



The Sandstone Way Cycling Holiday (4-day itinerary)

See the best of wild Northumberland on this predominantly offroad cycle trip

The Sandstone Way is a relatively new cycle route, opened in 2015 from Berwick upon Tweed to Hexham and taking you through some of the more rural, rugged and beautifully unspoilt areas of Northumberland.

The route is well signed (see logo above) and follows a natural sandstone ridge and can be ridden either north to south or south to north.

Designed solely as a MTB route, this should not be attempted on anything other than a decent hardtail or full suspension mountain bike. The route includes some road, single track, cycleway and off road sections

Please note that due to severe storms in 2021, a lot of trees have fallen along the route. The vast majority of these have now been removed (March 23) however there is still felling work ongoing in some areas and local diversions may be in place. Please do not enter cordoned off areas.

HOLIDAY DETAILS:

Total distance: 120miles / 193kms, mainly off road with some sections of bike path and gravel track.

Average daily distance: 30 miles/ 50km

Total elevation gain – 11800ft/3600m

Difficulty – **Challenging, good level of riding skill, ability and fitness required**

The Sandstone Way

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- 4 nights' good quality, ensuite B&B accommodation (2 person/room basis) Luxury and single room option available (surcharge)
- Luggage transfer each day (one bag/person up to 17kg)
- Maps, route notes, gpx files
- Emergency recovery (if required)
- Certificate of completion
- Transfers as per your package (charges may apply)

Cycle hire & ebike hire available on request (surcharge)

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

Sense of achievement – This is a technically challenging ride, especially in the middle sections.

Outstanding scenery – Breathtaking views from start to finish, along the coast and then inland over the moors.

Cultural heritage – The Northumberland and Scottish Border areas have been feudal areas for hundreds of years, there are castles, bastiles and other fortifications in almost every town, you will come across these regularly both on the route and at your overnight destinations.

ITINERARY:

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

Day 0: Arrive Berwick

This northernmost market town of England sits on the mouth of the River Tweed and is less than 3 miles from the Scottish Border. The town itself is defended by 1.5 miles of rampart walls which surround the town and are well worth walking around in the evening. Berwick has always been a Feudal cauldron and has changed hands between Scottish and English ownership many times.

Recommendations

Dinner: Foxtons Restaurant or Audela, Berwick

Section 1: Berwick to Wooler

Starting just outside the fortified walls of Berwick next to The Sandgate entrance you ride over the old single carriageway low level road bridge to the south side of the River Tweed and follow the stunning Northumberland coastline south along Sustrans Cycle Route NCN1 as far as Beal.

Here you can take a detour if the tides allow on to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, whose religious history dates back to the 7th Century.

Minor roads and tracks take you up past St Cuthbert's Cave, (Cuddys Cave) associated as the resting place of St Cuthbert's body in the 7th Century. Before heading down through Chatton and past Chillingham Castle, famous for its Wild Cattle which have lived here since the Middle Ages. It is then a short ride to Wooler for your overnight stop.

Total distance: 33 miles/ 53 kms

Recommendations

Coffee Stop: The Barn at Beal, Beal

Lunch: Percy Arms, Chatton

Dinner: Milan Restaurant, Wooler

Section 2: Wooler to Rothbury

After a hearty breakfast you will head out into the true heart of Northumberland, remote and rural, often with unbroken views of stunning countryside whichever way you look.

The ride undulates along the edge of the National Park and Ilderton Moor before turning west into Ingram Valley and then off-road over Wether Hill with a well earned decent afterwards.

It's then a traverse along minor roads to Alwinton (good lunch stop) before turning south east again and heading through Holystone, Snitter and on into Rothbury

Total distance: 37 miles / 60 kms

Recommendations

Coffee Stop: Ingram Café, Ingram

Lunch: The Rose & Thistle, Alwinton

Dinner: Coquetvale Hotel, Rothbury
The Queens Head, Rothbury

Section 3: Rothbury to Bellingham

Today is a short ride but it's also quite strenuous and starts with an almighty climb up onto The Simonside Hills and some great riding through Harwood Forest.

When you reach East Woodburn there are a couple of alternative routes you can add on if you so desire, however the main route will take you to West Woodburn (lunch stop) and onwards to Bellingham

Total distance: 24 miles / 38kms

Recommendations

Coffee Stop: Take some snacks, it's pretty remote!

Lunch: The Bay Horse Inn, West Woodburn

Dinner: The Cheviot Hotel, Bellingham (ask for the ribs!!)

Section 4: Bellingham to Hexham

From Bellingham you head south past the edge of Kielder Forest along bridleways, tracks and minor roads with a few short steep climbs and stream crossings to reach the site of Milecastle 30 on Hadrian's Wall. From here it's a nice easy ride to the finish point at Tynedale Golf Club. If we are due to meet you at the end of the ride, the pick up location is the finish point at Tynedale Golf Club

What3Words Location – [generated.wisdom.risen](https://www.what3words.com/location/generated.wisdom.risen)

Total distance: 26 miles /44 kms

Recommendations

Coffee Stop: Simonburn Tearooms

Lunch: The Red Lion, Newbrough

Pick up at the end of your ride

If you are being picked up, please call **07790596782** or **01665713448** when you reach Simonburn, it's about a 90 minute ride from there to Hexham 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 hardtail MTB 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.

What to bring – Baggage allowance is one bag/person, max 20kg, ideally soft holdall

We recommend you wear/carry with you when riding:

- Appropriate cycling clothes (including some padded shorts)
- Waterproof jacket and warmer long-sleeved tops and bottoms
- Padded cycling gloves and some thicker, warmer gloves
- Some stiff-soled shoes to cycle in (we can change pedals for any you bring if you prefer)
- Suncream (lets be optimistic!!) and sunglasses
- Wallet (with cash as well as card for cafés)
- Camera
- Phone with navigational capabilities (GPS devices also strongly recommended as more weather-proof navigational aids)
- Water bottle/carrier and snacks
- Pump, multi-tool, lock, 2 x inner tubes, repair kits
- Plenty of your favourite snacks

For your evenings, the oft-forgotten items are:

- Evening clothes and shoes
- Toiletries & personal medication – towels are not required
- Relevant chargers
- Any evening entertainment (e.g. playing cards or a good book!)

Training

The Sandstone Way is a major challenge, with some hard climbs, often several of them in a day! 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 30-40 miles per day, on some good hilly routes, on at least 3 or 4 occasions in the month leading up to your ride.

This is without doubt a tough ride with some of the highest and hardest climbs in the country, often several of them in a single day

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

Our experience is that the biggest factor in enjoyment and success of your trip is often the effort put into training, with which you will find yourself enjoying the challenge and the scenery much more. We recommend having cycled 40-50 miles per day, on some good hilly routes, on at least 3 or 4 occasions in the month leading up to your ride.

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 "NOT 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.

Distances to:

Sandstone Way			
Berwick to Hexham			
	Mileage	Kms	
Berwick	0	0	0%
Beal	11	18	9%
Chatton	27	43	23%
Wooler	34	54	28%
Ingram	44	70	37%
Alwinton	54	86	45%
Rothbury	70	112	58%
(Elsdon)	85	136	71%
East Woodburn	89	142	74%
Bellingham	97	155	81%
Newbrough	114	182	95%
Hexham	120	192	100%

Cycle Repair Shops

The route is very sparsely populated and as such, cycle shops are few and far between. Make sure you are carrying the essentials such as spare tubes, repair kits, chain splitter, emergency hanger and a spare tyre to fit your bike plus anything else you may deem necessary. **We are always on call and can generally get out to you with either spare parts or a replacement bike if necessary.**

Location	Name	Address	Contact
Berwick	Berwick Cycles	17A Bridge St, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 1ES	01289 331476
Berwick	Halfords	50 Northumberland Road, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 2AS	01289 333010
Wooler	Haugh Head Garage	Haugh Head, Wooler NE71 6QP	01668 281316
Rothbury	The Bike Shop – call out service	Unit 2b Greensfield Court, Alnwick NE66 2DE	07599 350000
General – Call us	Pedal Power Cycling Ltd (CALL OUT)		07790596782

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