

Swanston/Burdiehouse/Brunstane burns (Lower reaches)

On leaving the main door of Craigdon Mountain Sports (café, toilets) turn left. Cross the main Biggar road at a pedestrian island. A snicket leads into Winton Park. Carry on straight ahead, parallel to the busy by-pass, either on the footpath or pavement. Pass to the right of housing. Then go right along the edge of a field. At the far side the path rises to an old, low barn. Turn right along the minor road. Keep a look out for the old Belvedere on your left. After passing a nursery the road becomes ever more lane-like. The lane turns right towards a pair of tall electricity pylons. This quiet, deserted track winds on through farmland, and alongside a short wooded strip, for 1.5 km, before exiting onto tarmac at a converted Steading.

New housing (in 2019) gives rise to a detour. Go left along the old lane (Broomhills Road) to Frogston Road east. Turn right. At Kaimes Cross Roads turn right. Ahead find Janefield which leads straight onto the old Burdiehouse Road and into Burdiehouse village. Here we rejoin the Burdiehouse burn. A small park lies to the left. Take the footpath leading diagonally to the bus-shelter and pedestrian lights. Cross the main Penicuik Rd. Turn right towards Penicuik and very soon, before the bus shelter, turn back sharp-left into Braidburn Park. Footpaths lead alongside the burn for 1km. At Lasswade Rd. it is necessary to go up right.

Exit through a gate in railings to the road. Cross. Keep right for a few paces. At a litter bin, and more railings, find a path that leads left, back down into the Park to continue the walk downstream alongside the burn. After a further 500m reach Ellen's Glen Cottages. Turn right along Ellen's Glen Loan. Cross a bridge over the burn, and then on the left, after one house, a footpath goes through a stone wall back into the Park. Take this footpath for 250m, through trees, to leave the Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park at ornamental gates.

Turn right along Gilmerton Rd. Cross at the pedestrian lights. Keep right to turn off left, opposite Aldi, into Moredunvale Rd. Follow this all the way down to the Royal at Little France. The burn and flood protection works lie on your left. At the busy Old Dalkeith Rd. pedestrian lights lead over to a path that runs to the right of the hospital. The burn is immediately on your right. As the car parks come to an end take the bridge to the right over the burn (beware of buses) to join Little France Drive. Also when crossing the bridge keep a look out for the twin tower blocks at Greendykes – our next objective. At the Little France Drive T-junction, beside the scrubby conifer plantation, go left. A long, straight road with unofficial hospital parking leads to modern housing and swings left towards the tower blocks. The road re-crosses the burn. Beyond, at a roundabout, take the footpath right.

The Greendykes high-rises tower above on the left. The open footpath swings slowly left, the burn remaining to the right. Eventually reach a footbridge. Cross right towards the Jack Kane Centre. Go left along the road, or footpath, through the open parkland towards the main entrance on Niddrie Mains Rd.

The next objective is to pass through Niddrie and under the main railway line. Begin by crossing at the pedestrian island immediately on the right. Go straight ahead through the railings into a little square and car park. In the far-left corner a snicket leads diagonally left, along a footpath with low railings, through into another square. Exit far-left along Niddrie Mill Grove. Turn left into Niddrie Mills Drive to cross the burn again. Keep straight on. Cross Hay Drive. Reach the tiny Hay's Park on your right. Go through the metal entrance arch. Immediately exit to the right. Go ahead through new housing, with its low black railings. The right-hand pavement is both foot and cycle path. Head for the trees alongside the railway. Next, the foot and cycle path leads left to come out at a roundabout and the underpass (locally known as the 'Jungle') beneath the railway.

At the far side of the railway follow the footpath right to football pitches where we re-join the burn. Follow Niddrie Burn downstream. Cross over Duddingston Pk. South road. Continue downstream and through the Milton Link underpass. DON'T follow the path around to the left. Instead low hedging and zebra crossings take you straight on across the car parks (there are power-lines high above) to reach the ramped bridge over the railway.

When across the railway, go left a few paces to turn right down the cycle path, down Brunstane Rd. There is a community garden on the corner. Take care here. Just beyond the first house turn left down a footpath. On reaching the main east coast railway viaduct, cross right over the burn. Further on, when passing the back entrance to Newhailes, up to your right, keep ahead on footpaths alongside the burn. (DON'T diverge into housing). On reaching the busy Eastfield Road cross over. Easily pass by the low gates opposite, to proceed along the right-hand side of the red shed (Booker Wholesale) to quickly reach a low wall, and parapet, and the walk end. This viewpoint reveals Burdiehouse Burn entering the sea, with the magnificent sweep of Musselburgh Bay behind, and with Fife off to the far left and East Lothian to the right.

