



Community
Energy
Scotland

April 2025



GETTING AROUND IN NITHSDALE

Inspiration for car-free travel



Community transport - Public transport - Walking - Cycling - EVs



N76 Energy in Motion is a partnership between Community Energy Scotland and seven development trusts based along and around the A76 trunk road in Dumfries & Galloway and East Ayrshire. The project was started in response to concerns about local barriers to travel and ways to reduce these barriers by improving low carbon transport options.

Working together has allowed the partners to share their knowledge and experiences about sustainable transport, local issues and priorities for their communities, as well as key contacts who can help with transport issues. The N76 partners meet regularly to share updates about their work and any news from their communities. This is a great chance to help each other and to celebrate accomplishments, such as a new active travel path or bike hire scheme.

The N76 Partnership

**New Cumnock
Development Trust**

**Kirkconnel & Kelloholm
Development Trust**

**Sanquhar Enterprise
Company**

Old School Thornhill

Nith Valley Leaf Trust

KPT Development Trust

Moniaive Initiative

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Supporting rural communities to access shops, services and great days out!

CAIRN VALLEY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Area of service: Glencairn, Dunscore and the KPT area

THORNHILL & DISTRICT COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Area of service: Thornhill and surrounding area

KIRKCONNEL PARISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Area of service: Kirkconnel local area



A WORD FROM RHIAN

Hello, I'm Rhian (rhymes with Ian) Davies, Lead for Community Transport at Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway. The community transport programme aims to build on work developing community transport in the region. Local community transport operators provide fantastic services including minibus hire and scheduled services getting people to the shops.

As well as working with existing community transport operators, I'm interested to hear from other organisations where community transport is something you do or have ambitions to do. You could be from a local sports team, wishing to make a minibus available to other groups, a development trust exploring how to help community members get to health appointments, or a village hall interested in installing electric vehicle charge points for the community. Or it could be something else entirely! If you're not sure if your organisation fits the bill, please just get in touch and we can have a chat.

Contact: rhian.davies@tsdg.org.uk or call 0300 303 8558

CAIRN VALLEY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Cairn Valley Community Transport serves Glencairn, Dunscore and Tynron. It is available for local community groups and organisations to hire, upon completion of a membership form. For bookings and info, call **01387 820869** or email **bookings@cvct.org.uk**.

CVCT operates a fortnightly scheduled service to Castle Douglas, leaving Moniaive at 11.15am, picking up at Kirkland, Wallacetown, Dunscore, Newtonaids and Shawhead, and arriving at Castle Douglas at midday. The return journey leaves Castle Douglas at 3.05pm, giving approximately 3 hours in Castle Douglas to shop and have lunch. By request, the bus will drop off/pick up at Threave Gardens enroute to Castle Douglas. In summer 2025 this service will operate on May 1st, 15th, 29th; June 12th and 26th and July 17th and 31st.

CVCT also facilitates Day Excursions throughout the year to locations across South Scotland and North England. Anyone can join these, including families with children. The bus picks up in Moniaive, Dunscore and other local places enroute. Visit cvct.org.uk for more details.

The bus seats up to 16 passengers and is fully accessible. However, passenger seats may need to be removed to accommodate wheelchairs, so please notify them in advance of any wheelchair users. The drivers, trustees and committee are all unpaid volunteers, and do not expect or accept tips. Everything you pay goes directly towards the running costs of the vehicle and the modest operating costs of the charity.



Left: The N76 group with brilliant CVCT driver Dean (left, sporting sunnies), ahead of a minibus trip.

THORNHILL & DISTRICT COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

16-seater, wheelchair accessible minibus serving Thornhill and surrounding area. For scheduled service or group bookings and further information, call **01848 330067** or email **thornhillcommunitytransport@yahoo.co.uk**.

Thornhill & District Community Transport

Summer Timetable 2025: Dumfries, Castle Douglas

Month	214: Dumfries via Park (Fridays)			215: Dumfries via Penpont (Fridays)			217: Castle Douglas (Wednesdays)
April		11	25	04	18		02
May	09	23		02	16	30	07
June	06	20		13	27		04
July	04	18		11	25		02
August	01	15	29	08	22		06
September	12	26		05	19		03

- All services depart Thornhill, West Morton Street 09.30am
- Returns:
 - Dfs Loreburne Ctr: 12.45
 - Castle Douglas Mad Hatter Tea Room, King St: 13.30
- Bookings: Janis Dick: 01848 330067



We acknowledge the generous support of Thornhill and Closeburn Community Councils and of the Robertson Trust

Co-op Group's Local Community Fund



Did you know?

The community transport providers in this booklet all rely on a small number of volunteer drivers!

If you'd like to give back to your community and have a few spare hours a month, why not get in touch with your local provider and offer to volunteer?



Above: Development trust partners board the TDCT minibus for a trip.

KIRKCONNEL COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Kirkconnel Parish Heritage Society

Kirkconnel Community Transport is available for all local community groups and organisations to hire. Groups must be a member of KCT in order to hire the bus and more information can be obtained either by emailing **kksnews@hotmail.com** or by phone on **01659 66002**.

KCT offers a free, monthly service which supports people to access local supermarkets. This service is door-to-door and a volunteer helps with loading and unloading any shopping. Information and dates for this service are advertised on the Facebook page, [Kirkconnel Parish Heritage Society](#), and in the local newspaper, the KKS News.

They also facilitate 'Dayhopper' excursions which are day trips to places which may be hard to reach using public transport. Details of these can be found on Facebook and in the KKS News.

The minibus is fully accessible, with electronic lift at the rear and an automatic sidestep. There are grab rails at the side entrance as well.

A heating system was recently fitted in the rear of the bus, ensuring all passengers are kept warm during the winter!



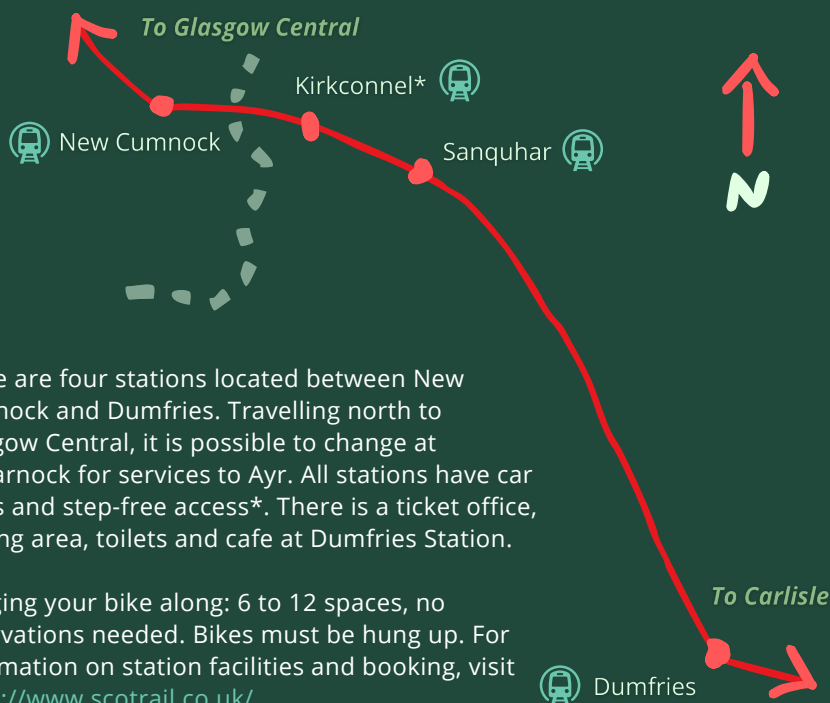
Images courtesy of Kirkconnel Parish Heritage Society.

TRAVEL BY BUS

Transport Scotland recommends the <https://www.travelinescotland.com> website and app for up-to-date route information on all bus services. If you need help accessing a timetable, your local development trust or library should be happy to help.

Bus timetables at bus stops may not always be correct. In the event of an outdated timetable or other problems with your journey, you should raise your concerns with the relevant bus operator. If the operator has not responded within 14 working days, you should contact Bus Users Scotland (bususers.org) at complaints@bususers.org or call 0300 111 0001.

TRAVEL BY TRAIN



There are four stations located between New Cumnock and Dumfries. Travelling north to Glasgow Central, it is possible to change at Kilmarnock for services to Ayr. All stations have car parks and step-free access*. There is a ticket office, waiting area, toilets and cafe at Dumfries Station.

Bringing your bike along: 6 to 12 spaces, no reservations needed. Bikes must be hung up. For information on station facilities and booking, visit <https://www.scotrail.co.uk/>

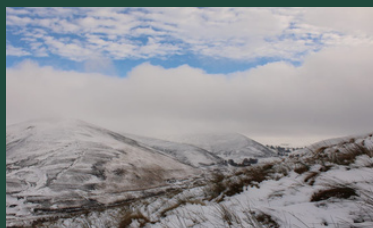
**The southbound platform at Kirkconnel station is accessed by a footbridge and does not have step-free access. For more information, contact ScotRail at customer.relations@scotrail.co.uk*

WALKING FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL AND LEISURE

PENPONT-THORNHILL ACTIVE TRAVEL PATH

The Active Travel Path is being developed by KPT Development Trust with funding from Places for Everyone, Transport Scotland, SWestrans and D&G Council. The completed 3.5km to Nith Bridge connects Keir, Penpont and Tynron communities with Thornhill. It also makes an inclusive scenic return route to the Three Villages Community Cafe, and historical and scientific sites of interest and natural beauty within the KPT area.

THE SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY



Scotland's only official coast-to-coast long distance walking route, the 214-mile long Southern Upland Way passes through the scenic and often-remote south of Scotland. Sanquhar, in Upper Nithsdale, makes a great base for shorter walks to tackle some of the most impressive sections of the route.



From Sanquhar is possible to follow the route to Wanlockhead, the highest village in Scotland, but please note that this is a hilly and pathless route where outdoor clothing and navigation skills are essential. For more information about this epic trail, visit <https://dgtrails.org/southern-upland-way/>

SCOTTISH PATHS MAP

Between 2019 and 2024, Ramblers worked with volunteers to produce the Scottish Paths Map, a map of almost 42,000 miles of paths in Scotland. Although no longer updated, this map shows a huge number of routes that are not designated as core paths or on Ordnance Survey maps. View or download the map at <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/what-we-care-about/scottish-paths-map>

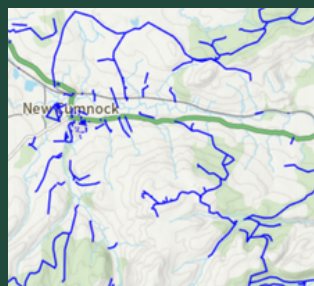


Image taken from Ramblers' Scottish Paths Map.

CORE PATHS

Core path maps can be found on the East Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway Council websites.

Core paths in East Ayrshire

<https://webgis.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/webgis2016/>

Core paths in Dumfries & Galloway

<https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/leisure-sport-culture/parks-outdoor-spaces/core-paths/>

OUR RECOMMENDED ROUTES

The following routes use core paths and community paths, as well as some minor roads. We've included grid references and What3Words (<https://what3words.com/>) locations to help you find each walk. Make sure to carry reliable maps or navigation aids, as some paths may be unmarked or tricky to follow. Local walk leaflets are also available from the development trusts. **For information on responsible public access to land in Scotland, visit <https://www.gov.scot/policies/landscape-and-outdoor-access/public-access-to-land/>**

ROUTE 1: MONIAIVE TO THE CAIRN POOL

2.4km 30min-1hr

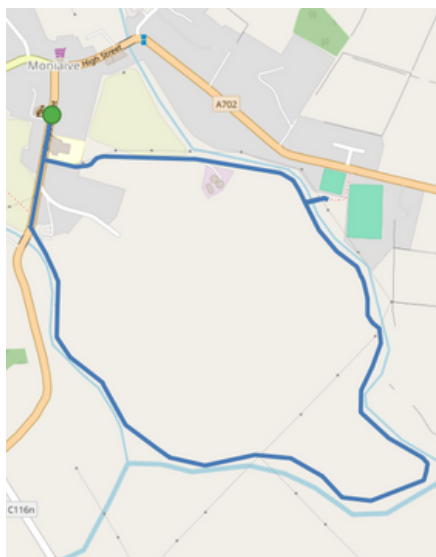
Grid ref: NX 77857 90835

What3words: lazy.acted.salaried

Issues: Uneven ground, short section along road.

This short walk uses the core path next to the primary school to follow the burn clockwise from Moniaive to reach the popular wild swimming spot, the Cairn Pool. Early in the route, it is possible to cross a footbridge to visit the John Corrie wildlife garden.

This walk follows the edge of a sheep field, so please keep dogs on leads or under close control.



ROUTE 2: PENPONT AND KEIR VIA THE ACTIVE TRAVEL PATH

9km 2hr 20min-2hr 50min

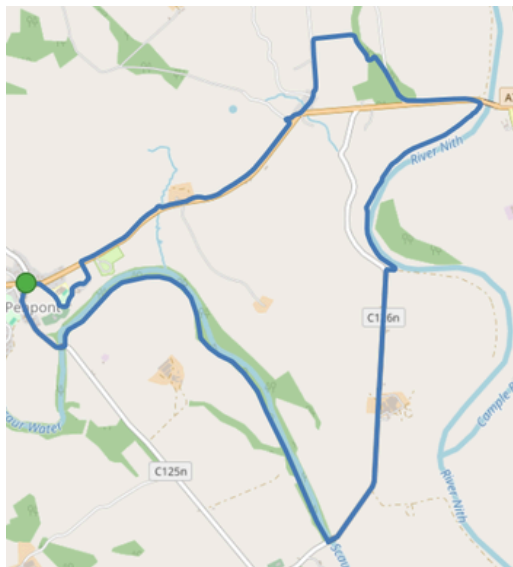
Grid ref: NX 84743 94635

What3words: udder.zoos.flood

Issues: Uneven ground, roads.

This longer route begins at Three Villages Cafe, following the Scaur River to Keir and continuing along a minor road to the Nith Bridge, before taking the active travel path back to Penpont.

Alternatively, the active travel path makes an excellent and wheelchair accessible linear route from Penpont.



ROUTE 3: CLOSEBURN FIELDS AND CASTLE

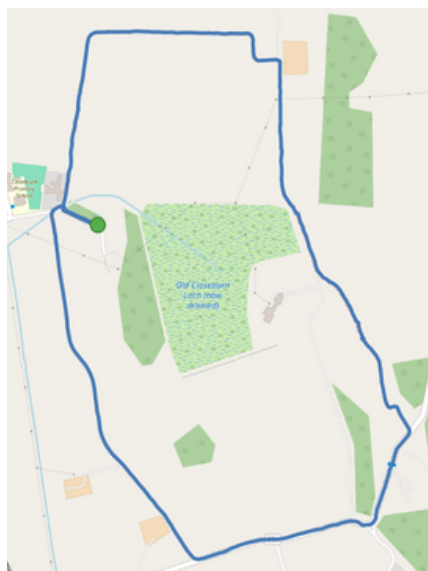
4km 1hr-1hr 30min

Grid ref: NX 90344 92337

What3words: flats.polka.dice

Issues: Short section of uneven ground, return along minor roads.

Starting at the picturesque Closeburn church, turn back toward the primary school and then right along a farm track. This route follows the track past sheep fields to the ruined Closeburn Mains and walled garden, before passing Closeburn Castle and returning along the road via lovely Croalchapel. The community garden is located to the right of Closeburn church and makes a worthwhile detour.



ROUTE 4: THORNHILL TO DABTON LOCH

4.5km 1hr 10 min-1hr 40min

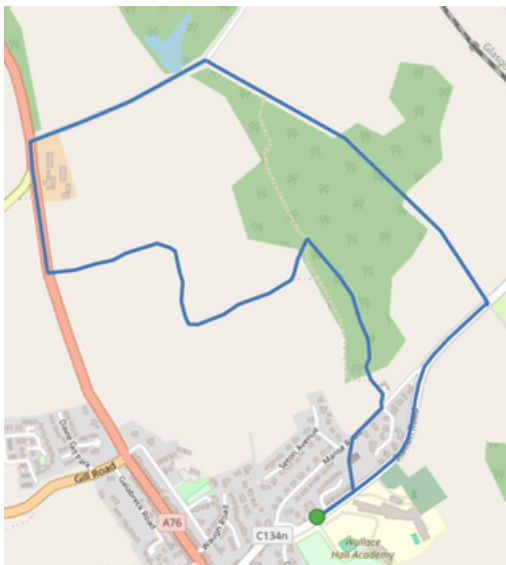
Grid ref: NX 88139 95659

What3words:

peanut.poster.column

Issues: Sections of uneven ground, minor road, footpath along busy main road.

Starting at the Old School, walk through the churchyard to reach Manse Road and soon follow the core path into the woods. The route passes alongside fields, before a short stretch along roads. After reaching Dabton Loch, follow the footpath through woodland and return via Station Road.



ROUTE 5: SANQUHAR BRAEHEADS RIVERSIDE WALK

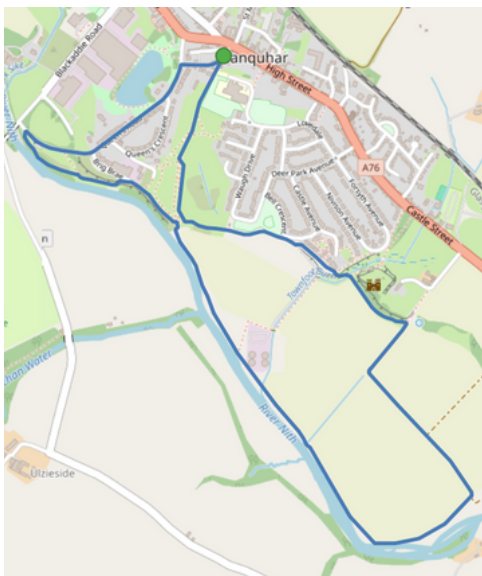
4.6km 1hr 15min-1hr 45min

Grid ref: NS 78095 09892

What3words: swept.winds.hints

Issues: Uneven ground, steeper sections.

Starting at the car park behind A' the Airts, this walk follows Queen's Road to the start of the riverside path and an information board. After a scenic ramble along the River Nith, the return passes below Sanquhar Castle and follows the footpath back through fields. Why not pop into A' the Airts for a cuppa upon returning to the car park?



ROUTE 6: BAKER'S BURN NATURE TRAIL, KIRKCONNEL

4.6 km 1hr 20min-1hr 50min

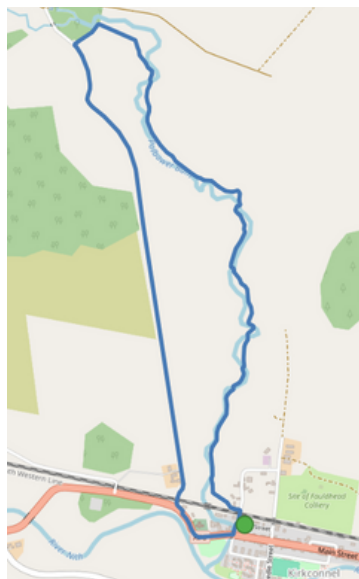
Grid ref: NS 72976 12302

What3words: tissue.texts.slice

Issues: Lots of uneven and steep ground, livestock in field, return along minor road.

From Duke Street car park, turn left and then right under the railway bridge to reach the start point. This route follows the burn into rolling fields, gaining a feeling of elevation and views across Nithsdale. There are footbridges across the burn and information boards along the route.

Once at the minor road and the return route, it is possible to extend the walk along the signposted Kirkland heritage and nature trail.



ROUTE 7: KNOCKSHINNOCH LAGOONS, NEW CUMNOCK

3km 45min-1hr 15min

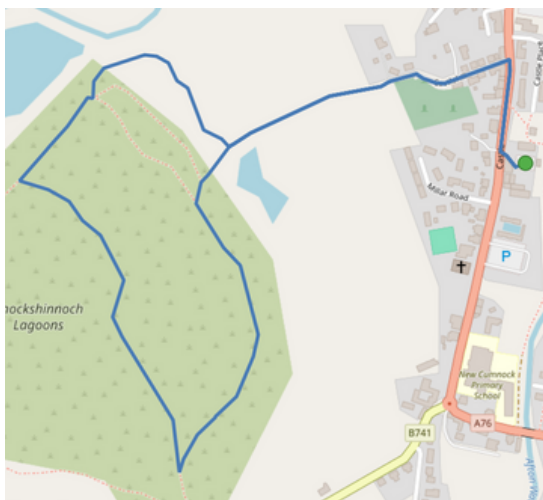
Grid ref: NS 61837 13661

What3words:

finer.tribes.grape

Issues: Some uneven ground, steeper sections.

This walk follows Castlehill past the old kirkyard to reach Knockshinnoch Lagoons, a wetland nature reserve. There are paths, benches and hides across the reserve and the suggested route can be easily extended.



More information about walks and wildlife at the Knockshinnoch lagoons is available at <https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserve/knockshinnoch-lagoons/>

CYCLING ONLINE GUIDE

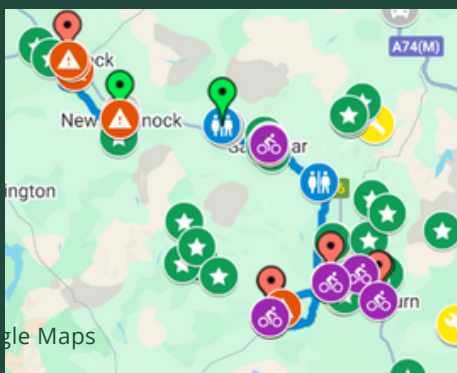
Routes compiled and tested by Josh Wood,
South West Scotland Cycle Training

<https://www.swsct.co.uk/>



To access the guide, follow the link to the custom Google map:
<https://bit.ly/4jcCKv5>

As part of this project, Josh worked with local cycle clubs, development trusts and other cycle experts to produce this interactive map (*right*). Downloadable GPX files are available for longer “Scenic Routes”. Use the panel on the left hand side of the google map to scroll down and select the Scenic Routes, or click the purple icons.

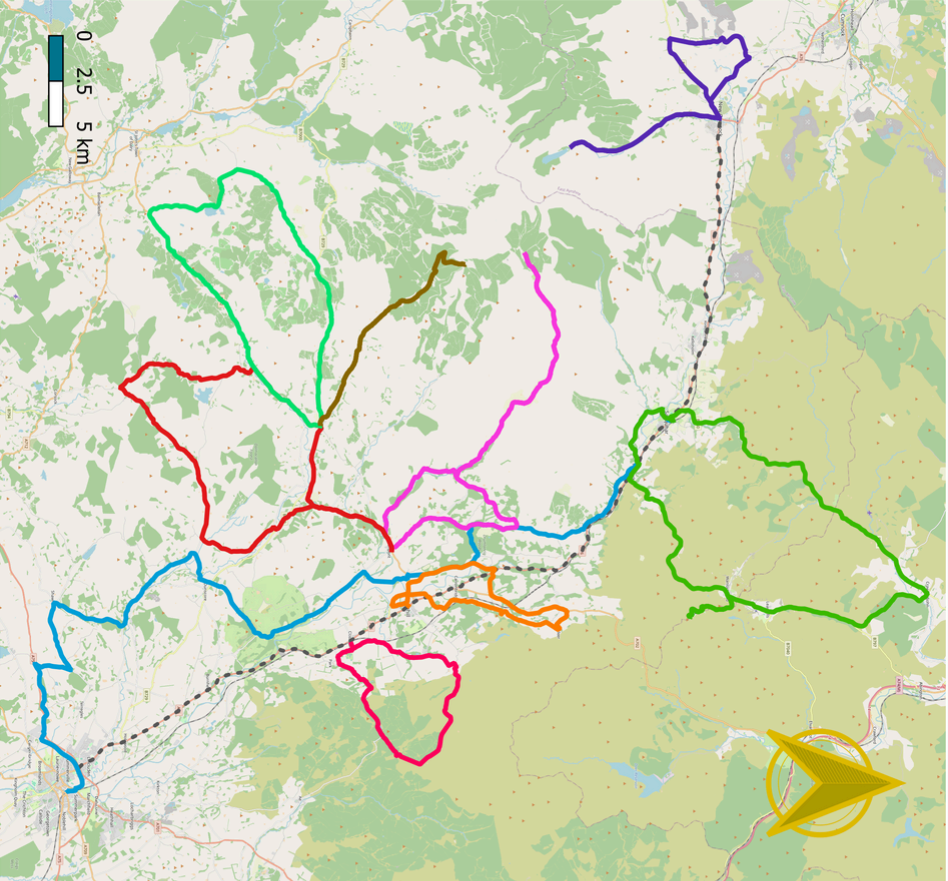


The map is intended to give you the information you need to cycle enjoyably across the our beautiful region. It gives route suggestions of the easiest routes to link up villages for day-to-day trips and sometimes suggests circular routes to give variation. The routes chosen have been carefully considered with regards traffic volume but as with all riding there are times where roads will be busier and road surfaces will be of varying quality.

Please note - this is not a flat region so all riding here requires a level of fitness and ability to ride up some hills.

If you want support with your riding, then Adult Cycle Training is available to assist you with this from learning-to-ride up to increasing confidence with riding on different levels of road - contact Cycling Scotland to find your nearest course provider.

There are also a number of adventurous routes around the region. Please do check the route profile and distances as these will give you an idea of their difficulty. Some of the routes are very remote with limited phone reception so please travel prepared. Happy cycling!



Scenic Cycling Routes in Nithsdale

- The Highest Village and Road in Scotland
- The Striding Arches
- The Moors of Moniaive
- Quiet Moorland Adventures
- Dunrsdeer and Drumlanrig
- The Scaur Valley
- New Cumnock Explorer
- Sanguhar to Dumfries
- Loch Ettrick and Views of Queensberry
- - - A76 Dumfries to New Cumnock OSM Standard

Bing Maps Satellite Imagery

All routes are available as downloadable GPX files with descriptions and elevations.

CYCLING: SCENIC ROUTES

All of the scenic routes on the previous page are available as downloadable route files, accessed using the interactive cycle map at <https://bit.ly/4jcCKv5>

1: The Highest Village and Road in Scotland 36 miles

What3words: basic.removers.rashers

A superb route, but you'll need your climbing legs for this one...one of the finest rides in Southern Scotland - this route begins at Sanquhar and sees you complete a clockwise, circular loop. You begin from Sanquhar train station, where a short ride takes you past the entrance to the Crawick Multiverse - well worth a visit and walk around with toilets and cafe facilities. From here you ride a stunning valley with excellent wildlife - particularly birds - as far as Crawfordjohn before you begin your climbing for the day as you pass through Leadhills and Wanlockhead. Wanlockhead is the highest village in Scotland and both Leadhills and Wanlockhead are full of interesting history and museums to visit - there's gold in these hills! Refreshments and cafes are available here seasonally.

From here you have the option to ride up Lowther Hill on the highest piece of tarmac in Scotland - higher even than Bealach Na Ba. A stunning road but a serious climb, with some of the best views in Scotland from the top. If you want a gentler experience then just leave this part out and begin your descent down the incredible Menzies Pass - a stunning valley and one of the most picturesque in the whole region. This route will see you join the A76 briefly, although there is a footpath you can choose to walk if you'd prefer for this section. Cafes and toilets can be found on your return to Sanquhar.

2: The Striding Arches 18 miles What3words: lock.staring.chatters

This short ride can be ridden as a standalone or an extension to another ride. It takes you to The Byre, the first and most accessible of the Striding Arches created by landscape artist Andy Goldsworthy. This, and the three hilltop arches, were created from Dumfriesshire sandstone and represent the travels of emigrating Scots. Around the Byre are stone inscriptions, further illuminating the human heritage of the area. You can continue along the gravel track, past the Byre, to access another striding arch on Colt Hill, which requires a steep climb uphill on foot.

3: The Moors of Moniaive 25 miles What3words: lock.staring.chatters

This route has a feeling of wildness as you leave Moniaive in the direction of Ayr. After 6 miles, you turn onto a single-track road and make a gradual climb uphill, with stunning views across the Galloway Hills to the Cairnsmore of Carsphairn. At Butterhole Bridge you join one of the remotest stretches of the Southern Upland Way, continuing past the ruins of Corseglass School, across a prehistoric landscape scattered with cairns. The banks of Lochinvar offer a great spot for a break, before continuing down to the A702, where you can detour to St Johns Town of Dalry, or return to Moniaive.

4: Quiet Moorland Adventures 30 miles What3words: blush.worked.luxury

Leaving Penpont, pass through the beautiful village of Moniaive, where you turn at the Cross. After 4 miles, turn onto a single-track road which climbs gently uphill to the moors of Loch Urr, giving stunning views across another remote and ancient landscape, returning to Penpont along quiet and scenic back roads.

5: Durisdeer and Drumlanrig 16 miles What3words: rugs.notch.unclaimed

Small and peaceful lanes take you up to the tiny village of Durisdeer and its church - well worth a visit. From here it's possible to access a lovely bothy (Kettleton Byre) either by foot or by bike on a loose and chunky gravel road. If wished, here you can continue up the very picturesque Dalveen Pass (taking you in the direction of Elvanfoot) - this is a popular road and is sometimes quite busy so please be aware there may be heavier traffic than on the other routes here.

The return brings you back past the always stunning Drumlanrig Castle and into Thornhill - there is a road crossing of the A76 required here as you approach Drumlanrig.

6: The Scaur Valley 32 miles What3words: blush.worked.luxury

The Scaur Valley is a gem of the region - no matter the season, it is always beautiful. Leaving Penpont you soon join the road which tracks the Scaur Water. After roughly 5 miles, you are able to take a detour up a dead-end valley which when the tarmac ends, you can continue past on a gravel track to reach the Chalk Memorial Bothy. There is no need to take this detour if you don't want to but it's a beautiful ride.

7: New Cumnock Explorer 23 miles What3words: pats.splinters.orange

This route takes you out of New Cumnock and up the Afton Valley, where a steady climb brings you up to the Afton Reservoir passing the Burns Memorial Cairn. This climb is at a steady gradient, offering gorgeous views to your left as you head up the valley to reach the reservoir. Descending this road you then have the option to extend the route with some of the lovely lanes around New Cumnock.

8: Sanquhar to Dumfries 41 miles What3words: basic.removers.rashers

This is a fantastic way to link up a route by train and allows for an A to B adventure. Begin in Sanquhar, following the tranquil River Nith - this is one of the most peaceful stretches of road in the region. Continue on past the grand Drumlanrig Castle and then onto Keir Mill - birthplace of Kirkpatrick Macmillan - inventor of the bicycle. It's possible to visit his grave here. A small detour into Penpont here would bring you to the Three Villages Cafe. This route then takes you on wonderfully quiet lanes - do take opportunity to stop at Routin Brig waterfall near Shawhead. At the waterfall you join a section of road used in the 2023 UCI World Championships.

Your journey into Dumfries sees you join a lovely section of old railway path bringing you to the train station. You do not need to book your bike in advance on this service (there is space for 6 or 12 bikes depending on how many carriages the train has) but bikes do need to be hung up.

9: Loch Ettrick and Views of Queensberry 14 miles

What3words: workers.decrease.deflated

This route takes you up into the hills and although you're never too far from the start, incredible views and a feeling of remoteness await. Begin by climbing steadily up to the beautiful Loch Ettrick (a spot popular with wild swimmers). Once past Loch Ettrick, a stunning view awaits you with a sense of the huge landscape around you. Views of Queensberry hill are excellent from here and it's possible to take a detour to reach Burleywhag Bothy (best accessed by foot). Continue on to hit a fast and steep descent with lovely views over to Tynron Doon and the hills beyond. It's possible to take a detour for a cafe stop in Thornhill here or just return to the start in Closeburn.

TRAVELLING BY ELECTRIC VEHICLE

To find details and locations for available EV chargers, go to:

<https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

or

<https://chargeplacescotland.org/>

EV charging points are available throughout the local area. Some key locations are listed below and can be found on Zap Map.



New Cumnock Outdoor Swimming Pool 22 Castle, New Cumnock KA18 4AN (what3words: inched.frightens.breathy)

Why not take a dip while you wait?

Kirkconnel ARC Main Street, Sanquhar DG4 6NE (what3words: bunkers.speeded.liquids)

Kirkconnel Activity and Resource Centre provides activities for adults with disabilities and complex needs.

Sanquhar Simpson Road Car Park, Sanquhar DG4 6BP (what3words: outlooks.sake.image)

Ideally located near the train station for any onward journeys.

Old School Thornhill Station Road, Thornhill DG3 4DF (what3words: excavated.stones.clocks)

Pop into OST to find out about local initiatives, join in with the many events from jazz nights to supper clubs, or help out in the community garden.

Moniaive Dunreggan Car Park, Moniaive DG3 4HQ (what3words: tooth.frantic.laminated)

Located next to the community garden and just two minutes walk from the community shop, complete with library, secondhand clothes and art exhibitions.

Note: All information and links included in this guide are correct as of May 2025. Community Energy Scotland and the N76 partner organisations, listed at the beginning of the guide, are not responsible for any activities undertaken by users of this guide.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all of the community members and organisations that have been involved with this project in its third year: learning visit hosts, workshop attendees, community transport providers (especially their volunteer drivers), presenters and cycle trainers, among many others.

Particular thanks go to Crawick Wheelers, KM Wheelers, Cycling Dumfries and the other workshop attendees who shared their expertise and decades of experience cycling around our local area in order to help us develop the cycle routes included in this guide. Thanks to Josh of South West Scotland Cycle Training for his hard work to compile, test and develop these routes for the guide.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

N76 Energy in Motion year 3 is possible thanks to the support of:

Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) Open Fund
Paths For All



Clyde Community Fund
Foundation Scotland



Foundation Scotland

Dumfries & Galloway Climate Hub Seed Fund
Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere



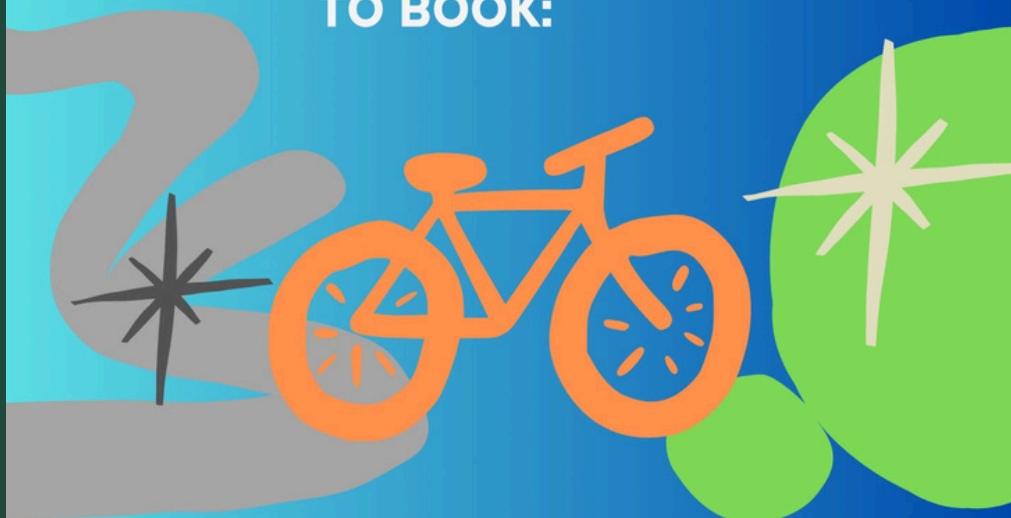
E-bikes for hire



£5 for 1/2 day (4 hrs)

£10 for 1 day (8 hrs)

TO BOOK:



**Contact Maureen on
07765073913**

or Michelle on 07 873 320 824

email info.kptdt@gmail.com

or ask in the Three Villages Community Cafe



**Community
Energy
Scotland**



**Foundation
Scotland**



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE



Net Zero
Scotland
Scottish
Government



LET'S DO
NET ZERO



DGG
CLIMATE HUB