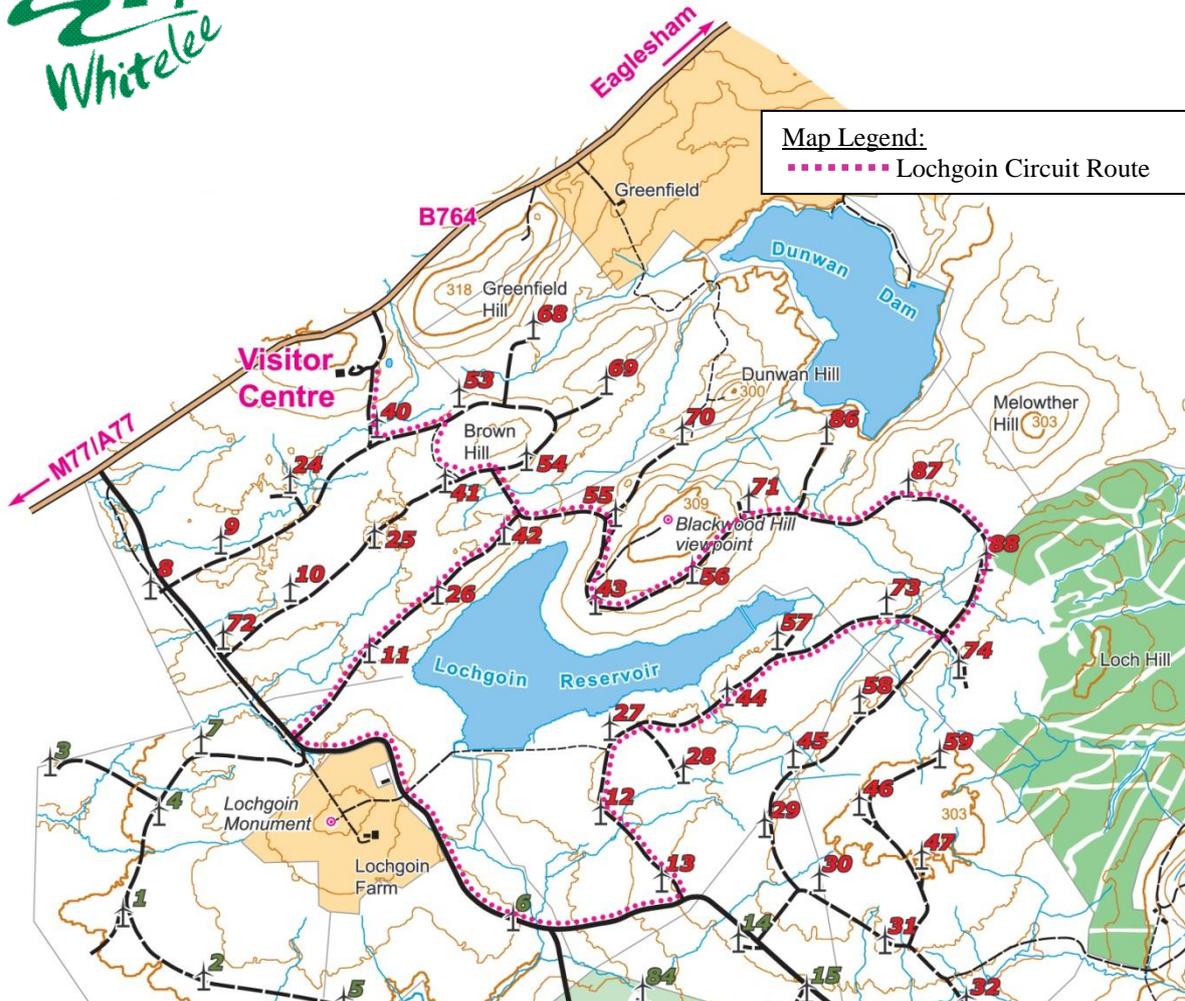




## Lochgoin Circuit – Walk & Cycle Route

Length: 8 miles / 13 kilometres

Fitness level: low



### Walk/Run/Ramble

This is a great walk, over relatively easy terrain with few climbs and plenty to be seen, and is therefore one of the most popular walks in the windfarm. It is easily accessible from the Whitelee visitor centre where there is ample parking and facilities. Watch for stunning views in all directions when on higher sections and wildlife, particularly birds and plants, along the way.

Accessible from the visitor centre by passing the entrance notice board and down to turbine 40, the Lochgoin circuit route is an 8 mile circular that is ideal for walking (dog walking), cycling, running etc for all ages and abilities. When passing the entrance notice board, please remember to check for any temporary access restrictions that could influence your route choice. You will also find site maps and dog waste bags at the entrance and we would encourage everyone to take a copy of the map for their visit.

The route is waymarked along its length by green finger posts at every junction making it ideal for anyone new to the windfarm or not keen on map reading and therefore looking for a simple to follow route option. The finger posts are intended to be viewed when moving in a clockwise direction and taking the route in this direction is less strenuous. In addition, there are a number of benches along the route in case you need a rest or simply want to take in the views. (There are litter bins stationed around the route that we would ask that you use.)

The Lochgoin reservoir which the walk encircles is spectacular in most weathers and there are often waterfowl and waders to be spotted. Views out to Arran and Ailsa Craig are possible in good weather

making this a pleasurable route to meander around. The route passes by the Blackwood Hill viewpoint which provides an excellent short detour up to the summit of the hill and where a toposcope and seating can be found to take in the spectacular views.

There are no significant hills or difficult climbs to make so the route can be enjoyed by most users, old and young, fit or working towards it again. There is a steady climb back up from turbine 40 to the visitor centre to be aware of however - but you will be able to decide if you can make it back up this when starting out. (Walking the route in a clockwise direction limits the number of climbs. For a more challenging walk – try the same route but in an anticlockwise direction.)

This route is also ideal for mobility scooters<sup>1</sup> with the 8 mile circuit being well within safe battery range of most (well maintained), machines and track conditions are some of the best in the windfarm. Please ensure your machine is well charged before heading out however, especially in cold and/or windy weather when batteries drain faster or are worked harder.

Please note that on this route you will pass through a sheep grazing area where you are requested to keep your dog<sup>2</sup> on a short lead or under close control, in accordance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Allowing your dog to harass livestock is a criminal offence so please make sure your dog responds to commands around livestock. Signage and the presence of cattle grids indicates when you are entering or leaving the livestock grazing area.

<sup>1</sup> Please note the route is not ideally suited to conventional wheelchairs as the hill to / from turbine 40 to the visitor centre can be challenging on the return leg.

<sup>2</sup> Please see our Dog Walkers leaflet for further useful information on walking your dog at Whitelee.

## Cycle

This is the same route as recommended for walks but using the bicycle is a nice gentle way of getting around in half the time. For cycling, the surface around most of the Lochgoin circuit is excellent and whether you're a novice rider or seasoned regular, this route has something for everyone. Please note however that at junctions and road ends etc, there can be a 'wash' of loose gravel swept together by vehicles and cyclists alike and these pockets of loose stone can be slippery, particularly for novice riders and small children.

The terrain isn't particularly challenging so it's suited to various levels of fitness although you should give yourself extra time to get round if the wind is strong. If reasonably fit the route can be completed in under 2 hours (without pushing too hard). There are some sections where you will be heading up and down hill but none of these are particularly exhausting, long or steep. Care should be taken when going downhill however as it is easy to build up speed and there are of course other access users as well as site traffic (vehicles), in the windfarm. If moving at speed through the windfarm please respect other access users and warn them of your approach (with a bell or call). Please also be cautious around dogs when off the lead and livestock, both of which can become startled by fast moving bikes.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see our Dog Walkers leaflet for further useful information on taking your dog to Whitelee.

WCRS  
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