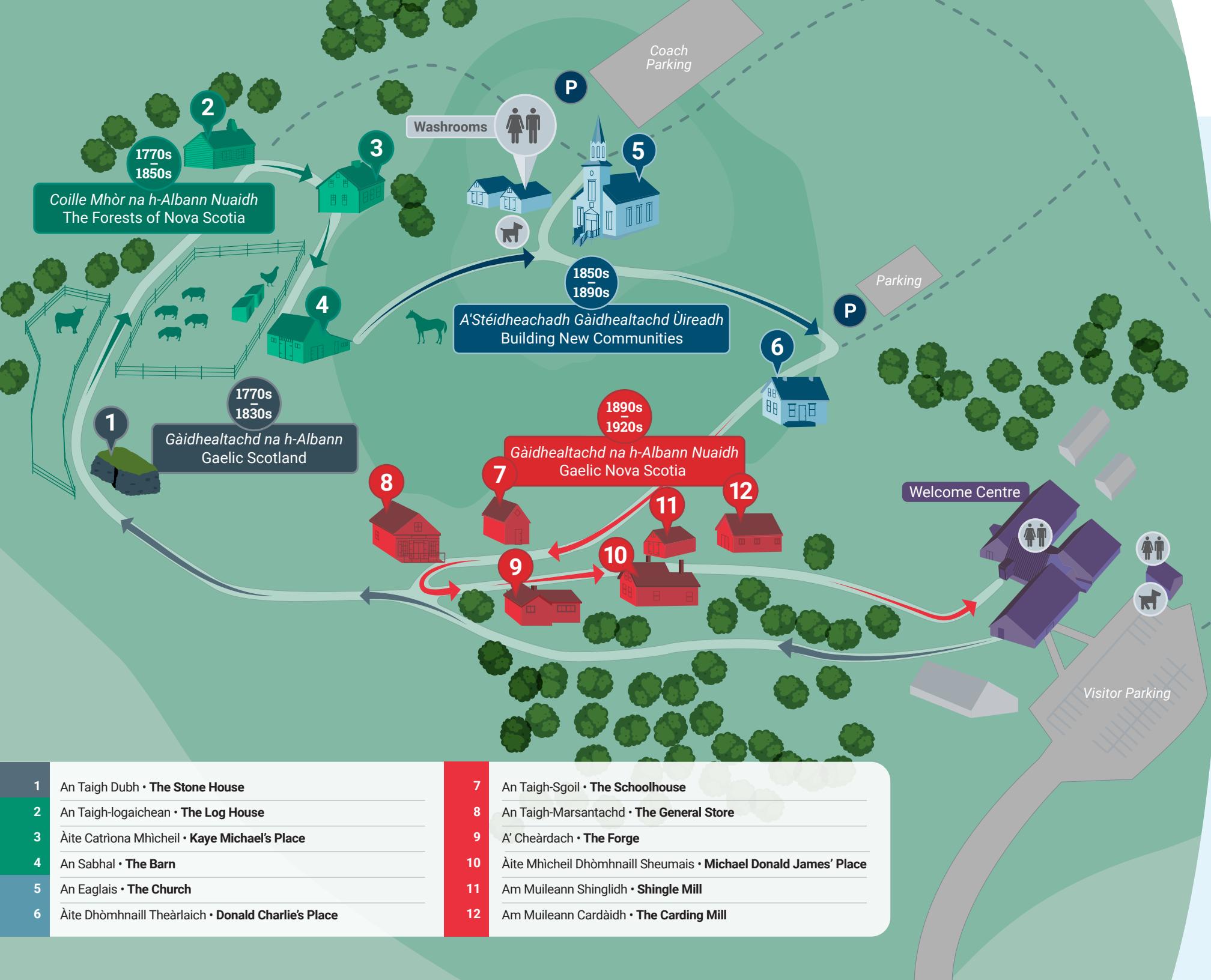


The journey of the Gaels, in four stories...



1770s-1830s Gàidhealtachd na h-Albann Gaelic Scotland

Living in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we are rich in Gaelic tradition, story, song and music. We are a hardy and enduring people, close in kinship ties. We gather fireside to discuss rising rents, the promise of land grants and a new life across the ocean.

1770s-1850s Coille Mhòr na h-Albann Nuaidh The Forests of Nova Scotia

Having crossed the ocean with little more than our language and culture, we now have access to lands where we can raise our families. We are well suited to a challenging life in the great Acadian Forest, which has been home to the L'nu (Mi'kmaq) since time immemorial.

1850s-1890s A'Stèidheachadh Gàidhealtachd Ùireadh Building New Communities

In these early days of new communities, we are often without clergy. As churches are built, we walk or travel in sleighs, wagons and boats to attend Mass or Sunday services. Many of our families have been in Nova Scotia for nearly 100 years and feel comfortable and secure here. The open hearth is slowly being replaced with cast iron stoves, but the kitchen remains our main place to céilidh.

1890s-1920s Gàidhealtachd na h-Albann Nuaidh Gaelic Nova Scotia

During this time teachers are instructed to teach in English only. Our children are often punished for speaking Gaelic in school. Merchants have opened stores to serve our needs for staples and merchandise. Credit is commonly extended. Sometimes, we settle bills by bartering butter, eggs and knitted items. The forge is our hardware store and repair shop. Since ancient times, the smith has been an esteemed trades person in Gaelic society. Five generations on, stories are still told about the first Gaels arriving in Nova Scotia. We have modern conveniences, but the cows still have to be milked and the hay made. We speak Gaelic to each other and the older generation, but not much to the children. Although well established, rural communities are often unable to sustain our large families.