

Route 3 - Broken Cross Muir

The old drove road on which this route is based has been in use for centuries.



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Description: The old drove road on which this route is based has been in use for centuries. Don't be put off by the motorway which runs parallel, which has superseded the original track. You can easily extend this route by linking it with The Differick.

Distance: Approximately 15-21km (2.5-4 hours) depending where you park and which option you choose

Location: Between Lesmahagow, Lanark and Douglas Water

Maps: OS Landranger no. 72 Upper Clyde Valley
OS Explorer no. OL335 Lanark and Tinto Hills

Parking: The wide grass verge opposite Craighead Garage at Lesmahagow (on the west side of the B7078 approximately 1km south of M74 Junction 10) signed 'Pathfoot Smiddy/Craighead Football Stadium' will accommodate several boxes/trailers. This area is used for

football tournament parking on some weekends - so can be busy. Or park at the wide roadside verge immediately west of M74 on minor road between Devonburn and B7078 or at Corehouse Farm (ideal if you are linking this route with The Differick) telephone 01555 661377.

Facilities: Happendon Services (on B7078 between Junctions 12 and 13 of M74); Tesco with petrol station at Junction 10; Shops in Lesmahagow.

Season: Year-round

Going: Grass track and quiet tarmac road.

Attractions: Easily accessible just off M74. Scope for long uphill canters, ideal for fitness training.

Challenges: A few of the gates at the Toftsgate end require dismounting.

Route Description

From Lesmahagow

- From Craighead Garage, head south on either of the wide grass verges alongside the B7078.
- After approximately 700m, just after the sign for Woodpark, turn left along the path which runs along the southern edge of the wood.
- At the end of the path, turn left along the B7018 to Brocketsbrae.
- After crossing the M74, turn first right up Eastwood Road, signed Hawksland.
- Follow this road straight ahead to the small hamlet of Devonburn, ignoring the next left up to Hawksland.

The Old Drove Road

- 1. From Devonburn, the drove road starts at the 'No through road' sign on the bend where the public road turns west under the motorway (OSGR NS832388). Initially stoned, the track soon becomes grassy, enclosed for most of the way between twin fences or dykes which once helped contain cattle as they were driven to market. Continue south along the drove road for 5.5km.
- 2. At the access road to Broken Cross Muir opencast site, with the site security office on the opposite left corner, continue south through the wide gap alongside the gate across the drove road, between the twin dykes/fence. Visibility is good so you have plenty of warning of any traffic, but take care at this crossing.
- 3. Go straight over at the junction with the next minor public road, continuing south along the old drove road downhill through a wide gate. The top latch on the double gates just before the old stone bridge can be stiff, so you may need to dismount.

Carry on over the bridge, through the next gate, along the grassy track of the drove road which now runs through a lovely birch wood to the cottage at Toftsgate.

- 4. The stile adjacent to Toftsgate is impassable by horses. Bypass the gate by turning right between two trees into rough ground approximately 50m before the gate, emerging onto the tarmac road some 20m to the west of the gate.

From Toftsgate, turn left (north-east) along the quiet country lane, following the cycle route sign.

Toftsgate Loop

(to return along the old drove road) (Total ride approximately 14.5km from Devonburn, 18.5km from Lesmahagow)

- 5. After 2km, shortly after a bridge over a burn, turn left at the T-junction at the brow of the hill. Follow this road for 2km passing Tower Farm and Folkerton Mill.

When you reach the old drove road (marked 3 on map), turn right and retrace your steps back to Devonburn and Lesmahagow.

Circular route via Easterton and Hawksland

(Total ride approximately 16km from Devonburn, 21km from Lesmahagow)

- 5. For a circular ride which does not involve retracing your steps, turn right (i.e. north-east) at the T-junction and follow this road for approximately 1.5km to Eastertown, the large farm on your left as you come up the hill.
- 6. At Eastertown, turn left (north-west) up the old road by the large 'Scotts UK' sign. If the main gate is locked, there is a bridlegate alongside. Follow this old road for approximately 2.8km. The gate towards the top of the hill is locked to restrict vehicular access after some problems with sheep rustling, but there is a bridlegate alongside. Carry on down the avenue of beech trees.
- 7. At the junction with the public road, carry straight on (north-west) for approximately 0.9km past Kilnhill, to Hawksland.
- 8. To return to Devonburn or Lesmahagow, turn left at Hawksland Farm and follow the road west for 1.6km to the cross roads.

To return to Corehouse, turn right at Hawksland Farm, fork right at the next junction and then right again after 1.5km on the track past Langside Farm, left at the T-junction and you will see the entrance to Corehouse shortly on your right.

- 9. Turn left at the cross roads down Bog Road to return to Devonburn.

To return to Lesmahagow, carry straight on at the cross roads, down the hill past Dumbraxhill and Boghill to the T-junction with Devonburn Road. Turn right (north-west) to Brocketsbrae, and then left at the next junction on the B7018 over the motorway to retrace your steps back to Craighead Garage.