

Cycling

IN THE NORTH PENNINES

4 ROUTES for
EXPERIENCED CYCLISTS
on roads starting from
ALLENDALE TOWN



NORTH PENNINES

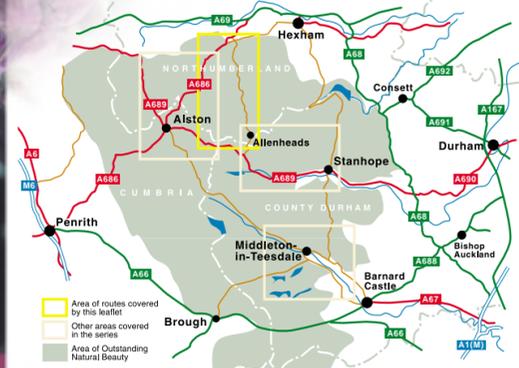
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

NORTH PENNINES
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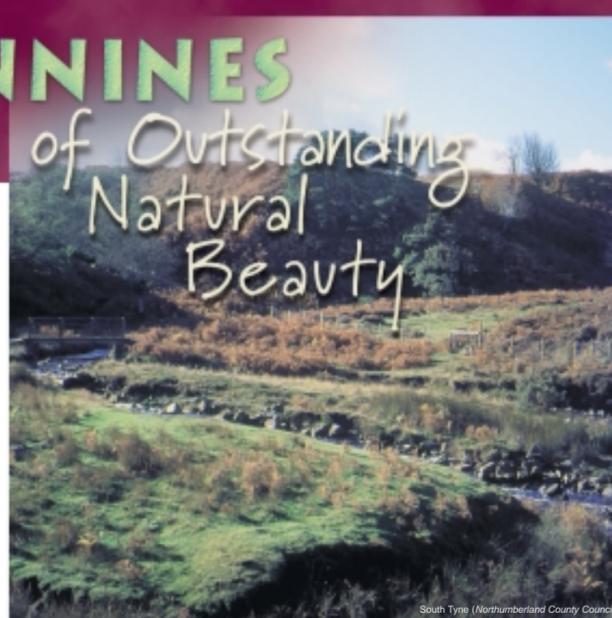
The North Pennines is one of England's most special places - a peaceful, unspoilt landscape with a rich history and vibrant natural beauty. It was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1988. The AONB is also a UNESCO Global Geopark.

An excellent way of exploring the North Pennines is by bike. This leaflet describes four routes of various lengths that can be started from Allendale Town.

Three other leaflets in this series highlight routes starting from Alston, Middleton-in-Teesdale and Stanhope.



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South Tyne (Northumberland County Council)

THE ROUTES

The routes are a series of four circular loops from Allendale Town, one of which links to the Sea to Sea (C2C) Cycle Route. The terrain in the North Pennines means that it is impossible to avoid climbs and therefore none of the routes are easy. The routes are designed for reasonably fit people who are used to cycling. They are generally not suitable for children.

Sea to Sea Cycle Route



The award-winning C2C Cycle Route is part of the National Cycle Network and is recognised as being the most popular long-distance cycle route in the UK. The C2C links Whitehaven or Workington on the west coast of Cumbria with Sunderland or Tynemouth on the east coast. More information from www.sustrans.co.uk or call 0845 1130065.

INFORMATION

CYCLE HIRE
Dale Bike Hire
Mobile hire in Weardale, Teesdale & Allendale
Tel: 01388 527737

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION
Traveline
Tel: 0870 608 2 608
Web: www.traveline.org.uk

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
Hexham - Wentworth Car Park
Tel: 01434 652220

FURTHER INFORMATION
For more information about the North Pennines contact the AONB Staff Unit
Tel: 01388 528801
Email: info@northpenninesaonb.org.uk
Web: www.northpennines.org.uk

***D CYCLING CODE ...

Please follow this simple code to ensure enjoyable riding and the safety of others.

- Obey the rules of the road**
- * Follow the Highway Code
 - * Follow the Countryside Code. Respect. Protect. Enjoy. Visit www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk
- Be courteous**
- * Give way to pedestrians and horse riders. Don't assume they can see or hear you
 - * Don't expect to travel quickly on shared use cycle paths
 - * Ring a bell or call out to warn of your approach. Acknowledge people who give way
 - * Respect the life and work of the countryside
- Care for the environment**
- * Can you cycle the whole of your journey or reach the start by public transport?
- Look after yourself**
- * Take care at junctions, when cycling downhill and on loose or wet surfaces
 - * Carry food, repair kit, map, spare clothing and waterproofs
 - * Tell someone where you're going and when you'll get back
 - * Keep your bike well-maintained
 - * Consider wearing a helmet and bright clothing
- Thank you for cycling!**

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ALLENDALE TOWN

THINGS TO SEE along the way

Valley of the White Water

Allendale is an attractive village set in the fertile East Allen Valley amidst the spectacular scenery of high moorlands. Allendale's name can be traced to Celtic origins meaning 'Valley of the White or Shining Water'. This probably refers to the traces of silver and lead ore that could be found in the river.

Smelt mill chimneys

Route 4 gives good views of the Allendale Chimneys and access is available at Frolar Meadows on Route 3. Both routes cross the flues to the chimneys. Flues and chimneys such as these took the fumes from the smelt mills up the valley to escape far away from settlements. Valuable deposits of lead also collected within the flues, and periodically small boys were sent through to collect it - not a pleasant job! Route 4 passes the site of the Allendale smelt mill near Thornley Gate. Lead mining in Allendale was dominated by



Allendale Chimney (North Pennines Heritage Trust)

a family business founded by Sir William Blackett and handed on through successive generations to the Beaumont family. Allenheads was the main centre of their operations but they also built the settlement of Carr Shield.

Carr Shield

Routes through Carr Shield highlight many of the elements of the North Pennines lead mining landscape. The small, often derelict, stone buildings scattered across the area were once the homes of miners who returned from their weekly work in the lead mines. Drystone walls, many of which are now beginning to crumble and disappear, surrounded their small enclosures. In Carr Shield you can still see the old school and chapel.

Keenley Chapel

A short diversion from Route 3 at Keenley takes you to Keenley Chapel. This is the site of the oldest Methodist chapel in the Allendale area and one of the first to be purpose-built in the North East. It was built in 1750, rebuilt in 1875 and is still in use. Many Methodist chapels - some now converted for domestic or other uses - can be seen throughout the North Pennines.

Bastle houses

You can also see examples of bastle houses in the area. These are small, thick-walled farmhouses that characteristically have both ground and first floor doorways. The lower doorway led into a basement where animals and provisions could be secured and the upper, living quarters, was reached by a ladder, which could be pulled up. These were the homes of tenant farmers defending themselves against cattle thieving which was as likely to be by groups from the next valley as marauding Scots.

AND PLACES TO VISIT nearby..

Allenheads Heritage Centre

Lead mining heritage, nature trail, Armstrong Engine House. The Old Blacksmith's Shop. Cafe, picnic and play area. Tel: 01434 685395 (Easter - Oct).

REFRESHMENTS and facilities

REFRESHMENTS

There is a tearoom and a number of pubs in Allendale Town. Allenheads has a coffee shop and an inn.

TOILETS

You'll find public toilets in:

- ❖ Allendale Town
- ❖ Allenheads

ACCOMMODATION

A wide range of accommodation is available in the North Pennines. For further information:

- ❖ Contact Hexham Tourist Information Centre on 01434 652220 for a free guide.
- ❖ Call 01388 528801 and request a North Pennines Discovery Guide (inc. accomm. listing).



Whiffield Hill (Northumberland County Council)



Allendale Moors (Tynesdale Council)

ALLENDALE TOWN

ALLENDALE TOWN

Northumberland

Route 1

APPROX. 34KM
(21 MILES)

ROUTE 1 is a circuit of both dales of the Rivers East and West Allen and roughly takes the shape of a rectangle which circum-navigates several moors. Cycling anti-clockwise will permit the regular supply of hills to be used to best advantage. The southern section is part of the C2C Cycle Route and provides an easy link into Allenheads village. Generally Energetic and Strenuous at times - gets easier.

START: Leave Allendale Town behind Allendale Motor Services down The Peth (path on a steep hill) and continue to Thornley Gate X rds.

1.1 TL (SP: Ninebanks 4 - easy to miss!) and ascend steadily past Hawksteel and over Round Hill before very long steep descent to West Allendale.

1.2 TL (SP: Ninebanks 1/2, Carr Shield 4 1/2, Nenthead 7 3/4). Look for lime kiln on L on approach to the fortified hamlet (pele tower) of Ninebanks then limestone quarry on L.

1.3 Keep L (SP: Limestone Brae, Carr Shield 3 1/2, Nenthead 7) and begin long steady undulating climb to Coalcleugh. More lime kilns (L) and Old Smithy (R) (dated 1689), Throstle Hall Buddhist abbey on L - look for old packhorse routes on opposite hillside.

1.4 TR on level section thru Carr Shield.

1.5 TL (SP: Allenheads, C2C) and climb steadily then descend easily - prepare for TL after cattle grid.

1.6 Bear L at triangle (SP: Spartylea 1 1/2 - easy to miss at speed!) for continued descent.

ALTERNATIVE: Allenheads SA downhill then TR, short distance on quiet level road.

1.7 TL along B6295 - look for LT just after a RT.

1.8 TL (NSP) opp 'Keep Clear' on road surface for very steep descent with very sharp bends - great care! (SP: Ford 750yds) - use bridge if in doubt.

1.9 TR (NSP) and head towards Knock Shield house.

1.10 TL at Tj (NSP) gently uphill for 150m.

1.11 TR (NSP) on narrow tarmac (not the track SA); great care for short sharp steep S bend over Acton Burn then undulate north for 3kms.

1.12 TR (NSP) downhill and enjoy the descent almost to Allendale Town - care at blind bends.

1.13 TR up Peth back to start.

There is a shorter option based on R1 which can be lengthened by including R3.

R1 ALT. - 23kms / 13.8 miles. Energetic if you are fit / strenuous if you are not!

START: Follow Route 1 directions to Tj at R1.4.

.4 TL (SP: Allendale; Hexham) then steady climb up Dryburn Moor then down towards East Allendale - look for next turn 150m after only LT - easy to miss at speed.

.5 TR sharp (SP: Acton) then after 100m TL.

.6 TL (NSP) downhill and enjoy the descent almost to Allendale Town - care at blind bends.

.7 (13) TR up Peth back to start.

Route 2

APPROX. 15KM
(9 MILES)

ROUTE 2 utilises the upper valley roads but is generally less demanding than the other routes despite one very short and extremely steep hill at Acton Burn which is followed by a series of generally upward undulations leading to a glorious descent back into Allendale Town. Strenuous uphill with equally steep downhill.

START: TR (SP: Shilburn Road) opp. public toilets then up gently.

2.1 TR (NSP) opp. Bulls Hill Farm entrance then gently uphill.

2.2 TL (NSP) at Tj then gently uphill and continue along 'balcony' road to Tj.

2.3 TR (NSP) downhill to B road.

2.4 TR on B6295 over bridge then TL (NSP) opp. telephone box uphill steadily to pass trekking centre on R.

ALTERNATIVE: stay on B6295 to next TR.

2.5 TR on B6295 then follow Route 1 directions from 1.8.

R2 ALT. - 30kms / 18 miles. More energetic than Intermediate despite a Strenuous middle section.

This route begins with R2 then uses the reverse of R1 to link up with the alternative finish for R1 to make a really enjoyable circuit.

Follow Route 2 as far as 2.5 then TL along the B6295 being the reverse of R1. SA at 1.4 to use the alternative R1 finish.

Route 3

APPROX. 14KM
(8 1/2 MILES)

ROUTE 3 begins with steep climb out of the valley to an upper road before descending extremely steeply to cross the River East Allen at Oakpool. The ensuing ascent is best taken at walking pace and several continuation options are available at Keenley. Mostly Intermediate with some Energetic sections.

START: Leave Allendale Town with public toilets on your L (SP: Hexham).

3.1 TR (NSP) just past 40mph signs (post box on R) steeply uphill then levelling off to eventually descend to the far side of Catton village.

3.2 Cross over (offset SA) with pub on your R.

3.3 TL down narrow minor road to Tj then TR and after 25m TL to Oldtown Farm; downhill for 1 mile - VERY steep and narrow - take great care! Push slowly up the other side.

3.4 SA at Keenley X rds and gently uphill (the last on this ride) to Quarry House.

ALTERNATIVE: At Keenley X rds TL to start.

3.5 TL passing tree line on your L then easily to Tj.

3.6 TL (NSP) down through Hawksteel Farm - steep S bend / care needed.

3.7 TR (NSP) to cross horizontal flues built to take valley based lead smelt fumes to distant chimneys after which TL downhill and join wider road noting tree line on your R.

3.8 TR (easy to miss) following tree line then TL (care) to join finish section for other routes.

Route 4

APPROX. 15KM
(9 MILES)
OFF-ROAD

ROUTE 4 is an off-road route which uses several sections of quiet minor roads as part of the itinerary. Once again, there are various options to extend or shorten the route according to time, energy and ground conditions. Energetic with easy sections between the Strenuous bits - can be done in either direction.

START: Leave Allendale Town with public toilets on your L (SP: Hexham).

4.1 TR (NSP) just past 40mph signs (post box on R) steeply uphill then levelling off.

4.2 TL (NSP) downhill but care at S bend down to X rds by Catton Methodist chapel.

4.3 SA over B6295 and continue on track alongside river after tarmac ends.

4.4 TR to cross River E Allen (site of lead smelt mill on L) then up to Thornley gate X rds.

4.5 Take road (SP: Ninebanks 4 - easy to miss) and climb steadily to second house on R.

4.6 TL up stony track (quite steep at first) passing ladder stile on L with wooden SP to X rds. SA on narrow tarmac with sharp LT down Tj at wider minor road.

4.7 TL for 150m to sharp TR (SP: Acton) then after 100m TR towards Acton.

4.8 TL (NSP - easy to miss) before mature pine plantation - do not cross bridge then downhill to cross ford and follow track to Steel Cottage (Steel: a corruption of 'stile' means a road on a hill O.E. stigol = to pass over a steep place).

4.9 TR thru' metal gate adjacent to tree house in garden then descend old unclassified road (muddy when wet) to River E Allen.

4.10 Keep R to cross old bridge then push up steep S bends to farm and B6295 - leave gate as found.

4.11 SA up steady climb past Golf Club (care). **ALTERNATIVE:** TL along B6295 to start.

4.12 TL at Tj along top road and descend gradually then very steeply to start.

NB If reversed - follow Route 3 to 3.2 to avoid very steep hill out of village.

KEY

- Visitor centre/information
- Parking
- Picnic Areas
- Refreshments
- Public toilets
- Public telephone
- Place / Feature of interest
- Steep descent (points down hill)

C2C Cycle Route (7)

Off-road section

- land under 350m (approx. 1150ft)
- 350 - 400m (approx. 1300ft)
- 400 - 450m (approx. 1450ft)
- 450 - 500m (approx. 1650ft)
- 500 - 550m (approx. 1800ft)
- 550 - 600m (approx. 2000ft)
- land over 600m (approx. 2000ft)

