and film. It was so well-liked that people from all across Scotland travelled to eat there because of its popularity.



Over the course of its existence, The Ossian remained a prosperous family-owned hotel and restaurant, undergoing transformations over the course of time to accommodate shifting family relations. Tony Brown, who became an unrelated part of the family, made a personal investment in The Ossian in the year 2008 with the purpose of reforming the organisation. Tony was the one who devised plans to convert the business into a self-catering establishment, and the move was approved.



Tony placed the Ossian on the market in 2014; however, the property market was poor as a result of the Scottish Referendum, and the project did not have the impact that was hoped. After having a casual talk with a friend who was a member of the Royal Air Force in the area, Tony made the decision in 2017 to do something positive and good with the property that was relevant to his tale. Forces Manor was established by Tony in the year 2018. The concept of a dedicated rest and recreation complex in the Highlands was evident and long overdue as a result of his substantial time spent in the Highlands and his relationships within the military.



My Journey



From abandoned child in care, to cadet, soldier and then veteran! ces Manor

Tony Brown founder of Forces Manor recounts his journey from childhood to Forces Manor.



I didn't have the best start in life; when I was only seven months old, my mother abandoned me in a hospital after I was admitted as a sick baby. When it came to being discharged, my mum didn't come back to get me; she just stayed away. Because of this, I was sent to the Shirley Oaks Children's Home in south London, which was run by Lambeth Council. I lived in the home until I was sixteen years old. It was a place where devious adults preyed on kids who were weak, alone, and helpless. The home, the largest of its kind in Europe, concealed over 400 lost souls. We were forgotten by everyone. Because that's all I knew, I put up with all the neglect and abuse. I didn't have any family outside of the home that cared about me. I was by myself because my mother didn't care about her only son. There were difficult times in the home, but it wasn't always a horror story. I was able to shine in many ways. I became an accomplished swimmer and diver, and I ran fast enough to compete. I was also good at art, and I did really well when I joined the Army Cadets aged twelve years old, and I'll never forget the first time I heard the command to fall in. At the time, the command to fall in simply meant that we should arrange ourselves in some sort of order, stay still, and not talk, something I struggled with as I did like to chatter!



When I was thirteen, I was asked if I would like to go on a gliding holiday to Scotland. This was a big deal in my life. I didn't know what gliding was about at the time, and I knew even less about Scotland! I won't talk about what the trip was really about or how it came to be—that's for another book. But in the end, I agreed, as long as certain staff didn't go. It was agreed, and once the home found a place for me to stay, I was put on a train in London and left on my own to get to the Highlands. There were no adult staff or any other children with me. I would be staying at the Ossian Hotel, which was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ramage. Marion Ramage, took me in and I fell in love with the place and the people who lived there. It was wonderful. Marion was the first time that I had recognised a real mother, and I felt close to her right away. I went back to the children's home after a week-long stay and a few rough glider rides. Luckily, the family told me I could come back whenever I was allowed by the home. I loved the hotel so much that I spent some of my school breaks there for the next three years.



Living in a children's home where staff came and went meant you were often ignored. This was apparent when it came to my education, and despite not being stupid I left school with no qualifications other than a detention and getting in trouble record to brag about. I've never been to college or university. Even so, I wasn't going to let the fact that I wasn't educated stop me.

At the age of 16, I left school and signed up for the regular army and became a member of the Royal Corps of Transport. Of course, not everyone is cut out for the military, but for me, being in the army was the best time of my life so far. All around, my time in the service has been very helpful to me in my life. As a boy, a man, a regular soldier, a reserve soldier, and then back to cadets as



an instructor, I was happy to wear the uniform and serve. In essence, I joined the army for a bed, some food, and a good laugh, and I got all three! During my time in the army, I engaged in a variety of activities, including possibly becoming the only squaddie in British history to be jailed for stopping a goal during a football game—a true story.

On the day I first arrived for my initial training, my life finally took a turn for the better. There were many reasons why this day was important. Forces Manor, which was then called the Ossian Hotel, became my leave address. Let me explain: I left the children's home in the morning and got to my first camp in the afternoon. When I checked in, the corporal who was in charge of getting my information wanted to know my parents' name and address. With a cockney accent, I answered,

"I ain't got-non"

"You haven't got what, said the corporal

"Parents" I said in a muted manner

"Well, who's your guardian?" The corporal inquired.

"What's one of them?" I said, looking confused.

"Are you stupid?" asked the now-annoyed corporal as he attempted to gather my information.

To be honest, I had no idea what a guardian was. Being in care isn't something most sixteen-year-olds say out loud, so I was starting to feel a little awkward. To escape more embarrassment, I simply lied. I didn't know that I had to give the army a leave address. When I was living in the children's home, no one ever told me the consequences of my departure from their care system. However, I was adamant that I would not be returning to the children's home during my army leave. As a result, I quickly found an answer and told the corporal my leave address was Ossian Hotel in Kinraig, I couldn't remember all of the address, but I must have given him enough as the corporal said, "Okay, we'll write to let them know you got here safely."

"Oh crap," I thought, "because I had never asked the family about it before." I hadn't seen any of them in over six months, although they knew I was joining. I was afraid they would find out I was using their postal code without permission. As I walked away after the signing-in process, I was unsure what to do because the truth would inevitably come out. After considering the situation for a few days, I made the decision to telephone the family, fully aware that they would soon receive a letter exposing my deception. I was also aware that my

My Journey



From abandoned child in care, to cadet, soldier and then veteran!

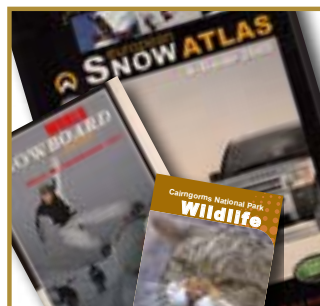


records would reveal the truth, confirming that Lambeth Council remained my legal guardians, a fact I was genuinely unaware of. I called the family, and after I apologised, Marion, who took the call, interrupted me. She reassured me that I could stay at their home whenever I wanted to for my leave periods.

With a leave address secured I got stuck into my training, which was at a camp in Somerset, just outside of Taunton. As a young, fresh-faced junior soldier, I did well and eventually became a trained soldier. I got my motorcycle licence, driver's licence and HGV 3 while still only aged sixteen, and the RCT posted me in one of its most sought-after units in Germany. My goal since entering the Corps had been to become a tank transporter. I was able to make that dream come true when I was sent to 16 Tank Transporter Squadron based in Fallingbommel. I was going to a special unit, and because I was only seventeen, I became the youngest tank transporter expert in the British Army when I got there, which is something I am still very proud of. I was mostly stationed in Europe, but I also did a lot of tours in Northern Ireland during the troubles. As a member of 42 Squadron AMF (L), I trained in the elite ACE Mobile Force. What I did was very different from what I had done before. It was a quick-response group, and we went on tours in Asia, Turkey, the US, and Iraq.



I loved being in the army, but all good things must come to an end, and I finally left to open up new doors as a civilian. I've experienced a lot of things since leaving the military, but nothing compares to what I did in the army. The US Air Force dropped bombs on me while I was in Libya. After that, I was caught in the desert and with a rifle pointed at me I was locked up in a Libyan army prison deep in the Sahara desert for a short time before. In a different role I wrote the world's first snowboarding guide and became the tenth overall British snowboard champion. I taught famous people how to snowboard on TV, and I opened the UK's first snowboard shop and school of instruction before becoming an award-winning publisher with an Observer book of the week, Land Rover and EA Sports sponsorship, and support from the Queen's Balmoral estate for a series of pocket booklets about Scotland's National Park.



I was still interested in the Army after I left the regulars, which is what led to me being elected as treasurer for the UK Tank Transport Association and becoming the publisher of a yearly military book. Getting back on track, I got to wear the Queen's uniform again in 2017 as instructor for Army cadets which was a very different experience to being an actual cadet.



The beginning of Forces Manor can be traced back to when I took over the Ossian hotel in 2008. I learned that the hotel had a lot of debt and that the bank was about to repossess it, so I sold my house and took on the hotel's debt to save it. The family had given me an address when I joined the army when I was in need, so it wasn't hard to make the choice, and it was an honour to give back the way I was. A friend told me that the RAF was thinking about buying the



property, which is how the idea for Forces Manor came about. Mockingly I thought there was no way I would let the RAF buy the property given my loyal to the army. But it made me think, and in the end I came up with the idea of Forces Manor, a place where all the armed forces could use. Nevertheless, I wasn't sure how or when the project would begin, but after talking with a senior Major General, I went forward. When COVID-19 hit, it looked like the project was lost, because of the lockdown. Surprisingly, the shutdown sped up the project, which meant I could start the development which I did on March 20, 2020. So, here we are today, we still have a lot to do, but we had guests from the UK and other countries. Being a non-profit centre, it hasn't been easy getting to this point. Even though we asked for grants, we didn't get any. I paid for this project with my own money and some great donations. Despite the Scottish Parliament passing a support bill, we have not received a single grant, and no MSP, aside from the one who nominated the project, has ever contacted us. HRH Prince William has acknowledged Forces Manor, as have Lieutenant General (R) Sir Alistair Irwin, KCB CB, and Major General Capps CBE, both of whom gave their full moral support.

In 2023 Forces Manor accomplished the dual goals of signing the Armed Forces Covenant and obtained a Bronze accreditation certificate. Also in that year Forces Manor was unexpectedly nominated for Scottish Veterans Awards. Then in 2024 we were again nominated for Scottish Veterans Awards and was a Bronze Winner.



Being open and transparent, I am often asked how did I fund the project, in reply I offer this as an explanation. The beginning of my life did not get off to the best possible start. Following my mother's abandonment of me. Certain staff members and their practices destroyed my life as a child. The children's home and those in charge were rotten to their core. Abuse of all types was a daily occurrence, and I wasn't free of it until I joined the army. I did finally get justice, though, and was able to see someone go to prison for ten years. At the same time, the home and Lambeth were shamed for covering up abuse and neglect. In my early years, I went through a lot of pain and suffering. Subsequently, I received compensation for what happened to me while in care, and I donated the proceeds to the growth of Forces Manor. It's been really rewarding to turn a bad part of my life into such an important good thing. Because of what happened, I'm writing a book called '**Who Cares,**' which is about how dishonest, abusive, and uncaring council child care services are, based on my personal experiences. Society disregards the plight of children in care, blaming us for our predicament. Such indifference stems from social services' lack of concern; in fact, they, along with their social workers and carers, cover up their crimes and try to gag their victims. "Who cares? tells you who, why and how.



As well as all the new plans for Forces Manor, I am also nearing completion of another unique military book under the title of '**Brown Eyes**' that chronologically recounts my journey from care as a boy, through cadets, and finally into the army. Its a very special book that not only has hundreds of pictures and over 400,000 words but it is also linked with music with video clips linked in a special way. The purpose of the book, a not-for-profit publication, is to generate funds for vulnerable children in care, like I was, and vulnerable veterans, like I could have been.

The Development



Whats been achieved so far



Getting stuck in

Check List of what has been achieved and started so far:

- Created over 200 square metres of new accommodation.
- Increased bedrooms from 9 to 16.
- Created a new 2 room suite.
- Created 1 new 1 bedroom studio.
- Created a new 10 metre long open dining room.
- Installed 2 new 35kw Gas Boilers.
- Installed 2 new 500 litre hot water tanks.
- Installed 40 new Radiators
- Installed 55 new double glazed windows.
- Built a 6.5 metre front extension with 4 new bedrooms.
- Built a 14 metre x 7 metre Veterans lounge
- Created Study and Library
- Created a new 20 space car park with space for 2 mini buses.
- Created 2 new kitchens.
- Created a new office.
- Rewired the building for electrics, communications and fire safety.
- Built a 1 bed garden lodge.

Since the inception of my Forces Manor project, I have been uncertain about its funding. However, thanks to the compensation I received for my time spent in a children's home and donations, I was able to get started. However, due to the extremely tight budgets, I was unable to complete the development in a conventional manner using paid labour and contractors. As a result, I took on all of the main building work myself, only relying on tradesmen when necessary, such as the electrical work, fitting the gas boilers, laying down the foundations for the veterans lounge, and roofing work. I also handled all internal joinery.

Although I am not an architect, I decided to take a hands-on approach at every level. I completed all the architectural and building warrant drawings myself. The only exception were the engineer's drawings. This meant I saved in excess of £25k on professional fees.

It also enabled me to be fully in control of the project and aware of everything. I sought advice for my designs and drawings. A qualified architect told me after viewing my drawings that he couldn't improve on them. In light of this, I felt confident enough to submit my work to the Highland Council for planning permission, which they duly granted along with a building warrant.



Taking down the old dining room



The old dining room now used for the car park



Over 20 tons of rubble was shifted by hand



Anthony on one of the many trips to the rubbish dump



Tearing down the old dining room



Tearing down the old dining room

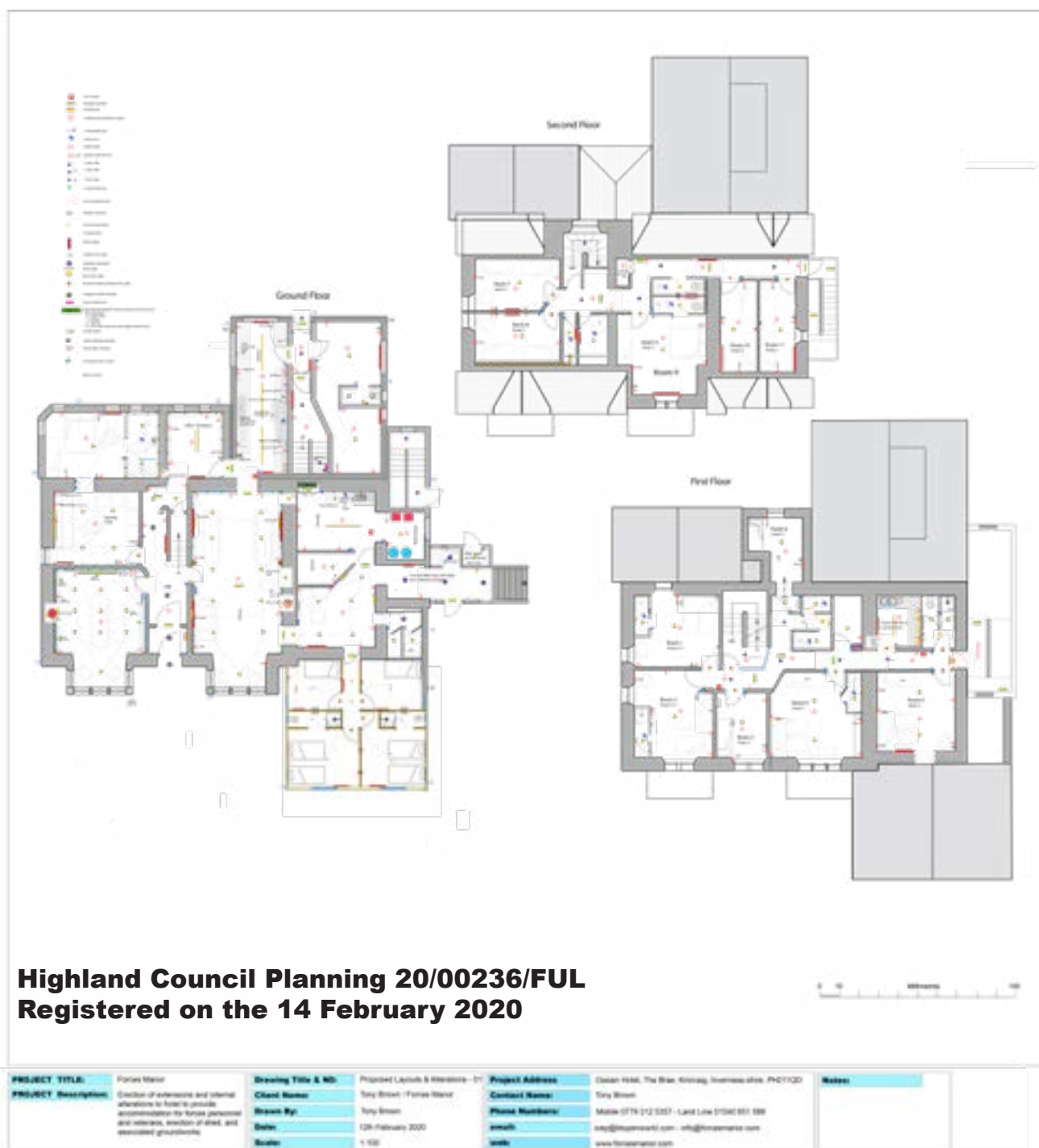


The Development



Whats been achieved so far

Layouts



Existing Building with new Features



The Development



Whats been achieved so far



Anthony's home made hamme

Singlehanded I initiated the development in March 2020, following my forced cessation of B&B trading due to the Corona virus outbreak. The original idea was to do the development in two stages. The first phase was to renovate the existing building and build the front extension, and the second phase was the creation of the veterans lounge and upper accommodation, which would have been done a year after finishing the first phase using income generated from trading once again.

However, circumstances changed, allowing me to do phases one and two at the same time. This saved a significant amount of money and time.

I had planned to hire some joiners to help with the front bedroom extension and, later, the Veterans Lounge. However, after reviewing the required work and having previously built a house almost singlehanded, I decided to just get on with things myself and not employ any joiners except when required, such as for the roofing. Having designed the buildings myself, I was well-versed in the necessary tasks and confident in my ability to complete them independently.

The upgrade of about 40 rooms and corridors in the main building, along with the demolition of an old dining room and the subsequent construction of a four-bedroom extension, left me stuck. I remained unfazed by the challenges of project management and working independently. I simply got on with it.

The first thing I did was pull down the old dining room, which was beyond repair because of a leaking roof. It was a three-metre by seven-metre building with a flat roof. During the removal of the structure, it soon became clear just how far it had gone beyond repair. When exposed, the rotten timber holding up the roof crumbled in my hand after years of leakage.

Initially, I wasn't entirely aware of the essential requirements, but I was certain that I needed to demolish the building, resurface the walls, and transform the entire space into a more environmentally friendly environment. This meant adding insulation to the ceilings and walls, plus fifty new double-glazed windows. I had to install a new, efficient central heating system requiring over forty new radiators, complete with two new gas boilers and two 500-litre water tanks. I was awarded a grant for the new heating system, and I employed a gas fitter who was a veteran and agreed to do the work at a reduced rate. I saved at least £15,000 thanks to this. I also had incredible luck with the cost of the windows, as I managed to get them fitted and replaced for less than £10k for the entire building. We also needed to rewire the building with upgraded



Removing the wall of the old kitchen



Opening up the new dining room



Installing the 4.5m RSJ



Over 100 sheets of plasterboard carried in



Anthony fetching water during the freeze



Creating the new drive way



Lining all the inner walls



Over 50 new windows installed

The Development



Whats been achieved so far



All plumb

consumer units and a hardwired fire alarm system. I sought expert guidance to draft the essential blueprints, subsequently submitting them to the planning and fire inspection departments for their approval. Due to the nature of the project, a local electrician carried out the rewiring work at a greatly reduced cost, significantly impacting the budget, just like the other elements.

Although I completed 90% of the work on my own, I received valuable assistance from young Anthony Campbell, a local Army cadet from my cadet detachment in Aviemore. Anthony came to work for Forces Manor as our first member of staff, working tirelessly each Saturday and during the school holidays. During year one, he never missed a single day of work. Anthony even created his own tools to work with on development, which are still in use today. He has been a tremendous help and is now a full part of Forces Manor's development and history.

However, during the week, I was always alone, working on the building. On each floor within the main building, I lined all the walls over the existing finishing with 2x2 timbers, filling the space with thermal and acoustic insulation before covering it with 11mm OSB wood sheets and 12.5mm plaster board. I replicated this process for the ceilings, concurrently building new shower rooms and installing new plumbing for the hot and cold water supply and toilet waste disposal. On the ground floor, I removed an existing wall, and with a build warrant certified by an engineer, I installed a 4.5-metre RSJ and opened up the space to create a 10.2-metre-long by 4.5-metre-wide new open dining space, removing the old kitchen in the process. Also on the ground floor, I created a new study room, a one-bedroom suite, a new office, an anteroom, a new laundry room, and a large commercial kitchen. I also built a 7-metre by 6.5-metre extension with a new foundation wall in accordance with planning permission. The build was a big one, but I managed it alone, and in doing so, I saved thousands of pounds in labour costs.

On the second floor, I lined all the inner walls in much the same way as on the ground floor and created one new bedroom and a small guest kitchen for snacks, tea, and coffee. Similarly, I created two new bedrooms on the top floor. I relined all the corridors with new sheeting, insulation, and plasterboard. New pipe work was required to carry hot and cold water. I hired local tradesmen to install all the new windows during this process.



The new gas boilers and water tanks



Framing the new ceilings



Lining the corridors



Digging the foundations for the Veterans Lounge



Measuring out the foundations



Preparing the foundations trench



Anthony digging his way out of a hole!



Building the new shower rooms



Anthony measuring with a lazer tool



Anthony demolishing a wall



Anthony and Travis removing a floor



Fitting new water pipes



Nick laying the concrete for the extension



Travis shifting tons of wood for the Veterans Lounge



Taking out one of the old fire places



Building the floor for the extension





Anthony having a smashing time!



Alfie helping with the lift of the trusses



The Veterans Lounge taking shape

The Development



Whats been achieved so far



Many tons of materials were shifted



Building all the kits on site

On the surrounding grounds, I had to remove a number of trees as part of the new parking arrangements. However, as the trees were professionally removed, we discovered that most were rotten and beyond saving. Consequently, the removal of more trees than anticipated resulted in an increase in car parking space, eliminating the need to invest in developing the lower garden for additional parking.

At one point, during the winter of 2021, with exterior temperatures falling to minus 15 degrees and no heating in the main building, the water froze, and we had to rely on a neighbor supplying us with buckets of water from across the street. However, we worked on it, and luckily enough, when the pipes finally defrosted a week later, none of the pipes burst, so we didn't suffer any damage.

During the summer of 2021, I decided to start the Veterans shed, which I hadn't intended to do for at least another year. Having purchased the wood in the winter when lumber prices were low, I didn't want to leave it unused for another winter. So a groundsman came in to hollow out the foundations. A local builder and I laid the blockwork for the large, 14-meter by 7-meter, two-story building. Once the foundations were completed, I built the timber for the walls onsite and put them to work completely alone. While it was rather testing at times, the net result was that I saved in excess of £40 to £50k in labour costs. To complete the roof, I employed a local joiner at a reduced rate, and we put the trusses together as well as the final roofing materials.

During 2022 and into 2023, I worked on getting all the interiors finished before partially opening in June 2023. As we welcomed our first guest, I knew there was still much to do. I still had three bedrooms on the top floor to finish, and the veterans lounge was far from complete. But if I hadn't opened when we did, then the project would have been lost forever.

All in all, it's been a long slog, but I've got there, and it's a real pleasure to host guests from all walks of life and all branches of the armed services. I won't claim that it has been an easy task, as it has certainly not been. At one point, thanks to the lockdown and lack of income, I couldn't even afford to feed myself. On one occasion, I lasted two days on a can of soup. My plight became public, and many friends rallied around, offering money and even food parcels. But I got over all the hardships and am now looking forward to a successful future.

The next step in the development is to finish the grounds and gardens, construct the bikeway and sports stores, and build the garden lodge. I hope to achieve this in 2024 and 2025.



Anthony with his new project



The extension with the trusses installed



The trusses going up



The Veterans Lounge



Anthony getting messy



Tom being - Tom

The Development



Whats been achieved so far

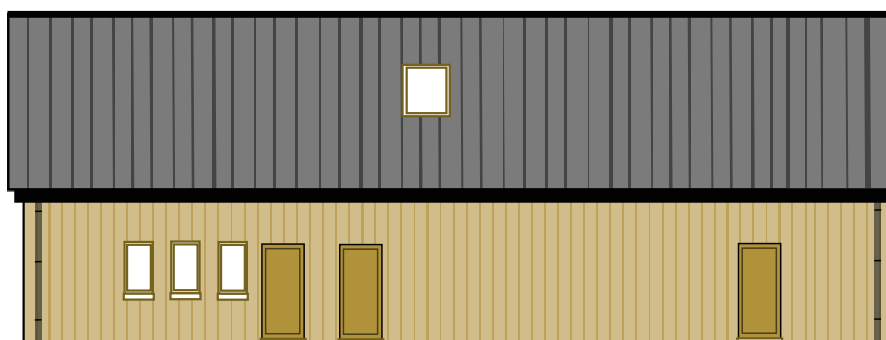


Veterans Shed as drawn and designed by Tony

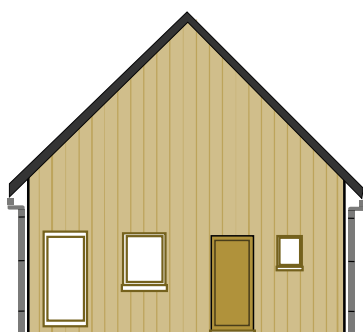
East Elevation



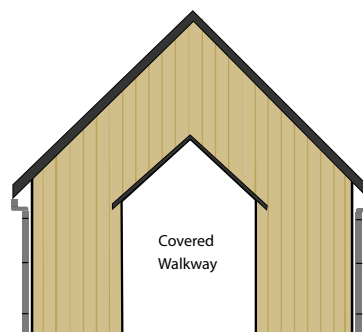
South Elevation



North Elevation



South Elevation



The Development



In the Pipe Line

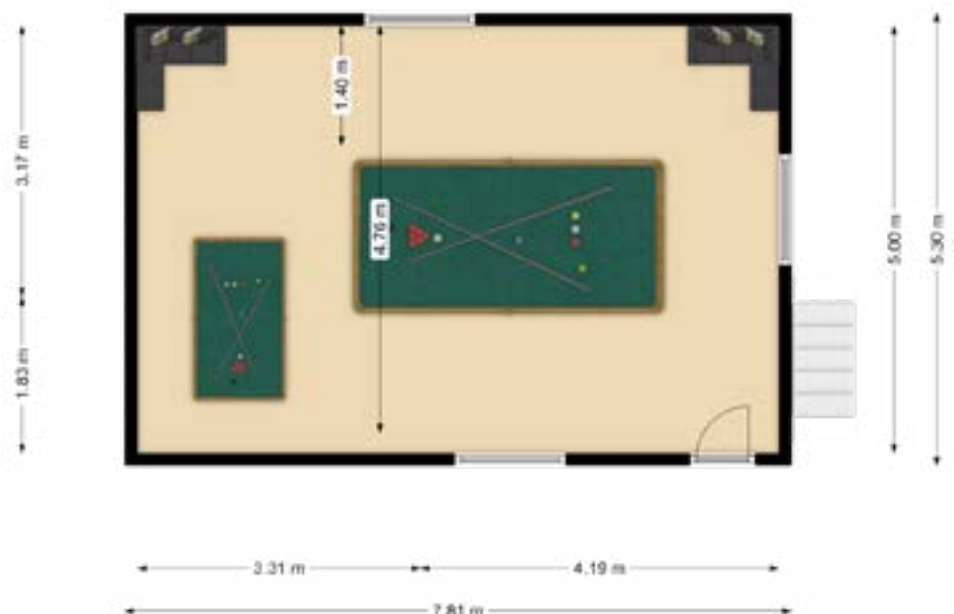


Anthony measuring up

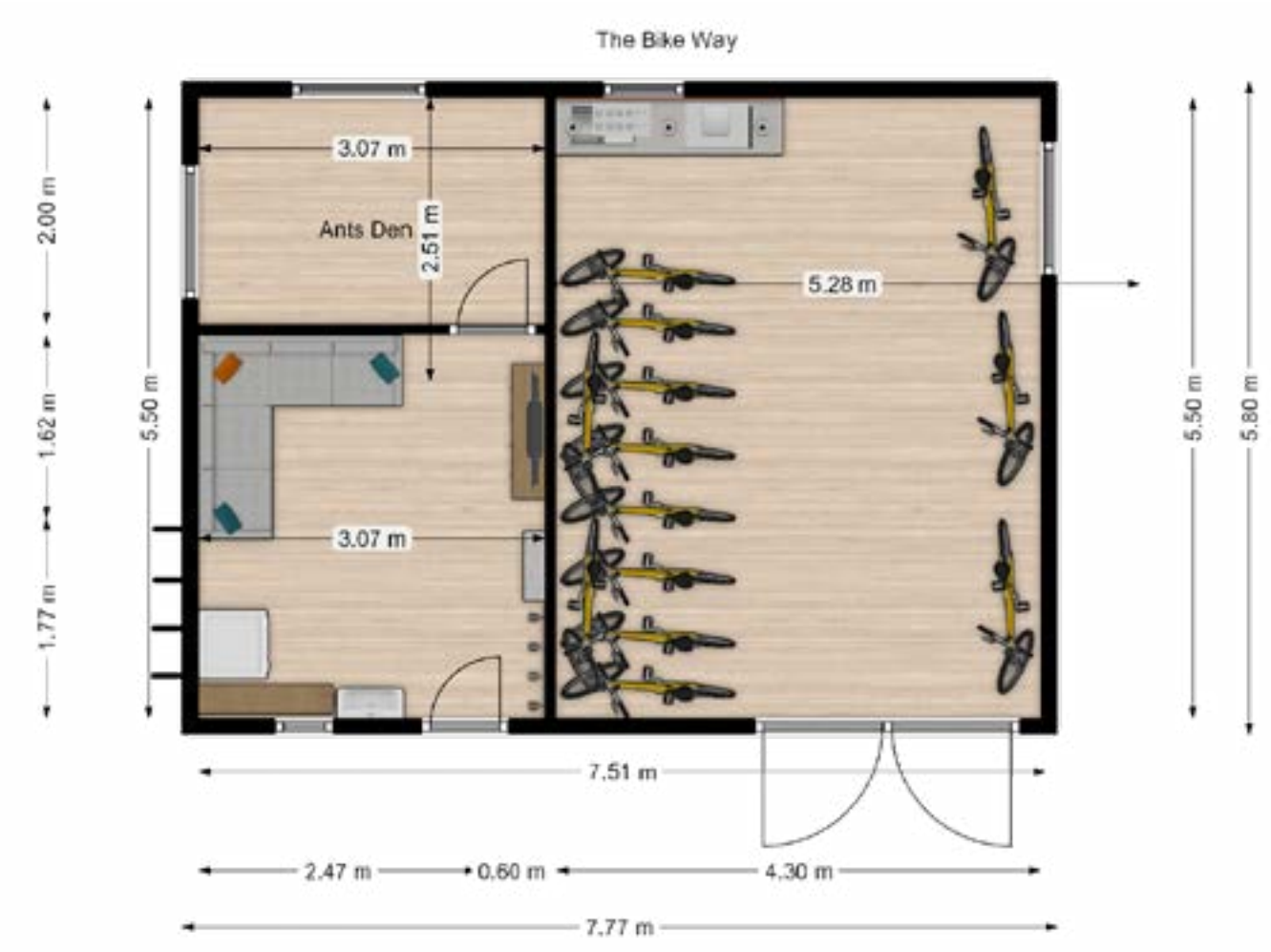
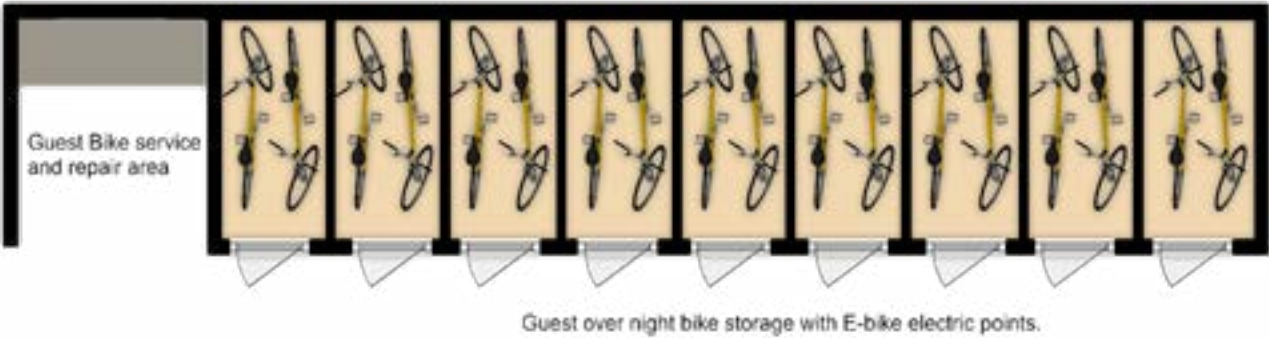
Campbells Games Room



New Garden Lodge



Forces Manor Mountain Garage



Out and About



On the door step



Whether you're looking for an adventure, fun for the whole family, or a break from everyday life, Cairngorms National Park has a lot to offer.

The Cairngorms National Park, twice the size of the Lake District, boasts more There are mountains, forest paths, rivers, lochs, wildlife hotspots, and friendly villages, distilleries than you can possibly imagine.

Mother Nature dealt the Cairngorms a hand full of aces. That's not fair, but that's how it is. Five of the UK's six highest mountains lie inside the park, and there are 55 Munros—mountains over 3,000 ft. There are huge forests of ancient native trees, cascading waterfalls, and more wildlife than you can shake a capercaillie at.

*More people come to the Cairngorms for snowsports than at any other UK resort. Hillwalkers and rock climbers will never run out of routes to try. There are oodles of top-class mountain bike trails, cross-country skiing trails, pony treks, and orienteering courses. Should you be into husky racing, well, you can do that here, too. You can also enjoy some downtime amid the glorious scenery. Alternatively, you could choose to explore the Malt Whisky Trail.

Forces Manor is situated in the easily accessible village of Kincaig. The location is within the Cairngorms National Park, just five minutes south of Aviemore.

Kincaig is a typical highland village, quiet and tranquil, yet boasting a wide variety of attractions and facilities, making it a popular, sought-after village to live in. We even have ospreys that return every spring to nest and rear their young on the island loch, just a short walk from Forces Manor.

Kincaig has two bars, a Lochside restaurant, a cafe/tea room with an art gallery, a water sports centre, a wildlife park, an activity centre at Alive Estate, and an RSPB nature reserve.

The surrounding area is teeming with wildlife, with resident osprey in the summer and roe deer all year round. On the grounds of Forces Manor, there are a number of red squirrels who have been living in our trees for many years, and if you are patient, you will spot otters down on the loch. One of the best places to fish for salmon and trout is the River Spey, which flows into Loch Insh in Kincaig.

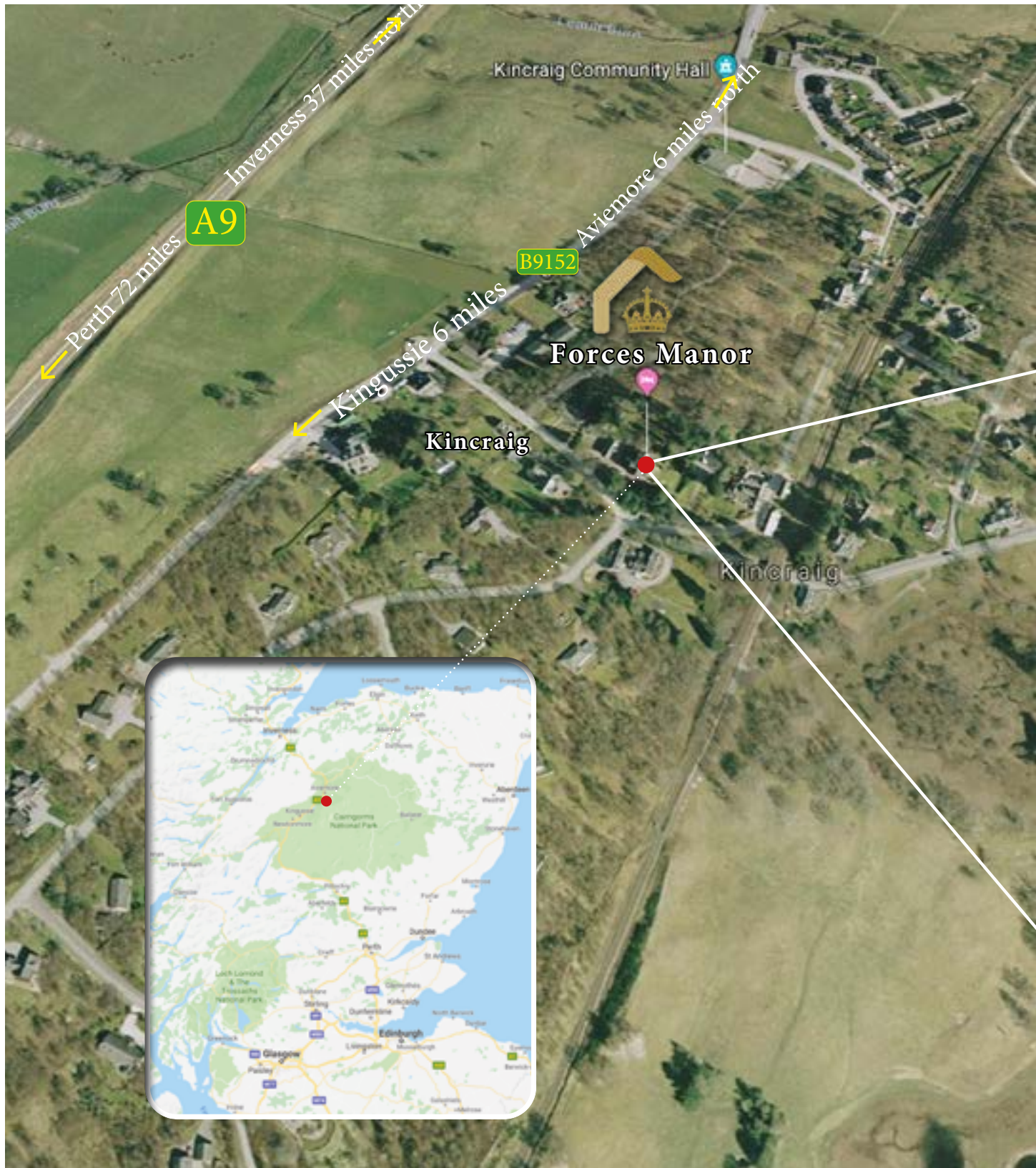
Close to Kincaig are Aviemore and Kingussie, which both have a large selection of shops, banks, restaurants, and bars. You will also find swimming pools, tennis courts, gyms, and international golf courses all just six miles in either direction.



Location



Easy access





Getting here couldn't be easier:

By Bus and Train:

Intercity city trains stop at stations in both Aviemore and Kingussie, while intercity buses stop in the centre of Kinraig, 200 metres from Forces Manor.

By Car:

From the south, head up the A9 from Perth, turning off at Kingussie, and drive the remaining six miles along the B9152 to Kinraig. From the north, head down the A9, turn off after Aviemore, and follow the B9152 to Kinraig. Forces Manor is located in the village's center.

By Air:

Inverness International Airport is just 44 miles from Kinraig.

Fuel:

The nearest fuel station is in Aviemore, just 6 miles north, with another fuel station to the south in Newtonmore, 8 miles, and another to the north in Carrbridge, 10 miles away.



FORCES Manor

Together



FORCES Manor

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