

KM Rally 2024 –

May 24 – 27 The cycling!

Making the most of Dumfries and Galloway's extensive network of quiet rural roads – enjoy miles and miles of scenic cycling guided by local cyclists. We've also suggested a few self-guided routes plus some options to get you to and from the nearest railway stations if you're coming by train.



Registration and Ride programme

The 'family friendly' shorter routes are designed for those riding with children (although no kids required to join these rides!) to kid-friendly destinations. These should be suitable for children cycling independently if they can manage a couple of hours riding and are able to tackle some hills, and will be at a slower pace – probably 6-8 mph, but adjusted to the needs of the group.

All rides start from Penpont's Gladstone Park (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/9G6G4eGWCh7fDbBS9>)

Friday 24th May – some shorter options for those arriving in time, setting off in the afternoon

· **Morton Castle, Durisdeer and Drumlanrig** – A moderately hilly circular on-road 25 miles (1600 feet of climbing) – route here <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2468230>

· **Moniaive, Lochinvar and Loch Urr** – A moderately hilly circular on-road 44 miles (3200 feet of climbing) – route here <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2468218>

· **Family friendly to Thornhill** – 4.7 miles, taking advantage of the new active travel path. A short out-and-back to Thornhill where there are a range of shops and cafes, so useful for anyone needing an introduction to the local amenities – route here <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2483945>

Saturday 25th May – rides start around 10am

· **Thornhill, Ae, Auldgirth** – a moderately hilly circular 33 mile ride (1800 feet of climbing) with options for a café stop at Ae Forest – route here <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2468205>

- **Sanquhar, Crawfordjohn and Leadhills** – a hilly longish ride of 56 miles (3900 feet of climbing) out via Sanquhar and back over the Mennock pass via Leadhills and Wanlockhead.
<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2421764>.
- **Family friendly to Drumlanrig Castle** (<https://www.drumlanrigcastle.co.uk/>) – mostly out-and-back ride of 9.2 miles with about 500 feet of climbing (mostly one big pull up to the castle grounds). Break at the castle to explore the grounds or visit the café, and either return with the group or independently for those wanting a longer visit. Route here
<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2484623>

Sunday 26th May – the day starts with a mass ride to Keir Mill and the birthplace of the bicycle (suitable for all abilities) followed by the traditional tea and cakes in the Keir village hall. From there, join our family friendly meander back to Penpont or set off on a self-organised adventure individually or in groups (see below for inspiration)

- **Family friendly Barjarg and Steil Road** – work off all that cake with a 7-mile route back to Penpont, looping round through the woods at Barjarg and back via the new cycle path. One steep climb at the start. Route here <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2484678>

Monday 27th May – for those still around, we'll be taking advantage of [Spring Fling](#) to do a medium-length tour of local open art studios. Watch this space - we will update once the participating studios are confirmed.

Getting there

Coming by bike and public transport? Self-guided routes to the KM Rally site from the three nearest stations using quiet back roads (note that the X500 bus from Stranraer to Dumfries and the X74 from Glasgow to Dumfries can also carry bicycles).

- **From Dumfries:** 17 miles (avoiding the A76) <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2484750>

From Sanquhar: 15 miles (avoiding the A76) <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2421770>

From Lockerbie: 26 miles (avoiding the A709) <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2484738>

Self-guided rides

Looking for inspiration for Sunday's ride? Here are some suggestions from local cyclists:

Morton Castle, Closeburn (18 miles), rough track near Morton Castle is not great for road bikes
<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2481502>

- **Mitchellslacks, Loch Ettrick** (22 miles) – a challenging hill but great views
<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2481661>

Dalswinton via Park (20 miles) – includes a short section on the pavement alongside the A76 near Auldgirth. There is a tiny new café in Dalswinton (Blumen Flowers and Coffee) for coffee and cake <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2481667>

- **Mennock and Dalveen Passes** (45 miles) – for those who like a lot of climbing.
<https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2481682>

Glenkiln Reservoir (32 miles) - A scenic figure eight past Barnsoul (where the KM Rally was held in earlier days) <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/2481482>

Points to note

Note that although Thornhill and Penpont are well served with shops and cafes, other villages around the area are not so lucky. Do not assume that you will be able to refuel unless you have checked in advance, and bring emergency provisions.

The last few years of bad weather have been tough on our back roads. Whether riding independently or in a group, be prepared for potholes and gravel on the roads. You also may not always find a phone signal in some of the remoter spots.

OS Explorer 321 (Nithsdale and Dumfries) covers most of the rides described above if you want a battery-free backup navigation aid. 329, 328 and 320 should cover the rest.

Registration

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/km-rally-may-2024-a-cycling-event-for-everyone-tickets-768251871027>