

Cycling & Mountain Biking



around **DUNKELD** and **BIRNAM**

Dunkeld and Birnam are two small quintessentially Scottish towns set on opposite banks of the River Tay amidst a natural amphitheatre of forested hills. This lovely area lies at the heart of Perthshire's Big Tree Country and is home to some of the finest woodlands in Scotland - an outstanding location for cycling, walking or simply exploring the surrounding countryside.



A Giant Hedge and Five Lochs

Circular Road Route

Approximately 25 miles/40km

OS Landranger Map 53

Mostly on main roads, with the option of alternative routes on minor roads.

Turn right out of the public car park at Tay Terrace in Dunkeld. Continue along the A984, with the River Tay for company much of the way, to reach the small rural villages of Caputh, Spittalfield and finally Meikleour. Detour just south of Meikleour, on the minor road, to see the highest hedge on the planet. Then retrace your wheels to connect with the minor road going north towards Kinloch and then the A923 back into Dunkeld. OS Map recommended for this route. Alternatively, choose your own route to 'The Hedge' using the network of small country roads that criss-crosses the countryside between Dunkeld and Blairgowrie. Refreshments: Dunkeld and Meikleour, **Highlights:** You can't miss the great hedge of Meikleour! It forms an incredible living wall of beech trees, 30 metres (100ft) high and 530 metres (1/3 mile) long. The trees were planted in

1745 and are now officially recognised in the Guinness Book of Records as the highest hedge in the world. The A923 is graced with a necklace of five tranquil lochs, all close to the road, and at Loch of the Lowes (the nearest to Dunkeld) there is a visitor centre and nature reserve, with ospreys in summer.



National Cycle Network - Route 77



Dunkeld is situated between Perth and Pitlochry and, as such, is a convenient mid-point on Route 77 (Dundee to Pitlochry) with great opportunities for enjoyable day trips either south to Perth (14 miles/22km - one way only) or, north to Pitlochry (13 miles/21km - one way only). The route uses a combination of quiet minor roads and tracks - just follow Route 77 waymarkers. **A comprehensive Sustrans Map for the route is available from Dunkeld Tourist Information Centre.** Both Perth and Pitlochry have rail stations enabling a swift return journey to the station at Birnam (near

Dunkeld). Contact First ScotRail in advance to book a bike space (T: 08457 484950) **Highlights:** Southbound attractions include the Perthshire Visitor Centre and Scottish Liqueur Centre, both at Bankfoot. In Perth, Huntingtower Castle, the Black Watch Museum and riverside walks on the North Inch are all close to Route 77. Pitlochry has two malt whisky distilleries, a Festival Theatre, dam and salmon ladder and many walks.



www.perthshire.co.uk





To Loch Ordie

(near Dunkeld)

Linear Off Road Route - Approximately
6 miles/9km (one way only)

OS Landranger Map 52

Good generally flat tracks with some
steep sections.

Highlights: A very enjoyable open route in the unspoilt hinterland above Dunkeld. There are five peaceful lochans along the way and good views south over Atholl Estates.

To reach the route start point and car park, cycle or drive north through Dunkeld and turn right onto the A923 signposted for Loch of the Lowes and Blairgowrie. Take the first turning on the left, up a steep hill to reach Atholl Estates Cally car park, where there is an information board. Cycle through the gate and follow the signposts for Loch Ordie up to The Glack. Continue past Mill Dam on the right and onto Rotmell and Dowally Lochs further north-west. At Raor Lodge, turn right and follow the track up to Loch Ordie where there is a lodge on the south shore - a small bridge further up the track is a good rest/viewpoint looking across the loch and down towards Deuchary Hill. Return by the same route. Refreshments: picnic. The route is only partly waymarked - OS Map recommended.

Accommodation



Perthshire has an excellent choice of accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets. Many establishments are members of the VisitScotland Cyclists Welcome Scheme and provide specific facilities such as cycle storage, drying areas, weather forecasts and packed lunches - all designed to make your stay more enjoyable.

Contact Dunkeld Tourist Information Centre
for details of participating local establishments

OR visit www.visitscotland.com/cycling

OR look out for the logo in our brochures.



Craigvinean Forest (Dunkeld)

Off Road Routes

OS Landranger Map 52

Forest tracks with a choice of gradients
including steep ascents and thrilling
downhilling.

adventure and a mountain bike, an off road route links Dunkeld (start from Rumbling Bridge car park) and Aberfeldy - OS map essential. With a good choice of accommodation in both locations this expedition is ideal for a weekend. **Highlights:** A superb location for off road enthusiasts and, on the gentler routes, for families. Craigvinean has been popular since the time of the Victorians, who loved the forest paths leading to follies and dramatic viewpoints with unrivalled views over Dunkeld. The forest is home to a thriving population of red squirrels that feast on the large cones produced by the many different conifers.

This is one of Scotland's oldest managed forests, created from larch seed brought from the Alps for the second Duke of Atholl. Craigvinean lies above The Hermitage (a beauty spot on the River Braan) and is just off the A9 1 mile/1.5km north of Dunkeld. If you are in a car, turn off the A9 at signs for The Hermitage then follow the track to reach the upper Craigvinean car park and main access point for the forest. (Those arriving by bike should avoid the busy A9 by going through Dunkeld and then using the underpass at Inver to access The Hermitage and Craigvinean). Routes are waymarked and there is an information board in the car park. 'A Guide to the Tay Forest Park' is available from Dunkeld Tourist Information Centre. Refreshments: Dunkeld. For those with a sense of

When you are on the National Cycle Network (NCN)

you will see these signs. The number on the signs relates to the route you have chosen to follow.





Loch Freuchie Loop (near Amulree)

**Circular Route - Combination of Road &
Off Road - Approximately 7.5 miles/12km**

OS Landranger Map 52

**Minor road and estate tracks.
Mostly level terrain.**

A circuit of this peaceful loch (located 9 miles/14.5km west of Dunkeld off the A822) is an ideal way to recharge your batteries amidst beautiful scenery. Begin at the village of Amulree where there is ample free parking near the community hall. Take a clockwise direction travelling along the minor southern road and then onto estate tracks to complete the circuit. **Highlights:** A small crannog (man-made island dating from the Iron Age) is visible about half way down the loch. Shingle beach at the western end - great for picnics and spotting birdlife on the water.



Family cycling in Craigvinean Forest



Looking across Dunkeld & Birnam

Cycle Hire and Other Services

(Advance booking advised. Delivery of bikes may be possible).



Escape Route, 3 Atholl Road, Pitlochry. Tel 01796 473859.
HIRE · SPARES · REPAIRS · SALES

Crighton's Cycles, 87 Perth Street, Blairgowrie. Tel 01250 874447.
HIRE · SPARES · REPAIRS · SALES · ORGANISED HOLIDAYS

Perth City Cycles Ltd, 42 Princes Street, Perth. Tel 01738 639346
HIRE · SPARES · REPAIRS · SALES

PUBLICATIONS TO HELP YOU

Dunkeld Tourist Information Centre stocks a wide range of local Ordnance Survey Maps to help you explore the area by bike.

Also available:

‘Cycling in Highland Perthshire’ - On and Off Road Routes for All. Excellent simple map showing routes around Dunkeld and Highland Perthshire. £1.00

‘A Guide to Tay Forest Park’ - information on cycle routes and walks at six woodland sites throughout Highland Perthshire. 50p

‘Discover Atholl Estates’ - Countryside Trails Dunkeld’ - routes in the hinterland above Dunkeld. 50p.

Mountain Bike Routes - Dunkeld Area - 6 laminated route cards. £3.50

National Cycle Network Route 77 ‘The Salmon Run - Dundee to Pitlochry’. Detailed map and route information. £3.99

See also www.sustrans.org.uk



USEFUL CONTACTS

Dunkeld Tourist Information Centre, The Cross, Dunkeld, PH8 0AN

T: 01350 727 688

E: dunkeldtic@visitscotland.com

www.perthshire.co.uk for information on cycling, other activities & places to visit in Perthshire.

VisitScotland T: 0845 22 55 121 E: info@visitscotland.com W: www.visitscotland.com/cycling

Visit the website to request free brochures packed with information on cycle routes throughout Scotland, holiday operators, tips and maps.

Perth & Kinross Cycle Campaign (ByCycle) W: www.bycycle.org.uk

Sustrans/ National Cycle Network Information Line: 0117 929 0888 W: www.sustrans.org.uk

Travelling with your bike: First ScotRail T: 08457 484950 or www.firstscotrail.com



BE SAFE, BE AWARE

- Always exercise your access rights responsibly in accordance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code www.outdooraccess-scotland.com
- Adhere to guidance signage and requests from land managers, countryside rangers and estate staff.
- Always give way to walkers and horse riders.
- Take special care cycling downhill.
- Wear a cycle helmet and be prepared for emergencies.



Live it. Visit Perthshire.



VisitScotland Perthshire is committed to ensuring that our natural environment, upon which our tourism is so dependent, is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy.

Photography: VisitScotland / Scottish Viewpoint, Perth and Kinross Council

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