

SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY

Notes on multi-use access

The Southern Upland Way is one of Scotland's four original long distance routes, now recognised as one of Scotland's Great Trails. The route was originally designed and created as a walking route, incorporating some sections of path and track with a long tradition of equestrian or multi-use, and others which it was never envisaged would be used by anyone other than walkers. Since then, access legislation has changed in Scotland, and interest from cyclists and horse-riders in using Scotland's Great Trails has increased significantly.

Along much of the eastern (Scottish Borders) section of the route, gates have been installed to improve multi-use access, but there are still some sections of the overall route, including much of the western half of the Southern Upland Way, which are impassable with a horse, or unsuitable for multi-use in wet weather. These notes have been produced by British Horse Society Scotland to help identify location and brief details of features which may restrict multi-use of the Southern Upland Way. Only those which may present an issue for experienced riders are noted below. Inclusion of narrow footbridges and gates, steps, or sections of very steep, narrow, eroded or boggy path within the notes does not necessarily mean that these are impassable with a horse. Photos have been included where appropriate to help you assess for yourself whether a feature such as steps, a narrow footbridge, gate or gap less than 1.5m wide may present an obstruction to you.

All route users are responsible for deciding for themselves whether this route, or any section thereof, is suitable for their intended use, taking account of their own abilities, skills, fitness and experience, as well as season, weather conditions etc. Riders are also responsible for deciding for themselves where and when it may be safer to dismount and lead their horse. Suggestions for parking and alternative routes to avoid obstructions are included where volunteers have provided relevant information but do not constitute a recommendation, and you may wish to explore other options. Event organisers, groups or commercial operators considering using the Southern Upland Way are urged to contact the route managers.

These notes are intended to supplement detailed route guides and other information already available from the route website (<http://www.southernuplandway.gov.uk/cms/>) and other sources. The background information for these notes has been provided by volunteers who surveyed the route in 2014 as part of a multi-use long distance route audit funded by Scottish Natural Heritage. The notes were updated following review with route managers in March 2017, but neither BHS or the relevant access authorities can guarantee accessibility or the accuracy of information provided.

Remember that whether on foot, cycle or horseback, rights of access in Scotland depend on access takers and land managers accepting individual responsibility for their actions. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code <http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/> offers guidance on what this means on the ground. Specific guidance for horse riders can be downloaded from <http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk/responsible-riding.html>. Courtesy, consideration of others' needs and good communication are the key to sharing paths. Always pass others you meet along the trail at a walk, and elsewhere limit your pace to ground conditions and visibility. On surfaced paths and other well used sections of the route, riders need to be particularly careful to respect other users and clear up dung.

Although the route is waymarked throughout, sometimes the waymarks are difficult to find, and may differ from the route marked on OS maps. Make sure you have a map with you, and know how to read it. A compass is advisable on the higher route sections in case low cloud hampers navigation.

Portpatrick to Stranraer

Between Portpatrick and Black Head, the Southern Upland Way follows the coast along the cliffs. Numerous sets of steep narrow steps (some with a chain hand-rail to help haul yourself up), scrabbles over boulder-strewn rocks and kissing gates make this section inaccessible on a bike or with a horse.

Between Black Head and the B738, there are gates alongside each cattle grid incorporating a narrow pedestrian gate, but horse-riders would need to open the main gates, some of which are tricky to open, and all of which are likely to require dismounting.

Between the A738 and Stranraer, the Southern Upland Way follows a mixture of quiet lanes and farm tracks, all of which are multi-use accessible other than a locked gate at NX595025 east of Knockquhassen reservoir (incorporating narrow pedestrian gate impassable with a horse), which there is no alternative way round, other than road.

Stranraer to Castle Kennedy

Quiet lanes, woodland paths and tracks, all multi-use accessible.

At NX116608 there is a 2-in-1 gate. The main gate is padlocked and the integral 0.74m wide pedestrian access is too narrow for a horse. There is a 0.81m gap (pictured below) between the fence and tree alongside the gate but most horses would struggle to squeeze through this gap.





It may be possible to avoid this obstruction on tracks to the north, using the gap alongside the gate at NX116607 to link with the core path to Balker Bridge, turning east again to rejoin the Southern Upland Way at East Lodge, but there is a metal vehicle barrier across the track just west of the lodge. Overhanging branches may require dismounting to get around the gap to the side of the gate.







Castle Kennedy to New Luce

The track through Chlenry Farm which provides an off-road alternative to the minor road between Castle Kennedy and New Luce is multi-use accessible, but be aware you are likely to meet cows in the fields through which the Southern Upland Way passes east of the farm.

The track down to Glenwhan Forest and path along the north edge is multi-use accessible until a flight of wooden steps (see below) which are impassable with a horse, as is the kissing gate immediately beyond. Although there are further kissing gates between here and Cruise Farm, south of New Luce, for most (but not all) there are alternative field gates. However, the footbridge over the Water of Luce at NX173621 is impassable with a horse due to steep steps either end, and although the river is not too deep other than when in spate, the steep wooded western bank and continuous fence parallel to the river mean that fording the river anywhere near the line of the waymarked path, or several hundred metres up or downstream, is not an option. Although passable with a horse, some riders might not like the steps either side of the bridge over the railway east of Low Airyolland. The usually quiet minor road from Castle Kennedy to New Luce offers an alternative.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NX170616	Steep ladder steps up bank 	None in line of path – steep wooded bank, no space or scope to pass alongside. Use minor road between Coburn Bridge and New Luce.
NX171617	Kissing gate leading onto bridge across burn. Bridge passable but kissing gate impassable with a horse. 	No alternative other than minor road as above. (Field gate out of wood immediately north of kissing gate but other field boundaries may not have gates)
NX171617	Kissing gate at woodland boundary. Path through wood to north otherwise passable	Field gate to north leading onto open fields (but note other restrictions with rail and river crossing)

		
<p>NX170623</p>	<p>1.5m metal bridlegate leads onto series of shallow steps down onto bridge over railway, further bridlegate and steps at eastern end. Passable with a horse with care</p>   	<p>None</p>
<p>NX173621</p>	<p>Metal bridlegate in fence leads onto steep steps up onto narrow, very</p>	<p>Impassable with a horse, difficult with a bike. River not particularly</p>

wobbly pedestrian only suspension bridge over river, insufficient load bearing capacity other than walkers, steps down at eastern end – impassable with a horse





deep, easy to access from east side, but no entry/access on steep wooded west bank, and no gate in fence parallel to river to allow fording or exit from the river further up or downstream. Use minor road from Coburn Bridge to New Luce

NX173622

Kissing gate in stock fence

Field gate 50m along fence to north





		
NX175624	<p>Kissing gate at junction of SUW with road</p> 	<p>Field gate 50m west down fence, across burn, to further field gate at NX175621, then further field gate adjacent onto public road</p>

New Luce to Bargrennan

East of Cruise Farm the Southern Upland Way follows an old road, for most of the way now a grassy track, through to Kilhern and then north towards Barnshangan. There are some wet patches where drains are blocked but the whole of this section is multi-use accessible.


North of Balmurie Farm, the previous stiles have recently been replaced with self-closing gates and new boardwalks have been installed, designed mainly for walkers, but it may be passable in dry weather with a bike or horse if you are prepared to pick your way carefully around.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NX208674	1m wide self-closing gate	Flake gate in fence to north
NX212680	1m wide self-closing gate	Pallets tied together with baler twine in dyke 5m east of stile (requires dismantling to get through with a horse but passable)
NX214687	1m wide self-closing gate. Path beyond soft in places for first few hundred metres but passable	Fence recently replaced, stile impassable, but there appears to be a gate through the fence 30m east of the stile
NX215691	1.2m wide wooden footbridge with side rails, non-slip surface. Burn either side very boggy to try and ford	

		
NX223717	<p>Locked barrier across bridge on west side of burn</p>  	<p>Gap alongside barrier passable with horse with care – width constrained by railings, barrier, and steep bank which drops down to the side</p>
NX233727	<p>Boggy section of path built on brash, risk of horse losing leg through. Riders are advised to dismount and lead with caution.</p>	<p>None – forest roads currently do not link through to turning circle</p>
NX 262736 Path west of Derry	<p>Kissing gate in dyke at either end of waymarked footpath which cuts corner of forest road</p>	<p>Continue along forest road around hairpin bend</p>
NX 262736 Forest track immediately above Derry	<p>Cattle grid with gate adjacent but opening restricted by overgrown willow, requires lifting gate off hinges</p> 	
NX314714	<p>2 sections of 2m long x 0.75m wide boardwalks, followed by several concealed deep holes</p>	<p>Continue south along the minor road, then take first left</p>
NX318723	<p>Narrow path over boggy ground with peaty holes >2m wide, protruding stumps and branches left after clear</p>	<p>As above</p>

	falling present difficulties for walkers let alone horse-riders	
NX321724	4m long boardwalk followed by stile	As above
Hill of Ochiltree to Garchew Wood	2-in-gates with pedestrian sections but main gates unlocked, ground relatively firm and dry	
Garchew to Bargrennan	3 sections of boardwalk, ladder stile, stone steps built into a wall and a wooden kissing gate make the whole of this section impassable by cyclists or horse-riders	Continue along minor road east from Garchew to A716, turn right (south) then first left to rejoin SUW at Bught Hill

Bargrennan to Loch Trool

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
Bargrennan	<p>Metal roadside barrier followed by steep steps leading down bank into woodland</p> 	Follow A716 south to Clachaneasy
Bught Hill	SUW passable with care on cycle or with horse from Clachaneasy Bridge to next road junction (but see below- route beyond impassable)	Follow public road from Clachaneasy Bridge to Stroan Bridge
Clachaneasy Bridge to Glen Trool	Numerous stiles, footbridges, narrow insecure boardwalks and sections of narrow, boggy path make this section impassable on a bike or with a horse. Although the forest road is passable up to the turning circle at NX371766, there is no facility on from there.	Follow public road to visitor centre at Stroan Bridge, then turn right (east) continuing on tarmac road to Loch Trool, and waymarked cycle route along firm track to rejoin SUW at Glenhead


Loch Trool to Clatteringshaws

The waymarked Southern Upland Way along the south side of Loch Trool is in theory passable on cycle or horseback but at time of survey in summer 2014 was blocked in places. A new path surfaced with sharp stone is passable on foot but may present some issues for cyclists or horse-riders where it has suffered serious water erosion (NX420798) and where there are steep steps (NX422798).



The easier route for cyclists and horse-riders follows the tarmac road and then waymarked cycle route around the north side of the loch, rejoining the Southern Upland Way at Glenhead over a vehicular bridge. East of the bridge, hard sharp stone surfaced forest road continues all the way to Clatteringshaws. In several places gaps have now been left alongside vehicle barriers, in place of former kissing gates. Elsewhere 2-in-1 gates incorporating a pedestrian gate, but the main gate is unlocked hence passable with a bike or horse.

Clatteringshaws to St.John's Town of Dalry

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NX539790	Wooden slip-gate adjacent to stile, passable dismounted 	


St. John's Town of Dalry to Stroanpatrick

Potential parking for a trailer or small lorry at NX625815 – but this section has numerous kissing gates which are impassable with a horse, and numerous boggy stretches which would be passable with care in dry weather. In places the waymarked route differs from that shown on OS maps. In other places waymarking is missing and the route is unclear.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NX632822	Kissing gate impassable by horse, no alternative	
NX633828	Kissing gate impassable by horse, no alternative	
NX634841	Kissing gate impassable by horse, no alternative	
NX633848	Small slatted wooden boardwalk	Ford burn adjacent
NX636849	Wooden footbridge, passable with horse, but gated at one end. Requires tying up	

	horse to close. Track beyond narrow and very rocky.	
NX637851	Kissing gate, impassable with horse, no alternative	
NX643895	Kissing gate, impassable with horse, no alternative	
NX644898	Kissing gate, impassable with horse, no alternative	
NX643903	Kissing gate, impassable with horse	Alternative gate at NX645901

Stroanpatrick to Polskeoch

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NX641919	Stile with electric fence to side, impassable with horse	None
NX655935	Narrow 90cm wooden gate in dyke	Use forest road past Cornharrow and Manquhill, rejoining SUW at Craigencarse (but see restrictions beyond)
NX680970	Stepover wooden stile in wire fence, very boggy ground beyond at the top of Benbrack	
NX689990	Padlocked bridlegate adjacent to wooden stepover stile	
Allan's Cairn NX696005 to 691011	1m wide x 2m long boardwalk across boggy section, followed by narrow path with conifer encroachment both sides, then numerous fallen trees across path	Follow forest road
NX683022	Padlocked vehicle barrier, 1.1m gap alongside 	

Polskeoch to Sanquhar

Much of this section is across relatively high, peaty, boggy ground, which is passable with care in dry weather but not recommended at any other time.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NS687024	Shallow ford approx. 50m long, easily passable with horse, boardwalk for walkers	

	and cyclists	
Cloud Hill to Whing Head	Very wet ground with numerous open ditches. Boardwalk next to dyke but boggy inbetween	Follow forest road past Euchanhead then public road along Euchan Water.
Whing Head To Bruntley Knowe	Generally a good well defined grass track but very wet in places, even in dry weather.	As above or pick your own way around the wettest parts, keeping well to the east and avoiding the boardwalks
NS766079	High level bridge, passable with care	Ford the burn further downstream
Blackaddie Bridge over River Nith to A76 NS775096 to NS784097	Four kissing gates, a flight of steep concrete steps, a narrow footbridge and steep grass steps make the waymarked route of the SUW impassable with a horse or bike	Follow the minor road from Blackaddie Bridge, turning right past the school, and right again on the A76 for a short way before rejoining the SUW at NS784097 up Cow Wynd

Sanguhar to Wanlockhead

The first part of this section of the Southern Upland Way is along a wide, firm grass track, as is much of the route beyond Cogshead, all of which in theory should be suitable for sustainable multi-use, but stiles, kissing gates and a padlocked slip hurdle, only some of which are by-passable, mean that at present this section is impassable with a horse without diversions to avoid the obstructions.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NS792107	Kissing gate – gate alongside but blocked further along this section	Continue north-west up grass track to join road at NS787112
NS796111	Kissing gate, path beyond enclosed by fences, boggy in places	Follow public road to Lochburn Bridge
NS796112	Stile in wire fence	
NS799114	Uneven boardwalks over very wet ground followed by stile in wire fence	
NS799113	Slatted wooden footbridge with large gaps between treads	
NS801114	Stile in wire fence. Gate can be opened alongside but ground leading up to gate very wet	
NS809115	Stile over dyke	
NS811116	Stile over wire fence	
NS815118	Stile over wire fence	
NS809115	Stile over wire fence	
NS829132	Stile over wire fence	Use gate into fank adjacent and access direct onto hard track
NS833135	Narrow wooden footbridge over relatively steep cleugh, without handrails	Use culverted crossing upstream at OSGR NS833135
NS835135	Slip gate, not locked at time of survey but chain and padlock hanging over gate	
NS843139	Padlocked slip gate, stile over adjacent fence	None

Wanlockhead to Overfingland

Between Wanlockhead and the “golf ball” on Lowther Hill, the SUW is passable with care with a horse in dry weather. The tarmac road offers an alternative. East of Lowther Hill, the route becomes much steeper, in places over very boggy ground, and two stiles in fencelines with no alternative make this section impassable with a horse.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NS874128	Wooden sleeper steps in line of path, shallow rise, passable with horse or easily circumnavigated	
NS884115 Throw Rig	Waymarked shortcut over boggy ground	Follow road instead
NS888107	Step over stile over wire fence	None
NS890106	Step over stile over wire fence	None
NS899095 Cold Moss	Boggy flat area on top of hill	Skirt around bog picking own way
NS914094 Comb Head to Laght Hill	Steep rocky path	Pick own way across grass slope to north
NS924093 Laght Hill	Stile over dyke	Gate immediately to north of stile into adjacent field, slip gate out of field at NS925095. Alternatively double slip gates at NS921093 leading onto field to south of Laght Hill (which stile accesses into), rough grazing, wet in places

Overfingland to Daer Reservoir





This section of Southern Upland Way is largely on forest track capable of sustainably supporting multi-use but is currently obstructed by several stiles with no viable alternative.




Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NS933101 east side A702	Wooden slip gate nailed shut	Alternative slip gate at NS935103
NS939103	Stile over wire fence	None
NS945093	Locked gate across forest track, stile adjacent	None





Daer to Beattock





This section of the Southern Upland Way has a succession of stiles with no readily identifiable alternative which make it inaccessible for multi-use. Much of this section of route is also over peaty ground, very boggy in places. Windblown trees which have been lying across the path through the forest for several years make it difficult to negotiate in places even on foot.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NS970091	Pedestrian only step-over in locked gates either	Follow original route of

	<p>end of dam over Daer Reservoir</p> 	<p>SUW as marked on OS map rather than new waymarked route, turning left at junction of track through Watermeetings Forest and public road, over bridge, then right, through gate next to cattle grid, then left alongside fence (not waymarked)</p>
<p>Sweetshaw Brae NS986095</p>	<p>Boggy peat with some sections of slatted boardwalk, passable in dry weather but then meets ladder stile in dyke on southern side of Sweetshaw Brae</p>  <p>Next section very boggy with open peaty ditches</p> 	<p>Slip hurdle in fence at approx. NT994097 but ground very boggy on north side of dyke</p>
<p>NT989096</p>	<p>Step over stile in fence followed by more peaty bog with open ditches</p> 	<p>Slip hurdle</p>


		
	<p>Stile in fence, followed by more boggy ground</p> 	<p>Wooden slip hurdle adjacent, wired up</p>
<p>NT004080 Forest boundary south of Ferry Craig</p>	<p>Stile in fence</p> 	<p>None other than dismantling fence. Original gateway wired across</p>
<p>NT014074</p>	<p>Windblown trees for several hundred metres across path</p>	<p>Walkers have beaten a narrow path through bracken parallel to path, boggy in places and difficult for horses to see</p>




		their footing
<p>NT019070 (approx.)</p>	<p>Serious erosion/landslip/wash out in line of path at burn crossing, passable with care Oct 2014</p>  <p>Path beyond very boggy in places</p> 	None
<p>NT034053</p>	<p>Windblown trees across path</p> 	<p>None. SUW runs between tall conifers either side, ground off the line of the path (and sometimes on the path) very boggy</p>
<p>NT037049 North of Birkie Know</p>	<p>Narrow wooden footbridge, fallen trees across one end</p>	<p>Former ford 20m upstream of bridge</p>

		
<p>NT037048</p>	<p>Boggy ground, various slatted wooden boardwalks in line of path</p> 	<p>None</p>
<p>NT039046 Foy's Bridge</p>	<p>Narrow wooden footbridge with steps either end</p>  <p>Ground beyond very boggy, with some short sections of boardwalk</p> 	<p>None other than fording or jumping burn adjacent, ground either side soft</p>
<p>NT039044</p>	<p>Ladder stile over dyke</p>	<p>None, stone dyke without gate</p>

		
NT048025	<p>Padlocked gate with kissing gate adjacent</p> 	None

Beattock to Moffat

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT081027	<p>Two underpasses in quick succession under the M74 and A701, river alongside. Ample height and width clearance, but riders may prefer to dismount and lead horses which may spook when heavy vehicles rumble overhead</p> 	Follow main road around roundabouts and under motorway



		
<p>NT092029 NT096029</p>	<p>Ladder stiles in fence</p> 	<p>Follow quiet public road past Oakriggside and Newmills</p>
<p>NT100033 NT106042</p>	<p>Ladder stiles over dyke at road junction either end of path</p> 	<p>Follow minor road parallel to SUW past Craigbeck (which may provide horse and rider accommodation)</p>





Moffat to Ettrick




Between Craigbeck and the forest boundary a stony track runs through fields with cattle grazing, with several gates, some of which may require dismounting but all easily passable with a horse. The section of route for approx. 1m west of Ettrick Head

is very steep, narrow and eroded in places. Although passable with a horse, it is unsuitable for equines other than those which are sure footed, and not recommended other than in dry summer months. Riders lacking a head for heights may prefer to find an alternative route!

The alternative high-level route waymarked over Gateshaw Rig and Croft Head is currently impassable with a horse due to a kissing gate in the fence at Croft Head, which there is no way round. The first section north of the Cornal Burn also involves a narrow footbridge and deep piles of brash after recent clear fell west of the burn, with no clear path much of the way, presenting problems for walkers let alone horses.




Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT163060	<p>Steep, narrow grass path, eroded in places. Passable with care with sure-footed horse but suggest leading</p> 	
NT165062	<p>Steep narrow 70 cm wide wooden footbridge over rocky gully, unsuitable for horses. Metal supports projecting either side of the ends of the bridge restrict scope to cross the burn at this junction with a horse.</p> 	<p>Ford burn upstream of bridge where banks less steep (where original path line and FB marked on map)</p>
NT165062	<p>Eroded crossing of small burn. Narrow and easily stepped over but care required.</p>	

		
<p>NT167063</p>	<p>Eroded rocky gully. Passable with care with sure-footed horse but tricky footing and steep drop.</p> 	<p>None other than staying lower down close to the burn and rejoining path east of this gully</p>
<p>NT167063</p>	<p>Narrow path along hillside, steep in places, with sharp drop downhill and short section of scree to negotiate in line of path.</p> 	
<p>NT171063</p>	<p>Narrow 1m wide wooden gate adjacent to stile</p> 	

NT173064	<p>Wooden stile in fenceline</p> 	<p>Scottish Borders Council are arranging replacement with a self-closing bridlegate. Meanwhile slip gate 50m south of stile but wet ground and ditches to negotiate inbetween</p>
NT174066	<p>1m wooden plank bridge over shallow ditch where path through conifers leaves track</p> 	<p>Step over ditch</p>
NT181081	<p>10' wide ford with solid footing adjacent to 3' footbridge with steps either end</p> 	

Ettrick to St. Mary's Loch (Tibbieshiels Inn)

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT246144	12' metal gate in dyke adjacent to stile	
NT241153	Shallow burn to ford, max 6' wide in line of path	

		
NT250183	Narrow wooden footbridge with steps either end unsuitable for horses	Wide vehicular ford in line of track with firm, stone base
NT254187	<p>12' wooden gate adjacent to stile. At time of survey wet, peaty broken ground approaching gate but footing appears sound underneath, Scottish Borders Council advise ground has since dried out and easily passable</p> 	
NT254189	<p>12m long 1m wide wooden boardwalk/footbridge, no side rails, riders may prefer to lead horses</p> 	Ground either side very soft and wet which together with discarded pallets limit options for fording or jumping the burn

St. Mary's Loch (Tibbieshiels) to Dryhope




This section includes numerous relatively narrow gates. The path along the south side of St. Mary's Loch is in places narrow and unsurfaced. Although physically passable with a horse in dry weather, particular care is required to avoid damage during wet weather. The alternative is to follow the A708 which is much quieter than most A roads in Britain (but is popular with motorcyclists at weekends in fine weather). There is a wide, firm grass verge approximately half way alongside the road running parallel to St. Mary's Loch. Parking may be available with permission at Tibbieshiels Inn. Informal parking is usually also possible at the head of the loch.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT241207	Narrow 1m wide wooden gate adjacent to padlocked vehicle gate	
NT242208	Wet section of path	
NT234243	3m wooden footbridge with rabbit netting overlay. Narrow 1m wide gate beyond.	Use ford alongside
NT54226	Narrow 1m wide gate	
NT256227	Two narrow 1m wide wooden gates at right angles	
NT256227.	Narrow 1m wide gate. Low overhanging tree	Dismount to lead under tree, or circumvent, but ground off path very soft and uneven
NT257228	4m wooden footbridge with rabbit netting overlay	Good solid based ford several metres downstream
NT257229	Narrow 1m wide gate	
NT258228	Narrow 1m wide gate	
NT272240	Narrow 1m wide pedestrian gate	
NT273243	3m wooden footbridge over boggy drain with rabbit mesh overlay, followed by narrow 1m wide gate	Detour into field to avoid boggy section
NT273244	Wooden footbridge with handrail and ramps either end	Ford burn beside footbridge

Dryhope to Traquair

This section includes numerous gates, most of which are easily negotiated with a horse, other than those mentioned below. See diversion below to avoid footbridge. Several of the gates immediately north of Black Douglas are relatively narrow (approx. 1m wide). The sections across moorland can be soft after wet weather, when equestrian or cycle access would not be responsible, but even the moorland sections should usually be easily passable in summer.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT268248	Wooden flake gate	To avoid bridge at Hawkshaw Clech (and 5
NG274260	Short section of wooden board walk, possible to pick your way around if you prefer	

		<p>gates) follow A708 east to Craig Douglas, then track north to Blackhouse, to rejoin Southern Upland Way at NT281271</p>
<p>NT277266</p>	<p>Long relatively narrow wooden footbridge with hand rail along one side only, long run of steep narrow steps on northern side.</p> 	
<p>NT308322</p>	<p>Stile with 12' wooden gate adjacent, gate fastens on hook and staple, wrapped around with twisted wire which is tricky to undo but passable</p> 	<p>Scottish Borders Council exploring other options to improve gate fastening</p>

Traquair to Yair

This section of route has long been used by horse riders and has more recently become very popular with mountain bikers, who do not necessarily expect to meet horses. Some parts of this section are quite stony, which may not suit barefoot

horses, but the views are fantastic, and the hill climbs are great for fitness training. A few suggested circular route options are included on the online maps.



There are small car parks at either end at Traquair Village Hall, and on the south side of the A707 at Yair just east of the bridge over the Tweed, but both of these car parks are often full at weekends or on bank holidays. Please be considerate of others wishing to use these areas: pick up any dung, leave as much space for others as possible, and turn on arrival to avoid getting wedged in. There is a much larger Forestry Commission 7 Stanes car park south of the River Tweed on the east side of the B709 heading from Traquair to Innerleithen, which can be busy at weekends or when there are mountain bike events taking place.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT346337	Short section of slatted wooden boardwalk/footbridge over ditch followed by three shallow steps leading up to grassy path.	Signed equestrian route follows parallel stoned track to north, rejoining west of the Cheese Well
NT433318	SUW east of Three Brethren is steep, on loose stone.	Go through bridlegate at Three Brethren, following track parallel to SUW which rejoins main path through farm gate at OSGR435313.

Yair to Melrose

This clearly waymarked section of the Southern Upland Way is mostly deal for multi-use, following firm farm tracks over the hill, with 360 degree views. Horse riders and mountain bikers should take particular care to respect others enjoying the park at Galashiels.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT478347	Narrow 1m wide wooden gate at west side of wood	
NT485352	Stile in wall.	Use gate through wall 100m west of stile (second gate in the wall on your left if heading east), which links across via firm track to rejoin main path across shallow ford
NT486357	Wooden boardwalk/footbridge	Follow main track around western edge of wood, rejoining SUW north of the academy.
NT502344 A7 crossing	Steep wooden steps leading down to A7	Continue south on Abbotsford Road, parallel to A7, for approx. 400m, linking down via short section of path to main road. Turn left (north), keeping to verge to rejoin main route at

		Netherbarns
NT504342 to NT511350	Narrow riverside path along River Tweed and Gala Water	Keep to minor road which runs immediately parallel to west
NT513313 Red Bridge, Tweedbank	<p>Southern Upland Way runs parallel to newly re-opened Waverley Way railway line, immediately behind high chainlink fence on picture below. Post and rail fence on opposite side. Passable with care, but riders should be aware of high level of pedestrian and cycle use and risk of trains in close proximity to path. Sign advises horse riders to dismount crossing bridge over Tweed in case horse spooks should a train pass as parapets lower than BHS recommended height of 1.8m.</p> 	Continue north on public road to B6374, turn right (east) to rejoin SUW at Gattonside
NT535346	Pedestrian only suspension bridge.	River only suitable to ford in exceptionally dry summers. Alternative route from Galashiels: From B6374 junction west of Melrose, turn left heading north over River Tweed by road bridge, then first right on B6360, rejoining SUW at Mill Cottage

Gattonside to Lauder

Most of this section of route is along farm tracks or firm grass paths, with some short sections on public roads. There are numerous gates across the track, at least some of which you will need to dismount to open and close, and in some places bridlegates adjacent to or just along the fence from the original wooden ladder stiles, but there are no physical obstructions to multi-use access.

Lauder to Abbey St. Bathans

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
The Thicket and Drummondshall Wood	Soft patches and small wooden bridges over ditches in line of path	Pick way round on drier ground
NT555490 Park Hill	Stile in wall	Use gate 100m east along wall from stile
NT568506 Blythe Water	Footbridge unsuitable for horses.	Ford burn up or downstream of bridge. If burn in spate, continue along track west of burn to Braidshawrig and rejoin SUW by crossing burn at steading
NT577512 Scoured Rig	Stile in fence	Use gate in fence line 300m north-east of stile
NT580514	Stile in wall	Use gate 100m south along wall from stile

Abbey St. Bathans to Cockburnspath

Parts of the Southern Upland Way between the A1 crossing and Cove are inaccessible to horses or cyclists because of narrow precipitous sections of cliff-top coastal path and a succession of steps, boardwalks and kissing gates. Minor roads provide an alternative, but the A1 crossing on the Southern Upland Way is potentially very dangerous. Riders and cyclists may prefer to follow the minor road north from the road junction between Whiteburn and Blackburn Mill (NT765652), and continue along the road to the end of the Southern Upland Way at Ecclaw. The track between Blackburn and Ecclaw may be another alternative to reduce the distance on tarmac.

Location / OS Grid Ref.	Feature/description	Alternative access to avoid restrictions
NT758622	Footbridge over Monymut Water	Either turn right at telephone box and follow minor road south for 600m, then first left, over the ford to rejoin the SUW or if the burn is in spate, turn left at the phone box, crossing the burn by the roadbridge, then immediately right on the track up past Shannobank, heading north-east to rejoin the SUW after

		crossing the Whare Burn
NT794668	A1 trunk road. Crash barrier on west side of road, 2m wide verge alongside. Crossing of A1 very restricted visibility for both vehicles and non-motorised users on SUW	See notes above re. Potential alternative
NT797675 Penmanshiel Wood	Main gate locked, narrow 1m wide wicket gate to side	Scottish Borders Council negotiating replacement, meanwhile no alternative
NT792700 Pease Bridge	Restricted access due to tree in line of path followed by narrow steps down to bridge, inaccessible with horse	Turn off SUW at NT793698 to follow track north along edge of forest to join A1107 on east side of Pease Bridge. Beware llamas in adjacent field!
Pease Dean Nature Reserve NT792700 to NT793706	Succession of narrow, steep steps and boardwalks, inaccessible with horse	Follow A1107 east to Woodend, turn left (north) on minor road to Pease Bay caravan park
Coastal path Old Linhead to Cove Farm NT780708 to NT781712	Steep narrow cliff-top path with flight of wooden steps and kissing gates, impassable by horses	Follow minor road north-west from Old Linhead to Cove Farm, rejoining SUW to pass through tunnels under railway and A1 into Cockburnspath

VWG

Updated March 2017