

CLYDE WALKWAY MULTI-USE NOTES

The Clyde Walkway is a 40 mile long distance route linking the Falls of Clyde above New Lanark with Glasgow city centre, offering opportunities to explore the natural, built and industrial heritage of the Clyde valley. As its name implies, the route was originally developed and is promoted primarily for walkers. The western section from Glasgow to Newton Bridge (south of Carmyle) coincides with National Cycle Route 7 and is fully multi-use accessible. South of the A723, the waymarked Clyde Walkway features many steps, kissing gates and boardwalks designed only for pedestrian use and inaccessible with a horse. Other sections are along busy main roads which may not appeal to riders. However, under the Land Reform Scotland Act 2003, horse riders enjoy the same rights of responsible access to most land as walkers and cyclists. These notes have been produced by British Horse Society Scotland in response to demand from horse riders to identify which sections of the Clyde Walkway are multi-use accessible, and the location of restrictions.

The notes are intended to supplement route descriptions and other information already available from http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/258/clyde_walkway. All route users are responsible for deciding for themselves which, if any, sections are suitable for their intended use, taking account of their own abilities, skills, fitness and experience, as well as season, weather conditions etc. Photos have been included where appropriate to help you assess for yourself whether a feature such as steps, a narrow footbridge, gate or gap less than 1.2m wide may present an obstruction to you. Bridges which fail to meet BHS' rigorous national recommended specifications but are still passable with a horse and gates which can only be opened or closed if dismounted are not documented.

Remember that whether on foot, cycle or horseback, rights of access in Scotland depend on access takers and land managers accepting individual responsibility for their actions. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/> offers guidance on what this means on the ground. Specific guidance for horse riders can be downloaded from <http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk/responsible-riding.html>. Courtesy, consideration of others' needs and good communication are the key to sharing paths. Always pass others you meet at a walk and limit your pace to ground conditions and visibility. Riders need to be particularly careful to ensure they respect other users and clear up dung on more urban and narrow sections of path. Although the Clyde Walkway is waymarked most of the way, it is still worth having a map with you – and making sure you know how to read it.

Falls of Clyde to New Lanark

Steps, stiles and boardwalks restrict the southernmost section of the path to pedestrian only.

New Lanark to Kirkfieldbank

The unbound surfaced woodland path between New Lanark and Castlebank Park has been designed and is managed, signed and promoted for walkers only. There are numerous steps, the majority of which are shallow, but the longer flights have deeper risers and are relatively narrow (see pictures overleaf), which combined with the steep drop to one side and lack of passing space makes this section unsuitable for horses. The alternative is to follow the road between New Lanark and Castlebank Park.



The track (former road) which links St. Patricks Road and the sewage works is multi-use accessible, with shallow steps at the lower end passable by a horse.



The field gate at the western end of the track between the sewage works and Clydesholm Bridge is unlocked, but immediately west of the sewage works there is a locked double gate across the track (pictured above right), with a narrow 70cm side gate made of metal rails with sharp protruding points, which automatically closes on a tight spring. The sewage works access road up to the A72 may provide an alternative.

Kirkfieldbank to Crossford

West of Kirkfieldbank, the Clyde Walkway runs along the busy A72 to Linnville, where the waymarked route branches off on a tarmac path along the south bank of the river through a double metal gate. The main section of the gate is padlocked, with a freely opening 1.2 m wide side gate.



The bridge over the weir at NS855440 is multi-use accessible, but numerous flights of steps mean that the path between the weir and the power station is impassable with a horse.



West of the power station the beaten earth path narrows in places and there are several wooden bridges (pictured below left) but all sufficient width to accommodate multi-use. There is a locked barrier across the track at Crossford (pictured below right) south of the junction with the B7056 with gap alongside to allow multi-use access.



Crossford to Garrion (A71)

Most of this section is impassable with a horse due to steps, kissing gates and boardwalks insufficiently robust for anything but pedestrian use.

North of the B7056 a kissing gate restricts access onto the riverside path. The bridge over Fiddler Burn is 110 cm wide with a gate of similar width on tight spring immediately beyond the western end of the bridge.



Although it might be possible to avoid these restrictions by using the alternative path which runs parallel to the east to rejoin the main route on the west side of the footbridge, further kissing gates, long boardwalks and steps make the section between Crossford and Orchard House unsuitable for multi-use and impassable with a horse.



The riverside path north from Orchard House is in theory capable of supporting multi-use but access is currently restricted by six kissing gates.



The path between the junction with the path which branches off to Poplarglen (OSGR NS823479) and Townhead Burn is unsuitable for multi-use. A 1.2 m wide footbridge across the burn is followed by a long section of boardwalk designed only for pedestrian use, with some rotten planks, followed by several very steep flights of steps impassable with a horse.



The broad unsurfaced path between Townhead Burn and the Milton Lockhart Farm track includes several wide sleeper bridges and a flight of shallow steps but is multi-use accessible, and well used by mountain bikers.



On the north side of the Milton Lockhart farm track there is a kissing gate in the line of the path, with an unlocked field gate 10 m to the west leading onto the same track, with a vehicle width sleeper bridge across the burn.



The track – heavily used by mountain bikers - becomes muddy in places through the wood, and includes several flights of eroded shallow steps



South of Jock's Burn there is a wooden footbridge designed for walkers only, which at time of survey had some rotten planks, followed by four kissing gates impassable with a horse. North of Jock's Burn there are a series of steps and rotten boardwalks similarly unsuitable for multi-use.



Between Mauldslee Bridge and Cardie's Bridge on the B701 there are numerous wooden footbridges, some only 90-100 cm wide, and some with rotten planks.



A series of narrow shallow eroding steps lead up to the B7011. There is a gap alongside the narrow kissing gate used by cyclists, but the Clyde Walkway fingerpost restricts the passable width and it is a steep scabble over uneven ground, straight onto a very busy road where the constrained width of the road bridge allows no pavement or verge.



Garrion to Raith interchange (M74)

The Clyde Walkway branches off the main track south of Highmainshead Wood down a series of steps on a beaten earth path, crossing the burn via an 80cm wide wooden footbridge with three rails either side. Although in theory it might be possible to ford the burn near the bridge, kissing gates further along make the whole of this section impassable with a horse through to the Clyde Bridge on the A723 between Hamilton and Motherwell.



Cyclists are bypassing the metal kissing gate at OSGRNS787523 along the riverbank, but it would be a tight squeeze with a horse, and although two further kissing gates along the riverside path are now redundant, the metal kissing gate at OSGR NS773531 is impassable with a horse. The alternative may be to follow the track past Upper Carbarns (but note other restrictions below).



At time of survey, the gate off the farm track onto the riverside path at OSGR NS772533 south of Lower Carbans was unlocked and stood open, clearly being used as an alternative to the nearby kissing gate.



West of this gate, there is a short flight of steep wooden steps, which are being bypassed by cyclists and walkers down the bank.



There is a locked gate with metal hooped kissing gate adjacent at the western end of the meadows west of Lower Carbans Farm (south of Adders Gill wood, OSGR NS764544) with no identifiable alternative.



The only restrictions on the track between Easterbraes Plantation and the A723 are two locked gates with adjacent metal hooped kissing gates at the eastern end of Baron's Haugh Nature Reserve at OSGR NS763544 and OSGR NS757546, which are impassable with a horse.



The riverside path under the A723 between Motherwell and Hamilton has restricted headroom and width and floods when the river is in spate. The alternative route suggested for walkers and cyclists offers an alternative regardless of river level. It crosses over the road at the nearby traffic lights, accessed by gently stepped ramps leading up from the riverside path.



There are no restrictions on access west of Clyde Bridge through Strathclyde Country Park, but any horse riders using this section of the Clyde Walkway would need to be particularly careful to respect the many walkers and cyclists of all ages who use this area, including many with dogs or buggies and some wheelchair users.

Raith Interchange was still undergoing major work at time of survey, including construction of a new bridge linking the Clyde Walkway east and west of the M74. It is understood that the new bridge should be multi-use accessible, but horse riders would still face sections along busy road to the west.

Raith interchange to Low Blantyre

West from Raith interchange, the Clyde Walkway follows the north bank of the river through Raith Haugh Nature Reserve. This section of route was closed at time of survey but is understood to be impassable with a horse because of the flight of steps between the B7071, Battle of Bothwell Monument and the riverbank. The only obvious alternative is the busy public road.

The Clyde Walkway as shown on most OS maps is blocked to all users by a high steel fence and stone pillars across the track at the entrance to the former Craighead House. Sections of Heras fencing have been erected to prevent access from the cycle path which runs parallel to the Clyde Expressway through to Bothwell Viaduct. There is no way through the

adjacent industrial estate. The alternative is to follow the signed cycle route which follows the road past the industrial units and under the Expressway.



Low Blantyre to Uddingston

The David Livingstone Memorial Bridge may not necessarily meet BHS' stringent UK recommendations for bridge specifications but is physically and legally passable with a horse with care.



Immediately east of Bothwell Bridge (OSGR NS697585), a metal kissing gate with narrow gap alongside restricts access at the southern end of the woodland path between Bothwell and Uddingston.



Beyond this barrier, the rest of the woodland path through to Uddingston (pictured below left) is multi-use accessible, apart from a scabble past a now redundant kissing gate below the castle (pictured below right).



Uddingston to Newton

The Clyde Walkway crosses the Clyde south of Uddingston via the Green Bridge, which has bollards either end but is nevertheless multi-use accessible.



West of the river, the path opens onto a broad track. The kissing gates at the junction with the Townfoot Farm track are now redundant and are easily bypassed around the end of the fence.



A narrow but clearly defined and well waymarked path leads through the wood parallel to Blantyre Farm Road. Ignore the kissing gate onto the road, continuing through the trees on the waymarked Clyde Walkway to cross the road beyond the fence.

The Clyde Walkway is signed off Blantyre Farm Road along a farm track which has a padlocked gate with adjacent kissing gate and narrow gap impassable with a horse alongside at OSGR NS681606.



The railway underpass is designed for vehicles and easily passable with a horse. The footbridge over the Rotten Calder (pictured below left) is passable with care, but there are two flights of relatively steep stone steps to the west of the bridge which are tricky with a horse or bike.



The alternative is to follow the signed cycle route along Calder Road into Newton.

Newton to Cambuslang Bridge

From Newton, the promoted cycle route follows the disused railway. The Clyde Walkway follows a rough, beaten earth path along the south bank of the Clyde.



Although narrow in places (see pictures above), particularly around the new housing development, there are no physical restrictions on access until immediately east of Carmyle viaduct where fallen trees obstruct the path immediately beyond the now redundant metal kissing gate. Walkers are using the concrete slab to cross the burn/wet area immediately to the south of the kissing gate, which is potentially difficult to negotiate with a horse (particularly heading east – see picture below right) because of the steep step(s) at the

western end which would mean clambering down onto a narrow strip with water/bog either side.



The cycle and pedestrian routes rejoin at Carmyle Viaduct, from where the Clyde Walkway follows the multi-use accessible tarmac surfaced National Cycle Route 75 west.

Cambuslang Bridge to Glasgow

There is a metal barrier across the tarmac riverside path approximately 30m west of the M74 underpass near Dalbeth, south of St. Peter's Cemetery, with only a narrow gap and metal chicane alongside. Although there is a chain hanging around the end of the barrier, consultation confirms that the barrier is never known to have been locked.



Other than this, the whole of this section of route is fully multi-use accessible tarmac path along the north bank of the Clyde. However, horse riders thinking of using this section of the Clyde Walkway would need to be particularly careful to respect the many walkers and cyclists of all ages and abilities who use this path.

VWG
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