Out and about in Midlothian

Key Points of Interest

- Dalkeith School campus
- Birds eye view of fields and the Pentlands from disused railway line
- Final meanders of the Esk through Musselburgh to the sea

Introduction

Walk down the Esk from Dalkeith to Musselburgh and the sea. This walk is almost entirely on tarmac but most is actually in parkland, then countryside on a disused railway line and ends on the Esk riverbank.

Route Details

Start in Dalkeith at the junction of Newmills Road and James Lean Avenue. Follow the blue cycle sign for route 1 & 196 along James Lean Avenue. In 200 metres, turn left onto a new tar path along a large grass park ending beside a graceful timber pedestrian bridge. Turn right, up the pavement past a roundabout. Look for a blue cycle sign for Whitecraig (left).

Cross Salters Road and follow the green sign ahead for Musselburgh through the Dalkeith School Campus and onto the disused railway line to Whitecraig. At Whitecraig turn left (blue sign cycle route 1 & Musselburgh). At the other end of the village turn right at roundabout (cycle route 1). In ½ mile turn left signed Musselburgh down towards the river Esk. Follow the path down the riverbank to a minor road (2 miles). Continue on the minor road. In 300m just before it ends, on left climb steps up to the main road. Cross directly across to a walled path on the right bank of the Esk. Continue downstream around the end of the first stone bridge then under the second one. Continue by the river until it reaches the end of the houses and the sea. Return by the same route. Alternatively, buses are available from Musselburgh to Dalkeith.

At the end of the walk you will see signs for the John Muir Way. At this point, the John Muir Way heads west to Helensburgh beyond Glasgow or east to Dunbar, the birth place of John Muir. From Dunbar the John Muir link path heads down the North Sea coast to Cockburnspath and the Southern Upland Way which ends in the far south west of Scotland.

Walk or Cycle

- Dalkeith to Musselburgh
- Distance: 12¼ miles / 19.7 km (Can be halved using bus return)
- Ascent: 400 ft / 120 m
- Time: 5¼ hours (walk)
- Terrain – Low level • All tarmac along disused railway line and river bank • Almost all off road with short section on quiet roads •
- Map: No 66 Edinburgh
- Start point: Junction of Newmills Rd and James Lean Ave., Dalkeith
- Gr: NT 346 735
- For Sat Nav users:
  - Lat: N 55.89250
  - Long: W 03.06023
- Public transport: Yes
- Car Parking: Yes
- Refreshments: Yes - in Musselburgh and Dalkeith
- Route: Ian Brown
- Photos: Ian Brown

Licence Number 100023416)

www.midlothian.gov.uk