

# Cafes, Hills and Cafes

This ride is quite long, but very gentle, except for the Pentland section! Lots of cafes on route mean you won't be short of cake.

**Distance:** 38 miles (61 km)

**Time Moving:** 4.5 hours

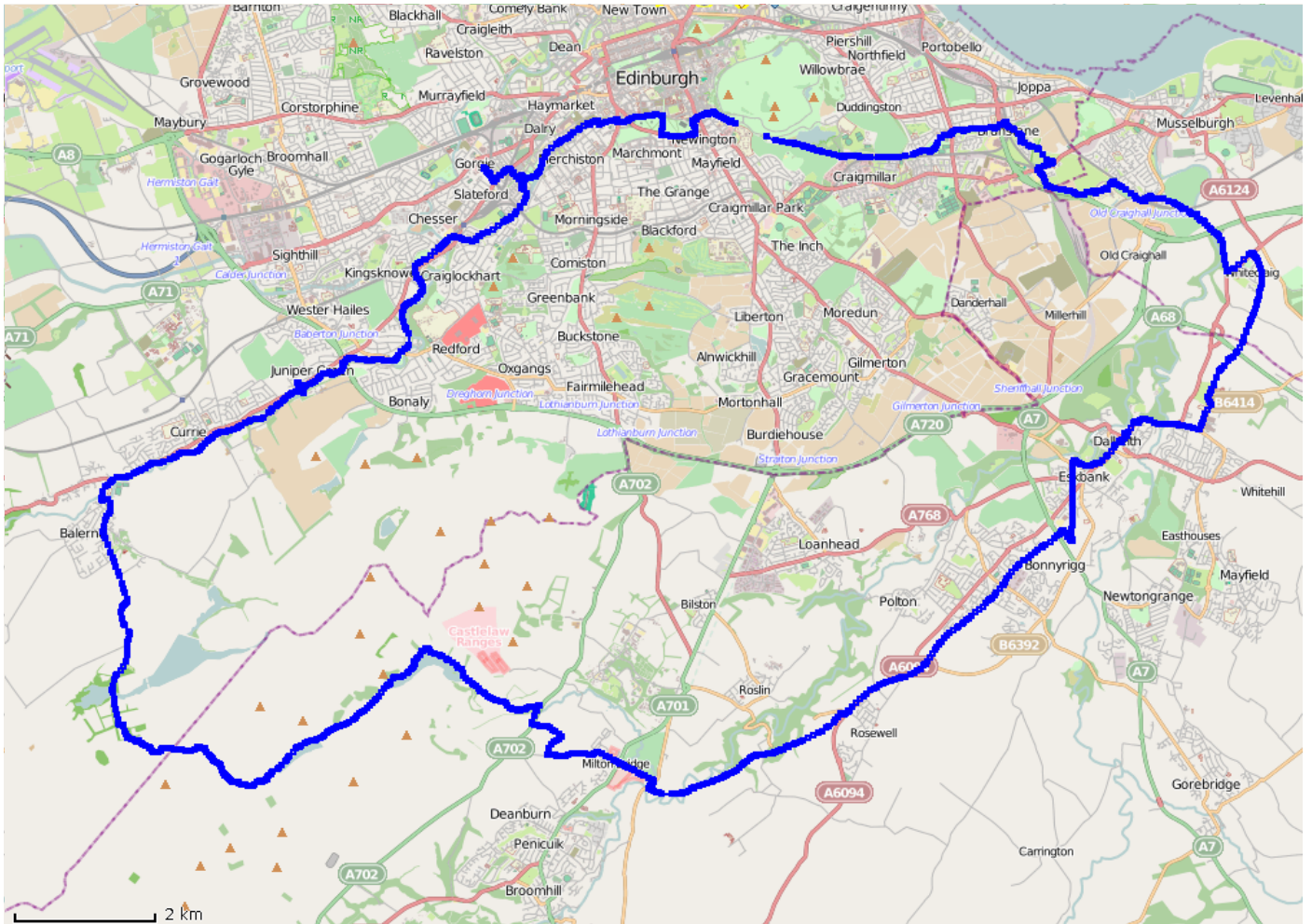
**Total Time:** 9 hours

**Total Ascent:** 365m

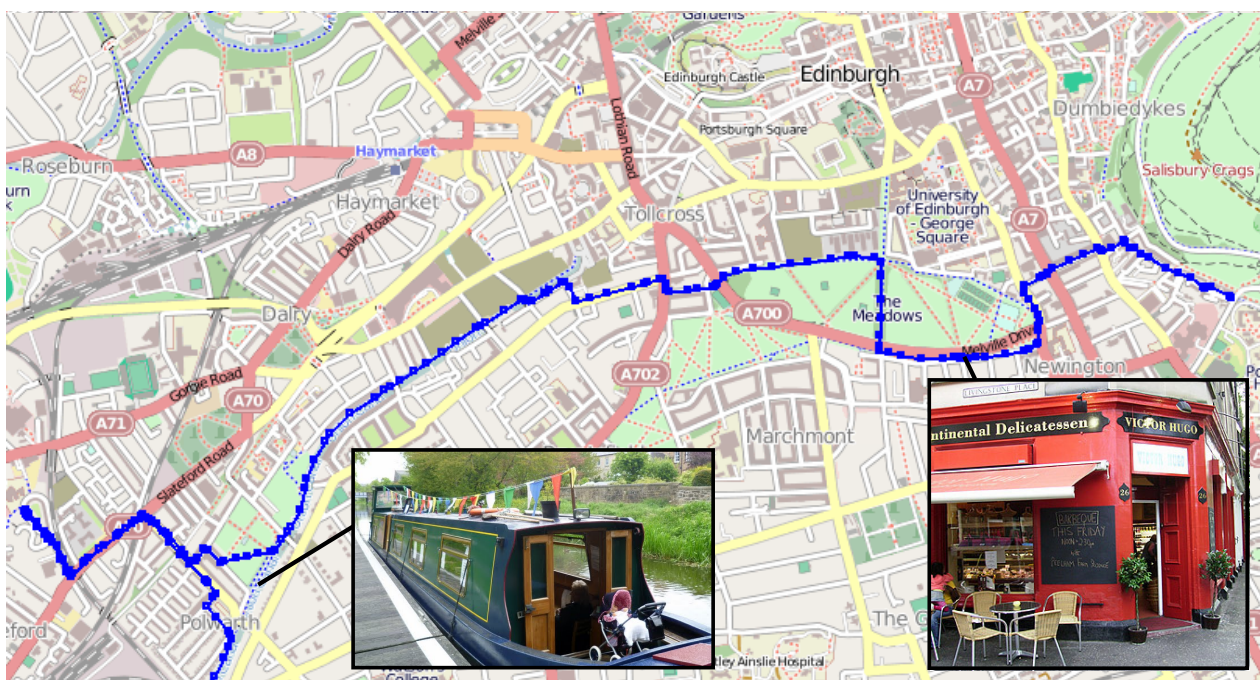
**Surface:**

Mostly asphalt with some very rough path bits through the Pentlands, for about 3km  
Also short sections of gravelly track just before the Flotterstone Inn.

**Traffic:** 90% offroad. Bit tricky around Dalkeith. Some roads through Edinburgh, to and from the Meadows.



## Part 1: Edinburgh



1. Start at Zazou on the Canal, just by Harrison Park West. Look out for Moorhens and their chicks on the canal in early Summer.

Zazou Opening times:  
 Thursday and Friday 10.30am – 5pm  
 Saturday and Sunday 9am – 6.30pm

**The Canal Game**

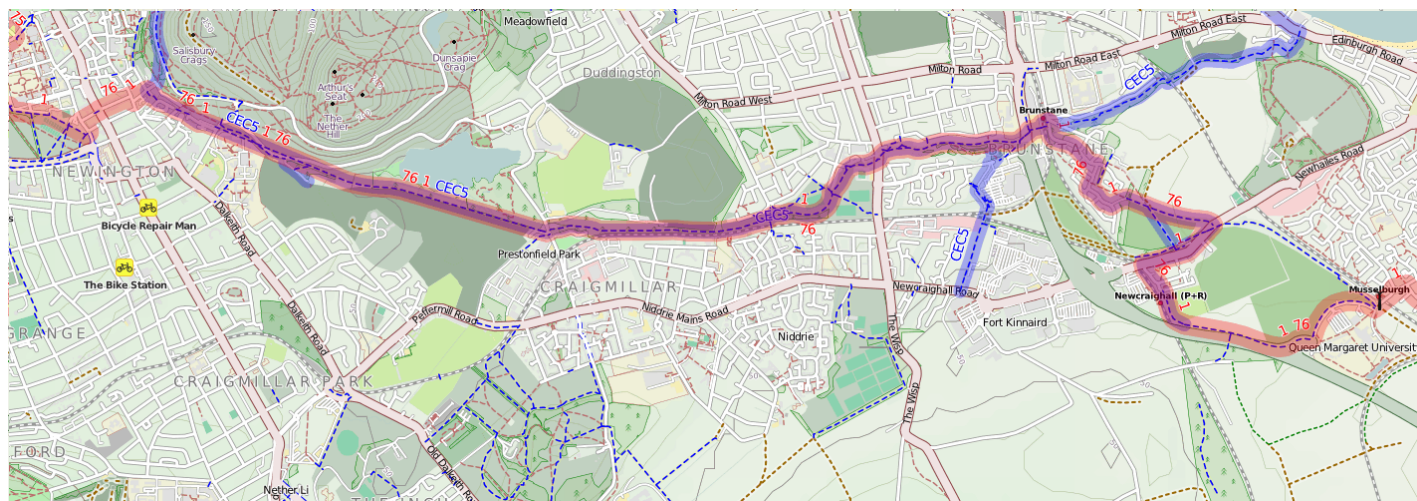
Duck: 1 point  
 Moorhen: 5 points  
 Swan: 2 points  
 Young: 4 times their adult's scores.  
 Unusual birds: decide yourselves.

0-20 points: Cycling too fast.  
 21-50 points: Good start.  
 51-80 points: Get back on your bike!  
 81+: The next Kate Humble (or Bill Oddy).

2. Cross at the Leamington Bridge at the end of the canal, and make your way along Gilmore Place, past the King's Theatre to the meadows. Either take the quick road route, or dawdle through the meadows. For another cafe (good for breakfast), turn right down middle meadow walk and make your way to Victor Hugo.

3. Then make your way back onto **cycle route 1**, to the entrance of the innocence tunnel.

Victor Hugo Opening times:  
 Monday to Friday 8am-8pm  
 Saturday 9am-6pm,  
 Sunday 10am-5pm



## Part 2: To Musselburgh

If you've time it's worth detouring to see Duddingston Loch. Since 2011 people have often see an otter there!

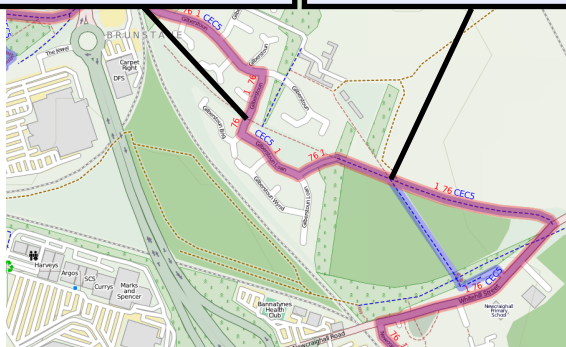


Keep following route 1. Experience the future of out-of-town-retail as you cross the ex-woolworths carpark by Brunstane station.

Then four handy short cuts:

1. Turn left under the pylons in the housing estate.

2. Take a right across the field a bit further on.



3. Cycle through the QMU campus (if it's quiet).

4. At QMU don't go over the rail bridge. Instead turn right past a barrier and down a field margin. Then under two train bridges.

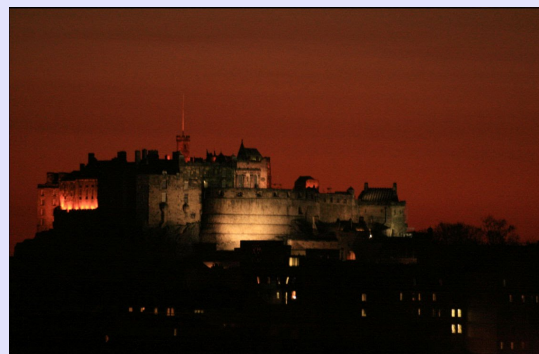
Coming out on route 1 again!  
[flooding risk under the bridges after heavy rain]



### The Innocent Tunnel Game

Start at the railing at the top of the tunnel. Do not pedal at any time. The aim: To see who can roll furthest down the slope. Hopefully this sport will be in 2016's Olympic Games.

If you're coming back this way, the Sheep Heid Inn makes a good spot to get some food. Then a detour up the hill (the road is closed to motor traffic on Sundays) and onto the track around Salisbury Crags gives a wonderful view of Edinburgh's twinkling lights.



Photos:

Innocence Tunnel by **Dave Henniker**

Castle at night by **utas guszt**

Otter by **blackpuddinnabike**: [www.flickr.com/people/blackpuddinnabike](http://www.flickr.com/people/blackpuddinnabike)

### Part 3: More cycle route 1

We spotted a pub in Whitecraig after a long ride in East Lothian. When really tired and hungry a burger at the Dolphin Inn is fantastic. I can't vouch for if it's fantastic when not tired or hungry.

The next place of note is Dalkeith. Generally best to get through as quickly as possible, except, it is *definitely* worth stopping for the community cafe in their church!

St Nicholas Buccleuch Coffee shop opening times:  
Every day 10am - 4pm

 **Highly Recommended!**

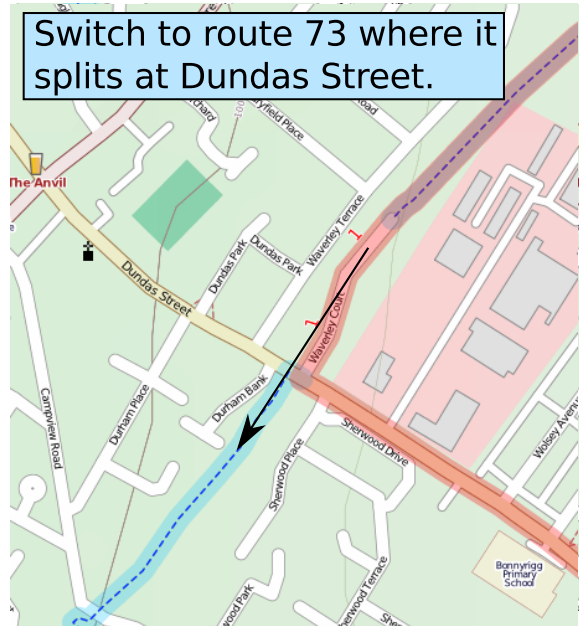


### Part 4: Leaving route 1

Continue south, along route 1, to Bonnyrigg (possibly ironically named?) There your route splits from route one, and follows route 73, continuing along the old rail line.

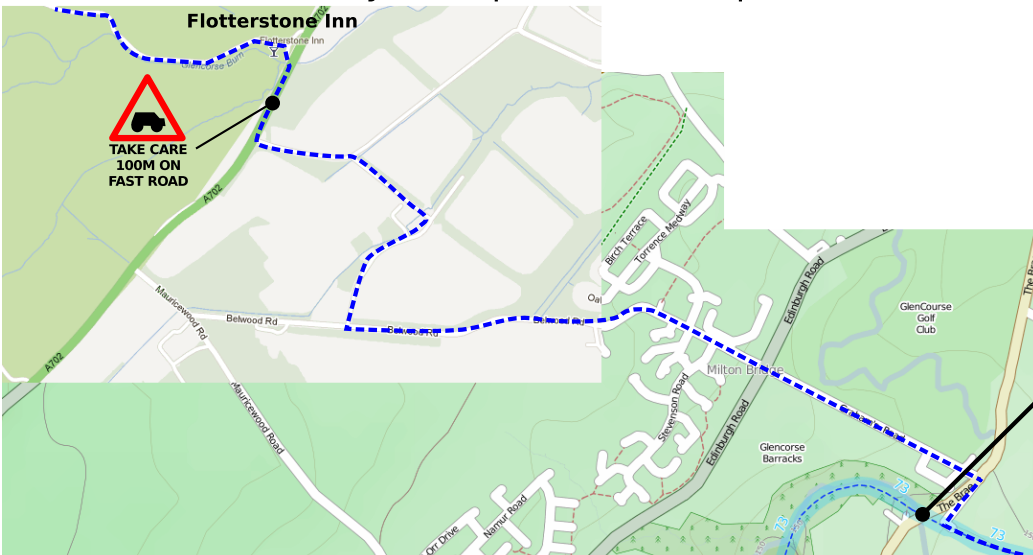
A mile or two down the path, you'll get to the turn off to Rosslyn Chapel (We decided not to pop over as the entrance fee is £9!)

Turn off the path just before the tunnel and bridge (see photo below). Follow Belwood Road towards the pentland, take a right onto a track at some houses, this will lead you around to the A702. 100m along this main road (down hill) you'll get to Flotterstone Inn. Maybe stop for some chips?



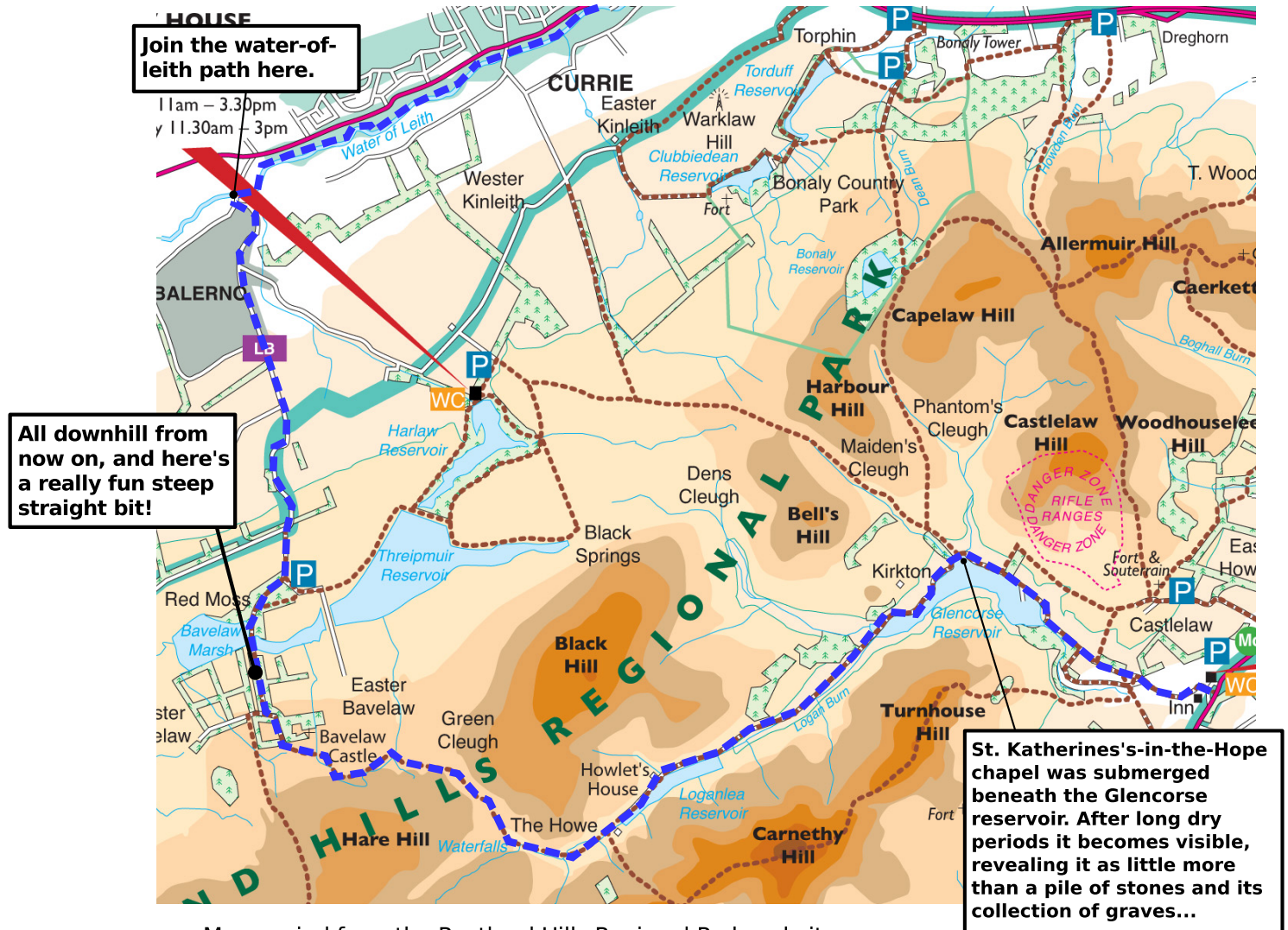
Tunnel photographed from south, from the former Auchendinny station. You should have turned off the path before the tunnel!

Photos: Google street view and me



## Part 5: Across the Pentlands

This is where there's some hilliness to get over, and some rough and rocky paths to negotiate!



Map copied from the Pentland Hills Regional Park website  
[www.pentlandhills.org](http://www.pentlandhills.org)

## Part 6: Down the water of Leith and back into town

Head down the path by the water of Leith, after a couple of miles you'll get to Juniper Green. If you need another cafe stop, look out for steps up from the path into Juniper Green (they're opposite a small ruined wall, and have a handrail). This will bring you out next to Ruth's Kitchen! Try the scones! Probably best to get there before about 3:30pm.

Now all you have to do is cycle down the Water of Leith, switch onto the canal where the two cross (opportunity for another coffee at the WoL visitor centre!) Then cycle back into town.

