There’s so much to see and do in Lanarkshire. Make the most of the great outdoors at one of the area’s fine country parks and estates, or discover its rich and fascinating history at the many museums and heritage attractions, including the Unesco World heritage Sites at New Lanark and the Antonine Wall near Kilsyth. With so much fun on your doorstep, what are you waiting for?

VisitLanarkshire.com

Love it.
If you love cycling, you’ll love cycling in Lanarkshire. In this selection of bike routes for 2015 you’ll discover that cycling in Lanarkshire is definitely going places.

A phenomenally successful Commonwealth Games has further boosted participation and many more people are taking advantage of the top-class facilities available in North Lanarkshire.

The myriad cycle routes are well established and popular but there are a growing number of specialist centres catering for those seeking extra thrills.

Cathkin Braes is a prime example. This world-class 5.5km mountain biking circuit was a venue for the Games but is suitable for all abilities with mixed terrain.

And it’s free to use — an enduring example of the Games legacy planning and a great day out. Or you could try BMX riding at the international-standard Broadwood Stadium complex in Cumbernauld. Again it’s open to all ages and abilities.

If you’re a fan of Tour de France-style road racing then you’re in for a treat when the Pearl Izumi Tour Series comes to Motherwell on Tuesday 26 May. Britain’s top professional cycle teams will race around a 1.7km street circuit in the only stage of the event to be held in Scotland.

The Matrix Fitness Women’s Grand Prix Series race will also take place over the same course.

Starting and finishing on Hamilton Road, the circuit takes in High Road, Farm Street, Ladywell Road and Douglas Street offering great opportunities for local people to see the spectacular action close up. But there’s much more to cycling in Lanarkshire. And you don’t need to travel for miles to reach routes that suit as Lanarkshire is right on your doorstep — and much of it still feels undiscovered.

All sorts of cyclists can find all sorts of options, all grades of difficulty and endurance, and a real choice of distance.

Ride through a variety of landscapes peppered with history and well-served with restaurants, pubs and tearooms where you can rest your legs, refuel and relax after a day well spent.

Whatever your prowess or fitness, there is a route for you to enjoy in Lanarkshire.

If you love cycling, you’ll love this 2015 edition of Cycling in Lanarkshire.
Peaceful urban havens for cyclists and wildlife

Map: OS Explorer 343
Start/finish point: Strathclyde Park watersports centre
Transport: Train: Motherwell; Airbles (en route); Hamilton West
Refreshment: Waterfront Cafe, watersports centre – 01698 402060.
M&Ds, www.scotlandsthemepark.com
Cycle Hire: Mountain bike hire, Watersports centre - 01698 402060
Distance: 8.5 miles
Time: 1-2 hours
Difficulty: easy/moderate
Terrain: Cycle paths, park roads and quiet roads

Strathclyde Park is a superb hub from which to explore the surrounding area by bike. The first route finds a quiet way through Motherwell to link Strathclyde Park with Duchess Park, Dalzell Estate and the RSPB Baron’s Haugh nature reserve.

Points of interest

1 Watersports centre
A world-class sporting venue with lots of exciting events to combine with a cycle ride – why not try sailing or enjoy a thrilling speed boat ride?

2 M&D’s Leisure Park
Scotland’s only theme park and Amazonia’s indoor tropical rainforest are yet more exciting reasons to visit.

3 Roman bath house and bridge
The bridge is a copy but enough of the 2nd-century bath house remains to be able to trace your way from the cold room to the hot room.

4 Dalzell Estate
Dalzell offers a lot more cycle exploration on the paths that wander up to Dalzell house and around the ornamental gardens of this extensive estate.

5 White Walk
The old graveyard is at the foot of the equally spooky White Walk. Peer into the Hamilton family mausoleum and look out for the pet cemetery.

6 Baron’s Haugh
RSPB Baron’s Haugh nature reserve is a flooded marshland in a bend in the river Clyde. The reserve attracts wintering wildfowl including widgeon and whopper swans. Look out for the hides on your right.
**Cycle 1 route**  
*Dalzell Estate & Baron's Haugh*

Head off round the Strathclyde loch in a clockwise direction. At the far end of the loch go off to the left and continue to gate. Turn right to join road and continue to T-junction.

Turn right to join main park road and follow for 1 ½ miles. At the crest off the second hill go between the rocks to leave the road on the left. Follow the gravel path to the end of Neilsland Drive. Go to the left and go downhill on tarmac path. After a short distance join gravel path to the right.

Emerge at Hamilton Road and go to the left to cross at lights beyond garage. Take first right into Malcolm Street and follow round to the left on to Crawford Street. Where Nigel Street meets Crawford Street go to the right into Duchess of Hamilton park and follow path on right-hand edge of park. Emerge where Avon Street meets Airbles Road opposite the Electric Bar. Cross Avon Street and continue to pedestrian crossing. Cross Airbles Road and then go round first right on to Leven Street. Take second right on Leven Street to take up North Lodge Avenue. Continue to end of avenue to turn right downhill at garages – signed for RSPB nature reserve and Clyde Walkway.

Go round to the left and descend on the White Walk to the very bottom of the hill. Take care as hill is steep in places.

Follow path to the left around the cemetery and cross stream on narrow bridge. Turn right on to Chestnut Walk and follow to River Clyde. Turn right to take up Clyde Walkway and stick with river until directed to right through residential area. Go to the left and continue to end of cul-de-sac. Rejoin path by Clyde (steps) and continue to Clyde bridge.

Go under bridge to enter park and follow Clyde back to watersports centre.

**Distance:** 3.75 miles  
**Time:** Less than an hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Terrain:** A traffic-free path that follows the edge of the loch.

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**Cycle 2 route**  
*Strathclyde Loch*

Head off in a clockwise direction from the Watersports Centre to make best use of the wind. M&D’s theme park and Amazonia are excellent reasons to stop about halfway round.
Cycle 3
Peaceful urban havens for cyclists and wildlife

The route area Strathclyde Loch and the new cycle path to Chatelherault are great for wobbly cyclists young and old . . . you'll have no trouble persuading the kids and their grandparents to come along for the ride.

Points of interest

1. **White Cattle**
   - White cattle - with their fearsome horns this rare breed may be a descendent of ancient wild cattle.

2. **Chatelherault**
   - Chatelherault hunting lodge, built in 1732 for the duke of Hamilton, is the centrepiece of this 500-acre woodland country park.

**Distance:** 2.75 miles  
**Time:** 30 minutes  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Terrain:** A good surfaced cycle path suitable for all the family. One moderate to steep incline.  
**Refreshment:** Strathclyde park watersports centre 01698.402060; Chatelherault visitor centre –01698 426213.
**Cycle 3 route**

**Chatelherault**

Leave the watersports centre car park at the river Clyde side and turn right in the direction of Mausoleum and golf course.

After 200 yards cross river Clyde on footbridge and on the far side turn left – signed National Cycle Network 74, Chatelherault 2 ¼, Larkhall 5.

Follow path through trees to road-bridge. Go under bridge and resume path which now follows the river Avon.

At Avon Bridge Nursing Home turn left over Old Avon bridge. Go off to the left uphill and follow path between sandstone gateposts on the right.

Continue uphill (moderately) to Chatelherault hunting lodge. Visitor centre entrance is to the rear of the building.

Return to Strathclyde park by the same route.
Once something of a regular feature on the route of the Tour of Britain cycle race, Strathaven offers excellent cycling on the gently undulating roads around this vibrant market town.

Mountain biking is also receiving a boost in the area with the opening of more than 50 miles of tracks at the Whitelee Wind Farm, a short distance to the north of the town.

Points of interest

1. Strathaven Castle (ruin) – One of the many lords of Strathaven Castle punished his wife by having her bricked up alive inside a purpose-built niche. Recently human remains were found when part of the castle walls collapsed.

2. Loudoun Hill is a volcanic plug just inside the Ayrshire border. The site of a famous victory by Robert the Bruce over the English in 1307, it is also an excellent viewpoint.

3. Battle of Drumclog took place in 1679 when “Bloody ClaverHouse/Bonnie Dundee” patrolling with his dragoons encountered a group of Covenanters. It was a victory for the Covenanters and he only just managed to escape with his life having been knocked from his horse. A short detour from the route is necessary to visit the memorial.

Cycle 4 & 5

Take on some of the Tour of Britain route

Cycle 4 route

Leave the Common Green by Bridge Street (Tudor Coffee House). Follow Bridge Street to roundabout at Strathaven Castle.

Turn right and then turn left into Todshill Street.

Turn left at the next junction and then take the first right into Newtown Road. At fork in road take the right fork and follow road out T-junction with B743. Turn left and cross bridge over river Avon. Beyond the bridge take the first right.

Following the road we keep right. However, at Westlinbank Farm ignore right for Kilmarnock and continue straight on. Continue downhill to T-junction and go in the direction of Kilmarnock, B745.

After short distance come to crossroads. Turn right and follow road into Drumclog. At A71 Drumclog Memorial Kirk, cross
Strathaven & Whitelees

Map: OS Landranger 71
Transport: Train: Hairmyres 11 miles – signed cycle route to Strathaven
Refreshment:
Strathaven is well served by tearooms, pubs and restaurants.
Distance: 20 miles.
Time: 2-3 hours.
Difficulty: Moderate
Terrain: Quiet back roads.

straight over on to Meadowfoot Road.
At Moss Side go to the right. After 500 yards turn left (straight on and downhill past Stobieside for Battle of Drumclog).
At next T-junction turn right and follow long, straight road downhill.
Once over stone bridge go to the right and continue parallel with the Calder Water. At crossroads go straight over.
Follow road for 2½ miles and turn left for Strathaven Airfield. After a short distance at the top of the hill turn right and follow road into Strathaven.
Follow road downhill through a residential area. At T-junction turn right along Lethame Road to return to Common Green.

Whitelee Wind Farm Cycle 5
More than 50 miles of tracks linking the 140 wind turbines high on the Eaglesham Moors have been made available for walkers and particularly mountain bikers to enjoy.
There is, however, plenty of room for everyone and for those who want to take it more slowly there is a visitor centre, where you can learn about the wind farm, plus a café on the Eaglesham side and a museum at Lochgoin.
Perhaps the best reason for cycling at Whitelee is the remarkable view over the central belt and beyond to the Highlands.
The wind farm is accessed on the Lanarkshire side from Ardoch Rig (NS 638 467) where there is a car park. There are a number of signed routes on offer from the visitor centre, including the Lochgoin route (8 miles).
Download a detailed map and find more information at: http://www.whiteleewindfarm.co.uk
Please remember to follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
Cycle 6 & 7

Roman roads and historic waterways

Map: OS Explorer 348
Transport: Train – Croy (1½ miles)
Refreshment: Coachman Hotel, Kilsyth 01236 821649.
Café Refresh, Kilsyth, 01236 827652; The Boathouse, Auchinstarry Marina, 01236 829200.
Distance: 7 miles.
Time: 1½ hours.
Difficulty: Easy
Terrain: Paths, estate roads, short sections of back roads.

With miles and miles of paths, Kilsyth is a great place for gentle cycling away from the traffic. Colzium Estate, the Forth and Clyde canal, the Dumbreck marshes and a brush with the Antonine Wall mean that there is enough interest to turn a short route into a full day of exploration. On the second route out of Kilsyth you can tackle the Tak-ma-doon and the Crow Road that both straddle the Campsies. These ‘big’ climbs are as celebrated among local cyclists as the col du Galiber and col du Tourmalet are on the Tour de France.

Cycle 6 route

From Market Square go to the left, turn left into Burngreen and along cobbled road past park and old library. Continue straight on to road indicated as dead end. Dismount to tackle small sets of steps, emerge at Stirling Road.

Cross Stirling Road on to Tak-ma-doon road. After short distance take right on to path signposted for Banton, Colzium and Bluebell Wood. Short steep climb takes you to level path. Keep right along path (though you can climb to Colzium house) until you reach driveway at kids’ playpark.

Turn right on to drive and follow to entrance to estate on Stirling Road. Turn right and carefully crossing main road to take the road for Dullatur.

Follow minor road round to the left and then round to the right. Take left fork for Dullatur on the downhill. Continue to canal and go to the right to join towpath. Follow towpath under bridge at Auchinstarry and continue to Twechar. Leave towpath at Twechar bridge and loop back on to road and take next left towards Queenzieburn. Continue for 150 yards and take up footpath on right for Dumbreck Marsh and Kilsyth.

Follow tarmac path downhill and over narrow bridge then follow gravel path – Dumbreck marshes on your left. Stay with the gravel path and the Dock Water. Just after Dumbreck marshes take left fork signed Kilsyth town centre one mile. Path becomes rough. Follow stream into Kilsyth past Astroturf playing fields. At St Patrick’s Primary follow gravel path straight ahead. Dismount, go under bridge. Continue through small shopping centre. Follow stream through Burngreen park and cross park to war memorial, turn right and right again to return to Market Square.

Cycle 7 Tak-ma-doon, Carron valley and the Crow Road

Points of interest

Viewpoint – At the top of the Tak-ma-doon there is an impressive view of the Firth of Clyde and Arran, and the Firth of Forth and the famous bridges, as well as north to the Highlands and south across the central valley.

Points of interest

1. Colzium Lennox Estate – Centred on the 18th Century Colzium House, the surrounding parkland includes the ruins of the 15th Century Colzium Castle, the site of the Battle of Kilsyth (1645), a walled garden and one of the oldest curling ponds in the world.

2. Forth and Clyde Canal – Engineer John Smeaton chose a similar route to the Antonine Wall for his canal linking the North Sea and the Firth of Clyde. Work began in 1768 and it was opened in 1790.

Distance: 7 miles.
Time: 1½ hours.
Difficulty: Easy
Terrain: Paths, estate roads, short sections of back roads.
8 miles to junction with B822. Turn left for Lennoxtown 7 miles – the Crow Road. Sustained climb. Descend into Lennoxtown. Follow Crow Road and then Crosshill Street to junction with Main Street.

Turn left on to A891 for Milton of Campsie and Torrance. Continue through Lennoxtown and follow A891 to Milton of Campsie on the downhill. Just after playpark turn right for Kincaid House Hotel and Kirkintilloch, B757 – Birdston Road. Continue through Birdston to Kirkintilloch. At traffic lights at McDonald’s turn left for Kilsyth A803. Continue to Eastside roundabout and go straight through for Kilsyth A803.

On leaving Kirkintilloch take the right for Antonine Wall and Twechar B8023. Road eventually runs parallel with the Forth and Clyde Canal. Continue straight on at Twechar and continue to T-junction opposite Auchinstarry.

Turn left on to B802 for Kilsyth ¾ mile. Stay on undulating road into Kilsyth, go straight through roundabouts. Continue past Lidl and at roundabout with A803 go to the right for Stirling. Continue past Coachman Hotel, then turn right for Burngreen park on Station Road to return to start.

Alternative route from Kirkintilloch: at traffic lights at McDonald’s go straight ahead for 100 yards to T-junction, turn right to Hillhead roundabout and take second exit up the hill on Hillhead Road. At Forth and Clyde canal turn left on to towpath and follow through Twechar to Auchinstarry. Rejoin the B8023 before Auchinstarry bridge and at T-junction turn left on to B802 for Kilsyth. Follow above directions through Kilsyth and back to start.
It would take many days to explore all the cycling possibilities offered by the miles and miles of country lanes spreading out from Biggar.

The first route follows these lanes through peaceful hamlets into forgotten corners of the Pentland Hills where Covenanters hid out in the 17th century, while the second route heads east into the Borders to the village of Broughton, where it is claimed the magician Merlin was laid to rest.

Biggar & Pentland Hills

Points of interest

1 Moat Park Heritage Centre is one of five museums in Biggar. It explains the local Iron Age and Roman histories. Other museums include the Gladstone Court, the Gasworks and the Greenhill Covenanters’ House.

2 St Mary’s Church dates from 1545 and was the last collegiate church in Scotland built before the Reformation.

3 Dunsyre Kirk – look out for the iron jougs set into the church wall. Offenders would be sentenced to wear the iron collar around their neck.

4 Little Sparta is the exotically named poetry garden of the late artist Ian Hamilton Finlay.

5 Newbigging Mercat cross – topped with a stone sun, it is a peculiarly pagan object dated 1693.

Cycle 8 route

From the Corn Exchange on High Street go left downhill and then go right for Carnwath, B7016. Go uphill out of Biggar and continue for less than one mile. Take the right on the bend to leave the B7016. Follow the quiet road to crossroads with A721 and go straight over. Follow road for 3 miles and take left signed for Dunsyre (1 mile).

Continue on road through woodland and into Dunsyre.

Go uphill and round to the left in Dunsyre and follow road for 3½ miles to Newbigging.

At T-junction with A721 (Nestlers’ Hotel) turn left and go downhill. At the foot of the hill – and on the bend – turn right.
Follow quiet road fairly steeply uphill. From the top of the hill a fast downhill takes you to a T-junction with the B7016. Turn left and then after a short distance turn right for Thankerton and Quothquan. Follow road into and through Quothquan. At red telephone box take the left fork and continue to junction.

Turn left and continue through Cormiston. At foot of steep downhill turn left on to Lindsaylands Road and follow into Biggar. At T-junction at the Cadgers Brig turn left to return to start.

Map: OS Landranger 72
Start/finish: Corn Exchange, High Street
Transport: Train – Lanark (18 miles)
Refreshment: Biggar is well served by tearooms, pubs and restaurants; Nestlers’ Hotel,

Newbigging – 01555 840680.
Distance: 24 miles.
Time: 2-4 hours.
Difficulty: Moderate
Terrain: Quiet back roads; surface rough in places; route includes a short section on the A721.
Everyone is welcome to test their mettle on the world class Cathkin Braes cross country course which is set to become a mecca for cyclists for many years to come. MATTY SUTTON got on her bike to try it out.

You can almost hear the crowd cheering on the hill top . . . or is that the nerves ringing in my ears? This was my first time on a mountain bike and facing a 5.5km route ahead of me which was used for the Commonwealth Games, I wondered if it was going to be a baptism of fire. I’m used to cycling on the roads, whizzing along the tarmac at 30 miles an hour, but already I sensed this was a different kettle of fish.

Just a few metres from the car park pedalling over rocks and undulating gravel paths, my adrenaline was pumping.

It’s hard to believe you are just a few miles from Scotland’s largest city. Up there the air is fresh and fellow cyclists buzz about laughing and chatting as they challenge themselves on the ascents and descents.

Under the watchful eye of Scottish Cycling’s development officer for events Bob MacFarlane, my coach for the day, I approached the first steep downhill section brimming with confidence.

Ahead of me – on the easiest route – are two rock ledges. I stop dead. From where I am, it looks like I’m balancing on a cliff edge, and, even though the ground is only a couple of feet below, in the end I bottled it, deciding to save that challenge for next time.

We went further down the track and under a short tunnel before I nearly went flying over the handlebars at a sharp bend.

This is the ‘red’ route. Graded the same as ski courses, red is a difficult trail with rocking features.

But, thankfully, most of the really scary sections can be avoided on the more family friendly ‘blue’ and ‘green’ routes, and, for the dare devils, there are difficult ‘black’ rated routes.

The hairiest bit came as we hit the aptly named “Double Dare”. If that name doesn’t tempt you to take on the challenge, I don’t know what would.

All the features on the trail were named by local primary school children who seemed to have captured the feeling of each part of the route, from a rocky section called “broken biscuits” to the section I faced next.

But before I went anywhere on the steep downhill section I had to take a few moments to admire the view. From the top of the hill – around a third of the way round the second loop of the figure of eight-shaped route – you can see the whole city, a sprawling metropolis nestled between the surrounding hills.

For the professionals this is a fast plunge over rocks and gravel. For me it’s a slow stumble, hands locked on the brakes, eyes concentrating on every bump and groove in the trail below.

But, before long I’m at the bottom and it’s uphill through woodland and open grassland before looping back to the start. Including stoppages for training tips, the entire loop took us around an hour and a half to complete. The top athletes will hammer round it in about 13 minutes. I was mentally and physically done in after one lap.

The whole experience was both terrifying and exhilarating. I will definitely be up there again and I would recommend it to anyone who likes a challenge. The trails are open to the public.
IN the shadows of Broadwood Stadium in Cumbernauld, the night is a buzzing hive of activity. Out on the national BMX track, a group of riders are being put through their paces. They soar through the air, flying round the course with such impressive ease it’s as if fairy dust had been sprinkled on their wheels.

Scotland has a rich history in BMX racing. It is the sport where six-time Olympic champion Sir Chris Hoy cut his teeth before making the move to track cycling.

Costing £420,000, the Broadwood track was opened to the public in June 2014. It was funded by North Lanarkshire Council, the Commonwealth Games Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund, sportscotland, WREN and Cumbernauld Centurions BMX Club.

It is Scotland’s only international standard BMX track. The facility is managed by North Lanarkshire Leisure and was designed and built by Clark & Kent Contractors, the company behind the design for the London 2012 track.

Broadwood can host racing up to and including Pro Circuit and Youth Olympic level. It is already set to welcome a clutch of top events in 2015 with rounds five and six of the British BMX Series coming to Cumbernauld from May 23-24 and the Scottish BMX Championships from September 12-13.

But this is more than simply a venue for elite level riders. The floodlit track is open to the public seven days a week. A 90-minute session costs £3 for children and £4.50 for adults. Equipment hire is £5, although for families that cost is capped at £10. Beginner induction courses are available.

Already the first shoots of grassroots development are in evidence. Cumbernauld Centurions BMX Club has seen membership numbers double since the track opened. In addition the NLL HARO BMX race team, aimed at up-and-coming riders, was founded in early 2015 to further nurture new talent.

Among the regulars are Fergus Whitehouse, nine, and Austin Goldberg, 11, both from Cumbernauld. They have been doing BMX for three years.

“This track is much better than our old one, it’s bigger and a lot more technical,” said Fergus. “I can learn new skills and put myself to the test.”

It is already capturing the imagination of future stars. “I chose BMX rather than another type of cycling because it seemed more exciting,” said Austin.

“I want BMX to be my job and I would love to go to the Olympics one day.”

Graeme Atkinson, general manager at Broadwood NL, said: “The BMX track is located within an hour’s drive of 95% of the Scottish population so in terms of hosting events or people popping along to give it a try, it is easily accessible.”

His sons Adam, nine, and Paul, 12, are keen cyclists and Graeme speaks with pride about seeing them blossom.

The track has been particularly good for Paul who is profoundly deaf. The youngster has cochlear implants and has found that on a BMX track he doesn’t feel as self-conscious among his peers. Paul now trains three times a week at the facility.

“We always cycled as a family but when the BMX track opened Paul went to a summer camp and joined the club soon afterwards,” says Graeme. “He saves up all of his own money to buy new kit and things for his bike.

“The last time I raced Paul he beat me four times in a row and they did commentary over the PA system. I still haven’t lived that down.”
Once described as God’s Own Treasure House, the Lowther Hills have been mined for gold and lead since Roman times. The mines are closed but lots of reminders remain. Leadhills, Scotland’s second highest village, reeks of its mining past.

Piles of spoil, old railway tracks and miners’ cottages do not take away from the beauty of the Lowther Hills but rather add plenty of interest for the passing cyclist.

Wild, green, otherwordly and with several high passes to cross, the Lowther Hills are perfect for cyclists looking for a challenge.

However, there also are plenty of opportunities by the youthful River Clyde to enjoy the scenery but with much less effort.

**Crawford & Abington**

**Points of interest**

1. **Lindsay Tower**
   (Crawford Castle) is now a ruin but in the 16th century the castle hosted a dinner between King James V and the French ambassador. The king, who was about to be married to Magdalene of France, presented his guests with cups full of gold pieces.

**Cycle 11 route**

From car park (public toilets) on Carlisle Road turn left (north). Follow road uphill to Crawford’s mercat cross on small grassy traffic island. Turn right signed for Camps Reservoir and Lindsay Tower. Once over the Clyde take first left uphill.

Continue for a couple of miles then turn left at Mountview Caravan park and continue uphill to Abington.

At Royal Bank of Scotland in Abington turn left.

Follow A702 and take up cycle lane. Continue to roundabout at Crawford where you take the first left and descend into Crawford on Carlisle Road to return to start.

**Map:** OS Landranger
72 **Start/finish:** Car park (public toilets), Carlisle Road, Crawford.

**Transport:**
Train; Lanark (18 miles)

**Refreshment:**
Abington Hotel – 01864 502467; Abington

**General Store**
– 01864 502374

**Distance:** 6 miles.

**Time:** 1-2 hours.

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Terrain:** Cycle lane by A702 and quiet back roads where the surface is rough in places.
Lowther Hills

[Map of Lowther Hills with landmarks and places of interest marked, such as Abington, Mid Hill, Castle Hill, Raggengill, Tewsgill Hill, Harryburn Brae, Ravengill, and Lindsay Tower, Crawford Castle (ruin).]
Cycle 12

New route connecting first-class visitor attractions

Cyclists can cycle separately from the traffic between Larkhall and Chatelherault Country Park.

Another section along Bothwell Road in Hamilton extends the NCN 74 to Blantyre and it is only in Blantyre where it is necessary to share the road with the traffic and then only for short distances.

Convenient and efficient though the cycle routes are, you should not forget to stop off and visit Chatelherault, Hamilton Mausoleum and the David Livingstone Centre.

Points of interest

1. Chatelherault hunting lodge – was built in 1732 for the Duke of Hamilton. It is the centrepiece of the 500-acre woodland country park.

2. Hamilton Mausoleum – A massive sandstone-domed mausoleum built in 1842 as the burial place of the Dukes of Hamilton. It is all that remains of the grand palace complex that once stood nearby. It is renowned for its echo.

3. Bothwell Bridge – In 1679, 6000 Covenanters and 5000 government troops met here in battle. The Covenanters, poorly equipped and untrained, were quickly defeated. More than 600 died and 1200 were taken prisoner.

4. David Livingstone Centre – marks the birthplace of the renowned missionary. The museum recalls his upbringing and time in Africa. This year is the 200th anniversary of his birth and many special events have been planned.

www.davidlivingstone200.org

The route

From Larkhall station go up the ramp and continue to the left along Caledonian Road past the Coalyard café to the T-junction with Raploch Street. Turn right, continue to traffic lights and turn left. Follow Hamilton Road for a short distance to a play park on left where you can join the shared pedestrian/cycle path.

Follow the cycle path (NCN 74) downhill out of Larkhall. In Ferniegair the path narrows and it is necessary to cross and cycle for a short distance before crossing again to enter Chatelherault.
Larkhall to Blantyre (David Livingstone Centre)

Country Park. Join the avenue and follow uphill towards the hunting lodge (now a visitor centre). When the avenue turns steeply uphill, go off to the right through a gate to rejoin the cycle path signed for Hamilton, Motherwell and Strathclyde Park. Turn immediately to the right.

Follow tarred cycle path steeply downhill through sets of staggered gates to a set of white gates.

Continue through the gates and turn left downhill to cross the old cobbled bridge of Avon. Turn right, rejoin the cycle path and follow the River Avon downstream.

Go under the M74 and then under the Clyde Bridge, which can be very muddy, and follow the cycle path though pines to the junction with a path from the Strathclyde Park watersports centre.

Turn left and enter the tunnel under the M74, then follow the cycle path straight ahead past the Hamilton Mausoleum.

Join the quiet park road and continue straight on towards a very steep hill (with no through traffic).

Climb Mote Hill. At the top, join the cycle path on the right, staying on the right-hand side of Bothwell Road. At an ornate white wall at Hamilton College, cross to the left-hand side of Bothwell Road.

Continue along past the park and downhill past Strathclyde Fire Service HQ. Once over the East Kilbride expressway but before you cross the Clyde, turn left on to a path (the Battle of Bothwell Bridge monument will be on the far side of Clyde on the other side of road).

Follow the path past the Lido gardens by the Clyde, where the path narrows and climbs moderately steeply.

At the junction with the motorway, turn right and follow the cycle path across the entrance to Ireland Alloys. At the Scottish Water offices cyclists are required to rejoin the motorway.

Follow the road around to the left, signed for the David Livingstone Centre. At the T-junction with Whistleberry Road turn right. Continue up and over the railway bridge and down to roundabout, where you should take the third exit for Blantyre and go under the expressway.

At the next roundabout continue straight on. The shared path resumes on the left and right-hand sides of the road. Join the one on the right. At the next roundabout turn right down Devlin Grove and join John Street.

At David Dale House, turn left and continue past the skate park. Follow the path to right and after a short distance turn left. Continue through a barrier to Station Road and turn right downhill. Blantyre station will be on your right. Continue downhill for David Livingstone Centre.

Map: OS Landranger 343
Start: Larkhall station./
Finish: David Livingston Memorial (Blantyre station)
Transport: as start and finish
Refreshment: Chatelherault visitor centre, Waterfront cafe, Watersports centre, Strathclyde Park.
David Livingstone centre

Distance: 9 1/2 miles.
Time: 2-4 hours.
Difficulty: Larkhall to Strathclyde Park - easy. SP to Bothwell Bridge - hard. Bothwell Bridge to Blantyre - moderate
Terrain: excellent traffic-free cycle paths, quiet residential roads - short section in Blantyre on main road.
Map: OS Explorer 342 & 343.
Start: Uddingston Railway Station or Bargeddie Railway Station (no Sunday service).
Finish: Summerlee, Scotland’s Museum of Industrial Life. (Coatbridge Central or Sunnyside Stations)
Transport: as start and finish.
Refreshment: Uddingston is well served by cafes; Drumpellier Country Park visitor centre and Summerlee museum also have cafes.
Distance: 10.5 miles.
Time: 2-3 hours.
Difficulty: moderate (one short, hard climb).
Terrain: traffic-free cycle paths, residential roads, canal towpaths and gravel paths.

This route follows much of the Lanarkshire leg of the Glasgow to Edinburgh national cycling network route (NCN 75).

Avoiding busy roads it carves a route through Central Scotland to make cycling surprisingly pleasant. Not far beyond Bargeddie station the route leaves the roads behind to follow the towpath by the Monkland Canal and to explore the tracks through Drumpellier Country Park and around Lochend Loch. The peace is shattered, however, when you reach your final destination – Summerlee, ‘Scotland’s noisiest museum’ …

Points of interest

1. **Monklands Canal**
   – Designed by James Watt in 1770, the 13-mile-long canal was built to take coal from Coatbridge and Airdrie to Glasgow. Look out for the quays and “windings”, where boats were loaded with coal.

2. **Drumpellier Country Park**
   – 54 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodland. Stop off at the visitor centre for a snack.
   Tel: 01236 422257 www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

3. **Bank Street basin**
   – Bold art installations bring alive memories of the area’s iron, coal and steel industries. Look out for the stick of gelignite and Bleezin – an excerpt from a poem, recalling the sight of tens of blazing factory chimneys, by Janet Hamilton. Also look out for the giant Lees’ snowballs and the Beat the Goalie street art installations.

4. **Summerlee Museum**
   – Based around the site of the Summerlee ironworks, this vividly recreates Lanarkshire’s industrial past. There are tram rides, tours of the recreated mine and working machinery. Hundreds of exhibits tell the story of the area (free entry; open daily). 01236 638460. www.visitlanarkshire.com/summerlee

The route
Leave Uddingston railway station and continue to Main Street. Cross at the pedestrian crossing to the right and straight over to join the cycle path on opposite side running parallel to the railway track – signed as NCN 75,
Bargeddie 3, Coatbridge 6.
At the end of the cycle path, you'll enter a residential cul-de-sac. Continue straight on to mini-roundabout and turn left. Follow NCN 75 (not NCN 74).
Follow the cycle route through an underpass and continue to the traffic lights at New Edinburgh Road. Go straight over and climb a moderate slope up Spindlehowe Road to the junction with Old Edinburgh Road and turn left.
At Tannochside Old Crescent turn right on to Armstrong Crescent. Opposite No 35 Armstrong Way take the short cycle path off to the right. At the end of the path turn left and follow NCN 75 along Vallantine Crescent. Continue to the junction with Guthrie Drive – second on your left – and follow to a roundabout.
Join the footpath/cycleway at the roundabout on the right as directed. Continue over Tannochside Drive and past Tannochside Business Park to take the next exit, Aitkenhead Road. Follow the cycle path down then uphill towards Showcase Leisure Park. Follow the cycle path to the right and then over a road. Return to Aitkenhead Road and continue under the MB/A8 – signed Drumpellier Country Park 2.
Remain on the footpath, and use it to negotiate a roundabout at the entrance to the leisure park and travel in the direction of the A752, Gartcosh and Muirhead. After a short distance, enter Bargeddie and follow the road to Bargeddie railway station (an alternative starting point).
Continue past the Langmuir Inn – using the footpath/cycle path.
At the roundabout at Bargeddie Community Centre, turn right and continue to a pedestrian crossing and across the dual carriageway.
Travel a short distance to the left and then turn right down a lane. At the end of the lane, turn right along Maple Grove, with good views of Tinto Hill.
At the next junction turn right into Cherryridge Drive, and follow to a roundabout. Turn right and then immediately go off to the left to join a red gravel path signed for Drumpellier 1, Coatbridge 2, Airdrie 5. Cross a steel bridge and continue through woods to emerge at the Monkland Canal. Turn right and follow a towpath. Go under the Drumpellier Bridge and then uphill to the right and cross over the bridge. At a T-junction of paths, turn left to follow a gravel path running parallel to the railway line. After a short distance turn right over a railway bridge and continue to the entrance of Drumpellier Country Park. Lift your bike over a specially lowered fence and turn left to follow a gravel path downhill through woodland, then to the right. Stay on the red ash path, keeping left, until it joins an access road. Turn left and continue through a gate at nursery woodland. Continue to Lochend Loch and go around the loch in a clockwise direction to return to nursery woodland (there's a visitor centre halfway round).
Leave the loch by the Country Park access road and follow uphill, then downhill past a school and playing fields. Go under the railway line and continue to the junction with Blair Road. Turn right and descend over Blair Bridge. Go through a gateway on the right signed for Monkland Canal NCN 75.
Turn right and go under the Blair Bridge and up a tarred path that follows the route of the filled-in canal across West End park and then under Merryton Bridge. Follow a broad tarred path, past the artworks in Bank Street Basin. At the giant Lees' snowballs under railway bridge, turn left and go between barrier and bridge support to join West Canal Street. Take the first left, Heritage Way, and follow to the Summerlee Museum.
Cycle 14
Empty moors and forgotten byways

Map: OS Explorer 349.
Start: Caldercruix railway station.
Finish: Cumbernauld railway station.
Transport: As start and finish.
Refreshment: Cumbernauld town centre is well served with cafés, pubs, restaurants and a main shopping centre
www.visitlanarkshire.com
Distance: 15 miles.
Time: 2-3 hours.
Difficulty: Moderate (hard in places).
Terrain: Traffic-free cycle path and then minor back roads. This is a route for confident cyclists as roads through Cumbernauld can be busy.

The cycle path goes all the way to Edinburgh, whereas this route leaves it at the end of Hillend Loch for a cross-country route over Scotland. A rarely visited area, the roads can be wonderfully lonely. An interesting feature of the route is the expanse of raised peat bog, doming upwards and clad in heather.

Points of interest

1 Hillend Loch – more than 200 years old, the loch was once the biggest man-made lake in the world. A popular spot with anglers, it still supplies water to the Forth & Clyde Canal and the Monklands Canal between Coatbridge and Glasgow.

2 Mexican Hat – this is a rare and unusual landmark in otherwise empty moorland. The mound resembles a Mexican sombrero and is formed of spoil from Lochend Pit No 5, which operated here between 1880 and 1948.

3 Fannyside Muir is an expanse of valuable raised peat bog around the Fannyside Loch – close to the top of the final climb. Up to 12 metres deep and laid down over thousands of years, the bog is rich in plant and animal life. Look out for dragonflies, grouse and snipe.

The route
From Caldercruix railway station – making sure you are on the platform 2 side of the tracks – turn right along Station Road/Main Street, a traffic-calmed residential street, and continue past the Railway Tavern.

At the T-junction turn left at Welcome to Caldercruix sign and then immediately right to take up the NCN 75 cycle path signed for Bathgate 10.

The cycle path has an excellent surface. Cross new bridge over stream and stick with path. Look out for sculptures along the way.

Path draws level with Hillend reservoir. Continue between the reservoir and the new railway line, past Hillend fishing lodge to the end of loch and then continue over the road.

Resume the cycle path and continue east until you come to second road. Leave the path at Forrestfield Road and turn left uphill.

The road climbs moderately steeply across open moor and raised bog, and the very distinctive spoil heaps known locally as the Mexican Hat will be on your right.

At the end of Forrestfield Road turn left on to the B825 (Caldercruix Road). Continue until you reach the junction with Telegraph Road, signed
Longriggend and Upperton, (for a major short cut, continue straight on, returning to Caldercruix station – one mile). Turn right on to Telegraph Road, travel uphill until you eventually come to Longriggend. At a ‘give way’ sign in Longriggend, turn left on to Main Street. After about half a mile, follow around to the right and over a bridge. Continue downhill for a short distance and then take the first right at the very edge of Longriggend.

Follow the road uphill as it bends away to the left. Continue uphill past Roughrigg – beware as the road narrows in places. Follow around to the left at Roughrigg farm. The road will begin to descend and then makes a short rise to a T-junction (B803) – visibility here is limited, so take care.

Re-enter North Lanarkshire. Follow the B803 for one mile. Turn right at sign for Cumbernauld – Fannyside Rd.

Follow the road downhill and then climb up to Fannyside Loch – a single-track road with passing places.

The road then descends to a T-junction with Forest Road in Cumbernauld. Turn left in the direction of Cumbernauld which is a further one mile.

At the roundabout take the first exit and continue past the petrol station on right (no footway).

At the Carbrain junction descend and go under a road bridge (footway is on the right).

Cycle uphill away from bridge. Then, beyond Suressafe, turn right on to Kelvin Road North.

Go almost to the bottom of the hill, past the car-park area. Branch right on to the footpath and follow to bridge over the railway line at Cumbernauld station.

Take the path to the right before the bridge for trains to Gartcosh, Stepps and Glasgow (westbound), or go over bridge and turn down right for trains to Falkirk (eastbound).
This route both starts and finishes with a canal – the Monkland and the Forth and Clyde. In between there’s a vibrant mix of visitor attractions, sculptures and great countryside. Even more topical, it includes sections of the Commonwealth Games Cycle Time Trial route through North Lanarkshire, hotly contested by the sport’s elite riders on 31 July 2014. Here’s your chance to pedal in the tyre tracks of champions like Sir Bradley Wiggins.

Transport: Train: Coatbridge; Gartcosh; Lenzie Refreshment: Summerlee Museum Cafe www.visitlanarkshire.com/Summerlee

Distance: Sunnyside-Gartcosh 6.02km, Gartcosh-Lenzie 11.25km, Lenzie-Kirkintilloch 2.73km Total 20km. Kirkintilloch to Glasgow, an additional 16.88km. Kirkintilloch to Falkirk Wheel, an additional 22.19km Terrain: Mainly cycle and foot paths with some short road sections and crossings.

Use SPT railway options not only to access the suggested starting point (Sunnyside Station, Coatbridge) but also customise your distance to suit. Shorten the route by using Gartcosh or Lenzie Stations; lengthen your cycle by continuing from Kirkintilloch westwards along the Forth and Clyde canal towpath back to Glasgow, or head eastwards to the spectacular Falkirk Wheel for nearby railway stations at Falkirk High or Grahamston. This route is largely on cycle and footpaths but, please note, there are some short road sections and crossings where care is required.

Suggested start: Coatbridge

Sunnyside SPT Station (via Glasgow Queen Street Station low level, Helensburgh/Drumgelloch line).

Exit the station and turn left along Sunnyside Rd towards town centre and Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life.

Cross at pedestrian crossing before roundabout and turn right into West Canal Street.

While on West Canal Street why not visit Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life on Heritage Way - a leading 4-star visitor attraction with free admission. This is a fascinating destination for all ages with interactive displays, exhibitions, a mine to visit and vintage tram rides to enjoy, it provides a real insight to Lanarkshire’s industrial heritage. Spend time or just take a few moments to see what awaits when you have more time to explore its wonders.

In any case, Summerlee’s cafe and toilets provide a good opportunity to stop and make final preparations for the journey.

Returning down Heritage Way to continue on the route, cross road, turn left then descend into the Plug (Canal Basin) by means of a short flight of stairs and a ramp. Pass Westwards under the rail bridge towards the stick of dynamite, pass under road bridge at Blairhill Street, where tow rope marks can still be seen on steel plates then continue on to West End Park. Here the Monkland Canal opens up. Up until now you have previously been cycling on top of the piped canal below the cycle path.

After passing below the road bridge here, immediately to your left you will notice a metal Arch by renowned artist Andy Scott.

Continue along towpath and follow signs for Drumpellier Country Park, crossing the canal by a bridge at Home Farm, bear left then right over railway bridge, pass through kissing gate there and continue into Drumpellier Park on to the Strathkelvin Railway Path (SRP) which runs northwards (eventually to Kirkintilloch).

Continue on through the
Country Park to Lochend Loch, pass the nursery and Peace garden to your left and follow path along edge of the loch (water on your left) up to the Park’s visitor centre (with cafe and toilets).

Leave the Park, turn left out into footway along Townhead Road for a short distance and, with care, cross right and continue east footway on Gartcosh Road. After about 1k, leave the road by bearing right at Chapman’s and follow track leading below the railway bridge to and beyond Gartcosh SPT station (from Gartcosh Station there are regular 30 minute services west to Glasgow Queen Street or east to Cumbernauld and on to Falkirk Grahamston).

Continue along the SRP to the roundabout and turn left into Auldyards Rd. After a short distance and before the next roundabout, cross right out of Auldyards Rd continuing on cycle path to skirt the village of Glenboig, past the Garnqueen Loch and onwards. This becomes the Strathkelvin Railway Path route.

Turning left onto Drumcavel Rd (this section is part of the Commonwealth Games cycle time trial route) pass under the M73, turn right into Avenuehead Rd and after a short and steep descent the path bears to the left. This goes past Bedlay Cemetery and onward beneath the A80 Cumbernauld Rd, skirting the Glen west of Moodiesburn and on to emerge at Gartferry Road.

Cross over Gartferry Road with care, again onto the Strathkelvin Railway Path Gartferry Road is the second section of the Commonwealth Cycle Time Trial to feature on this route.

At this crossover point, take a very short diversion to visit the Auchengeich 1959 mining disaster memorial (less than quarter of a mile). Turn right onto Gartferry Rd and just beyond the Bridgend roundabout, at the edge of the social club car park, you’ll find a memorial to Scotland’s worst mining disaster of the 20th century.

Back to the disused railway path route, continue north west along that track and over the new bridge crossing the recently completed M80. The track runs alongside the Bothlin Burn, cross over Burnbrae Rd with care, leaving North Lanarkshire and entering East Dunbartonshire at the edge of Lenzie. Keep left to the Strathkelvin Railway Path (or alternatively, cross over the Bothlin Burn at the footbridge and follow the path along the water course below Woodilee Railway Arches. This loops briefly off to the right but rejoins the Railway path before reaching the Canal).

After crossing under the main east/west railway line, you could choose to shorten your journey by turning left along Garngaber Avenues to catch a train at Lenzie SPT station back to Glasgow or east to all stations towards Stirling and Edinburgh.

To continue on to Kirkintilloch, follow the Strathkelvin Railway Path Kirkintilloch town centre and the Forth and Clyde Canal - your second historical waterway of the day.

For those with energy still left in their legs, a left turn along the canal towpath will take you west to Glasgow. Or swing right and head eastwards to the Falkirk Wheel, a choice of two railway stations in the town, or continue pedalling along the Union Canal to Edinburgh.
The cycle from Lanark is first class and shows off Lanarkshire at its best. Demanding in places, for the most part it follows delightful country lanes across classic rural landscapes. Look out for the roadside memorials that reveal a surprising side to this part of Lanarkshire. The surprises continue on the Forth route. Few people are aware of Wilsontown and its trail blazing iron foundry or the sleepy hamlets of Haywood and Auchengray that occupy this forgotten corner.

Lanark, Tinto & Covington

**Points of interest**

1. **Clydesholm Bridge** is the very narrow bridge at Kirkfieldbank. Built in the 17th century.

2. **Tinto hill** – at 707 metres this is the highest point in the central lowlands. A straightforward climb to the top (1 ½ hours) from where the view is excellent.

3. **Cargill memorial** marks the spot where Thomas Cargill, a Covenanter, was arrested in 1689 during the Killing Times.

4. **Covington** is a hamlet of thatched cottages, and further on at the farm there is a medieval keep and dovecot where Robert Burns spent the night, there is a cairn to commemorate his visit.

**Cycle 16 route**

From Lanark railway station, go towards town centre. Continue through traffic lights and descend on High St. Follow road through narrow point at church and continue downhill. Take left for Hamilton A72 – steep downhill. Cross River Clyde and turn first left onto Riverside Road and right into Kirkfield Road and climb out of Kirkfieldbank.

Take left fork on edge of Kirkfieldbank – Byretown Road and continue to climb. At top of climb road follow road round to right and continue to T-junction.

Turn left and follow road for about 1 ½ miles. At junction take left for Sandilands and descend to bridge over river – tight corner. Continue to T-junction at dairy.

Turn right and follow road round to left and climb past red telephone box to junction with A70. Join cycle lane on your left and follow to right turn for Carmichael 2 – take care.

Follow road to right at farm and continue to crossroads in Carmichael – old signpost.

Turn right and continue through Carmichael. Turn right at foot of hill. Follow road round to left (dead-end ahead) and continue to Lochlyvoch Farm. Continue through the farm yard and follow road for 2 miles to A73 at Tinto tearoom. Go straight over A73 for Thankerton. Continue into Thankerton and take left signed for Carstairs and Carnwath – Boat Road.

Turn left over railway, descend out of Thankerton. Continue straight on at Boat Farm and climb to first Newtown of Covington and then Covington Mains Farm. Beyond farm road swings to left. Turn right for Pettinain. Follow road to T-junction.

Turn left and descend towards new homes in Pettinain. Go to the right – signed Carstairs Junction 2 ¼ and climb steeply into Pettinain. At next T-junction turn left and descend to River Clyde and then continue into Carstairs Junction.

At T-junction at church turn left and continue uphill past Carstairs Junction station (trains for Glasgow and Edinburgh). Turn right over railway and follow to left to Carstairs village. Keep the green on your right and continue to T-junction with Lanark road. Turn left and leave village.

**Map:** OS Landranger 72
**Start/finish:** Lanark Railway Station
**Transport:** Train: Lanark
**Refreshment:** Lanark is well served by tearooms, pubs and restaurants
**Distance:** 25 miles.
**Time:** 3 – 4 hours
**Difficulty:** Moderate/hard
**Terrain:** mostly back roads but short section of A72 at start and A70 towards end; road surface rough in places.
Follow A70 for ¾ mile. Continue straight on when A70 goes right and take the first right uphill into Cleghorn. Continue to traffic lights at A706. Turn left and follow A706 (not A743) into Lanark.

At T-junction opposite YMCA turn left and follow High Street to station.

There are a series of walks that explore what remains of the foundry.

2. **Auchengray** The distinctive village church is modelled on a Coptic church in Alexandria, Egypt.

### Cycle 17 Route

From the St Paul’s Parish Church Main St go to the left - downhill - and take first left into Manse Road. Follow Manse Road out of Forth to T-junction at church. Turn left and then after short distance turn right signed for Auchengray. Follow road downhill through Wilsontown and then round to left.

Follow road through Haywood following signs for Auchengray 2 ½. Steep climb into Auchengray. Turn right at T-junction past village square. Leave Auchengray on the downhill and follow road round to the right and over the level crossing.

Follow long straight road to T-junction at Eastshield Farm. Turn right signed for Forth 3. Climb into Braehead. Continue through Braehead and descend past first left – Bog Road – and continue in the direction of Auchengray.

At bungalows take next left for ford. Descend into ford or use bridge in flood and climb into Forth. At T-junction turn left onto Manse Rd and return to start.

### Cycle 18 Route

A signposted route that descends from Lanark to Kirkfieldbank and then once over the river Clyde goes off to the left where it’s necessary to climb steeply. The route goes via Sandilands, Carmichael, Thankerton and Cormiston and enters Biggar on Lindsaylands Road. Good for linking with the Tweed Cycleway.

### Lanark to Biggar

**Distance:** 20 miles.  
**Time:** 2-4 hours.  
**Difficulty:** Moderate/Hard  
**Terrain:** Mainly quiet back roads and a short section of cycle path by the A740.
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