



from the  
**horse's**  
mouth

A GUIDE TO RESPONSIBLE HORSE  
RIDING IN NORTH AYRSHIRE

# A guide to **responsible** horse riding in **North Ayrshire**

Horse riding is a popular activity within North Ayrshire. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 provides a right of responsible access to a wide variety of land, so there are lots of places to go.

This includes paths and tracks, beaches and coastline, most urban parks, woodlands and a variety of managed open spaces. Riding on firm or hard surfaces, such as wide paths and tracks and on well-drained ground causes few problems. Wherever you ride you always need to ensure that you do so responsibly.

So when you are out and about make sure you follow the main principles of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Code) by respecting the interests of other people, caring for the environment and being responsible for your own actions.



**You can make sure you do so by following this simple guide. Always remember:**

- ⌚ In some places access rights do not apply – always check the Code or contact the Council’s Access Officer or BHS Access Officer if you are unsure
- ⌚ In many instances the land on which you will take access is managed and potentially provides the landowner/manager’s livelihood. Therefore it is essential that you do not disrupt ongoing land management operations or livestock grazing.
- ⌚ To take care of your own safety and that of your horse as well as that of other users
- ⌚ To respect the interests of other users and make sure that they are aware of your presence, giving them advance warning wherever possible. Wearing reflective clothing improves your visibility to other users.
- ⌚ To follow local guidance and signage
- ⌚ That you require permission before using any custom made facilities such as jumps or gallops or to carry out repetitive schooling



**Keeping to suitable paths and tracks can help minimise damage and when riding on these routes remember to:**

- Avoid churning up paths and surfaces and check that you are not causing damage
- Take extra care when riding on narrow routes by giving way to walkers where possible or by looking for an alternative route
- Avoid wet, boggy or soft ground and take an alternative route if horse use is causing damage or erosion
- Give way to other users where necessary
- Kick your horses dung off paths wherever possible

**When crossing golf courses:**

- Stick to paths and tracks at all times to avoid damaging the playing surfaces and make sure that you do not interfere with any golf games.

**When riding in the wider countryside:**

- If you are riding off path especially during the winter take care to avoid churning up the surface



- Do not go into fields where there are grazing horses or animals that might be a danger or in danger, e.g. fields of pregnant or young animals
- Before entering fields check what alternatives are available
- Leave all gates as you find them
- Take care not to disturb farm animals and wildlife for example by riding slowly past fields of livestock
- If you take your dog out with you when you are riding, keep it under close control at all times and follow the guidance in the code and Paws for Thought guide to responsible dog walking and ownership.

### **If you transport your horse by trailer or horsebox:**

- Please do not clean them out or dispose of the horse's dung in car parks, lay-byes or on to paths.
- Park carefully and ensure that you do not block gateways or car parks
- Make sure your horse is securely tied up when not being ridden.



**There are a wide range of places to ride in North Ayrshire including:**

### **Beaches including Irvine Beach**

When riding on the beach please respect the environment and follow designated paths through sensitive dune systems highlighted by black diamond shaped signs. Do not gallop past other users on the beach.

### **Eglinton Country Park**

The Park is set within 1,000 acres of beautiful Ayrshire countryside and offers an extensive path network. The Park operates a permit system and offers a wide range of facilities including ample parking and toilets.

### **Irvine & Kilwinning New Town Trail**

A 12 mile (19km) route following the main river valleys and linking Irvine, Kilwinning and Eglinton Country Park. The trail also links into an extensive network of paths including the two NCN routes.

**[www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess)**



## **Forestry Commission Forests on the Island of Arran**

There are a wide range of forest roads and routes within the forests on Arran.

[www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland)

## **National Cycle Network Route 7**

Route 7 runs between Carlisle and Glasgow entering North Ayrshire near Troon (in South Ayrshire). The route links into Route 73, passing through Irvine and Kilwinning and links with the outskirts of Kilbirnie.

## **National Cycle Network Route 73**

A predominantly off road route running between Kilmarnock and the ferry terminal at Ardrossan. On route to Ardrossan it passes through Springside, Dreghorn, Irvine, Kilwinning and the Three Towns. On the island of Arran the route is on road from Brodick to Lochranza.

[www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland)

Further information on the BHS Park and Ride Scheme is available from:

[www.bhsscotland.org.uk/parkandride](http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk/parkandride)

## For more information on:

Outdoor access and routes please visit:  
[www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess)

The British Horse Society Scotland  
please visit:  
[www.bhsscotland.org.uk](http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk)

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 or the  
Scottish Outdoor Access Code please visit:  
[www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

Routes throughout Ayrshire please visit:  
[www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk](http://www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk)

Eglinton Country Park please visit:  
[www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk)  
01294 551776

**This leaflet is available in  
alternative formats on  
request from 01294 225100  
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**NORTH AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL

The British Horse Society



**Scotland**

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