



University/ Cycle path

Directions

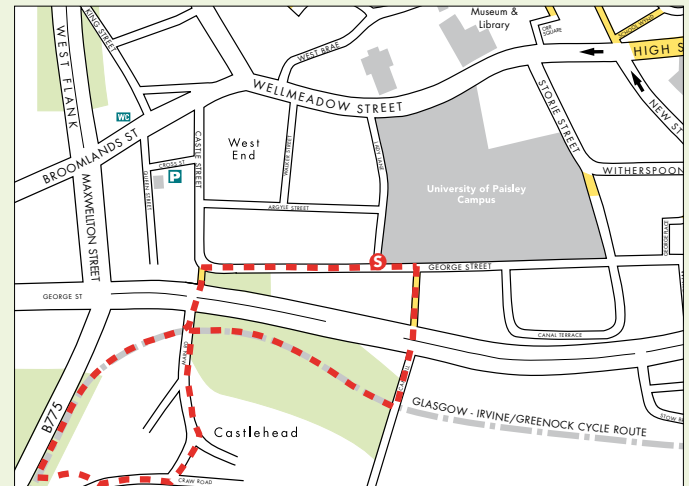
Start at the junction of **Lady Lane** and **George Street** at the back of Paisley University buildings. Turn left along George Street and quickly turn right into **West Buchanan Place**. Walk through the pedestrian way to Canal Street. Use the pedestrian crossing to cross **Canal Street** and walk straight up **Camphill** opposite. A few metres up the hill, bear right onto the **cycle track**. Follow the cycle track and you will go through a tunnel with carvings in the stonework above the entrance way. Further on, an exit on the right would take you onto Maxwellton Road. However continue along the cycle track, further on you will see a bridge over the path but another path leaves the cycle track on the left. Take the path to the left, at the top of the slight slope turn slightly to the right and then immediately left onto **Craw Road**. After a short walk take the road on the left blocked off by metal bollards. This is **High Road** follow this down hill to the junction with **Main Road**. Here bear off to the left. You will be able to see **Canal Street** at the bottom of the road. Cross over the dual carriageway and cross into the blocked off road **George Street**. Turn towards the right and head back along George Street to where you started.



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walking to health

Distance: 2.0kms Approximate time: 35 mins





A little local knowledge

As you walk along the streets of **Castlehead** listen for the ghostly sound of tramping feet and distant drums. The earliest evidence of human occupation in the area is the earthwork called the Mound, behind High Road and Main Road, which is reputed to have been the site of a Roman castelum. Castlehead, Oakshaw and Woodside are reputed to be the three hills occupied

by the Romans which made up the station of Vanduara, occupied by the 20th Imperial Legion. From these vantage points the garrison could watch for enemy movements on the far bank of the Clyde. The name of the Roman station comes from the Celtic word Wendur meaning white water and this name is still reflected in the name of Paisley's river today.

Part of the area was also known as **Gallow Hill**, which was used as a vantage point for those enjoying the spectacle of public executions on the Gallow Green.

The Romans would have certainly been unfamiliar with the idea of cycling, but they would have recognised many of the plants which now grow along the route. **Ash, Silver Birch, Elder** and **Ivy** are all native plants in Scotland. This means that they have grown in Scotland since at least the end of the ice age and therefore the Romans would have been familiar with them. They may even have used some of them in their everyday life.

The men of the Roman garrison would have had a strict uniform code, but maybe the wool used for their socks was dyed using parts of the **Elder** shrub. The leaves would have given them green dyes, the bark black and the flowers blue. The flowers and fruit are both rich in Vitamin C and therefore coughs and colds could be treated using teas made from them. Even nowadays they are used to make jam and wine.

Birch trees also have their uses. The sap makes a sweet white wine and the twigs tied together have been used to brush floors for hundreds of years. The twigs were also used to beat people as a source of punishment which was thought to drive out evil spirits.

Wildlife can find it hard to survive in the concrete jungle of the town or city. The native plants along the cycle way are important throughout the year for many insects, animals and birds. Pollen can be collected from **Willow** and **Birch** catkins as early as February or March, later in the year **Foxgloves** provide nectar for fat **Bumble Bees** and in the autumn **Elder** berries provide food for **Thrushes** and **Blackbirds**. Where the trees and shrubs form a tangled mass, small birds flit in and out in search of insects, and mice and voles make their homes. The cycle path forms a safe corridor where wildlife can move from one area to another without being detected.

