

Spokes competition 2015, Entry 22

South-west Edinburgh circular

2 Suitable for both novice and experienced cyclists, road bikes and mountain bikes (I use 700 X 23/28 tyres)

3 South-west Edinburgh

4 Start: at the junction of North Meadow walk and Middle Meadow walk

Finish: as start

Description: Meadows - Holyrood park - Innocent railway path - Peffermill - Inch park - Blackford Glen - ex City hospital - Firrhill - Colinton Dell - Juniper Green - Heriot-Watt campus - Union canal - Meadows, 20.6 miles. For detail see <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=6703366>

5 See: Peffermill house, Inch house, Agassiz rock, Hermitage of Braid house, Colinton Dell, Spylaw house, northerly views from Bloomiehall park and the beautiful Heriot-Watt campus and arboretum.

Facilities: toilets just west of the Hermitage of Braid house, toilets and cafes at Heriot-Watt, which makes the public most welcome. Ask at the reception desk for campus and arboretum guides if you are interested.

Caution: On entering the H-W sunken garden, beware 20 yards of downhill, deep, loose gravel on track before turning half left on to a firm track.

6 Old age and, maybe, caring responsibilities, severely limit cycling horizons but, in a beautiful and historic city like Edinburgh, with its wealth of paths, the discoveries are endless. This circular route, which can easily be cut short should the need arise, is largely off road and links several noted beauty spots - Holyrood park, Blackford Glen, Colinton Dell, the Water of Leith, the Heriot-Watt campus and arboretum and the Union canal - which are lovely at any time of year. The combination of fresh air, gentle exercise in beautiful surroundings and in the company of good friends leaves one feeling refreshed, reinvigorated and very happy. The effect lasts several days.