




NORTH ESK

CYCLE LOOP

Distance:
15 miles (24km)

Time:
2-3 hours

Difficulty:
Easy/Medium

Suitable for:
Experienced adult cyclists



NORTH ESK CYCLE LOOP

History, scenery and peace on Edinburgh's doorstep

Length

15 miles (24km), with a 5-mile (8km) extension to Penicuik and back

Conditions

8 miles (13km) traffic-free (Penicuik extension also traffic-free)

Surface

Mostly tarmac, with short sections of whindust/hard gravel

Time

2-3 hours

How hilly?

Gentle gradients or level, especially anti-clockwise

Suitable for

Experienced adult cyclists

Attractions and facilities

Rich history, great scenery, cafes, toilets, peace and quiet

Maps

OS Landranger 66; OS Explorer 344, 345, 350; Spokes Cycle Map of Midlothian

Total ascent

522ft (159m); highest point 550ft (168m)

Be safe

The short sections of public road include some with a speed limit of 60 mph (100kph). While traffic is often light, you should maximise your visibility to vehicles, be vigilant, and ride (or walk) according to the prevailing conditions. Please make other path users aware of your presence if you approach them from behind (call out or ring your bell), and give priority to pedestrians.

Midlothian Council cycling information:

(downloadable map, advice): www.midlothian.gov.uk/cycling, or call the Cycling Officer on **0131 271 3398**



Circling the loop

Start and finish at any point. Travelling anti-clockwise is recommended: gentler hills and easier junctions. Starting at Eskbank railway station, turning left on to Dalhousie Road (B6392), the route passes through Eskbank (take Melville Road B6392 at roundabout: caution - busy) and crosses the River North Esk. Farmland and views of the Pentland Hills open out as you follow the on-road cycle path and then join the shared-use pavement towards Gilmerton, on the southern edge of the city of Edinburgh. Dismount after Bernard Hunter site entrance and cross with care, turning left on to a short section of public road which takes you to the start of the traffic-free cycleway, built in 2014 on a former railway line which closed in 1969.

Passing under the City of Edinburgh Bypass, a path to your right takes you into the Straiton Pond Nature Reserve, previously a clay pit. The cycleway passes underneath the village of Loanhead, and crosses the spectacular Bilston Glen Viaduct. Spanning the Bilston Burn, 140 feet (43m) below, the bridge dates from 1894.

Further on, a bridge offers a vantage point for views of the Pentland Hills. Ekki wood, chosen for its durability, is used in the construction of two bridges on this route. The memorial to the Battle of Roslin (1303) appears as you enter Roslin village, with its famous and mysterious Rosslyn Chapel (1446).

Leaving Roslin, via Penicuik Road, ignore B7003 and take next left (unsigned road). The route reaches its highest point and drops down to the village of Auchendinny. Here, turn left at Dalmore Mill and join National Cycle Route 196, turning right for Penicuik, or turning left to continue on the North Esk Cycle Loop. This too is a former railway, which closed in 1967. The remarkable sign for Rosslyn Castle station dates from 1874.

The route now runs gently uphill and crosses two roads (caution fast traffic) before returning to tarmac and commencing a long descent towards Eskbank. This attractive, wooded section connects several extensive housing developments with schools, a hospital, a supermarket, a college and the railway network, offering a real alternative to car travel. The route joins National Cycle Route 1 at Bonnyrigg, and brings you back to Eskbank Station.

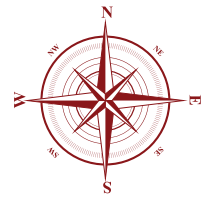
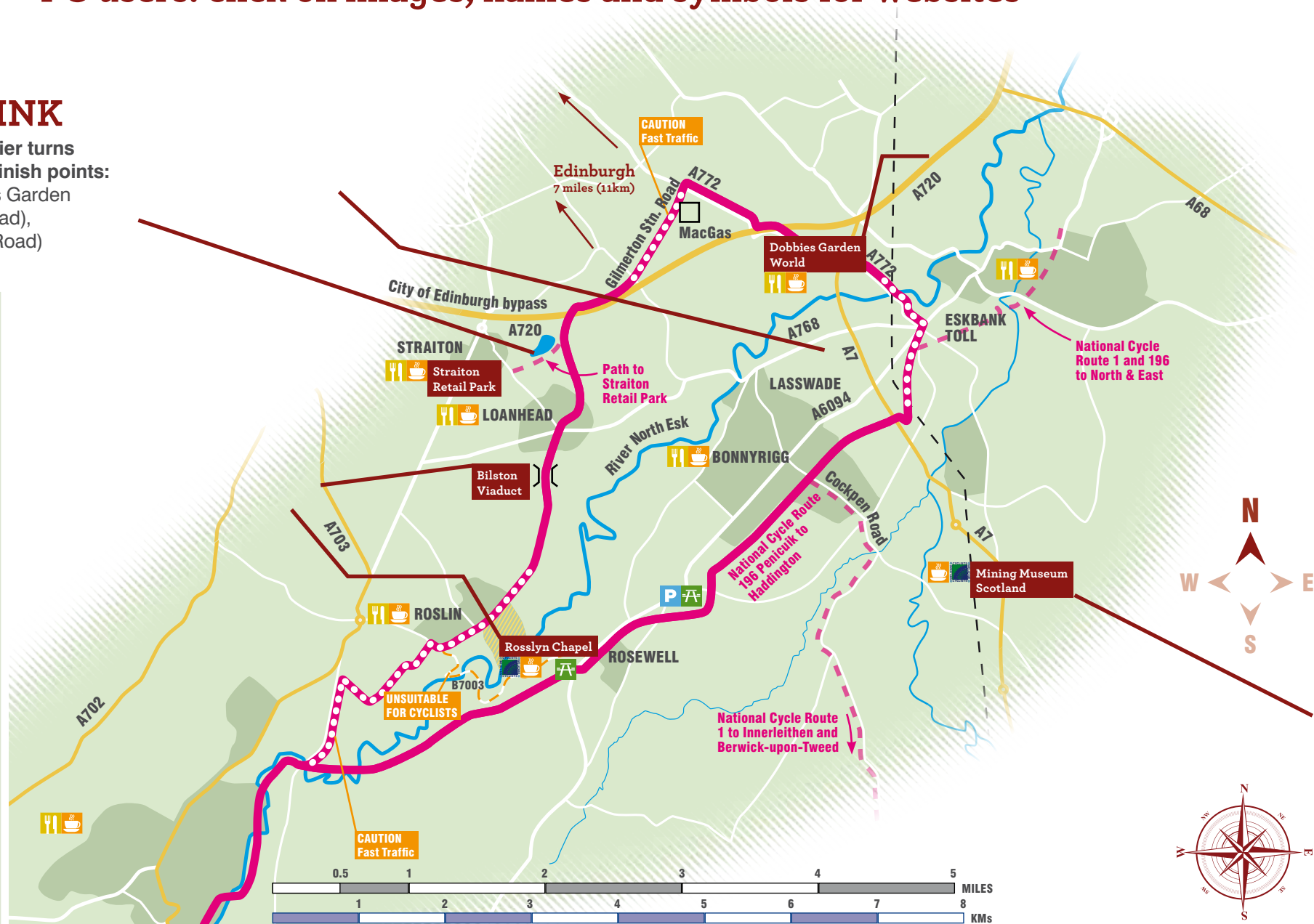


PC users: click on images, names and symbols for websites

NORTH ESK CYCLE LOOP & PENICUIK LINK

Ride anti-clockwise for easier turns and hills! Suggested start/finish points: Eskbank rail station, Dobbies Garden World, Loanhead (Station Road), Roslin, Penicuik (Valleyfield Road) or Rosewell Car Park

CYCLE ROUTE	
CYCLE ROUTE (PUBLIC ROAD)	
Other Cycle Route	
Main Road	
Minor road	
Railway	
Attraction	
Pub, cafe or takeaway	
Cafe, not open every day	
Restaurant	
Bike shop	
Parking	
Cyclists Welcome scheme	
Picnic place	
Rail station	
Battle of Roslin site	
River	
Built up area	



ATTRACTIONS KEY

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Rosslyn Chapel | 4 Melville Golf Centre, Range & Course |
| 2 Bilston Viaduct | 5 Dobbies Garden World |
| 3 Straiton Pond Nature Reserve | 6 Edinburgh Butterfly & Insect World |
| | 7 National Mining Museum Scotland |

Rosslyn Chapel photography by Vic Sharp Photography and Antonia Reeve / Rosslyn Chapel Trust.

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