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## The Hadrians Cycleway Cycle Holiday

Ride through many of the main locations of Hadrians Wall, see the Wall up close from Coast to Coast

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The alternative coast to coast, Sustrans waymarked cycle route (NCN 72) taking in the UNSECO World Heritage Site of Hadrians Wall dating back to AD122

This 174 mile linear ride takes you from Ravenglass on the West Coast, an designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), north up the western Lake District coastline and around the southern edge of the Solway Firth before turning eastwards along the route of the Roman Emperor Hadrians Wall to it's finish in Tynemouth on the East Coast. You will pass through spectacular and un-spoilt countryside all along the route.

### HOLIDAY DETAILS:

Total distance: 174 miles / 280kms, on road with some sections of bike path and gravel track. Average daily distance: 45-50 miles/ 70-90km

Total elevation gain – 7000ft / 2150m

Difficulty – **Moderate/Good, reasonable level of riding ability and fitness required, some steep hills**

### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- Good quality, ensuite, B&B accommodation (2 person/room basis); Luxury and single room option available (surcharge)
- Luggage transfers each day (one bag/person)
- Maps, route notes, gpx files (available on the Pedal Power website)
- Emergency recovery (if required)
- Certificate of completion
- Transfers (charges may apply)

### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

**Sense of achievement** – Cycling from the Irish Sea on the west coast to the North Sea on this east coast, this iconic and flexible route is suitable for riders of reasonable to good levels of fitness. There is a great sense of achievement riding though some of the least crowded areas of the country, you will very much get the feel of “escaping from it all”.

**Outstanding scenery** – spectacular and contrasting scenery from the views of the Irish Sea on the west coast, along the flat Solway firth, up over the whinstone ridge and Northumberland moors, along quiet roads and cycle tracks to finish in the lovely seaside town of Tynemouth.

**Cultural heritage** – This UNESCO World Heritage site of Hadrians Wall, Ravenglass & Eskdale narrow gauge railway, Birdoswald Fort.

The Roman Army Museum (Greenhead) and Vindolanda Settlement are both “not to be missed” stop off locations on your ride.

Hexham Abbey if time allows.

### OTHER INFORMATION:

**Please note that these are generic trip note and your actual itinerary and overnight locations may differ from those mentioned below.**

Remember to carry your actual Sustrans map with you at all times as if you miss a waymark sign (which is easily done) it's not so easy to find your way back onto the route without the map.

Many of the historic sites on Hadrian's Wall belong to English Heritage, if you are planning on visiting a few of these sites then we would recommend taking out membership, short term "overseas" membership is also available <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/overseas-visitors/>

#### ITINERARY:

##### Section 0 - Arrive Ravenglass or Whitehaven

Ravenglass is a small village on the west coast of Cumbria and famous for its narrow gauge passenger railway line, if you arrive early enough it's nice to book a short trip along the line.

Whitehaven is a larger historic market town with an impressive harbour and some very good restaurants.

##### Recommendations

##### Dinner:

Pennington Hotel, Ravenglass

Zest by Harbourside, Whitehaven

##### Section 1 – Ravenglass to Whitehaven

The route is very popular and is well signposted by Sustrans NCN Route 72

The day starts with you riding out of Ravenglass up the Cumbrian coastline with some stunning views of the western Lakeland hills over to your right. You pass through the pretty coastal towns of Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport before reaching your destination of Silloth.

The "official" start point is The Roman Bath House which is down a private road just south of Ravenglass.

However, most people prefer to start from the seafront.

From the seafront, turn left onto a track prior to going under the railway bridge, there is a short section of sandy track before joining the tarmacked road at Saltcoats. Follow the signage for NCN72 through Drigg to Seascale and Sellafield Nuclear Power Station, (**this is a strict "no photo" area and is heavily policed**).

Continue along the route to Egremont where there's a bit of a climb before heading down to Whitehaven Harbour.

**Total distance:** 22 miles/ 35 kms

There are several coffee shops down by the harbour in Whitehaven

##### Section 2 – Whitehaven to Silloth

From Whitehaven Harbour, ride along the Marina to the large Tesco's and Whitehaven train station, the route takes you behind the station to continue along the England Coastal Path, past the remnants of a Roman Fort at Parton where you turn towards Distington, go under the dual carriageway and follow the old railway path into Workington.

The NCN 72 now stays along the west coastline to Silloth, passing through Maryport (pretty harbour and good coffee stop location) and Allonby.

Silloth is a quiet town with stunning views out over the Solway Firth towards Dalbeattie, Southern Scotland

**Total distance:** 31 miles/ 50 kms

##### Coffee

The Harbourside Café, Maryport

##### Dinner

Greenview, Silloth (residents only)

The Golf Hotel, Silloth

### Section 3 – Silloth to Bowness on Solway

This short section of the route takes you to the “official” start point of the Hadrians Wall Walking route and the start of our Condensed Hadrians Cycleway

Turn inland from Silloth at the northern end of the broad Main Street and follow the NCN72 out along small lanes to Abbeytown. Turn left at the end of the village and follow the slightly convoluted signage through Newton Arlosh, to Angerton, over the bridge turn left and you are basically riding a big loop around the edge of the Solway Firth to Bowness on Solway.

This area is a great area for the ornithologists, and you will often see many of them along the coastline, if a rare bird has suddenly flown in to feed on the mudflats.

Stop just before Bowness on Solway at the carpark on your left, there is an iconic finger post there showing the distance to Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire (photo shot!)

Bowness on Solway is a small village that now relies on walkers and cyclists for trade.

**Total distance:** 21 miles/ 34 kms

#### Coffee/Dinner

Hunters Leisure Café, Bowness on Solway  
The Kings Arms Inn, Bowness on Solway

### Section 4 – Bowness on Solway to Brampton – THE START OF THE CONDENSED HADRIANS CYCLEWAY ROUTE

Leave Bowness on Solway with the Solway Firth on your left and continue down the road to Port Carlisle and on to Burgh by Sands.

If the tide is out keep a look out and you may see some “Lay Fishermen” standing out in the middle of the estuary with large wooden frames with nets hanging from them, they are fishing for salmon and seatrout heading up the estuary.

When you get to Burgh by Sands, there is a pub, The Greyhound Inn with a statue of King Edward 1<sup>st</sup>, he apparently died here in 1307 whilst heading north to quell a Scottish uprising. There is also mention of him later on in the route at Lanercost Priory.

Stay on this road following the NCN72 all the way into Carlisle. Carlisle is a busy town and with a lot of traffic, you are not on the main roads but do need to be aware of pedestrians around you. Carlisle Castle is worth a visit if you have time.

The NCN 75 route through Carlisle takes you around the back of the castle, over the river and out through Rickerby Park to Linstock. Continue on through Warwick Bridge (left turn just after the village) along some minor tracks with several turns of direction, up a short climb and then downhill to finish in Brampton

There’s a lovely evening walk around Talkin Tarn just outside Brampton or another along “The Ridge” if you have the inclination.

**Total distance:** 28 miles/ 45 kms

#### Coffee

Carlisle Castle, Carlisle

#### Dinner

Oakwood Park Hotel (residents only)  
The Howard Arms, Brampton

### Section 5 – Brampton to Gilsland

This section is where you really start to see the sights of Hadrians Wall and other historic places of interest. Ride out of Brampton, following the NCN72 and turn left at the Howard Monument on the grassy triangle. Follow the route to Lanercost Priory. This C12th monastery is a must stop destination and well worth exploring.

From here there are several short climbs, firstly up to Birdoswald Roman Fort, on the way you will start seeing some of the remains of The Wall, short sections of wall and also the Mile Turrets that lined the wall. Birdoswald is a good place to stop, it has a nice coffee shop and there's some great sections of the wall to see.

Go down a steep bank and up the other side before turning right and following the route to Gilsland.

If staying in Gilsland you can walk a good section of the Wall back to Birdoswald in the evening

**Total distance:** 7 miles/ 11 kms

**Coffee**

Birdoswald Roman Fort

**Dinner**

The Samson Inn, Gilsland

### Section 6 – Gilsland to Haltwhistle and Twice Brewed/Vindolanda

Head out of Gilsland along the NCN72 to Greenhead, passing Thirlwall Castle on the way. At Greenhead there is a cheeky little 14% climb up to The Roman Army Museum, (set back in the trees). The museum is really worth a visit and we highly recommend this and its sister site Vindolanda later on the route. You can buy a combined ticket for both sites at the museum.

From the museum, follow the route, crossing the main road and head down into the town of Haltwhistle. Depending on the number of days you are riding, we regularly use Haltwhistle as an overnight stop.

Ride out of Haltwhistle following the NCN72, under the main A69 trunk road and follow the route to Bardon Mill. You've now got a couple of steep climbs to take you up onto the ridgeline and the line of Hadrians Wall

Turn right down the line of the Roman Road to the stunning Roman Settlement of Vindolanda.

Vindolanda, this is a MUST STOP destination and the primary reason why most people choose this historic route.

Allow at least 1-2 hours to explore, make sure you go all the way to the bottom to the museum and café.

From April to September, you are likely to see permanent and volunteer archaeologists on the site and they are generally more than happy to talk to you and explain what they are doing and what they have found that day.

**Total distance:**

To Haltwhistle: 8 miles / 13 kms

To Vindolanda: 16 miles / 26 kms

**Coffee**

The Roman Army Museum

The Yellow Bird Café, Haltwhistle

Vindolanda Cafe

**Dinner**

The Manor House Inn, Haltwhistle

The Twice Brewed Inn, Twice Brewed

## Section 7 – Vindolanda to Hexham and Corbridge

From Vindolanda, head back onto the route, down the hill then up a steep incline to follow the NCN72 down along the Roman Road (Stanegate) to Newbrough, cross over the river and turn immediately left onto a track that runs alongside the railway line and onto the side of Tyne Green Country Park & Golf Course, Hexham.

Hexham is a lovely market town with an imposing Abbey that is worth a visit (off route)

Back on the route, recross the River Tyne (this is a busy road) and turn immediately right onto a minor road that runs parallel to the A69, follow this in to Corbridge. Just before Corbridge you will pass the original Corbridge Roman Site, it is worth a visit, and this is where you understand the classic Monty Python phrase ***“What have the Romans ever done for us?”*** (Underfloor heating, running water, roads, etc, etc)

### Total distance:

To Hexham 14 miles / 23 kms

To Corbridge 18 miles / 29kms

### Coffee

The Red Lion Newbrough

### Dinner

The Beaumont Hotel, Hexham

The Wheatsheaf, Corbridge

## Section 8: Hexham/Corbridge to Tynemouth

You are now down in the valley of the River Tyne and you will be pretty much following this all day today, staying on the NCN72, along minor roads, disused railway lines and cycle paths to Tynemouth.

Follow the route out of Corbridge along the B6530, turning right before you get to the A69 roundabout, ride down to the riverside at Stocksfield, turn left before the bridge and head into Ovingham. At Ovingham you need to cross the river over the narrow bridge, please take care and watch out for cars.

Directly after the bridge, turn back on yourself and go under the bridge to join the route along the riverside. Follow this, crossing the disused Hagg Bank Railway Bridge and ride along the old railway line, through Wylam to Newburn.

You are now in the outskirts of Newcastle and although you will be on cycle paths, you will need to keep your wits about you for other traffic and pedestrians.

Newcastle Quayside is a great place to stop for a coffee and to enjoy the new and old architecture, including The Millennium Bridge, The Sage (locally known as The Silver Slug!) and The Baltic Flour Mills, now a free to enter art gallery.

People tend to lose their way at the very end, as you ride along the North Shields Fish Quay, you will pass the Staith House (pub) on your right, turn right here and ride through the Low Lights carpark there are 3 huge blue and red painted seabouys in the carpark with NCN 72 and NCN 1 painted on them. This is the official finish point on the north side of the water.

Or you can continue along the promenade by the river and at the end ride up a short incline and you will see Tynemouth Castle in front of you.

The finish is at the Tynemouth Sailing Club by the north pier. There is currently no statue at the finish however we are hoping to have one erected soon.

**Total distance:** 31 miles /50 kms

### **Pick up at the end of your ride**

Please call **07790596782** or **01665713448** when you reach Newcastle, it's about a 60-90 minute ride from Newcastle to Tynemouth where we will meet you if arranged.

Please note our earliest pick up time is 2pm and latest pickup time at the end of your ride is 5pm, unless organised when booking your trip.

### **Inclusions**

The tour is designated as "self-guided": Pedal Power will arrange the accommodation, provide route mapping, kit lists and training advice, GPX files, route notes and daily briefings (if on a fully supported ride), along with luggage transfer and mechanical support where required. If part of your package, the support van will meet the group en route at various points during the day with light refreshments and lots of encouragement

### **Bikes**

If not riding your own bike, we can provide you with a hybrid or cyclocross/gravel bike, or an ebike. The bike will come in a frame size that suits your height. The bikes are 24 speed and have disc brakes, they are on fast-rolling 700c wheels and are perfect for these routes. All bikes are fitted with a bottle & bottle cage and come with a pannier bag, spare innertubes x 2 and tyre levers, pump and bike lock. If you wish to bring your own saddle and pedals these can be fitted to the bikes for you.

### **Training**

The Hadrians Cycleway is a great ride with a few challenging climbs along the way. The biggest factor in your enjoyment and success of the trip is very often the effort put into training – without it, it can be very uncomfortable – but with the training (which should also be enjoyable!), you will find yourself enjoying the challenge and the scenery much more. We recommend having cycled 30+ miles per day, on some good hilly routes, on at least 3 or 4 occasions in the month leading up to your ride.

You do require a reasonably good level of cycle experience and be reasonably physically fit and in good health.

### **Medical**

If you have any medical conditions that you deem we should be aware of, then please inform us of these prior to arriving on the trip along with any information we may require for emergencies.

If you are in any doubt about your medical conditions, level of fitness or other medical worries, then please speak to your home doctor for their advice and if necessary approval for you to partake on this trip. We can provide them with further information if required.

WE WANT YOU TO ENJOY THIS HOLIDAY AND NOT END UP SUFFERING BECAUSE OF IT.

A sore posterior after a day in the saddle is not a medical condition, it's a forgone fact!!

### **What's not included**

Personal travel insurance (activity related) **(IF AN OVERSEAS VISITOR OR NON UK RESIDENT, YOU MUST PROVIDE PEDAL POWER CYCLING LTD WITH A COPY OF YOUR UP TO DATE TRAVEL INSURANCE THAT COVERS YOU FOR THE ACTIVITIES YOU WILL BE TAKING PART IN WHILST WITH US)** For insurance purposes this route is classified as "NON TECHNICAL, LEISURE CYCLING" it is not to be confused with "OFF ROAD MTB CYCLING"

Any relevant entrance fees, meals other than those mentioned in the itinerary.

Any charges for travelling with your own bike, taxi fares.

Any costs associated with bringing your own bike including maintenance, repair and the supply or replacement of parts on the bike.

**Any questions**

If you'd like further information or have any questions about our cycling holidays or bike hire, please feel free to get in touch on 07790596782, 01665 713448 or email [info@pedal-power.co.uk](mailto:info@pedal-power.co.uk)

**Remember to :**

- **ENJOY THE Challenge**
- **TAKE TIME TO STOP AND ADMIRE YOUR STUNNING SURROUNDINGS**
- **AND ABOVE ALL ..... HAVE A GREAT AND SAFE RIDE!!**

**Distances to:**

|                                                  |         |       |      |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------|-------|------|
| Hadrians Wall Distances                          |         |       |      |
| Ravenglass to Tynemouth                          |         |       |      |
|                                                  | Mileage | Kms   |      |
| Ravenglass                                       | 0       | 0     | 0%   |
| Whitehaven                                       | 22      | 35.2  | 13%  |
| Workington                                       | 30      | 48    | 17%  |
| Maryport                                         | 37      | 59.2  | 21%  |
| Silloth                                          | 53      | 84.8  | 30%  |
| Bowness on Solway (Start of the Condensed Route) | 74      | 118.4 | 43%  |
| Carlisle                                         | 88      | 140.8 | 51%  |
| Brampton                                         | 102     | 163.2 | 59%  |
| Gilsland                                         | 109     | 174.4 | 63%  |
| Greenhead                                        | 113     | 180.8 | 65%  |
| Haltwhistle                                      | 117     | 187.2 | 67%  |
| Bardon Mill                                      | 122     | 195.2 | 70%  |
| Twice Brewed / Vindolanda                        | 125     | 200   | 72%  |
| Hexham                                           | 139     | 222.4 | 80%  |
| Corbridge                                        | 143     | 228.8 | 82%  |
| Newcastle                                        | 162     | 259.2 | 93%  |
| Tynemouth                                        | 174     | 278.4 | 100% |