

Mid Calder to Kirkliston

Third leg of a 4-part route down the full length of the valley of the River Almond.

Starts Mid Calder. Good (quarter hourly) bus service from Edinburgh and Livingstone (X27, X28). Ends Kirkliston. Quarter hourly bus (38) to Edinburgh. Also buses 63 and 600.

Varied walk: visiting Almondvale Country Park, Canal feeder channel, Union Canal, site of Newbridge chariot burial, Huly Hill tumulus and standing stones.

With your back to the 'Fork and Field' pub turn right along the pavement for a few paces. Turn right down Gasworks Brae, at a notice board and footpath sign. Bear left to cross the left-hand bridge, and pass beneath the imposing road bridge. This substantial stone structure was constructed around 1795 in order to carry the great turnpike road between Edinburgh and Glasgow. It replaced a previous bridge shown on the earliest detailed map of the Lothians (drawn in 1636). At the far side turn right up steep steps. At the top turn left along the footpath. A T-junction is reached within 400m. Turn right and follow the R. Almond downstream. After passing an impressive the weir go left over a footbridge. At the far side note the channel fed by the weir. We follow this canal feeder channel for over 4km. Turn right along the footpath. Continue downstream all the way to the Almondell & Calderwood Country Park Visitor Centre (cafe & toilets).

Beyond the Centre pass old stables and bear right to cross the Mandela Bridge. Turn left downstream. After many gates and stiles, as the Almond Aqueduct comes into view, climb up right to a roadway which leads to the Lins Mill canal basin. Drop down, left, pass beneath the Union canal and immediately climb steps on the right to emerge on the far canal bank. Turn left along the towpath. In 1.2 km, as the canal begins to bend right, a short path leads down to a minor road. Cross with care and go left along the narrow, grubby pavement beneath the M8 and then beneath a railway. Stay on the footpath for another 600m to pass. Once beneath the railway viaduct the footpath soon ends. Cross and go right. In 60m step across the grass verge and adjacent roadway to discover, in thin trees, a concealed, informal, footpath down the left-hand side of an industrial unit (Batleys Cash & Carry in 2019). On arriving in the carpark head diagonally right towards its far corner. Pass to the right of green fencing. Cross Newbridge Rd. Take Chariot Dr. immediately opposite. Take the first left, Huly Hill Rd. A spiral staircase outside the first unit marks the position of a buried chariot, discovered when the industrial unit was under construction. The chariot was the first of its kind to be found in Scotland. The only other area of Britain where similar chariot burials have been found is East Yorkshire. They date from the late Iron Age, before the time of the Roman conquest. At the T-junction at the bottom end of Huly Hill Rd. cross over. Clamber over the low fencing and head half-right across grass, to the low mound of Huly Hill tumulus, surrounded by a modern wall and three standing stones.

From here head towards the airport runway. Take the short path to the right of trees. On reaching a car show compound keep to the right of a brick wall to reach a busy road. We are aiming for the metal bridge on the far side. If there is a gap in the traffic cross. However, safest is to turn left for 150m and instead cross at the traffic island. A foot and cycle path leads over the metal bridge, over the M9. Once down the final ramping turn sharp right. A good footpath leads beneath the ramping and out along a good path along an old railway line. Follow this for

1.5 km all the way to Kirkliston. 70m after crossing the River Almond paths lead us up to the left, to the High St., the walk end, and bus stops.

