

Linlithgow – Blackness History Tour

ROUTE TYPE: Cycle

DISTANCE: 17 miles/27 km

AVERAGE TIME TO COMPLETE: 2 Hours

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: ■■■□□ Medium distance, some hills



THE ROUTE

Take a tour of the history and wildlife of the West Lothian and Falkirk areas on this circular ride. Starting and finishing in Linlithgow, you'll cycle to some of the most spectacular historic sites on the John Muir Way.

Start or finish with a visit to the impressive Linlithgow Palace by the loch before following the Union Canal west for a gentle warm-up. Heading north from Linlithgow Bridge, you'll tackle the rise up Fishers' Brae before entering the wooded tracks through Kinneil Estate where you'll discover its grand house and part of the Antonine Wall.

Continue to follow the John Muir Way signs to Bo'ness with its steam railway and then along the flat shoreline path to Blackness, where you can enjoy another historical fix at the imposing Blackness Castle.

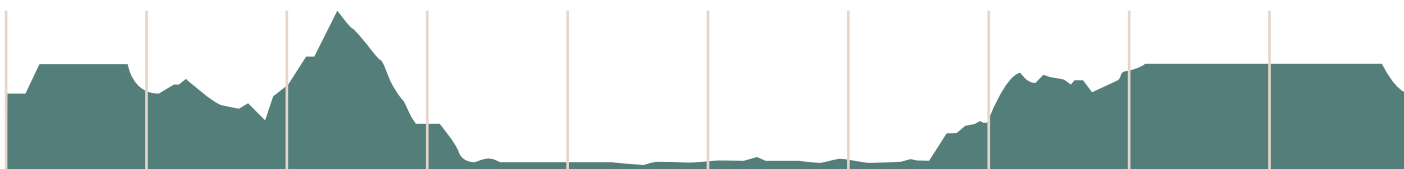
Climb on quiet roads from Blackness, taking care on the short section of A904, before arriving at the Union Canal for a relaxed spin back to Linlithgow.



Blackness Castle

ELEVATION PROFILE

Total ascent 221m / Highest point 113m



PLACES OF INTEREST

- 1 **LINLITHGOW PALACE**
Famous as the birthplace of Mary, Queen of Scots and often used as a film location, these magnificent ruins are set in a park beside a loch rich in wildlife.
- 2 **LINLITHGOW CANAL CENTRE**
Learn about the Union Canal's history in the museum or take a boat trip to the Avon Aqueduct. The centre also offers canal boat hire and has a tearoom.
- 3 **KINNEIL ESTATE**
A rich slice of history can be explored here, with the 15th century house and part of the Antonine Wall. Look out for the museum and James Watt cottage where he worked on his steam engine.

*Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway**Linlithgow Palace*

- 4 **KINNEIL NATURE RESERVE**
Part of the Firth of Forth Special Protected Area, the foreshore at Kinneil is internationally important for breeding and overwintering birds.
- 5 **BO'NESS & KINNEIL RAILWAY**
Take a step back in time with a ride on a steam train and learn all about the history of rail travel at the museum and visitor centre.
- 6 **BLACKNESS CASTLE**
This imposing 15th century castle has hosted garrisons, prisoners and many a film crew. Climb the towers for fantastic views of the Forth.

THE INSIDE TRACK

Both Linlithgow Palace and Blackness Castle are Historic Scotland sites with paid entry for the full experience. Stop for a bite or ice cream in Linlithgow, Bo'ness or Blackness.

TERRAIN

This route follows canal towpath, footpaths, forest tracks and quiet roads. As you'll encounter mixed surfaces, a bike with wider tyres is recommended. Much of the route is flat, following the Union Canal and the coastal path to Blackness. However, be prepared for a couple of steep pitches over the rough track of Fishers' Brae towards Kinneil and on the road leaving Blackness.

Please enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly.
Visit: outdooraccess-scotland.com

GETTING THERE

BY RAIL: Linlithgow sits on the Edinburgh-Glasgow train line.

BY BUS: The X38 bus service links Linlithgow and Edinburgh.

BY CAR: Parking is available in Linlithgow beside the Burgh Halls and some free spaces are available beside the loch. Avoid starting this route in Blackness as parking and congestion can be an issue there.

Plan your trip and find more routes at:
johnmuirway.org/day-trips