

Equestrian Guide – Woodhead to Dunford Bridge

Disclaimer: This guide provides additional details to assist horse riders to use the Trans Pennine Trail. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given is correct the Trans Pennine Trail and the volunteers who have supplied this information take no responsibility for any errors or omissions. It is the responsibility of riders to ensure the route is an appropriate ride for them and their horse. **This guide should be used in conjunction with the appropriate Trans Pennine Trail map.**

General Information

Start of Section: Woodhead Tunnel (Grid Ref: SK 114999)	End of Section: Dunford Bridge (Grid Ref: SE 158024)
Approximate Distance: 3 ½ Miles	TPT map no: 1 (West – Irish Sea to Yorkshire)
OS Map Name and No: Explorer OL1 The Peak District (Dark Peak area)	

Parking Information

Name / location Car Park: Dunford Bridge Car Park, Dunford Bridge		
Grid Ref: SE 158024	Cost per day: No fee at the moment.	
Road Name: Windle Edge, off A628		
Suitability for Car & Trailer: Yes		
Suitability for Horse Box: Yes	Security of parking area: Good, well used, usually somebody coming out or going in.	
Height Barrier in place: No		
Approx Number of Parking Spaces: 4 Motorboxes / 6 Trailers		
Toilets: No	Water: Yes (trough on Penistone Stretch)	Refreshments: No
Other facilities: (<i>i.e. mounting blocks, hitching rail, corrals, picnic table, nearest public telephone</i>) Natural stone provide mounting blocks. There are picnic tables and a public telephone across from the car park entrance.		
Approach route: (<i>Details of the nearest A road and any difficulties on the approach to the parking that could be a problem for trailers / horseboxes, e.g. low bridges, tight bends or junctions</i>) From A628 Woodhead Road turn right (if approaching from east or Barnsley direction) onto the minor road, Windle Edge, which is undulating but mainly downhill to Dunford Bridge. Could be dangerous if road is frosty / icy, very exposed area. In the depth of winter check weather reports before proceeding. It is possible to approach on the minor road from the north but this is steeper, and more winding/undulating although it is used by bus services.		

Section Summary

Please provide a summary of the overall experience and terrain on this section of the route

The ride from Dunford Bridge to Woodhead provides some spectacular moorland scenery. A real 'away from it all' feel. Whichever way you ride it i.e. Dunford to Woodhead or vice versa there are some strenuous uphill climbs and easy downhill stretches. If your horse is fit you can trot and canter some of it. If your horse is unfit or older you can walk and take in the scenery. **(Note: the following description is from Dunford Bridge to Woodhead as there is parking at Dunford Bridge)**

Route Description

Stage 1

The stretch from Dunford back to the A628 crossing is along a quiet lane, two thirds of it has verges, you can go on if traffic needs to pass. The A628 crossing has good visibility, but beware the traffic is moving fast. *(Note: this crossing is on top of the Pennines and therefore in poor weather cloud or fog can reduce visibility to virtually zero)* There is an emergency phone here. There is also a small wind power sign that may be noisy when windy. There are plenty of areas to keep clear of the road and stand waiting for gaps in traffic.

Stage 2

After crossing the A628 go through the gate and stop. This track is undulating grass and gravel. If your horse is fit you can canter and trot. You soon forget the traffic as you proceed with hills all around you. This track goes downhill and bears right to the old packhorse bridge with a couple of stock gates to negotiate. The track approaches the next road crossing. If your horse is good at gates you could stay mounted, if not I suggest you get off. To do this gate there is an area to stand and wait in front of the gate. Cross with care, downhill traffic very fast here. Again when you have crossed over there is an area to stand before the gate. As before if your horse is good at gates you will be ok. If not stay on foot and remount when through the gate and safely back on the TPT.

Stage 3

This stretch is grassy in places, like an old cart track. It goes away from the road undulating, very open / wild aspect in places. Livestock present most of the year including Highland cattle. Make sure gates are secure. The track goes down a steep stone surfaced incline to the Woodhead Tunnel crossing. Either retrace steps back to Dunford or continue to Hadfield, crossing road with care, gate and cross through barrier here. All of this is multi user; there is plenty of room for everyone. The route is part grass, gravel, and tarmac. An unshod horse would walk it ok I think, but may be too stony in places for fast work unshod. This part is very scenic and open, wonderful in good weather. Not for novices in bad weather if horse is lively.

Riding Opportunities

Canter: Yes	Water Crossing: Yes
Trot: Yes	Tunnels: No
Steep Incline: Yes – down to Woodhead	Bridge: Yes (Small packhorse bridge)
Additional details of the above or any other features (e.g. adjacent woodland that can be ridden through)	

Gates on Route

Number of Gates: 7	Number of Horse Step Stile: 2
Ease of Opening: All horse friendly	
Other access controls: Main road crossings, if your horse is impatient be careful.	

Natural Hazards

Details of any natural hazards, obstructions or areas of concern (including exposed areas where whether conditions could be an issue)

This stretch is exposed and there is little opportunity for shelter. Even in the summer, visibility can be limited if the mist comes down when it is raining. On a clear day the views are fabulous!

Other Hazards

Details of any other hazards or areas of concern (likely presence of illegal motorbikes, whether the route is through a built up area, other horses or livestock in fields)

3 crossings of the very busy A628. Sheep often on the route, some times of year cattle are also on the moor.

Route Breakdown

Approximate breakdown of the route in terms of percentage in 5% steps

Bridleway/track	65%	Minor Road (marked yellow)	%
Minor Road (marked orange)	35%	B Road (marked orange)	%
A Road (marked red)	%	Track / verge parallel to road (not separated by a fence/hedge/wall)	%

Details of any particular danger points on road sections or crossings:

All road crossings, need full control of horse.

Facilities on Route

Details of establishments on or very close to this section of the route that provide additional facilities for equestrian: (i.e. accommodation, cafés, pubs, shops, saddlery, toilets) and if there are tie up points / corals within view of these).

Quite remote, the pub at Dunford Bridge was well used by riders, but has been closed for some time.

Rocky's Western Horse Riding Adventures – go horse riding, cowboy style, with Rocky on the Trail and in the surrounding Pennines and Peak District moorlands. Horse riding options available to suit all levels. Based approx ¼ mile from the Trail at Townhead, Dunford Bridge. 01226 767 315

www.westernridingadventures.co.uk

Emergency Contacts

Details of vets, farriers close to this section, along with any emergency contacts / call out numbers:

Nearest Vets: Churchfield Vets, Barnsley 01226 733 333

Linking Routes / Bridleways

The TPT horse riding route continues west from Woodhead (horse box parking at Torside – 4 miles) or east from Dunford Bridge.

Northern Horse Route – United Utilities have developed a signed, permissive riding route along the north side of the Longdendale Valley from just east of Tintwistle to Woodhead. This leaves the TPT on the moor above the incline down to Woodhead at grid reference SE 116001. This also connects to the TPT at Tintwistle/Hadfield allowing a circular route of the valley using the Northern Horse Route and the TPT. For more information contact United Utilities (Bottoms Office) on 01457 851081.

Local Contact for further information

Julie Scott 01663 741 500