

# BIKEPACKING SCOTLAND

20 MULTI-DAY  
CYCLING  
ADVENTURES OFF  
THE BEATEN TRACK

A scenic landscape photograph showing two cyclists riding away on a wide, light-colored dirt path. The path runs along a rugged coastline with a rocky beach and a blue sea. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and inviting, suggesting an outdoor adventure.

Markus Stitz

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20 MULTI-DAY CYCLING ADVENTURES OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

## Markus Stitz

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**Front cover:** *Josh Ibbett and Philippa Battye on the Isle of Jura (route 13).*

**Back cover (L–R):** *Looking at the Spittal of Glenshee from the highest point of the Catearan Trail (route 17); Invercauld Bridge over the River Dee (route 17); Capital Trail (route 05); view towards the Forth Bridge at Carlingnose Point Nature Reserve (route 06); at Craighouse Pier, Isle of Jura (route 13).*

**Previous page:** *Josh Ibbett and Philippa Battye going off route on the Isle of Jura.*

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Illustration (page xvi) by Emma Kingston.

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PLEASE GIVE WAY TO HORSES AND PEDESTRIANS.

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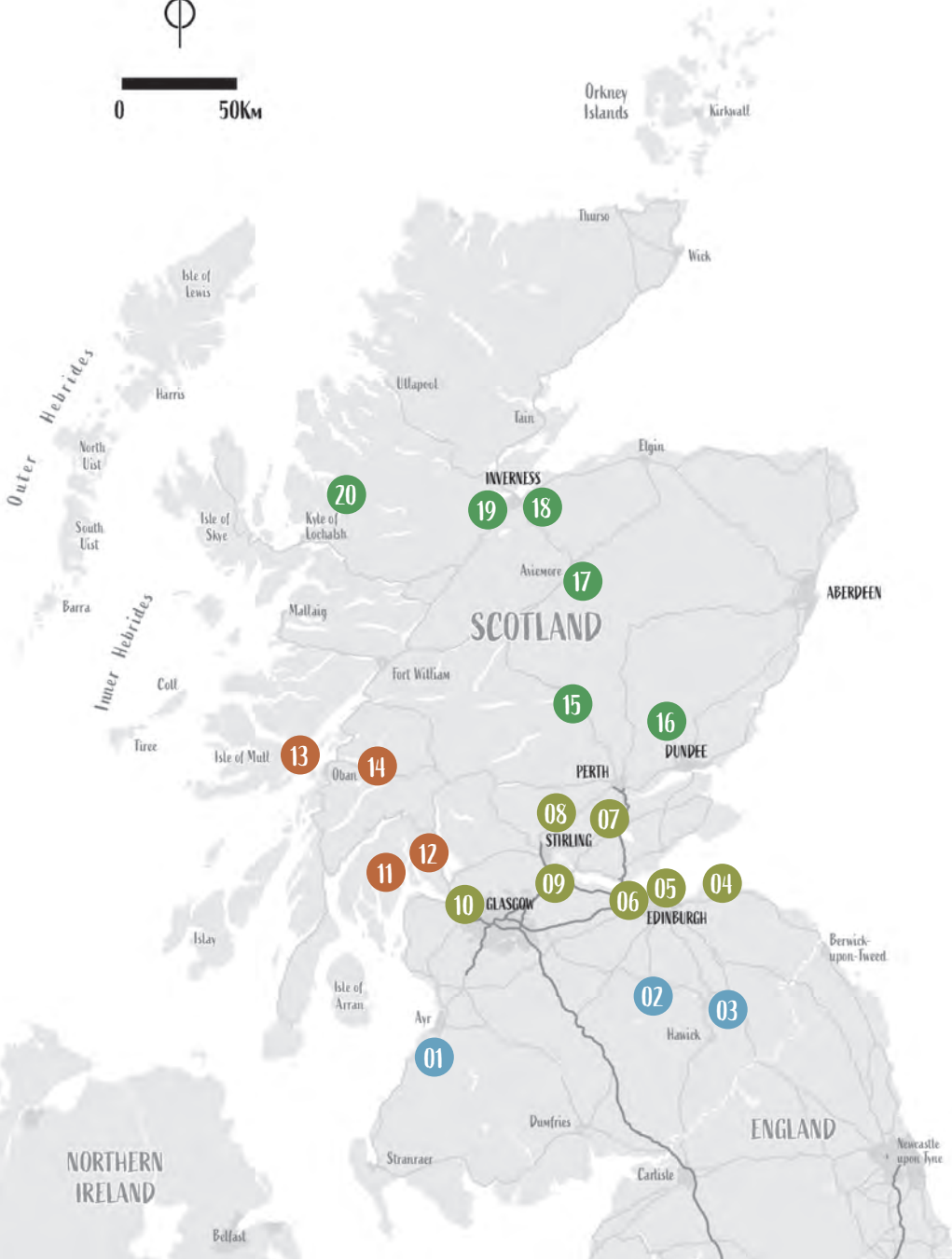
Markus Stitz



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### ROUTE GRADES (SEE PAGE VIII)

EASY	MEDIUM	HARD
▲	▲	▲



L-R: Stag on the North Coast 500 (route 20); mural in Cowdenbeath (route 06); Highland cattle in Glen Lonan (route 12); camping at Cruic Charrach on the Isle of Jura (route 13).

## INTRODUCTION

While this is my second book, *Bikepacking Scotland* has been much longer in the making than *Great British Gravel Rides*. I found my love for gravel riding through bikepacking, and in the year before Scotland welcomes the world to the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships, it seemed fitting to finally write this book.

I had my official introduction to bikepacking in 2014, when I first lined up in Tyndrum to ride the Highland Trail 550 on a single-speed bike. Back then I was unprepared for what lay ahead of me, but I loved the spirit of the community of riders that enveloped me. I had a fair bit of learning to do, but the sheer beauty that surrounded me, and the warm and welcoming nature of both the bikepacking community and the people of Scotland made the experience one that has stuck in my memories ever since.

Shortly after finishing the Highland Trail just hours within the cut-off time, I discovered the Cross Borders Drove Road on one of my local rides in the Pentland Hills. It immediately sparked an interest for the amazing heritage paths that criss-cross the country, and it inspired the development of my first bikepacking route – the Capital Trail.

Only a few months after organising an event on the route in 2015, I was off on a much bigger loop around the world. My 'Extended Capital Trail' took me cycling through 26 different countries and I was met with the same warm hospitality I encountered on my first bikepacking event. But I was also happy and pleased to return to Scotland after 34,000 kilometres (21,126 miles), to combine my passion for bikepacking and my learnings from the trip. This was the start of Bikepacking Scotland.

Since December 2016, when I first registered the domain *bikepackingscotland.com*, I have had the privilege to work with inspiring

people across the country to develop and promote bikepacking routes. I came to understand Scotland, which I have called home since 2009, so much better on two wheels than I would have done in any other way.

Bikepacking has allowed me to experience the rich history and natural heritage of the country with all my senses. My work has connected me with inspiring people, many of whom have since become friends. Bikepacking has taken me to the corners of Scotland that the country is world-famous for, but without the need to travel with a metal cage around me. But, more often, cycling has taken me to those places that don't normally feature in other travel guides.

For me, bikepacking is one of the purest ways to discover Scotland off the beaten track, leaving no other trace than a few tyre marks. All the bikepacking adventures I have had in Scotland have created lasting memories, even though at times it was a steep learning experience. Scotland isn't an easy country to cycle in when it throws its weather at you. You will fondly remember the first time you sink your feet into its famous bog, or the first time a cloud of midges surrounds you. But you will also be blown away by the wonderful scenery, no matter where you go.

The routes in this book are only a snapshot. Scotland inspires a vibrant community of people who create routes, organise events or simply share their experiences on social media, and these are people that are proud of where they call home. Its access rights, historic routes and climate make it one of the best countries in the world to enjoy bikepacking.

I hope this book serves as inspiration for you to enjoy your cycling adventures, big and small.

**Markus Stütz**

Edinburgh, December 2022





# SOUTHERN SCOTLAND





# 01 AYRSHIRE ALPS, COAST & CASTLES

## INTRODUCTION

This ride takes you through the beauty of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere, which covers a large part of South West Scotland. On quiet roads and gravel tracks you can surprise yourself with a rugged and scenic coast, majestic forests, beautiful rolling hills and farmland, historic villages, and towns that inspired Robbie Burns, Scotland's national poet.

## THE ROUTE

The route starts at Ayr railway station – with frequent connections to Girvan in the south and Glasgow in the north – and then follows the A79 and B7024 south to Alloway. The village is best known as the birthplace of Robert (Rabbie) Burns and provides the setting for much of his poem ‘Tam o’ Shanter’. At Burns Cottage, the route joins the Poet’s Path towards the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum (£), which is passed at the end of the loop. There are a number of Burns-related artworks to spot as you cycle along, the most noticeable being Kenny Hunter’s Monument to a Mouse, made from cast iron. You cross a bridge and then join a section of cycle path on the former line of the Maidens and Dunure Light Railway. The South Ayrshire Paths Initiative is working on creating a multi-user path between Ayr and Girvan based on the railway route, similar to the section that has already been converted.

Your route continues on the cycle path, until a path on the right continues to a residential estate and Doonholm Road. The route joins the National Byway route to cross the A77 at Doonholm Park, and then follows this signposted route to Dalrymple. From here, a quiet road climbs to Guiltreehill and descends through the rolling hills of the Ayrshire countryside to Kirkmichael. Expect more beautiful countryside and more

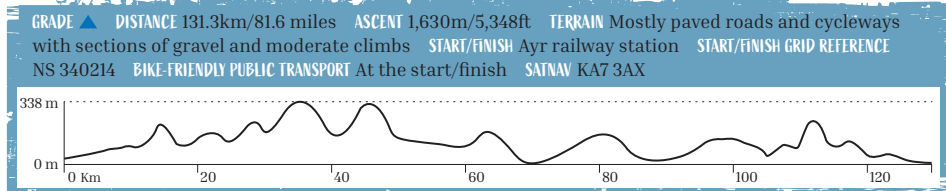


## ROUTE CONDITIONS

- Path: 8%
- Cycle path: 6%
- Road: 86%
- Recommended bike: gravel bike

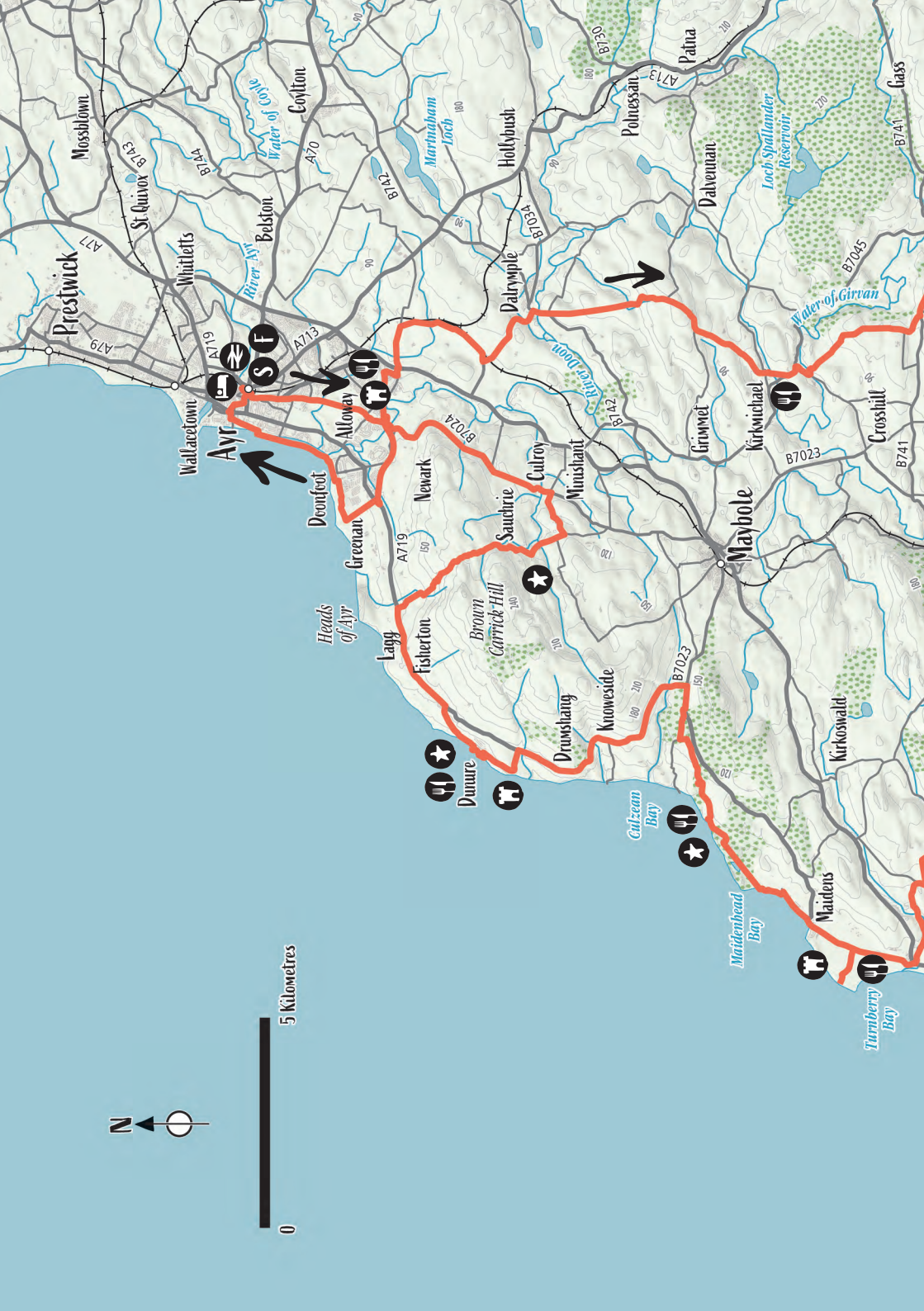
Previous page: From Moffat to Ae on Sustrans Route 7 (route 02).

Clive Drummond on a gravel track in the Change Plantation.





5 Kilometres







### WHEN TO RIDE

This route is good to ride all year round.

### WARNINGS

The A77 is a major road with heavy traffic. Be careful when crossing, and if you need to shorten or alter the route, it's best to avoid this road.

### FOOD AND DRINK

- Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway. T: 01292 443 700
- Kirkmichael Community Shop and Cafe, Kirkmichael. T: 01655 750 443
- Cafe The Buck, Straiton.  
[www.facebook.com/cafethebuck](http://www.facebook.com/cafethebuck)
- Barr Community Store and Cafe, Barr. T: 01465 861 221
- Home Farm Kitchen, Culzean. T: 01655 884 455
- Harbour View Coffee Shop, Dunure. T: 01292 500 026
- The Anchorage, Dunure. T: 01292 502 826
- Turnberry Lighthouse, Turnberry. T: 01656 333 991

rolling hills while following the National Byway to Straiton. The route continues through the village first, and then backtracks over farm tracks and a private road to a road that climbs steadily westbound and descends again to meet Sustrans Route 7. You continue into extensive forests, which are very typical for this corner of Scotland. The route reaches its highest point at the Black Hill of Garleffin, before it descends into more open moorland to South Balloch. From here, a nice off-road section takes you on wide and smooth gravel paths through Changue Plantation, reaching the highest point at Balloch Hill. The descent from here is awesome fun, and the small store in the village of Barr is a good place to stop for coffee and cake.

The route then undulates along the B734, a singletrack road alongside the River Stinchar, to Pinmore Bridge, where the A714 is joined, continuing through a beautiful wooded valley to Girvan. Girvan has a railway station and is an optional start or finish location. The route crosses the town and continues along the promenade, which is also the route of the Ayrshire Coastal Path, offering great views towards Ailsa Craig, the island which has long been the place where curling stones are quarried. In summer, it is home to 40,000 gannets. There are regular boat tours to this interestingly shaped rock, formed during the same period as the rocks on the nearby Isle of Arran, which is also visible on clear days.

At the end of the promenade the route joins the National Byway again, crossing the busy A77 and continuing steadily uphill on the B741 to Low Craighead. Here, another small road is followed, with more stunning views to Ailsa Craig on clear days. This and other sections are part of the Ayrshire Alps routes, which were developed by the local cycling club Ayr Burners Cycling. Watch out for stunning views to the coast while you descend to Turnberry, the village best known for its iconic golf course. The route makes a short detour to Turnberry Lighthouse, built in 1873, and the ruins of Turnberry Castle,



thought to be the birthplace of Robert the Bruce in 1274.

At Maidens, a series of rocks known as the ‘Maidens of Turnberry’ form a natural harbour, and the sandy beach with a grassy foreshore is a wonderful place to relax and enjoy the breathtaking scenery; on a clear day you can even see as far as the Mull of Kintyre. As with Turnberry, Maidens was one of the stations on the Maidens and Dunure Light Railway from Ayr to Girvan. Follow the road through the caravan park to enter the grounds of Culzean Castle (£) on the Ayrshire Coastal Path. Perched on the Ayrshire cliffs, the castle was designed by Robert Adam in the late 18th century; it once also decorated the back of a £5 note issued by the Royal Bank of Scotland. After following a series of tracks and roads through the country park, you’ll reach the A719, and soon afterwards one of Scotland’s oddest bits of road, the Electric Brae. Due to an optical illusion, freewheeling vehicles – and bicycles! – appear to be drawn uphill. Soon after, you reach Dunure, a small coastal village and a filming location for *Outlander*. Another ruined castle in a clifftop setting, a scenic former fishing harbour with a nice pub and cafe make Dunure a great location to rest for a while.

At Fisherton, the route joins the A719 to Genoch Farm. From here, the last proper climb follows Sustrans Route 7 over by Brown Carrick Hill. You’ll be rewarded with amazing views from the top, and a sweeping downhill to Sauchrie. Sauchrie House was home to John Loudon McAdam, a Scottish civil engineer and road-builder who invented the process of ‘macadamisation’ for building roads with a smooth hard surface, which ‘paved’ the way for modern roads. Shortly afterwards, the route continues on the B7024 to Alloway, passing the Burns Monument and Birthplace Museum. From here, the Burton cycle track is joined to Doonfoot, where the route meets Sustrans Route 7. This quiet cycle path takes you along the waterfront first, and then on a succession of roads back to Ayr railway station.

### ACCOMMODATION

- Various Airbnbs in the area – [www.airbnb.co.uk](http://www.airbnb.co.uk)
- Mercure Hotel, Ayr. T: 01292 844 299

### OTHER ROUTES NEARBY

- Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 7 – [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)
- National Byway – [www.thenationalbyway.org](http://www.thenationalbyway.org)
- Ayrshire Alps routes – [www.ayrshirealps.org](http://www.ayrshirealps.org)

### BIKE SHOPS AND HIRE

- Carrick Cycles, Ayr (shop). T: 01292 269 822
- Biosphere Bikes, Girvan (hire) – [www.biospherebikes.com](http://www.biospherebikes.com)

### VIDEO INSPIRATION



L-R: Former railway bridge; Burns Cottage in Alloway; Culzean Castle.





# 10 JOHN MUIR WAY BIKEPACKING ROUTE

## INTRODUCTION

One of Scotland's Great Trails, the John Muir Way offers a unique coast-to-coast bikepacking journey through Scotland's landscapes, history and heritage, linking Helensburgh in the west with Dunbar, the birthplace of John Muir, in the east. The John Muir Way Bikepacking Route is a combination of the signposted walking and cycling routes, and symbolically passes through Scotland's first national park, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs. This route offers a journey of contrasts and the chance to connect with nature, taking advantage of the green spaces that link the coasts, villages, towns and even the capital city, Edinburgh.

## THE ROUTE

Your journey starts at the waterfront in Helensburgh at the John Muir memorial where you'll find a white stone bench and a circular plinth engraved with footprints and a John Muir quote. The town is also the start and finish for the Wild About Argyll Trail (page 81) and is well connected by regular trains to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Hill House (£), by world-famous Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh, is passed early on the route and is well worth a visit. The route leaves town on a cycle path alongside Luss Road, before it climbs on a well-maintained gravel road towards Gouk Hill. The views across Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park from the top of the hill – a short detour – are awesome. The route continues via a technical singletrack on Stonemollan Road through the forest. This soon turns into a tarmac road which descends into Balloch.

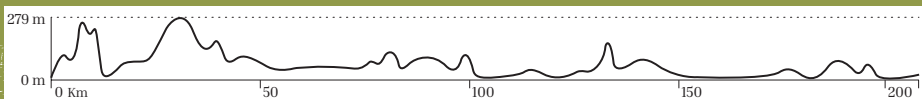


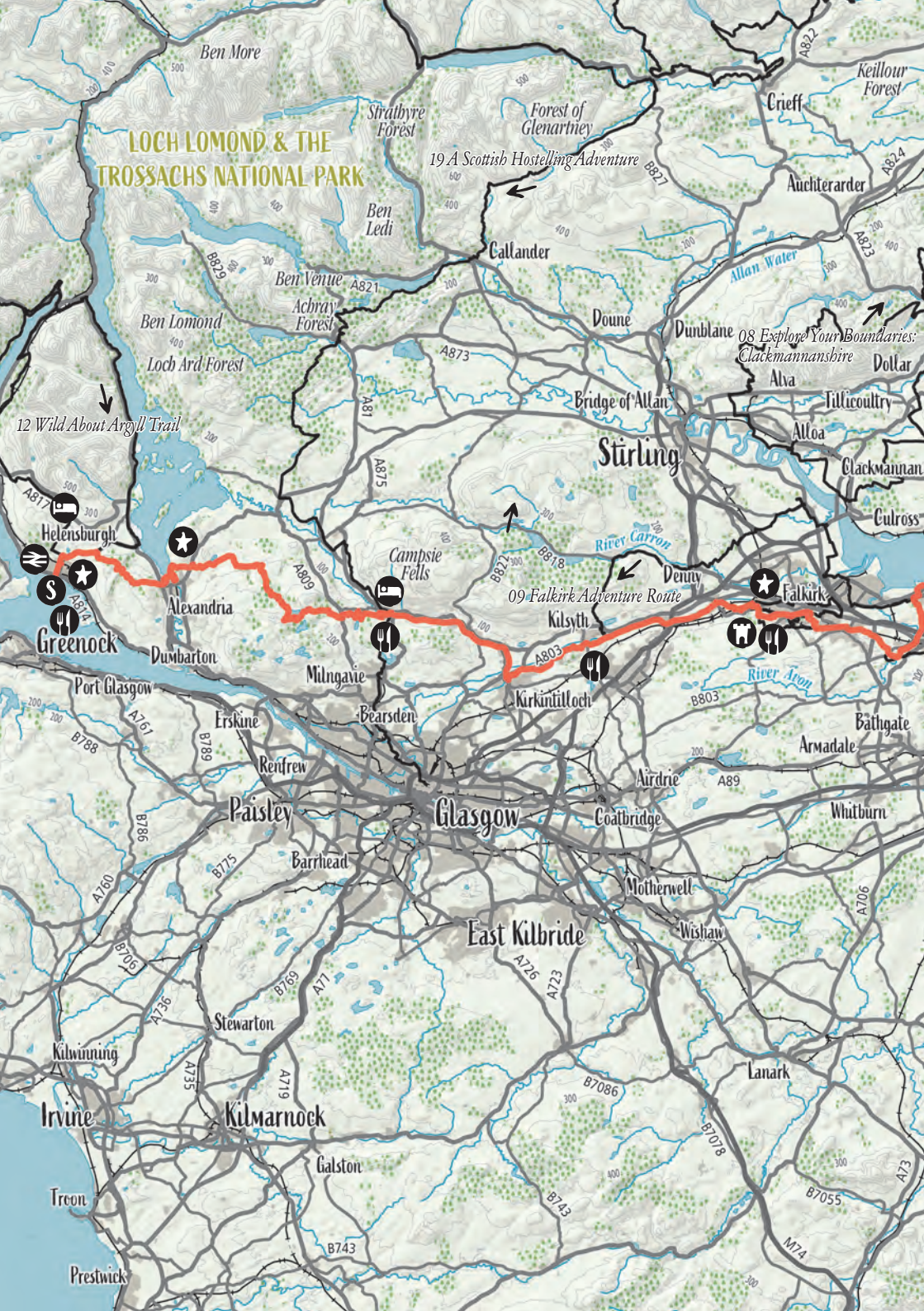
## ROUTE CONDITIONS

- Singletrack: 16%
- Path: 18%
- Cycle path: 41%
- Road: 25%
- Recommended bike: gravel bike

*Louise Chavarie on a path at Harestanes Wood near Aberlady.*

**GRADE** ▲ **DISTANCE** 213.2km/132.5 miles **ASCENT** 1,870m/6,135ft **TERRAIN** A great introduction to bikepacking, with only a few technical and remote sections **START/FINISH** John Muir memorial, Helensburgh/John Muir Birthplace Museum, Dunbar **START/FINISH GRID REFERENCE** NS 294822/NT 679789 **BIKE-FRIENDLY PUBLIC TRANSPORT** At Helensburgh Central/Upper and Dunbar railway stations, close to the start/finish **SATNAV** G84 8SQ/EH42 IJJ





# LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

12 Wild About Argyll Trail

19 A Scottish Hostelling Adventure

09 Falkirk Adventure Route

Greenock  
Helensburgh  
Dumbarton  
Port Glasgow  
Erskine  
Paisley  
Barrhead  
Stewarton  
Kilmarnock  
Galston  
Irvine  
Troon  
Prestwick

Alexandria  
Milngavie  
Bearsden  
Glasgow  
East Kilbride

Stirling  
Bridge of Allan  
Denny  
Kilsyth  
Kirkintilloch  
Airdrie  
Coatbridge  
Motherwell  
Wishaw  
Lanark

Falkirk  
Dunblane  
Alloa  
Fillingcuntry  
Clackmannan  
Culross  
Bathgate  
Armadale  
Whitburn

08 Explore Your Boundaries: Clackmannanshire





In Balloch, the route follows minor roads and mixed-use paths along the shores of Loch Lomond. You pass the *Maid of the Loch*, the last and largest in a long line of paddle steamers to sail on Loch Lomond; it is currently undergoing restoration. The route then crosses the River Leven at Balloch railway station, where it connects with Sustrans Route 7 initially but leaves the Sustrans route soon after to follow the riverbank into Balloch Castle Country Park. After the park, the route rejoins Sustrans Route 7 and gradually climbs into the Kilpatrick Hills on minor roads. After crossing the Cameron Burn, the tarmac turns into gravel on the climb towards Burncrooks Reservoir. This section of the route feels very remote. The track along the western and southern shores of Burncrooks Reservoir is fantastic for more experienced off-road riders; if you want an easier ride, the track along the northern shore is a shorter and flatter alternative. After Burncrooks Reservoir, a wider gravel track soon turns into tarmac and passes Edenmill Farm.

Shortly after, the route follows a brief section of Stockiemuir Road, and then crosses Carbeth Hill on a mixture of gravel tracks and paths – overlapping with the West Highland Way for a short section – before descending on Gowk Stane Road into the small town of Strathblane. From here, you follow the Strathkelvin Railway Path (Sustrans Route 755) along the route of several dismantled railway lines as far as Kirkintilloch, passing through Lennoxton and Milton of Campsie along the way. This smooth and traffic-free cycle path offers great views towards the Campsie Fells to the north, and Dunglass, an ancient volcanic plug, to the south. In Kirkintilloch, the route joins the towpath along the Forth & Clyde Canal, Sustrans Route 754, passing Twechar and the hillfort at Bar Hill. This fort is a remnant of the Antonine Wall, a turf fortification built by the Romans across the Central Belt of Scotland. Auchinstarry Marina provides the opportunity to leave the bike and walk up either Croy Hill or Bar Hill to explore the Roman heritage hereabouts. As these are historical monuments, cycling is not permitted.

Overlapping here with the Falkirk Adventure Route (page 57), your route continues on the towpath to Bonnybridge, where it passes underneath the canal through the Radical Pend.

#### NAVIGATION

Be mindful that the route described is a mixture of the walking and cycling routes, so don't rely on the signposting.

#### WHEN TO RIDE

This route is good to ride all year round.

#### WARNINGS

The technical singletrack on Stonemollan Road requires pushing down steep steps. While the last third on the East Lothian coast is mainly flat, headwinds can make this a slog.

L-R: Avon Aqueduct on the Union Canal; travel writer Simon Parker crossing a field near North Berwick; John Muir's Birthplace in Dunbar; Yellowcraig Beach with North Berwick in the background.



## FOOD AND DRINK

- **Sugar Boat, Helensburgh.**  
T: 01436 647 522
- **Edenmill Cafe and Farm Shop, Blanefield.** T: 01360 771 707
- **The Kirkhouse Inn, Strathblane.**  
T: 01360 771 771
- **The Boathouse Hotel Bar & Restaurant, Auchinstarry.**  
T: 01236 829 859
- **Cafe@Canada Wood, Falkirk.**  
T: 01324 612 111
- **Taste, Linlithgow.** T: 01506 844 445
- **Corbie Inn, Bo'ness.** T: 01506 825 307
- **The Lobster Pot, Blackness.**  
T: 01506 830 086
- **Honey Pot Creative Cafe, South Queensferry –**  
[www.honeypotcreativecafe.com](http://www.honeypotcreativecafe.com)
- **Harbour Cafe Fisherrow, Musselburgh.**  
T: 01968 620 563
- **Steampunk Coffee Roasters, North Berwick.** T: 01620 893 030
- **Hector's Artisan Pizzeria, Dunbar –**  
[www.hectorsdunbar.co.uk](http://www.hectorsdunbar.co.uk)

L-R: Murals in Prestonpans © Gavin Morton; Gouk Hill near Helensburgh with Loch Lomond in the background © Gavin Morton.

For many years, the pend, a tunnel-like passageway under a structure for pedestrians and cars, was the only way to get from High Bonnybridge to 'low' Bonnybridge, until the bridge was built over the canal. If you are brave, you can cycle through the water that runs through the pend, otherwise a small path on the side will keep your feet dry. The route joins Bonnyside Road and passes Rough Castle, another Roman fort which must be explored on foot (no cycling!). After crossing the railway twice, a path leads to the Falkirk Wheel, one of two working boat lifts in the United Kingdom and the only one of its kind in the world. Boat tours (£) of the wheel and the Union Canal offer a nice distraction from cycling.

After the Falkirk Wheel, a short section through woodland offers a welcome change to the easy towpath cycling, before the route crosses the Union Canal on gravel tracks into Callendar Park. This is a popular mountain bike area and offers a network of trails to explore. The route passes the free-to-access Callendar House, a stunning 14th-century, French-chateau-style house. Climbing through the park, the route meets New Hallglen Road and then follows a path towards the Union Canal, from where it continues on a well-maintained towpath once again. You will need to push your bike over the impressive Avon Aqueduct; carried on 12 arches, it is the tallest and longest aqueduct in Scotland, and the second longest in Britain.

Shortly after the aqueduct, the route leaves the Union Canal and follows the banks of the River Avon into Linlithgow Bridge. Linlithgow Palace (£), one of the principal residences of the monarchs of Scotland in the 15th and 16th centuries, is a short detour. After a section on the road, the route follows paths



and forest tracks. Fishers' Brae, a path once used by wives of fishermen travelling between Bo'ness and Linlithgow to sell their catches, provides superb views. At Kinneil, the public park surrounding the impressive Kinneil House incorporates a section of the Antonine Wall and the only visible example of an Antonine fortlet available today. The route passes the ruins of a small cottage, which was where James Watt devised his improved steam engine in 1765.

After crossing the steam railway tracks, the route follows the Bo'ness foreshore towards Blackness Castle (£). Built in the 15th century and used in various film sets, this is one of Scotland's most picturesque castles. From here, the route follows a well-graded path through the Hopetoun Estate, passing Hopetoun House (£), before joining the shore road into South Queensferry. The From Forth to Fife route (page 39) is met here in the small town. All along this section of the route, the views towards the three bridges over the Firth of Forth are fantastic. The route crosses underneath the Forth Bridge, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and follows the shore on gravel paths and singletrack sections past Hound Point. After the Dalmeny Estate, it leaves the shore towards Cramond and heads into Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh.

The John Muir Way crosses Corstorphine Hill on singletracks and wider paths before winding its way through town on a mixture of paths along the Water of Leith. After a few steps (with a rail to push bikes up), the route joins the Union Canal towpath for one last time to its terminus at Fountainbridge. The route then passes Arthur's Seat and the distinctively shaped Salisbury Crags in Holyrood Park. From here, a cycle path

#### ACCOMMODATION

- Travelodge Helensburgh Seafront, Helensburgh. T: 0871 559 1823
- The Attic at Edenmill Farm, Blanefield. T: 01360 770 500
- West Port Hotel, Linlithgow (short detour). T: 01506 847 456
- Richmond Park Hotel, Bo'ness (short detour). T: 01506 823 213
- Orocco Pier Hotel, South Queensferry. T: 0131 331 1298
- Ducks Inn, Abergeldy. T: 01875 870 682
- Gilsland Park, North Berwick. T: 01620 893 790
- The Dolphin Inn, Dunbar. T: 01368 868 427

#### OTHER ROUTES NEARBY

- Go East Lothian Trail (page 25), Capital Trail (page 31), From Forth to Fife (page 39), Falkirk Adventure Route (page 57) and Wild About Argyll Trail (page 91).
- West Highland Way – [www.westhighlandway.org](http://www.westhighlandway.org)
- Sustrans National Cycle Network routes 7, 754 and 755 – [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)



### BIKE SHOPS AND HIRE

- Helensburgh Cycles (shop, hire).  
T: 01436 675 239
- Greenrig Cycles, Falkirk (shop, hire).  
T: 01324 639 619
- Elevation Cycles, Linlithgow (shop).  
T: 01506 845 390
- Biketrax Edinburgh (shop, hire).  
T: 0131 228 6633
- Ace Bike Co, Musselburgh (shop).  
T: 0131 665 4468
- Law Cycles, North Berwick (shop, hire).  
T: 01620 890 643
- Ez-Riders, North Berwick (hire).  
T: 07407 039 747
- Belhaven Bikes, Dunbar (shop, hire).  
T: 01368 860 300

### VIDEO INSPIRATION



L-R: In a beautiful woodland at Tamfourhill near the Falkirk Wheel © Gavin Morton; Blackness Castle with the Queensferry Crossing in the background.

follows the route of the Innocent Railway to Brunstane railway station, where you must push your bike over a bridge. The route continues along Brunstane Burn Path and a short section of main road before reaching Fisherrow Harbour in Musselburgh, where it meets the Capital Trail (page 31).

From here to the finish in Dunbar presents a wealth of wildlife-watching opportunities on the East Lothian coastline. It is also mainly flat, but can be exposed to strong winds. The JMW follows the shore to Morrison's Haven, from where Prestongrange Museum is only a short detour. For centuries, Prestonpans was a place of intense industrial activity: a harbour, glassworks, pottery, colliery and brickworks have all left their marks on the landscape, while today Prestonpans is renowned for its murals. At low tide, the path along the coast is a great experience, but care is needed on the wet and mossy sections. The route passes a large John Muir mural at The Goth pub, and then continues along the shore towards the site of a former power station. At high tide, the road is the best alternative through Prestonpans, rejoining the route shortly after the supermarket at the end of the village.

Continue through Cockenzie and Port Seton and join the road for the next section to Gosford Sands. For wider tyres, the small coastal path is a good alternative to the busy road, but it is lined by hawthorn bushes, whose thorns can cause frequent punctures. Just as the road leaves the shore, a small track on the left leads through a stunning forest, the route lined with





concrete tank barriers built during World War II. Continue through the idyllic village of Aberlady to Aberlady Bay, home to a wealth of wildlife. A great gravel trail leads past a golf course to Gullane, and the route continues through the Archerfield Estate to Dirleton. You then follow a gravel track through fields to Yellowcraig Beach and continue along sandy singletracks and quiet roads into North Berwick.

As the path parallel to the road gets very busy in summer, the B1346 is followed instead. The Scottish Seabird Centre in North Berwick is the start of the Go East Lothian Trail (page 25) and offers tours (£) to Bass Rock in summer. The steep-sided volcanic rock, visible from far afield, is home to a large colony of gannets and puffins. The route passes through the bustling seaside town and past North Berwick Law, a volcano plug that offers great views from the top. With a bit of luck, the resident Exmoor ponies can be spotted on the way to the top, but walking is the much better option here. At the end of the parking lot at North Berwick Law a gap through a wall provides access, but it is difficult to negotiate with a bike; taking the

B1347 Haddington Road for a short section and then rejoining the route by the first minor road on the left is an alternative. The next section of trail through Craigmoor Wood is one of the highlights of the route, before it descends on a mixture of paths into East Linton.

From here, the route passes Preston Mill and continues along the River Tyne, then follows the road for a short while. Passing another set of tank barriers at Tyne Sands, the route reaches John Muir Country Park and continues past Belhaven Bay and along a final – and very scenic – section into Dunbar. The route leaves the JMW at Bayswell Park to avoid several steep sets of steps, and follows Bayswell Road into town, to finish at John Muir's Birthplace on the High Street. Dunbar railway station is close, served by the East Coast Main Line between London King's Cross and Edinburgh. Advance reservations for bikes are needed when taking a bike on the train. Alternatively, the Go East Lothian Trail offers a route back along the coast to North Berwick, from where frequent trains depart to Edinburgh and bike reservations are not mandatory.