



3 Exploring Strathgryfe

Like route 1, this uses the National Cycle Network. And also like route 1, there's plenty of scope for variation: if you're with children or haven't ridden a bike before, you can come back the same way and almost completely avoid any roads. You could also combine this ride with others in this guide to make your own route.

As you head out towards Kilmacolm, you get deeper and deeper into the beautiful Renfrewshire countryside. You'll finish up in the idyllic Strathgryfe, with its green fields against a backdrop of rough moorland in Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The return route via Kilallan explores some little known back roads with historic ruins and wonderful vistas over Paisley and Glasgow. Although the roads are very quiet, this route back is not recommended for young children because you'll probably meet some traffic and the roads are narrow. Better to return on the cycletrack, the way you came.

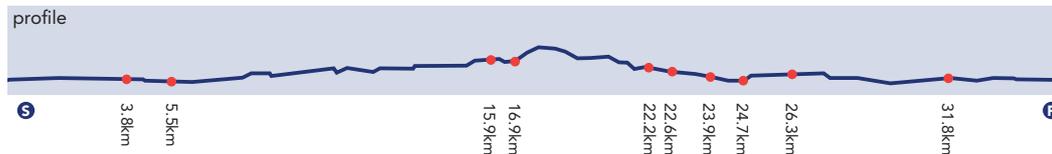
Getting to the start

The route starts at  Paisley Canal, just off Causeyside Street near the centre of Paisley (Ordnance Survey grid reference NS 483 634).

Rail – half-hourly trains Monday to Saturday from Glasgow Central. No Sunday service. You can also catch trains to Paisley Gilmour Street station from Ayrshire and Inverclyde, and then walk/cycle the 800 metres ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) through the town centre to Paisley Canal station.  If you're coming from Gilmour Street station, take care as the roads are busy.

Cycle – if you're coming from the east end of Paisley, Glasgow's south side or Glasgow city centre, you could use the Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 7 to get to the start of the route.  If you're cycling to the start of the route from elsewhere, take care as the roads around Causeyside Street are busy.

Car – Paisley town centre has a number of long stay car parks.



The nearest is on Stow Street, across Causeyside Street from Paisley Canal station (£1 per day Monday to Friday, free at weekends).

Alternatively, the route passes through or close to western Paisley, Elderslie, Johnstone, Linwood and Bridge of Weir – so you could join it on the way.

Bridge of Weir 10.5 km Bridge of Weir has a history of castles, leather tanning, cotton weaving and more recently as a leafy commuter village for Glaswegians – based on the rail connection to Glasgow, which closed to passengers in 1983 and became the cycletrack that you're cycling on. There are also a teashop and a few pubs on the Main Street, so why not stop? Find out more in route 4.

Kilmacolm 15.9 km The village of Kilmacolm has a long history, going back to the Irish missionary St Columba in the sixth century AD. It sits in beautiful green Strathgryfe, with

St Fillan's Church, Kilallan



Distances in bold are also shown on the profile and plan. Not every junction is described: carry straight on unless stated otherwise.

0.0 km	0.0 miles	 From station platform, follow cycletrack under bridge, signposted Johnstone 5, Kilbirnie 14.
0.5 km	0.3 miles	 At T junction, turn right down road for 10 metres, then left onto cycletrack signposted Johnstone 4, Kilbirnie 13.
3.0 km	1.8 miles	Immediately before bridge over road, fork left down ramp signposted Johnstone 2.5 & Kilbirnie 12.  Turn left using cycle lane along B789 Main Road.
3.8 km	2.3 miles	  Cross Elderslie Main Road at traffic lights, and go down Canal Street signposted Irvine. At the bottom, continue along cycletrack.
4.3 km	2.6 miles	At unmarked cycletrack junction, follow cycletrack to right under railway bridge.
5.5 km	3.4 miles	At cycletrack junction, turn right signposted Bridge of Weir 3, Gourock 17.
6.4 km	3.9 miles	Connection to route 2 (Linwood) at cycletrack junction in dip.
10.5 km	6.5 miles	Signpost to Bridge of Weir facilities on the right – turn off here for shops, café and pubs along the Main Street.

Ben Lomond and the Highlands



the Renfrewshire hills as a backdrop. And there are interesting shops, teashops and a pub too! Find out more in route 8.

St Fillan's Church, Kilallan 19.4 km Until the 18th century, Kilallan was a separate parish from Houston with its own church – although there was never a village here, just a mill, a smithy and farms. The name Kilallan means ‘the chapel of Fillan’, an Irish monk who came to the area in the early years of Christianity in Scotland (around 740 AD). St Fillan's Church, now a ruin, dates back to the 1630s and there are many gravestones from those times. The churchyard is delightful, full

of colourful flowers in the spring. Access is free at any time. To get there, turn left at the unmarked junction at 19.2 km. After 200 metres, leave your bike at a gate on the left with a sign “Please close the gate”. Walk down the grassy track for 100 metres, the church is on the right.

Houston 22.2 km The sister parish to Kilallan, Houston is mentioned in records as far back as 1200. The Mercat Cross on South Street (22.7 km) dates from the 14th century, and marks the centre of the village where proclamations were made and criminals punished.

15.9 km	9.9 miles	At the Pullman Tavern in Kilmacolm, turn right up ramp to Lochwinnoch Road. (Shops and cafés opposite and to the left.)
16.0 km	9.9 miles	 Turn right into Lochwinnoch Road, then left immediately before going over bridge (road is called Gryfe Road, no sign).
16.9 km	10.5 km	Turn up the 3 rd road on the left, Houston Road.
17.0 km	10.6 miles	  Give way at crossroads, straight on up Houston Road. Steep hill leading out of Kilmacolm.
19.4 km	12.0 miles	At unmarked junction, carry straight on.
22.2 km	13.8 miles	 At crossroads, turn right into Houston (no sign).
22.6 km	14.0 miles	Take 2 nd left into South Street.
22.8 km	14.1 miles	At T junction, turn left into Bogstonhill Road.
22.9 km	14.2 miles	At T junction, turn right (North Street, no sign). This becomes Kirk Road.
23.6 km	14.7 miles	 At crossroads, carry straight on along Quarry Brae (to right of white house).

By 1760, Houston had a population of around 300. Rapid expansion followed in 1780s, when the present centre of Houston – around North and South Street – was laid out as a new settlement, effectively a miniature Erskine or East Kilbride of its time.

The houses and communal drying green were laid out in a regular pattern, with North and South Street both running parallel on either side of the Houston Burn (which you cross at the bridge on Bogstonhill Road). This layout was deliberate. The purpose was to ensure access to water for all householders – crucial for the home-based weaving industry, which was the mainstay of the village economy through the nineteenth century.

By the end of the 19th century, hand-weaving was declining in the face of competition from machines. Coupled with the fact that the railways missed the village, Houston reverted back to its quiet agricultural origins by the early 20th century.



23.9 km	14.9 miles	At sharp bend, turn right down zigzag ramp to main road.   Dismount and cross main road, continue along tarmac path and after 20 metres turn right down lane by stone wall.
24.1 km	15.0 miles	  Where lane/path joins main road, turn left along road through Crosslee. Busy for 600 metres.
24.7 km	15.3 miles	  At bus layby on your left, turn right into Crosslee Road. Safer to pull into bus layby and check both directions are clear before turning.
26.3 km	16.3 miles	Immediately before bridge over road, turn left up cycletrack ramp (blue signpost). At top of ramp, turn left along cycletrack signposted Johnstone 2 ¹ / ₂ , Glasgow 14.
29.8 km	18.5 miles	At cycletrack junction, turn left signposted Elderslie 1, Glasgow 12.
31.4 km	19.5 miles	 Go up Canal Street to traffic lights. Continue in same direction using cycle lane along B789 Main Road.
31.8 km	19.8 miles	At top of hill, turn left onto cycletrack, signposted Glasgow.
34.7 km	21.6 miles	 At T junction, turn right up road for 10 metres, then left onto cycletrack signposted Paisley 1 ¹ / ₂ , Glasgow 9.
35.3 km	21.9 miles	Arrive back at  Paisley Canal station.



Facilities and information

Paisley start/finish

Plenty of pubs and cafes in the town centre for meals and snacks.

Contact Paisley Tourist Information for further information. Tel: 0141 889 0711 . Email: paisley@visitscotland.com www.visitscotland.com

Bridge of Weir 10 km

The following facilities are all on or near the Main Street:

Aulds Coffee Shop, Livery Walk (off Main Street) Snacks, teas and coffees all day. Closed Sundays. Tel: 01505 614858.

Lochnagar Coffee Room and Restaurant, Main Street. Meals, snacks, teas and coffees. Mondays to Fridays 10am-4.30pm, Saturdays 10am-3.30pm, closed Sundays.

Tel: 01505 613410.

The Four Elements, Main Street Lunchtime and evening meals and snacks, tea and coffees all day. Closed Mondays. Tel: 01505 610610.

The Gryffe Inn, Main Street Lunchtime meals and snacks. Tel: 01505 613023.

Shops There are a number of newsagents and a small supermarket.

Bridge of Weir Library, Main Street Local and historical information. Restricted opening hours. Tel: 01505 612220.

Visit www.bridgeofweir.org.uk for more information.

Kilmacolm 16 km

Cafes, shops, pub and library for information on Lochwinnoch Road.

Houston 22 km

Carrick Coffee Shop, The Carrick Centre, Main Street 22.6km – carry straight on for 100 metres, café is on the right Meals, snacks teas and coffees. Open Mondays to Saturdays 10am-4pm. Tel: 07961 333826.

Houston Inn, North Street 22.5 km on left Bar meals daily. Tel: 01505 614315.

Cross Keys Inn, Main Street 22.5 km on right Bar meals daily. Tel: 01505 612209.

The Fox and Hounds, South Street 22.6 km Bar meals daily and award-winning beer brewed on the premises. Tel: 01505 612448.

Shops 22.9 km Small shops on Bogstonhill Road and North Street.

Visit www.houstonscotland.org.uk for more information.

Crosslee 24 km

River Inn, Houston Rd 24.5 km Meals, teas and coffees daily. Tel: 01505 613288.

Shop 24.1 km On your right just before you join the main road.