

CYCLING

in and around

Stewartry



The natural place to cycle



See also:-

- Cycling Signposted Routes in Dumfries and Galloway
- Sustrans Maps
www.sustrans.org.uk
- The National Byway Map
www.thenationalbyway.org.uk

Particular thanks to John Taylor CTC for route and text contributions and for photographs. Photographs also by Alan Devlin and Dumfries and Galloway Tourist Board

This publication has been, designed and funded by a partnership of:



A Message from the Health Improvement Group
Cycling can seriously improve your health & happiness. Enjoy!



This booklet is one of a series of four covering the whole of Dumfries & Galloway that suggest a variety of cycle tours for visitors and locals of all abilities. Local cycling enthusiasts, using their knowledge of the quieter roads, cycle routes and byways, have researched the routes to provide an interesting and rewarding taste of the region.

A note of distance, time, terrain and facilities is given at the start of each route. All start points offer parking, toilets, snack places and accommodation. Some routes include stretches off-tarmac and this is indicated at the start of the route. Parking discs are required for some car parks and these are available at Tourist Information Centres and in local shops.

Stewartry is part of the old province of Galloway. In those centuries when the easiest way to travel any distance was by sea, it held a strategic place on the west coast, Irish and Isle of Man routes. This explains the many archaeological remains near the coast. There are also a large number of Mottes and Castles to be found inland. More recently, industry, particularly mines and mills, has been responsible for the enlargement, and sometimes creation, of many of the towns and villages in the region.

- 4 Nowadays, we have a land chiefly of green fields, moors and modern forestry, the last softened still by many native woods and fringes. It is pleasantly undulating with some dramatic spots, a beckoning coastline and plenty of views.

The routes are described in detail, but you may find an Ordnance Survey Landranger map useful. The relevant sheet numbers for these routes are 77, 83 & 84.



ROUTES

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Location Map

1	Route Start Point
---	National Cycle route 7
---	Footpath or track
—	Road
*	Viewpoint
B	Public transport link point
P	Car parking
R	Refreshments (pub, hotel, café)
i	Tourist Information





ON ALL ROUTES

Please be courteous. Always cycle with respect for others, whether pedestrians, people in wheelchairs, horse riders, drivers or other cyclists, and acknowledge those who give way to you.

ON SHARED USE PATHS


- Give way to pedestrians, leaving them plenty of room.
- Keep to your side of the dividing line.
- Be prepared to slow down or stop if necessary.
- Don't expect to cycle at high speeds.
- Be careful at junctions, bends and entrances.
- Remember that many people are hard of hearing or are visually impaired - don't assume they can see or hear you.
- Carry a bell and use it - don't surprise people.
- Give way where there are wheelchair users and horse riders.

WHEN CYCLING ON ROAD

- Always follow the Highway Code.
- Be seen - most accidents to cyclists happen at junctions.
- Fit lights and use them in poor visibility.
- Consider wearing a helmet and conspicuous clothing.
- Keep your bike roadworthy.
- Don't cycle on pavements except where designated - pavements are for pedestrians.
- Use your bell - not all pedestrians can see you.

IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- Always follow the Country Code.
- Respect land management activities such as farming and forestry and take litter home.
- Be self-sufficient - in remote areas carry food, repair kit, map and waterproofs.
- Try to cycle or use public transport to travel to and from the start and finish of your ride.
- Cycle within your capabilities.
- Match your speed to the surface and your skills.

 This warning symbol marks where you must give full attention to road safety.





START New Galloway car park

28km/17½miles

Allow 3 hours

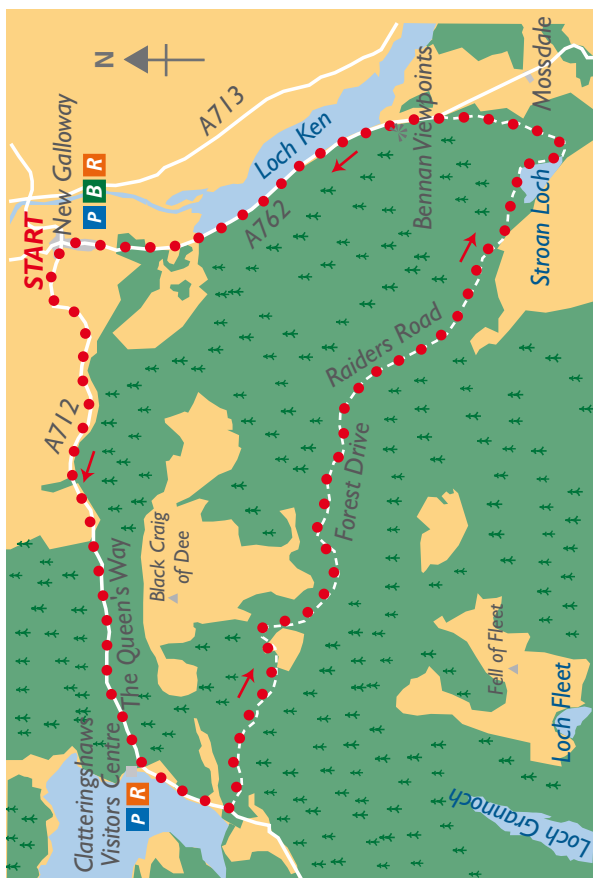
A long, but not too steep climb to start then fairly flat. 16km/10miles on rough, uneven, surfaced tracks

On route, toilets and snacks are available at Clatteringshaws Visitor Centre, open from April to October

Galloway Forest Park covers a large area of forest, interspersed with rugged hills, lochs and woodland. Amongst many other facilities there are miles of waymarked cycle routes of varying technical difficulties. There are visitor centres at Glentroll, Clatteringshaws and Kirroughtree.

Raiders' Road A 10 mile forest drive, based on the cattle rustlers' tale, *The Raiders* by Samuel Crockett. The degree of interest is continually increasing by the developing forest design. Look out for the sculptures, including those using on-site materials at Boddon's Isle. A good place to stop is the Otter Pool, where there are also toilet facilities, open between April and October.

Miles	Route
0.0	Leave New Galloway by the A712 towards Newton Stewart. Continue straight on.
5.9	Stop off at Clatteringshaws Visitor Centre or continue to Raiders' Road.
7.0	Start of Raiders' Road, signposted on your left. Follow it to its end.
17.0	End of Raiders' Road. Turn left onto the A762 then left again at the sign for Bennan Viewpoints for a glorious panorama. Return to the road and turn left.
22.0	New Galloway.





START Castle Douglas Tourist Information Centre, in the large car park at the top of the town

38.5km/24miles

Allow 4 hours

Route is hilly in places

On route, snacks available all year in Corsock

This ride is a fine sample of the attractive and varied scenery of the Urr Valley and the low hills between it and Loch Ken. There are several arresting views, both close up and distant.

Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park towards the Crown Hotel and turn right onto the main road. Go straight on at the roundabout then take first left into Dunmuir Road. Continue straight on to Clarebrand. Turn left at the crossroads.
4.3	At the T-junction turn left and follow the narrow, winding road.
6.0	Crossmichael. ▲ Turn right onto the A713.
7.5	▲ Take the first right (signposted to Corsock).
8.4	Turn left at the Y-junction at Barwhillanty House.
9.7	Turn right at the next junction. This is a very sharp turn.

- 10.3 Turn right, over the bridge then take the next left towards Corsock. Turn left again (signposted to Corsock).
- 13.5 ▲ T-junction with A712 (ornate, black fenceposts each side). Turn right then right again onto the B794 (signposted to Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie). Continue straight on down the Urr Valley.
- 17.7 Turn left at the signpost for Kirkpatrick Durham and turn right at the crossroads in the village. Continue straight on, crossing the B794 to Clarebrand. Go straight on to return to Castle Douglas.
- 24.0. Castle Douglas.





START Dalbeattie town car park

29km/18miles

Allow 3 hours

Gently undulating, all on tarmac.

On route, snacks are available in Haugh of Urr.

Motte of Urr is a modified drumlin (lump of glacial deposit), and is one of the most well preserved and largest mottes of the 12th century. At that time the river passed around the other side, or it may have been on an island. It was probably occupied by the Balliols prior to them moving down river to Buittle Castle.



Drumcoltran Tower is a 16th century tower house. Dine here with your own food in the company of the ghosts if the weather is too inclement to sit out.

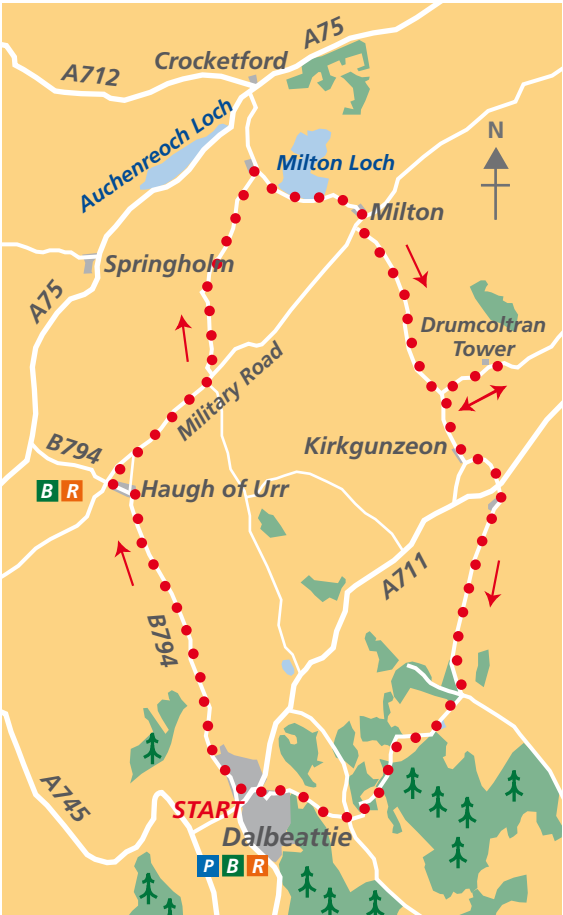


Colliston Park, Dalbeattie



Drumcoltran Tower

Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park by the one-way street, turn left onto the main road then continue straight on. Take the first right after the garage into Maxwell Street. Turn right at the end onto the B794. Enjoy great views of Buittle Castle, the range of little hills and the Urr valley. Later, the Motte of Urr is across the river on your left.
4.0	Haugh of Urr. Turn right uphill (signposted to Milton). Take the second left (signposted to Crocketford) and continue to the next junction.
7.8	Turn right, passing Milton Loch.
9.0	Milton. Turn right then first left (signposted to Kirkgunzeon).
11.1	At next junction, you can visit Drumcoltran Tower by turning left then returning to the junction. This adds a total of 1.3 miles. Otherwise, continue straight on.
12.1	Kirkgunzeon. Turn left and follow the road, bearing right to meet the A711.  Turn right then immediately left (signposted to Caulkerbush).
14.8	 At the skewed crossroads, bear right (signposted to Dalbeattie), looking in at Loch Fern on your left.
16.8	At the next offset crossroads continue straight ahead.
17.7	Dalbeattie.



Colliston Park, Dalbeattie



START Castle Douglas Tourist Information Centre, in the large car park at the top of the town

36km/22miles

Allow 3½ hours

Mostly easy but with two significant hills. 5km/3miles off road on rough, uneven, surfaced track.

On route, snacks are available all year in Palnackie and toilets are available all year in Auchencairn



Palnackie was once an important local port, importing raw materials and exporting the product of the mills. It was then used to export local agricultural produce and to import fertiliser, slates, coal and timber. You may see the boat that was recently built here. Its main claim to fame is as the HQ for the World Flounder-Tramping Championships.

Orchardton Tower Built in the 15th century, this is the only circular tower house in Scotland. Although cramped inside, it was obviously built to be lived in and had a range of supporting buildings.

Auchencairn Believe it or not, local industry was thriving here between 100 and 200 years ago. There were cotton, wool and saw mills as well as iron ore and barytes mines. In 1845, there were around 20 resident tradesmen, plus other itinerants and Auchencairn was a busy place.

Orchardton Tower



Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park towards the petrol station and the hexagonal auction mart. Go past this building then turn right at the junction. At the left hand bend, turn right and continue uphill.
2.6	At the junction with the B727, turn left.
3.4	Just before the A745, turn right and go straight on at the next crossroads, down a steep and twisting hill.
5.5	▲ A711. Turn right then first left.
6.0	Palnackie. Take some time to look round the harbour then pass Glenisle Inn and exit at the far end of the village, keeping left past the school. Do not rejoin the A711. At the next junction, turn right.
7.3	Orchardton Tower. Visit the tower then continue.
8.0	▲ A711. Turn left.
11.2	Auchencairn. Continue up through the village, turning right after the school (signposted Bluehill Farm). Continue to the hairpin bend where you go straight ahead towards Auchenleck Farm. Follow the rough, off-road track up and down hill through the forest.
15.4	Nether Linkins. Continue to the next junction.
16.0	At the junction, turn right and follow National Cycle Route 7 signs.
19.0	Gelston. Turn left at crossroads (signposted Rhonehouse), to return to Castle Douglas alongside Carlingwark Loch.
22.0	Castle Douglas.





START Kirkcudbright Tourist Information Centre, in main car park

26km/16½ miles

Allow 3 hours

Moderately undulating, with short, steeper climbs

Cup and Ring marked rocks. These are frequent only through south Argyll, Dumfries and Galloway and northern England and are around 5000 years old. You can see plaster



casts of some outside the Stewartry Museum, which you passed at the start. It is much more rewarding, however to see them in situ, as you do along this route. There are many theories for their existence.

Military Range Here since the last war, it is now used mainly for infantry training. When the red flags are flying, military operations are underway and the countryside beyond the flags is out of bounds.

Dundrennan Abbey Completed for the Cistercian monks in 1142 by David I and/or Fergus, who was first self-styled Lord of Galloway.



Dundrennan Abbey

Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park and go to the main crossroads at St Mary Street. Turn right, past St Cuthbert's church. If you wish, stop outside the museum to view the Cup and Ring marked rocks.
2.0	Mutehill. Leave the main road and continue straight ahead along the shore of Manxman's Lake, where Manx raiding vessels used to drop anchor.
2.9	At the next junction, turn left and enjoy stunning views across Ross Island to Burrow Head. Also look out for the Isle of Man, about 30km away.
5.7	Take the next public road on your right. ▲ At the T-junction with the main road, turn right again.
10.1	At the signpost for Port Mary you can choose to visit the shore at Abbeyburnfoot. A board here shows if it is accessible. It was from here that Mary Queen of Scots sailed into exile. This adds a total of 4.0 miles. Otherwise, continue straight on to Dundrennan.
10.5	Dundrennan. Just past the church, turn left into a minor road which climbs steeply. At the next junction, bear right then turn left at the T-junction. On your long descent, enjoy good views of woods, valleys and rolling hills.
14.4	At the signpost for High Banks, turn left and follow the track to a car park in the farmyard. Leave your bike and follow the signpost to see a major set of Cup and Ring marks. Retrace your steps to return to the road. This adds a total of 1 mile. Otherwise continue straight on, over the bridge and bear left.
16.5	Kirkcudbright.



The Doon



START Kirkcudbright Tourist Information Centre, in main car park

33km/20miles

Allow 4 hours

Fairly gently undulating, with a longer climb after Carrick Shore

On route, toilets are available all year at the Doon picnic site, Brighthouse Bay. Snacks are available in Twynholm and Borgue



Kirkandrews church, 'Coos' Palace', and Knockbren Castle. A series of buildings built to a style based on Warwick Castle, by local landowner James Brown 100 years ago. The Coos' Palace was just that – an ornate byre.

Carrick Shore A very popular spot for bathing or just wandering and gazing. Ardwell Isle, the biggest of the islands, has the remains of a very early Christian chapel. There is also evidence of smugglers' booty holes.

Tongland Bridge was designed by Thomas Telford and built in 1807. It is famous for being his first built with hollow arches to save weight. If you wish, dismount and, from the pavement, enjoy views to the ruined railway viaduct and Tongland power station upstream and the Dee marshes downstream of the bridge.

Kirkandrews Church



Miles	Route
0.0	Leave car park towards the harbour and cross the bridge. Take the first road on the left and follow National Cycle Route 7 signs.
3.2	The Doon. This is a popular picnic site at Nun Mill bay. Continue to follow Route 7 to Borgue.
5.3	Borgue. Before continuing, you may wish to explore the village. Look out for the memorial to William Nicholson, 'The Packman Poet', and Borgue Academy, originally a boarding school 200 years ago. Otherwise, your route turns left uphill on Route 7 (signposted to Carrick).
7.3	Pass the turning to Kirkandrews on your left then 'Coos' Palace' on your right.
9.0	If you wish to visit Carrick shore, turn left at the next junction (signposted to Carrick). Pass Knockbrex Castle in the trees and continue to just past the end of the tarmac where you can enjoy views to Ardwel Isle. Return to the junction. Otherwise, continue straight to the T-junction. Turn left to meet the A755.
12.0	▲ A755. Turn right. Continue straight on then turn left (signposted Twynholm).



17.0 Twynholm. Dip down into the village if you wish to visit racing driver David Coulthard's museum. Otherwise, turn right before the church and continue straight on, over the bridge to meet the A762. ▲ Turn right and right again at the T-junction (signposted A711 Kirkcudbright).

20.0 Kirkcudbright.





START Gatehouse of Fleet Tourist Information Centre, in main car park

23km/14½ miles

Allow 2½ hours

A long, but not strenuous climb out and, on return a long downhill followed by gentle undulations

Fleet valley more than lives up to its designation as a National Scenic Area, having a full spread of scenic elements from woodland and rivers to hills and moors.

Old railway line The railway that ran from Dumfries to Stranraer was closed in 1965. It was a lifeline in the two wars, particularly for bringing in American personnel and equipment, for which the Big Water of Fleet viaduct was strengthened. It is now a listed building.

Cairnsmore of Fleet National Nature

Reserve There is a car park and visitor centre with information about the reserve and recent wildlife sightings. There is also a waymarked circular walk. There are good views to the Fleet viaduct and to the Clints of Dromore.

Carstramon Wood is a major RSPB reserve, as natural as any can be after so many centuries of mans use. In the past, charcoal burning platforms in the wood converted oak to charcoal for the smelting of iron, brass and copper. The wood was also used to supply timber for a bobbin mill in Gatehouse until 1931.



Cairnmore of Fleet National Nature Reserve

Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park and cross the road to the Mill on the Fleet entrance. Follow National Cycle Route 7 signs out of Gatehouse.
1.6	If you wish to visit Ornockenoch and view this quiet loch, turn left at the second junction (signposted to Ornockenoch) and climb steeply. Otherwise continue straight on, following Route 7 signs. Enjoy fabulous views to Cairnsmore of Fleet and the Clints of Dromore as you gain height. Also note the Big Water of Fleet viaduct in the valley.
6.2	Gatehouse Station. At the T-junction turn right and follow Route 7 signs.
7.2	Cairnsmore of Fleet visitor centre. After a well-deserved rest, return downhill by the same route.
11.5	Take the junction on your left (sign for 'Weak Bridge'). This is a very sharp bend with gravel. Cross Castramont bridge and turn right at the next junction, past Carstramon wood. Continue straight on at the next junction, passing Barlaes, home of the artist family, the Faeds.
14.5	Gatehouse.





Carstramon Woods



START Dalbeattie coach park

20km/12½ miles

Allow 2 hours

A fairly easy ride with some short, steep climbs.
Mainly on forest tracks

Many of the tracks within the forest are multi-use.
Give way to walkers and have consideration for
other users

Between 250 and 100 years ago, Dalbeattie was linked with granite and milling. By the end of the 20th century, the production of granite and garments had ceased but the stone lives on in many of the buildings in the town and in countless monuments and structures even as far away as Eddystone Lighthouse and Malta. On route, you pass some of the old hand-worked quarries.

Dalbeattie is a mainly coniferous forest, interspersed with patches of broadleaved woodland. These areas not only add interest but are also excellent for wildlife, attracting a variety of birds and insects.



Granite Sculpture

The forest is well set up for recreation, with a number of waymarked walking and cycling routes. In addition to cycling routes, mountain bike trails feature highly, with routes to suit all abilities, ranging from undulating single track to hair-raising natural rock features.



Barean Loch

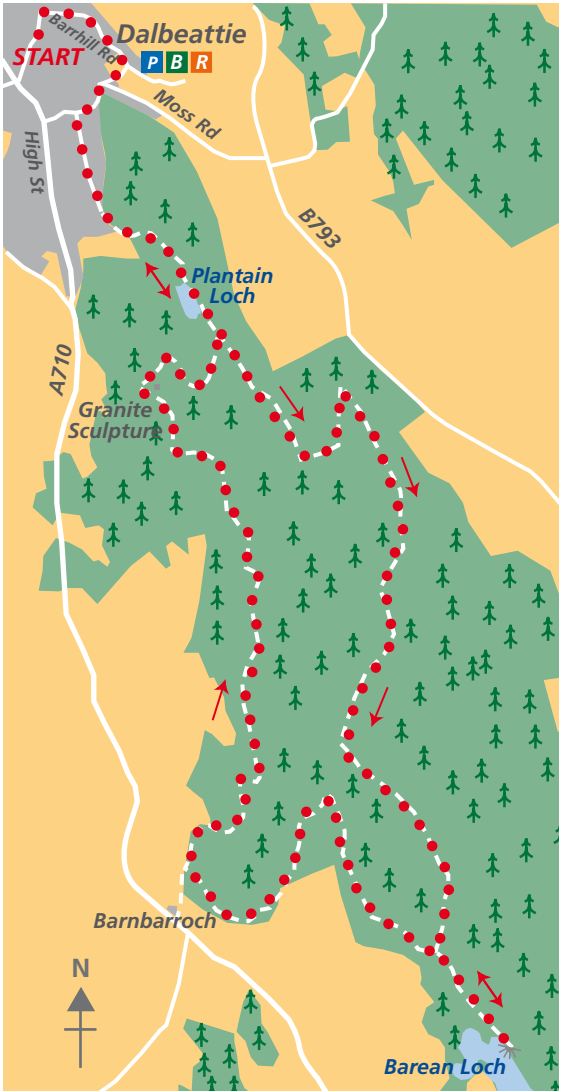
Miles	Route
0.0	Leave the car park, turning right onto the main road. Take the first right into Barrhill Avenue and follow the road round to the T-junction at the primary school. Turn right then take the second road on your left – William Street. Continue to the end of the road.
1.0	Follow the path, turn left at the junction and head uphill to a T-junction.
1.3	Turn right at the T-junction and follow the track, noting Plantain Loch through the trees on your right. At the next junction, bear left uphill and follow the track.
2.3	Turn left at the T-junction. Continue downhill, enjoying the views then turn right at the crossroads. From here continue straight on until you reach another T-junction.
5.1	Turn left at the T-junction and continue to the seat at Borean Loch.
5.4	Borean Loch. From here turn back the way you came and continue straight on.
6.6	T-junction. Turn left then right at the next junction (signposted to Dalbeattie). On a good day, enjoy views of Screel to the west and Cairnsmore of Carsphairn to the north. Ignore any junctions off to the left or right and continue downhill to a T-junction (2 blue waymarkers on either side of the track on your right).
9.4	Turn right at the T-junction. Pass a granite sculpture then turn right at the next junction.

10.3

Turn left at the T-junction and retrace your steps to the start (keep to the main track, turning left at the T-junction and right at the bottom of the hill to return to William Street).

12.5

Dalbeattie.



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FIND OUT MORE...

This booklet is part of a series for walkers and cyclists, covering Dumfries & Galloway.

For further information about public transport, accommodation, eating out, events and attractions contact:

Dumfries & Galloway Tourist Board
t 01387 253862

Dumfries & Galloway Traveline
t 0870 608 2608

www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk

info@dgtb.visitscotland.com

For further information about the history and natural heritage of the area contact:

The National Trust For Scotland Ranger Service
t 01556 502575

Forest Enterprise Ranger Service
t 01671 402420

Dumfries & Galloway Council
Ranger Service
t 01556 502351