

Coming through on the Land's End to John O'Groats Challenge

Increasing numbers of people are taking up the challenge of walking or cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats and many are choosing a route through Lanarkshire and the Clyde Valley.

Planning such a trip can be as daunting as the journey itself and it is not easy to appreciate every nuance of such a long journey and be always able to choose the best available route

So rather than struggle on along a busy road, Discover Clyde Valley has put together information on four routes to help you find the most pleasant, the most efficient, the most scenic and the most challenging ways through Central Scotland.

The described routes include such highlights along the way as the Lowther Hills, the historic village of Douglas, New Lanark (UNESCO World Heritage Site), the Falls of Clyde and the peregrine watch, the Barons Haugh RSPB nature reserve, Strathclyde Park, the David Livingstone memorial centre and Bothwell Castle.

The Routes

Cycling and Walking

1. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Happendon; Lesmahagow; Kirkmuirhill; Blackwood; (Stonehouse); Hamilton; Uddingston; NCN 75; Cambuslang; NCN 7 (Lochs & Glens).

Walking

2. Beattock; Southern Upland Way; Daer reservoir; Elvanfoot; Crawfordjohn; Pagie Hill; Douglas; Douglas castle policies; Bonnington Linn; New Lanark; Clyde Walkway; Kelvin Walkway; West Highland Way
3. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Roberton; Tinto; Carmichael; Sandilands; Bonnington Linn; New Lanark; Clyde Walkway; Kelvin Walkway; West Highland Way.

Cycling

4. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Roberton; Tinto; Sandilands; Hyndford Bridge; Lanark (New Lanark) Yieldshields; Carluke; Morningside; Kilsyth; Tak ma doon Road; Carronbridge.

Walking and cycling

1. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Happendon; Lesmahagow; Kirkmuirhill; Blackwood; (Stonehouse); Hamilton; Uddingston; NCN 75; Cambuslang; NCN 7 (Lochs & Glens)

This is the most straightforward and currently the most popular of the four routes and although it follows National Cycle Network routes 74,75 and 7, it can be walked or cycled.

Between Beattock and Happendon motorway services the NCN 74 follows the B7078. Along the way there is either a cycle lane or a separate cycle-path to follow.

NCN 74 currently ends at Happendon services however there are plans to extend the route in the very near future via Stonehouse, Chatelerauld country park and Strathclyde country park. Check out how the work is progressing at: www.sustransconnect2.org.uk

The southern sections of the route pass through hilly country and then cross wide open moors. There are however many places to stop off including the village of Douglas with its historic buildings and strong ties to the Wars of Independence and the Covenanters – 2 miles off route.

The impressive ruin of Bothwell Castle and the David Livingstone Centre can be taken in with a short detour from Main Street, Bothwell.

This route links easily with NCN 7 – Loch and Glens Cycle route and walkers can link the Clyde Walkway (NCN 75) with the West Highland Way by following the Kelvin Walkway from the heliport by the Clyde to Milngavie.

The Route

Beattock to Uddingston –

Signposted route to Happendon services. Continue north on the B7078 to Larkhall – there is pavement much of the way and although it is dual carriageway in sections traffic levels are low.

The B7078 (Carlisle Road) continues through Larkhall to meet up with the A72. Follow the A72 into Hamilton and around Hamilton town centre (it is possible to walk through the town centre along Cadzow Street to avoid the busiest sections).

Walkers may also choose to leave the A72 at Chatelherault Country Park and follow the Avon Walkway to Strathclyde Park where you can take up the Clyde Walkway.

However do not follow the Clyde Walkway into Blantyre rather go via Bothwell and resume the walkway by turning left down Blantyre Road (second left after Bothwell Bridge Hotel). Follow to Blantyre Mill Road and turn right down to river at the suspension bridge. Cross the bridge to visit the David Livingstone Centre otherwise continue along the right bank of the Clyde.

Cyclists should leave the A72 for the B7071 signed Bothwell and Uddingston. Follow the B7071 through Bothwell and Uddingston.

Join NCN 75 at Uddingston Station. At this point NCN 75 and the Clyde Walkway merge.

Crawford: accommodation; campsite; shop; eating & drinking.

Abington: accommodation; campsite; eating & drinking.

Douglas (off-route): accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Lesmahagow: accommodation; eating & drinking; shop; heritage (priory).

Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood: accommodation; eating & drinking; shop

Larkhall: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Hamilton: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Bothwell: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Uddingston: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Uddingston to Glasgow: NCN 75 –

Signposted route between Glasgow and Edinburgh. For Glasgow you follow the river Clyde downstream. From just before Cambuslang the surface is very good and cyclists will make good progress. Care will be required at Newton as new development may mean the route is unclear at times.

NCN 75 enters the city at Glasgow Green and continues through the city on a good path by the Clyde. Highlights include the People's Palace, the Templeton Carpet Factory (modelled on the Doge's Palace in Venice), the Tall Ship and the many bridges over the river.

Cambuslang & Rutherglen: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Glasgow: accommodation; youth hostel; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Walking

2. Beattock; Southern Upland Way; Daer reservoir; Elvanfoot; Crawfordjohn; Pagie Hill; Douglas; Douglas castle policies; Bonnington Linn; New Lanark; Clyde Walkway; Kelvin Walkway; West Highland Way.

This is a challenging route that is wild and lonely in places. There are good views of the Lowther Hills from Beld Knowe and of the Southern Highlands from Pagie Hill. There is an open bothy at Brattleburn (NT 015 069) and a B&B at Allershaw Lodge (NS 962 125).

Confident navigation skills and OS Explorer Sheet 335 are necessary for the section across the moors between Crawfordjohn and Douglas.

Beyond Douglas the route is much more straightforward as it follows the Douglas valley and then the Clyde walkway via New Lanark to Glasgow.

Beattock to Douglas - 25 miles

Follow the Southern Upland Way west along the minor road from Beattock. Continue to follow it north through the commercial forestry to emerge onto hillside close to the summit of Beld Knowe (517 metres).

Follow the SUW to the Daer reserve. Leave the SUW and follow the reservoir access road northwest to A702.

Turn right at A702 and follow north for three miles into Elvanfoot – there is an ample verge and traffic is light along this section of the A702.

About 500 metres north of Elvanfoot, at Elvanfoot farm, leave A702 on the left to follow track towards mobile phone transmitter. Continue past the transmitter and follow good track that runs parallel to the power line. Follow good track over pass.

On far side follow track overlooking M74 round to the left and through the gate into Glencaple. Descend to ford and then climb away to north. Take track on left before you reach Glencaple. Follow track east up Glengonnar to ford river at caravan club site.

Turn left onto the B797 and follow for one mile. Turn first right onto the minor road that climbs over the Apache Pass. Descend to good picnic spot and continue into Crawfordjohn.

The next section involves crossing featureless moor, the right-of-way is intermittent and the ground can be very boggy in places.

From Crawfordjohn follow the track that starts from the telephone box and goes in the direction of Blairhill. Continue past Blairhill on good track. However after the second gate it is necessary to take a diagonal line across the field to cross into the next field at the far away corner (N).

Climb to top of small hillock and then descend across the field to opposite corner (NE). Cross fence and dyke and follow dyke (NNW). At the end of the dyke cross the fence and aim for bridge over the Scottish coal conveyor belt and access road running east to west – marked out by two tall iron posts.

Cross bridge and follow good track at first past circular sheepfold. Track is intermittent but continue uphill towards the summit of Pagie Hill marked by a trig point.

Follow the fence north from Pagie hill to gate. Cross the gate and follow track downhill into forestry. Continue downhill on steep gravel track and then onto Springwell Road. Follow Springwell Road into Douglas to junction with Ayr Road (A70).

Douglas to New Lanark – 10 miles

From Springwell Road continue straight over onto narrow one-way street. At the end of the street go to the right and continue downhill to West Lodge. Continue into castle policies and follow broad track by small loch.

At ruin of Douglas castle (Sir Walter Scott's Castle Dangerous) turn right uphill and then left again at top of short rise and follow track east to gate. Cross gate and join NCN 74 that runs alongside the A70.

Follow NCN 74 east under the M74 and the round to the left at roundabout. Follow NCN 74 over dual carriageway. Follow NCN 74 for 500 yards. Turn left and follow quiet tree-lined lane.

At junction with other road go to the right and continue along this road for a further 2 ½ miles. Beyond turning for Sandilands road goes sharply to left however continue straight on.

Follow narrow road to weir. Cross river Clyde and follow path downstream through very pleasant woodland. Follow footpath all the way to New Lanark.

New Lanark to Glasgow: The Clyde Walkway – 40 miles

Signposted route. Follow the main road out of New Lanark to 200 yards beyond tenement row. Join walkway on left.

Approaching Motherwell there are sections that are prone to flooding and there is no clear footpath – let the Clyde be your guide. However the banks of the river can be unstable and you should not follow the river too closely.

At Bothwell Bridge go through the village of Bothwell and take the second left after the Bothwell Bridge hotel – Blantyre Road. Follow to Blantyre Mill Road and turn right down to river. Resume Clyde Walkway at suspension bridge by turning downstream (bridge leads to David Livingstone Centre).

Also at Newton walkway is being improved and redeveloped and the route may not be obvious in places.

New Lanark: accommodation; youth hostel; eating & drinking; heritage; heritage/museum; wildlife.

www.newlanark.org.uk

Kirkfieldbank: accommodation; eating & drinking shop; campsite.

Crossford: eating & drinking; shop.

Barons Haugh RSPB nature reserve:

www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/b/baronshaugh/index.asp

Motherwell: accommodation; eating & drinking; heritage; shop

Strathclyde Park: accommodation; eating & drinking; campsite; visitor centre.

Bothwell: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Uddingston: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Cambuslang & Rutherglen: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Glasgow: accommodation; youth hostel; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

The Kelvin Walkway: Glasgow to Milngavie (West Highland Way) – 9 miles

The Kelvin Walkway leaves the Clyde Walkway at the Heliport by the river Clyde and follows the river Kelvin through Kelvingrove Park and the Botanic Gardens.

Short detours to the Glasgow transport museum, Glasgow Youth Hostel, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the University of Glasgow.

The West Highland Way: Milngavie to Fort William – 95 miles

3. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Robertson; Tinto; Carmichael; Sandilands; Bonnington Linn; New Lanark; Clyde Walkway; Kelvin walkway; WHW

This route leaves the NCN 74 at Crawford to follow the Clyde Valley north for a short distance to Robertson. The climb from Robertson to over 1000 feet offers great views of the Border hills and the Southern Highlands.

It squeezes through a narrow pass in Tinto's western flanks and then follows peaceful back roads through ancient hamlets and scenic countryside to join the Clyde Walkway at Bonnington Linn – the first of four spectacular waterfalls on the river Clyde.

Beattock to Abington – 18 miles

NCN 74 to Abington. Follow Carlisle Road through Crawford to mercat cross on grassy traffic island. Turn right signed for Camps Reservoir; Castle Crawford. Cross river Clyde and take next left uphill at trees.

Follow minor road with railway line to Abington. For Abington cross the railway bridge and continue uphill to village.

Crawford: accommodation; eating & drinking; camping; shop.
Abington: accommodation; eating & drinking; camping; shop.

Abington to New Lanark – 15 miles

To continue with route return to the railway line and turn left once over the railway bridge by the campsite at Abington (continue straight-on if you do not visit Abington). Follow to minor road to A702. Turn left at A702 and follow for 500 yards. Turn right onto Bridgend Road and follow to A72.

Turn right onto A72 and follow for one mile. Watch out for right-of-way sign on left – Lythgate, Robertson. Follow right-of-way to Robertson.

At Robertson follow minor road north out of the hamlet and up over the pass. Continue straight through at crossroads. At T-junction go straight over and through gate. Follow rough track uphill through the Howgate Mouth.

Follow road from Howgate. Continue straight on at first T-junction and then to the left in Carmichael at second.

At Carmichael turn left signed for Douglas and continue to A70. Cross A70 and join short cycle-path to left. Turn right downhill to Sandilands.

At Sandilands turn right at telephone box and then first left. Follow road past milk tanker depot. Cross the Douglas Water on humpbacked bridge and continue uphill.

At top of the hill turn right and take narrow lane off to the right as road swings left. Follow lane to weir. Cross Clyde and follow footpath downstream into New Lanark.

Robertson: no services

Carmichael: no services

New Lanark to Glasgow: The Clyde Walkway – 40 miles

Signposted route. Follow the main road out of New Lanark to 200 yards beyond tenement row. Join walkway on left.

Approaching Motherwell there are sections which are prone to flooding and as a result there is no clear footpath in places – let the Clyde be your guide. However the banks of the river are unstable and you should not follow the river too closely.

At Bothwell Bridge go through the village of Bothwell and take the second left after the Bothwell Bridge hotel – Blantyre Road. Follow to Blantyre Mill Road and turn right down to river. Resume Clyde Walkway at suspension bridge by turning downstream(bridge leads to David Livingstone Centre).

Also at Newton walkway is being improved and redeveloped and the route may not be obvious in places.

New Lanark: accommodation; youth hostel; eating & drinking; heritage/museum; wildlife.

www.newlanark.org.uk

Kirkfieldbank: accommodation; eating & drinking shop; campsite.

Crossford: eating & drinking; shop.

Barons Haugh RSPB nature reserve:

www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/b/baronshaugh/index.asp

Motherwell: accommodation; eating & drinking; heritage symbol; shop

Strathclyde Park: accommodation; eating & drinking; campsite; visitor centre.

Bothwell: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

Uddingston: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Cambuslang & Rutherglen: accommodation; shop; eating & drinking.

Glasgow: accommodation; youth hostel; shop; eating & drinking; heritage/museum.

The Kelvin Walkway: Glasgow to Milngavie (West Highland Way) – 9 miles

The Kelvin Walkway leaves the Clyde Walkway at the Heliport by the river Clyde and follows the river Kelvin through Kelvingrove Park and the Botanic Gardens. Short detours to the Glasgow transport museum, Glasgow Youth Hostel, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the University of Glasgow.

The West Highland Way: Milngavie to Fort William – 95 miles

Cycling

4. Beattock; NCN 74; Crawford; Abington; Roberton; Tinto; Sandilands; Hyndford bridge; Lanark/New Lanark; Kilncadzow; Yieldshields; Carluke; Bonkle; Hareshaw; Airdrie; Cumbernauld; Croy; Kilsyth.

This route offers a very efficient way north. It leaves the NCN74 to follow the Clyde valley north for a short distance to Roberton. There then follows two climbs to over 1000 feet.

At Lanark the route switches from west to east as it follows a series of peaceful back roads that run parallel to the busy A73. There is a long climb, which is steep in places, out of the Mouse valley.

The Village Bakery in the small hamlet of Kilncadzow is a landmark.

Beattock to Abington – 18 miles

NCN 74 to Abington. Follow Carlisle Road through Crawford to mercat cross on grassy traffic island. Turn right signed for Camps Reservoir; Castle Crawford. Cross river Clyde and take next left uphill at trees.

Follow minor road with railway line to Abington. For Abington cross railway bridge. To continue with route go straight on.

Abington to Lanark/New Lanark – 16 miles

To continue with route continue straight on at the railway bridge by the campsite at Abington. Follow to minor road to A702. Turn left at A702 and follow for 500 yards. Turn right onto Bridgend Road and follow to A72.

Turn right onto A72 and follow for one mile. Take the next left into Roberton.

Follow minor road north out of the hamlet and up over the pass. Continue straight through at crossroads. At T-junction turn left and climb once again.

From the top of the hill it is a fast descent to the A70. Cross straight over the A70 in the direction of Douglas Water. Take the next right. Follow the narrow road to Sandilands. At Sandilands continue straight on to T-junction with the A70.

Turn right and continue to Hyndford bridge. Turn left over the Hyndford bridge and continue into Lanark.

Roberton: no services.

Carmichael: no services

Lanark/New Lanark: accommodation; youth hostel; eating & drinking; shop; heritage

Lanark to Kilsyth – 28 miles

Follow High Street downhill. Continue past the turning for the A706 and take the first right beyond the petrol station – Mousebank Road.

Leave Lanark on Mousebank Road and descend into the Mouse valley (National Nature Reserve) on very narrow lane. Steep climb follows immediately. Keep right at the top of the hill and go to the right at next junction. Cross railway bridge and go to the left. Follow road uphill to Kilncadzow.

Turn left and then right at Kilncadzow. TAKE CARE – FAST TRAFFIC!

The remainder of this route is not easily described. Click on the links below to view the route.

To view this section of the route on google map click [here](#).

To download this section of the route using Mappyx click [here](#).

Kilncadzow: eating & drinking

Yieldshields: no services

Carluke: accommodation; eating & drinking; shop

Bonkle: shop

Hareshaw (Greenhill): eating & drinking

Airdrie: accommodation; eating & drinking; shop; heritage

Glenmavis: eating & drinking; shop

Condorrat: shop

Croy: eating & drinking; shop

Kilsyth: accommodation; eating & drinking; shop

ENDS