

9 traffic-free bike rides in Scotland



Suitable for all abilities




sustrans
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Easy and enjoyable rides

As custodian of the **National Cycle Network** we've put together some of our favourite traffic-free bike rides of Scotland.

From the railway paths of the Central Belt to the inspiring views of the Cairngorms and Moray Firth, these easy routes are great places to be active while experiencing some of Scotland's finest scenery.

Key to route maps:



Bike Hire



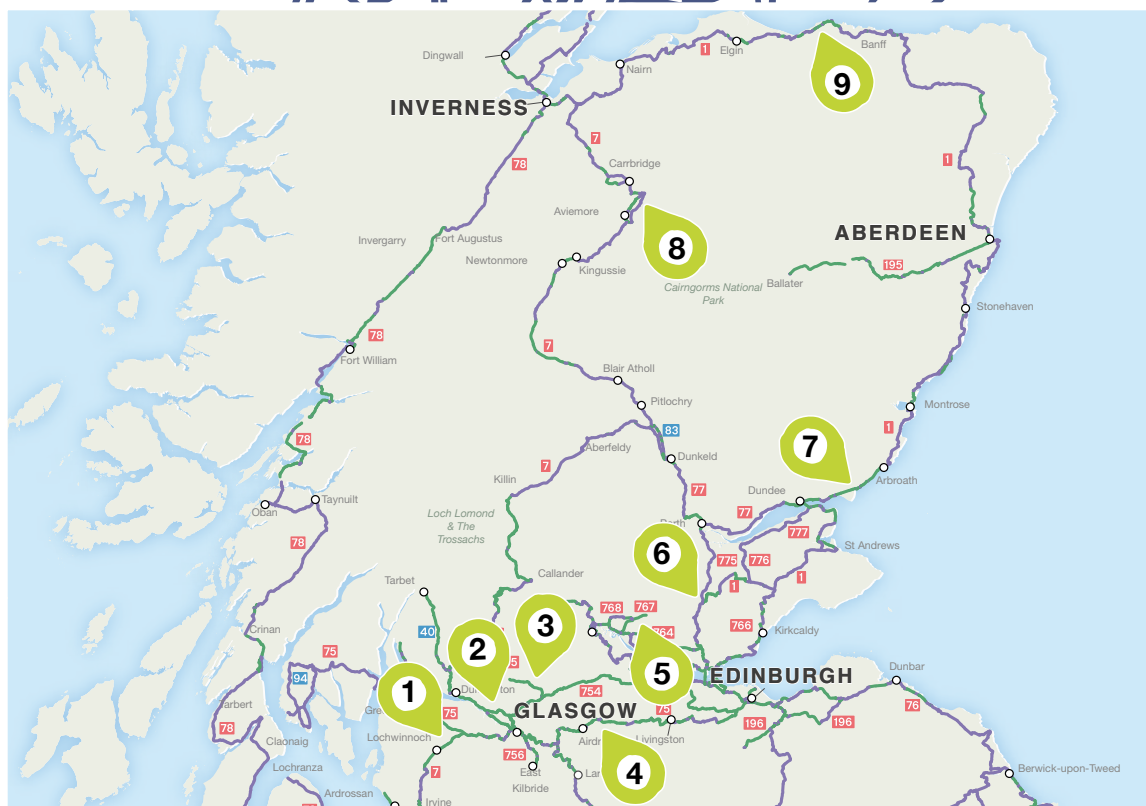
Pub



Café



Restaurant



Routes Menu

Tap on a desired route below or scroll

MENU



Route one – Renfrewshire

Johnstone to Lochwinnoch



Route two – Glasgow

Bell's Bridge to Clydebank



Route three – East Dunbartonshire

The Strathkelvin Railway Path



Route four – North Lanarkshire

Caldercruix to Blackridge



Route five – Clackmannanshire

Alloa to Tillicoultry



Route six – Kinross

Loch Leven Heritage Trail



Route seven – Angus

Carnoustie to Arbroath



Route eight – The Cairngorms

The Speyside Way



Route nine – Moray

Cullen to Buckie



Top Tips





Route one

Johnstone to Lochwinnoch,
Renfrewshire



Johnstone to Lochwinnoch

Taking in part of the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, this ride on a section of the former Lochwinnoch Loop Railway Line has no shortage of great views and interesting features. Try spotting the 18th-century “temple” on Kenmure Hill and check out the Collegiate Church before coming to Castle Semple Loch, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a haven for wild birds.



Key route information:

Start: Johnstone

Finish: Lochwinnoch Station

Time: 1 - 2 hours

Length of ride: 6.5 miles

Route one

Johnstone to Lochwinnoch, Renf.

MENU



Start

Barbush Cottage

Johnstone
PA5 8YR

GPS: 55.840553,
-4.511551

Finish

Lochwinnoch Station

Lochwinnoch
PA12 4JF

GPS: 55.787264,
-4.616225

Terrain, gradients and access

Mainly flat on a tarmac path. Traffic free, with train access at Johnstone and Lochwinnoch stations.

Ideas for things to do:

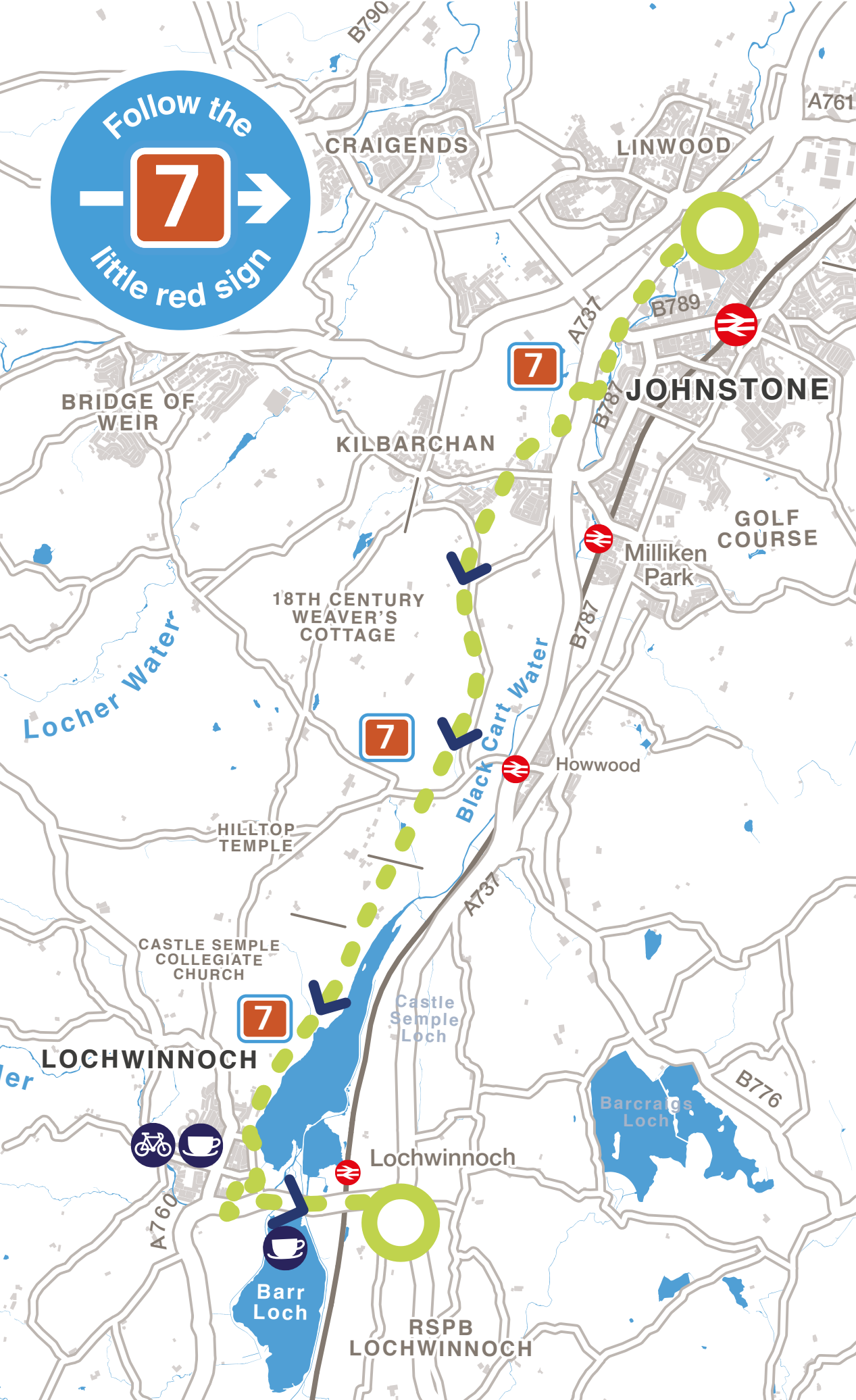
- If riding in summer, admire the wealth of wildflowers along the route verges
- Experience what 18th-century textile production was like at the Weaver's Cottage in Kilbarchan (open from March to September)
- Take advantage of one of the many outdoor activities offered at Castle Semple Visitor Centre and Country Park
- Watch out for wildlife such as ducks, crested grebes and even otters at RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve, a great wetland environment located close to the station

Route one

Johnstone to Lochwinnoch, Renf.



MENU





Route two

Bell's Bridge to Clydebank,
Glasgow



Bell's Bridge to Clydebank

Try this route for an eye-catching urban ride. From the beginning you'll be surrounded by impressive structures, from the metallic curves of the Science Centre and "Armadillo" SEC Centre to the Finnieston Crane and Tall Ship. Cycling along the banks of the Clyde, it won't be long until you spy the Kilpatrick Hills in the distance, before the imposing "Titan" at Clydebank ushers in the last stretch of the ride.



Key route information:

Start: Finnieston

Finish: Clydebank

Time: 1 - 2 hours

Length of ride: 6.5 miles

Route two

Bell's Bridge to Clydebank, Glasgow

MENU



Start

Bell's Bridge

Glasgow
G3 8QT

GPS: 55.859177,
-4.288775

Finish

Seaforth Road

Clydebank
G81 1TG

GPS: 55.903032,
-4.404590

Terrain, gradients and access

A tarmac path, with some road crossings and a brief on-road section coming into Clydebank. Both ends of the ride are well-served by rail links.

Ideas for things to do:

- Take a detour to Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, a free attraction housing many important artworks
- Uncover the history of transport in Glasgow at the Riverside Museum, covering everything from shipbuilding to trains
- See one of the most ancient sites Glasgow has to offer: a cluster of fossilised trees in the city's Victoria Park

Route two

Bell's Bridge to Clydebank, Glas.



MENU





Route three

The Strathkelvin Railway Path,
East Dunbartonshire



The Strathkelvin Railway Path

Starting just 10 miles north of Glasgow, this pleasant ride takes you into wide-open countryside and impressive landscapes. Edged with greenery, the path provides plenty of opportunity to stop and admire the views. If you're lucky you might spot a Kingfisher along Glazert Water, but you can't miss the imposing Campsie Fells and the craggy peak of Dunglass, the volcanic hill that signals the last stretches of the ride.



Key route information:

Start:	Kirkintilloch
Finish:	Strathblane
Time:	1- 2 hours
Length of ride:	8 miles



Start

Kilsyth Road

Kirkintilloch
Glasgow
G66 1QD

[GPS: 55.943050,](#)
[-4.153425](#)

Finish

Campsie Road

Strathblane
Glasgow
G63 9BE

[GPS: 55.985645,](#)
[-4.303254](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

Flat tarmac path with some road crossings.
There is public transport access via Lenzie railway station, which is around two miles from the start of the ride.

Ideas for things to do:

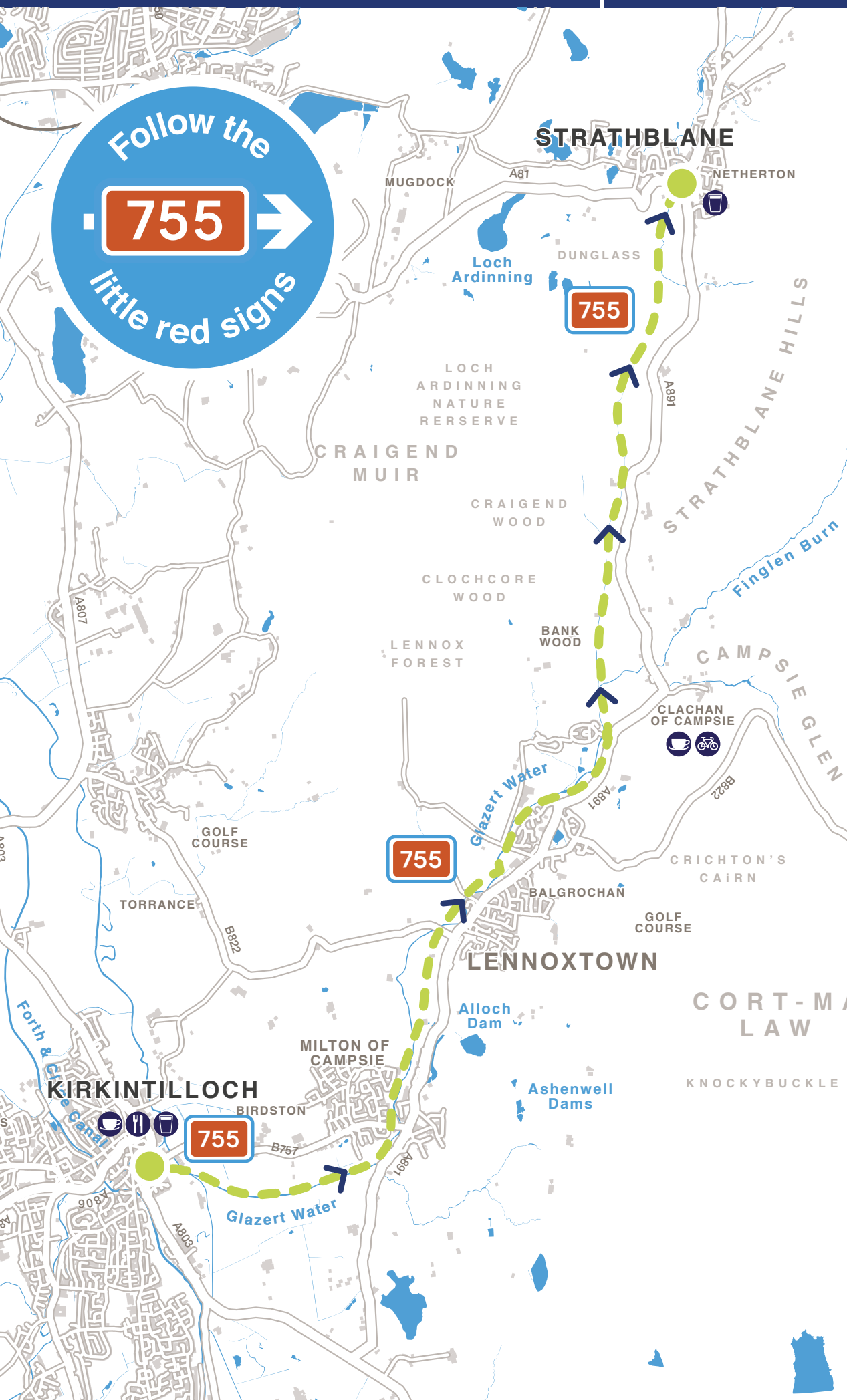
- Take a detour through the thick conifer woodland of Lennox Forest, where you can spy out some crossbills
- Lock up your bike at Clachan of Campsie and take a short, picturesque hike up Campsie Glen
- Book a tour around Glengoyne Distillery, a single malt whisky distillery just three miles up the road from Strathblane

Route three

The Strathkelvin Railway Path



MENU





Route four

Caldercruix to Blackridge,
North Lanarkshire



Caldercruix to Blackridge

The shores of Hillend Reservoir are the perfect introduction to this straight and gentle ride through an area rich in industrial heritage. Travelling along one of the most scenic sections of the Airdrie to Bathgate Railway Path, you'll enjoy great views of farmland to either side, with pockets of wildflowers and meadows along the route.



Key route information:

Start:	Caldercruix
Finish:	Blackridge
Time:	1 - 2 hours
Length of ride:	5 miles



Start

Gowan Brae

Caldercruix
ML6 7RH

GPS: 55.889749,
-3.881054

Finish

Station Road

Blackridge
EH48 3AH

GPS: 55.881102,
-3.762095

Terrain, gradients and access

Mostly flat on a tarmac surface. Caldercruix and Blackridge are served by train stations, though some on-road travel is required to access Blackridge station.

Ideas for things to do:

- Charge up on snacks at the Airdrie and District Angling Club café
- Take a break at the boulder seating areas along the route
- Seek out dragonflies, damselflies and more at Blawhorn Moss National Nature Reserve
- Take a detour for a riverside walk or picnic at Polkemmet Country Park

Route four

Caldercruix to Blackridge



MENU





Route five

Alloa to Tillicoultry,
Clackmannanshire



Alloa to Tillicoultry

Stunning panoramic views of the Ochil Hills make this ride through the Clackmannanshire countryside one to remember. Starting in Alloa, once one of Scotland's top spots for brewing ales, you'll join the path of an old railway line known as the Devon Way out to Tillicoultry – one of the so-called “Hillfoots” settlements that pepper this side of the Ochil range.



Key route information:

Start: Alloa

Finish: Tillicoultry

Time: 0.5 – 1 hour

Length of ride: 3.5 miles

Route five

Alloa to Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire

MENU



Start

Alloa Train Station

Station Road
Alloa
FK10 1BA

GPS: 56.117772,
-3.789184

Finish

Devonvale Hall

Moss Road
Tillicoultry
FK13 6NS

GPS: 56.150304,
-3.738814

Terrain, gradients and access

Flat on tarmac path, and there is rail access via Alloa station.

Ideas for things to do:

- Take a look inside Alloa Tower, the largest surviving castle keep in Scotland, where Mary, Queen of Scots lived as a child
- Enjoy Gartmorn Dam Country Park and Nature Reserve, where there are waterside walks to be had as well as a café for cake stops
- Do a spot of bargain-hunting at Tillicoultry's Stirling Mills Outlet Shopping Village

Route five

Alloa to Tillicoultry, Cla.



MENU



Follow the

767 ➔

little red signs



Route six

Loch Leven Heritage Trail,
Kinross



Loch Leven Heritage Trail

There's no shortage of things to see and do on this circular trail in view of the Ochil and Lomond Hills, from nature-spotting at Carsehall Bog and the RSPB Loch Leven Nature Reserve to picnicking at one of the many great spots around the loch. And passing through woodland, wetland and alongside the shimmering water of the loch, you'll enjoy cycling through some fantastic scenery.



Key route information:

Start: Kinross

Finish: Kinross

Time: 2 hours

Length of ride: 13 miles



Start / Finish

Kinross Pier

Kinross

KY13 8EU

[GPS: 56.200248, -3.416302](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

A fine gravel track that is mostly flat, with some gentle rises and falls. The trail can get quite busy at peak times, especially at Kinross, so please be mindful of other path users.

Ideas for things to do:

- Loch Leven Castle, where Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned and later escaped, lies on an island across the water and can be visited by boat between April and October
- The café and picnic benches at RSPB Loch Leven Nature Reserve are popular spots for lunch, and you can do a spot of twitching in the viewing hides
- With the Scottish Gliding Centre located nearby, you can take a moment to watch gliders soar in the air

Route six

Loch Leven Heritage Trail, Kinross



MENU



Follow the

1

little red sign



Route seven

Carnoustie to Arbroath, Angus



Carnoustie to Arbroath

Carnoustie's small but pretty beach is a great introduction to this breezy ride along the Angus coast that is sure to blow away the cobwebs. The sea is your constant companion as you pass through East Haven – one of the oldest fishing villages in Scotland – and on to Arbroath, with its picturesque harbour. Grab a batch of the famous “smokies” – the local delicacy – as a post-ride reward.



Key route information:

Start: Carnoustie

Finish: Arbroath

Time: 1 – 2 hours

Length of ride: 6.5 miles



Start

Carnoustie Beach

Carnoustie
DD7 6AJ

GPS: 56.499696,
-2.708390

Finish

Signal Tower Museum

Ladyloan
Arbroath
DD11 1PU

GPS: 56.554944,
-2.587095

Terrain, gradients and access

An almost entirely flat route on predominantly tarmac path. There are some brief on-road sections at Carnoustie, East Haven and Arbroath. Carnoustie and Arbroath are served by train stations.

Ideas for things to do:

- Check out the championship golf course at Carnoustie
- Learn more about Arbroath's local history at the Signal Tower Museum, not far from the harbour
- Visit Arbroath Abbey, the site of a famous declaration of independence by Scottish noblemen in the 1300s

Route seven

Carnoustie to Arbroath, Angus



MENU





Route eight

The Speyside Way (Aviemore to Boat of Garten), The Cairngorms



The Speyside Way

Wildlife, history and majestic views are combined here. Passing heather-clad moor and thick native birch woodland, this gently undulating route gives great views of the Cairngorm Mountains to the east, and if travelling in summer you may hear the chugging of restored steam engines on the nearby Strathspey Steam Railway. Lochs and rivers make the surrounding area a haven for Ospreys – in fact, Boat of Garten is also known as “Osprey Village”.



Key route information:

Start: Aviemore

Finish: Boat of Garten

Time: 0.5 – 1 hours

Length of ride: 5 miles



Start

Aviemore Train Station

Grampian Road
Aviemore
PH22 1PD

GPS: 57.188375,
-3.829362

Finish

Boat Country Inn & Restaurant

Deshar Road
Boat of Garten
PH24 3BH

GPS: 57.248676,
-3.753074

Terrain, gradients and access

Mostly fine gravel track with some gentle gradients. There are some road crossings and short on-road sections at Aviemore and on the approach to Boat of Garten. There is public transport access via Aviemore train station.

Ideas for things to do:

- Visit the café or check out the many activities available at Rothiemurchus Estate
- Travel back in time on the Strathspey Steam Railway (it only runs in summer, though bikes are allowed)
- Reward yourself with an afternoon tea at the Boat Country Inn at Boat of Garten
- Watch out for fantastic birds of prey at RSPB Loch Garten Osprey Centre

Route eight

The Speyside Way, Cairngorms



MENU





Route nine

Cullen to Buckie, Moray



Cullen to Buckie

The commanding views offered by the railway viaduct at the start of this route set the tone for a dramatic ride along the cliffs and coastline of the Moray Firth. You'll pass through a series of picturesque villages, where groups of old cottages bear witness to the area's historic fishing industry. Along with the striking formation of Bow Fiddle Rock, there's also the potential to spot dolphins out to sea.



Key route information:

Start:	Cullen
Finish:	Buckie
Time:	1 – 2 hours
Length of ride:	7.5 miles



Start

North Deskford Street

Cullen
AB56 4XH

GPS: 57.691056,
-2.823722

Finish

Buckpool Harbour Park

Buckie
AB56 1XQ

GPS: 57.676330,
-2.978445

Terrain, gradients and access

A largely flat route with one significant climb out of Findochty, on tarmac and fine gravel track. There are road crossings and intermittent on-road sections throughout the route.

Ideas for things to do:

- Power up for your ride with something sweet at Cullen's Ice cream Shop
- Take a detour down to Findochty harbour to spy out the local pleasure boats
- Immerse yourself in the rich history of the area at the Buckie and District Fishing Heritage Centre

Route nine

Cullen to Buckie, Moray



MENU





Bike ride checklist

You don't need special or expensive equipment to enjoy a short bike ride but here are some items you'll certainly find useful.

For you:

- A hat and suncream if it's sunny
- Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing
- Bike helmet – it's not compulsory to wear one in the UK but a well-fitted helmet is especially recommended for children
- Snacks and drinks to keep energy levels up
- Mobile phone and money

For your bike:

- Water bottle
- Puncture repair kit and pump
- Tyre levers, a bike 'multi-tool' or Allen keys and adjustable spanner
- Spare inner-tubes (saves you having to repair a puncture immediately)
- Bike lights
- Bike lock
- Bike bell – when on a shared-use path a friendly tinkle will let people know you're approaching.



Keep it safe and fun

Here are some tips to keep in mind when out on your ride:

- Let the slowest rider in your group set the pace for your ride.
- Ride in line on busy paths with any children in the middle of the adults. If there's only one adult, ride at the rear so you can keep an eye on everyone in front.
- Take extra care along any on-road sections and at road crossings. You may prefer to push your bike, especially with younger children or less experienced riders.

Plan your route



The routes in this guide are signed and easy to follow – just look out for the National Cycle Network blue and red signs. You can also check out your route in detail on our online map.

Check your bike



Before you set off on your ride, check your bike is in good condition. We've put together a guide to help you safety check your bike in 11 easy steps.

Fix a puncture



Thankfully, punctures don't happen often and are easy to fix yourself. All you need is a pump, puncture repair kit and a set of tyre levers. Watch our video to learn how to repair a puncture.

Enjoyed your ride on the National Cycle Network?

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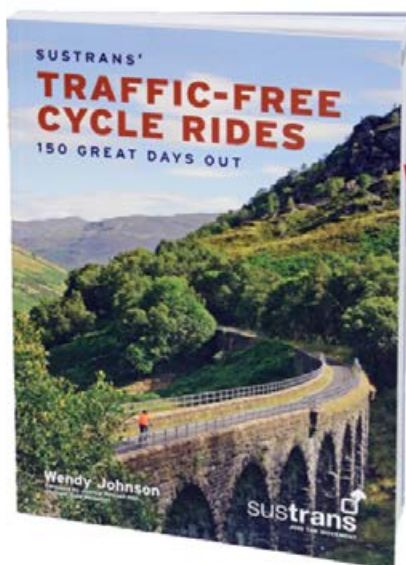


For more inspiring bike ride ideas buy our Traffic-Free Cycle Rides guidebook. It includes 150 hand-picked routes across the UK to help you plan the perfect day out.

Buy a regional map



Find and explore every local route and mile of the National Cycle Network in the UK with one of our pocket-sized regional cycle maps.



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We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

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www.sustrans.org.uk

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The rides in this guide have been suggested by Sustrans to help you enjoy traffic-free routes on the National Cycle Network. Cycle routes change over time, which may affect this collection of rides. Weather conditions may also affect path surfaces. Please use your own judgement when using the routes based upon the weather and the ability, experience and confidence levels of riders in your group.

Sustrans accepts no responsibility for any accidents or injury resulting from following these routes.

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