

John Muir Way cycle route and walking route options

Section 1

Helensburgh to Balloch – Full stretch of cycle route is on-road (15km). Walking route includes an upland path, do-able on a mountain bike probably with some pushing in several places, but not for a touring bike.

Section 2

Balloch to Carbeth – Cycle route follows a pleasant minor road to Gartness (9km) and is then off-road on the West Highland Way to Carbeth (some sections are steep with a loose surface and it's likely that cyclists will need to push in places). Walking route is an upland path which is relatively steep and challenging in a few places. Do-able (and excellent) by a mountain bike, probably with pushing in several places. Again, not for a touring bike.

Section 3

Twechar to Kilsyth – Cycle route is off-road on canal towpath path (5.5km). Walking route follows a steep track and grass paths over the Antonine Wall protected archaeological site, taking in the Roman Fort at Bar Hill. Cyclists can use the walking braid but must avoid riding on the soft surfaces at the protected Bar Hill site. Do-able by a mountain bike but would probably need to push in several places, and with some lifting over gates. Not for a touring bike.

Section 4

Roughcastle Fort – Cycle route is just a short detour (1.5km) to avoid the Roughcastle Fort protected archaeological site on the Antonine Wall. Cyclists are asked to dismount and push here, with some lifting over gates required.

Braid to south of Falkirk – This braid is an urban/rural split, rather than walk/cycle. The cycle route (6km) is more scenic through the countryside, while the walking route goes into the town. Either can be cycled. Pushing is needed at some minor steps at Falkirk High train station on the walking route.

Section 5

West of Linlithgow – Cycle route follows (3.5km) canal towpath then minor roads on outskirts of Linlithgow. The walking route follows the canal towpath then goes down a steep flight of steps to join a grassy path (which can be wet and muddy) along the River Avon Heritage Trail.

Section 6

No significant braids

Section 7

Dalmeny braid – Short off-road cycle braid (2km) to avoid woodland and sandy paths. The walking route can be wet and muddy.

Corstorphine braid – Short on-road cycle braid (2km). Walker route follows woodland paths over Corstorphine Hill, steep in places and not recommended for cyclists (unless pushing a mountain bike).

Section 8

No braids

Section 9

Seton Sands – Short on-road cycle braid (4km) to avoid a sandy path.

Dirleton to North Berwick – On-road cycle braid (6km), some of it now on widened roadside path. Walking route do-able for mountain bikes (sandy paths, off-road tracks, across a field).

Section 10

North Berwick to Dunbar – Cycle braid (24km) follows minor roads and cycle path, with a short 1.4km section across fields between Blackdyke and Whitekirk which can become wet and muddy after rain (but can be avoided by using the local roads). The walker route is not recommended for cycling due to steps and stiles, and steep inclines near the Dunbar clifftops. It can also be wet and muddy between Kamehill and East Linton. Possible on a mountain bike with some lifting and pushing.