

# Caithness Riders Access Group



## Camster Cycle Track

Maximum Distance - 7miles

Flat Hard Surface

Information contained in this pack is correct as of *03/08/2004*

## *Camster-Clyth Cycle Track*

*The Camster-Clyth track is a multi-use route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and belongs to the Forestry Commission. It is a lovely, undulating track running through immature woodland with good, open views over the surrounding countryside.*

**Access From:** The Camster-Clyth track is located along the very minor Camster road that runs from the A99 at Occumster, ½ mile north of Lybster, to the A882 just east of Watten. Travelling south along the A99 from Wick, turn first right just beyond the cottages at Occumster. The road is signed to the Camster Cairns and there is a red 'phone box beside the junction. Travelling north along the A99, the Camster road is the first road on your left about ½ mile after leaving the 40 mph zone through Lybster. Travelling west along the A882, Wick to Thurso road, turn left onto the Camster road just before the 30mph zone for Watten village. Travelling east along the A882 from Thurso, go through Watten and turn first right onto the Camster road almost immediately after leaving the 30mph zone. From the A99, the track is located on your right hand side after travelling about 5 miles and is before the Camster cairns. From the A882, the track is found on your left hand side after travelling about 7 1/2 miles and about ½ mile after you have passed the cairns on your right hand side. The entrance to the parking area is clearly marked and signed by the Forestry Commission.

Please see map on page 5

**Parking:** - There is parking for 1 to 2 horse boxes just off the road and a second parking and turning area if you drive over the cattle grid, where there is comfortable room for 2 boxes.

### General Information

Please note that the road along which you drive is a narrow, minor road with a bumpy surface in places and you can expect to encounter 'free-range' sheep throughout the year whose behaviour can be unpredictable!

There is grazing around the car park and it is a good place for a picnic after your ride!

This is a relatively young forest so you are less likely to encounter tree-felling operations but there may be other activities taking place.

Read any signs warning you of forest operations such as tree felling and extraction and follow any precautions taken by the land manager. This will ensure that you do

not hinder these operations and ensure your safety and that of people working there. In some cases signs may indicate that it is safe to go along a route if the activity has stopped, such as for the weekend.

Forestry Commission office: 01593 721204

Access Officer: David Barclay: 01955 605858

Caithness Riders Access Group: [www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk/](http://www.caithnessridersaccessgroup.co.uk/)

## **Ride Report**

At the start of the track beyond the car park, there is a metal horse access gate which is locked to prevent the passage of vehicles. Horses can step over the bottom bar of the gate, (which is shielded by wooden straps on either side so as to be kinder to their legs), passing through a u-shaped cross section. The bottom bar is about 1 foot off the ground. However, it is also possible to squeeze around the side of this gate it does not present too much of an obstacle. Since the Forestry Commission plan to install more of these gates in their forests, you may think that this is a good place to start getting your horse used to encountering them.

The track is lovely and meanders up and down, the surface being firm and rarely stony. In many places there are central heathery/grassy sections and verges at the side allowing the possibility to trot and canter.

However, please remember that this track is popular and that you may encounter people, dogs and cyclists while you are out for your ride. In addition to the main track, there are two short side tracks, one on the left hand side and one on the right which can both be ridden. These are both dead ends and relatively short- each no more than ½ a mile in length- but they provide interesting extra stretches to explore.

### **Caithness Riders Access Group Code of Conduct**

**We would advise anyone planning to ride any route to walk it and assess if it is suitable for them to ride before taking their horse out on it.**

Riders should always proceed with courtesy, care and consideration for all other users and landowners.

Remember that hooves can damage surfaces in wet conditions and after frost. Always try to ride on the middle of the track or the verge.

Be aware that others can be frightened of horses; stop, or proceed with caution, and do not canter past them. Whenever possible acknowledge courtesy shown by other users, especially to drivers of motor vehicles.

Leave all gates as you find them.

Park horseboxes carefully and always leave access points clear.

Clear up all droppings from parking areas and take your rubbish and litter home.

Ensure that you and your horse are clearly visible to others.



**Know the Code before you go ....**

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors. Everyone has the right to be on most land and inland water for recreation, education and for going from place to place providing they act responsibly. These access rights and responsibilities are explained in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The key things are:

When you're **in the outdoors**:

- take personal responsibility for your own actions and act safely;
- respect people's privacy and peace of mind;
- help land managers and others to work safely and effectively;
- care for your environment and take your litter home;
- keep your dog under proper control;
- take extra care if you're organising an event or running a business.

If you're **managing the outdoors**:

- respect access rights;
- act reasonably when asking people to avoid land management operations;
- work with your local authority and other bodies to help integrate access and land management
- respect rights of way and customary access

Find out more by visiting [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com) or phoning your local Scottish Natural Heritage office.

