



# Cycling

IN THE NORTH PENNINES

## 4 CIRCULAR ROUTES for EXPERIENCED CYCLISTS on and off road in TEESDALE from MIDDLETON-IN-TEESDALE



M I D D L E T O N

## THINGS TO SEE along the way

### Shaped by history

The area is shaped by a long history of farming, lead mining and quarrying. Traditional management means that Teesdale is still awash with flower-rich hay meadows. The whitewashed farm buildings of the Raby Estate are a distinctive feature in the upper dale.

Teesdale is a landscape of gentle dales and rugged rolling moorland. The Tees has one of many sources on the flanks of Cross Fell. By the time it is joined by the Lune and Balder below Middleton-in-Teesdale the valley has broadened out.

### Boom town!

Middleton-in-Teesdale was originally a small village but was developed into the industrial boom town of the London Lead Company as its northern headquarters in 1815. Middleton House, now in private ownership, was built for the chief agent and can be seen to the west of the village. The cast iron fountain in the centre of the village is a memorial to the London Lead Company and the benefits it brought. Those considered the most deserving employees of the company were housed in New Town, a model housing estate at its eastern edge. 'New Town' is distinctively designed with hipped gable ends to the houses and many ornamental arches. Piped water was available and each house had its own vegetable garden.

❖ Visit 'Meet the Middletons' in the village to discover the intriguing history of Middleton as the London Lead Company Town! Call 01833 640333 for more details.

### In the footsteps of miners

Many of the lead miners in Middleton would have walked to the mines up the Hudeshope Valley. Route 4 takes you



on this journey and reveals a landscape once dominated by lead mining.

As you ride the route you'll see lots of mine entrances, associated buildings and 'hushes'. Coldberry Gutter at the top of the valley is a fine example of a hush but other smaller ones can also be seen throughout the area. Water was dammed and then released in a torrent, removing soil and rocks, to expose lead veins on the surface that could then be worked. These V-shaped landscape features are still easily spotted in the landscape.

### Water sources

Routes 1 and 2 will take you around the reservoirs of Baldersdale and Lunedale. The need for water in the growing towns of Middlesbrough and Stockton led to the construction of the first reservoir at Hury in Baldersdale in the 1880s. Blackton Reservoir followed 10 years later, whilst Grassholme in Lunedale was completed by 1914. The continued growth in the demand for water brought about the building of the larger Balderhead and Selsel Reservoirs at the head of each valley in the 1960s.

The reservoirs are now important not only as sources of water but also for leisure activities and wildlife conservation.

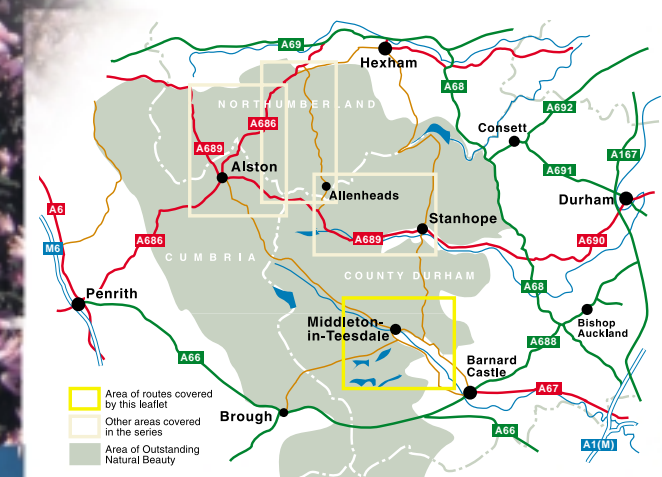
# NORTH PENNINES

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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 Middleton-in-Teesdale where you'll find parking, toilets and refreshments.

Three other leaflets in this series highlight routes starting from Alston, Allendale Town and Stanhope.



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# MIDDLETON

# NORTH PENNINES

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty


## THE ROUTES

The four routes are designed as a series of mainly circular routes starting from Middleton-in-Teesdale and linking into the National Byway.

The terrain in the North Pennines means that it is impossible to avoid some climbs. There are steep hills on some and moderate uphill sections on all of the routes. The routes are designed for reasonably fit people who are used to cycling. They are generally not suitable for children.

## The National Byway

The National Byway has been designed as Britain's heritage cycling route. It is a signed route on quiet country lanes linking places of interest. More information from [www.thenationalbyway.org](http://www.thenationalbyway.org) or call 01636 636818.



# MIDDLETON

# INFORMATION

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

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION**  
Traveline  
Tel: 0870 608 2 608  
Web: [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

**TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE**  
Middleton-in-Teesdale - 10 Market Place  
Tel: 01833 641001

**FURTHER INFORMATION**  
For more information about the North Pennines contact the AONB Staff Unit  
Tel: 01388 528801  
Email: [info@northpenninesaonb.org.uk](mailto:info@northpenninesaonb.org.uk)  
Web: [www.northpennines.org.uk](http://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

**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?

\* Follow the Countryside Code. Respect. Protect. Enjoy. Visit [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)

**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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and the area's nine local authorities

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(Philip Nixon)

## REFRESHMENTS and facilities

### REFRESHMENTS

There are various pubs, restaurants and tearooms in Middleton-in-Teesdale, Mickleton, Eggleston, Romaldkirk and Cotherstone.

### TOILETS

You'll find public toilets in Middleton-in-Teesdale.

### ACCOMMODATION

A wide range of accommodation is available in the North Pennines, including hotels, guesthouses, farmhouse B&Bs, self-catering cottages, caravan and camping sites and group accommodation.

For further information:

- ❖ Contact Middleton-in-Teesdale Tourist Information Centre on 01833 641001.
- ❖ Call 01388 528801 and request a North Pennines Discovery Guide (inc. accomm. listing).
- ❖ Ask for a County Durham Holiday Guide - Tel: 0191 3833354.
- ❖ Call the YHA on 01629 825850 and ask about 'Camping Barns'.

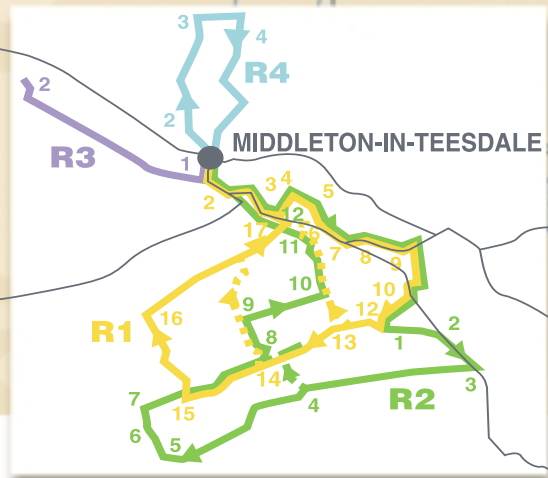


Eggleston Hall Gardens (Philip Nixon)

# MIDDLETON-IN-TEESDALE



# MIDDLETON-in-Teesdale



## Route 1

APPROX. 24KM  
(15 MILES)

- 1.1 Head due south out of the town to cross the River Tees on the B6276 (SP: Brough, Scotch Corner and Mickleton, Romaldkirk, Cotherstone) - take care on this first section.
- 1.2 Keep L (SP: B6277 Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland). Look out for viaduct on Rt 200m beyond which is your L turn.
- 1.3 Bear L onto narrow lane marked by two concrete bollards.
- 1.4 At Tj TL, take care on s bend decent to farm.
- 1.5 Where road forks, keep L (stone barn on L).
- 1.6 TL into Mickleton to soon join B6277 (garage shop to your right).
- 1.7 TL to follow B6277 - care!
- 1.8 Bear L on B6281 (SP: Eggleston Hall Gardens) with fine views of the river - stay alert!
- 1.9 TR (SP: Romaldkirk ¾) gentle ascent to village, passing church on R before reaching Romaldkirk village green.

ROUTE 1 is the main circuit with a choice of two shorter variations which can be selected at the appropriate junction. Each variation is worth doing in its own right for the superb scenery, the magnificent views and the stunning descents. Warning: always descend in full control - the roads are narrow with some sharp gravel-covered corners.

The route starts in the main Tees valley but the character and scenery soon changes as quiet country lanes gently gain height to offer excellent views of County Durham's hidden 'lake district'. On a fine day, these views change to vistas as an amplified reward for your effort.

Intermediate grade with one strenuous climb from 1.15.

**START:** Main road junction in Middleton-in-Teesdale.

- 1.10 TR up to B6277 then TL at red phone box (SP: Cotherstone 2, Barnard Castle 6).
- 1.11 After 150m bear R (SP: Balderhead Reservoir 4, Hunderthwaite ¾, Hury 2 ¾)
- 1.12 Keep R at Hunderthwaite to climb gently towards Hury.

**R1a Alt.** - 17kms / 10 ½ miles. One steady climb towards Hury.

**1.13** TR (NSP) slight decent over narrow bridge before steady climb to X rds then follow directions from **R2.10** - steep descent with amazing views - care!

**R1b Alt.** - 19.5kms / 12 miles. One steady climb towards Hury.

**1.14** TR (SP: Grassholme 2) then climb steadily before glorious descent - care!

**1.15** TR after New Houses.

**1.16** TR at X rds (small SP: Grassholme Visitor Centre) then descend gently to Mickleton.

**1.17** TL along B6277 and return to start.

## Route 2

APPROX. 34KM  
(21 MILES)  
OFF-ROAD

- 2.1 Sharp TL (Access Only SP: Cotherstone 2).
- 2.2 TR along B6277 - take care!
- 2.3 On entering Cotherstone, TR (SP: East Briscoe 2, Hury and Blackton Res. 2½) or SA to visit village. Note! SA at Briscoe - do not TL down to bridge.
- 2.4 TL (SP: Hury and Blackton Res, Clove Lodge 3 - No Through Route).

**R2 Alt.** SA very steep descent / ascent up to Tj to join main route - choose R (SP: Hunderthwaite 1½) or L (SP: Hury ½).

**2.5** At Clove Lodge TL through gateway with tree on your L then SA (further gate) on a double width track keeping stone wall on your R - descend to cross bridge.

**2.6** TL through gate and climb up permissive track up to reservoir road then over cattle grid to join county road.

ROUTE 2 utilises the first part of R1 (as far as 1.12) but then follows an additional loop which can also be used to extend R1 which it re-joins. R2 then follows very narrow minor roads as well as off-road sections. This route is memorable for its fine off-road sections although the narrow country lanes it otherwise uses are a joy to cycle on. The gentle ascent from the valley, with the associated views and options, makes this route a good choice for a wide range of cyclists.

Intermediate grade. Full route requires reasonable fitness.

**START:** Main road junction in Middleton-in-Teesdale. Follow directions for R1 up to 1.12 (Hunderthwaite), then:

- 2.7 TR along minor road.
- 2.8 TL uphill (SP: Unsuitable for motors) post box in wall.
- 2.9 TR along good track at Botany.
- 2.10 TL towards mast - steep descent with sharp corners - gravel on road, take care!
- 2.11 At sharp Rt bend TL to join rail path to return to viaduct (1.2).
- 2.12 Off-road option: At bridge use small gate on L to follow rail path to minor road before viaduct (1.2). TR then TL along B6277 back to start.
- 2.12 Road option: In Mickleton TL along B6277 back to start.

NB: The rail path is permissive for cycling but it does have many gates.

**! WARNING HERE!** This is the start / end of the rail path and, due to the previous bridge removal, is now at road level on a blind bend. Be aware of this and use only with great care!

## Route 3

APPROX. 12.5KM  
(8 MILES)

ROUTE 3 is a gently undulating 'there and back' linear route along a quiet minor road parallel to the River Tees. Easy grade.

**START:** Main junction in Middleton-in-Teesdale.

Follow first direction for R1.1, but then:

- 3.1 TL at first obvious bend (SP: Holwick), continue to end of minor road to start of track to Hield House Farm.
- 3.2 Return back the same way - this is not a circuit!

NB: It is illegal to cycle on footpaths.

## Route 4

APPROX. 9.5KM  
(6 MILES)

ROUTE 4 follows a rectangle to the north of Middleton-in-Teesdale and is worth doing for its scenery, views and descents - not to mention the heritage value!

The initial 1km is definitely uphill but well worth the effort, even if you decide to walk and push this section! The route is then level before dropping down to cross Hudeshope Beck amidst amazing scenery which exudes its lead mining history. A last ascent to point 414m is soon over and the reward is a long downhill - right back to the centre of Middleton-in-Teesdale.

Two strenuous climbs outward but second half is all downhill.

**START:** Leave Middleton-in-Teesdale on B6277 (SP: Alston) which bends L after crossing bridge over Hudeshope Beck.

**4.1** SA up short sharp steep hill.

**4.2** Continue climbing steadily then TR just beyond 30mph delimit signs (SP: Oakside, Coldberry) and ascend further 500m (distance) to Aukside where the road levels out.

Look at the way the lead mining history has sculptured the hillside on the opposite side of the valley and take note of your return route!

**4.3** Descend to cross Hudeshope Beck then ascend to a sharp Rt turn to the highest point of the ride.

**4.4** Take care during the extended descent back to the start. Look across the valley to your outward route.