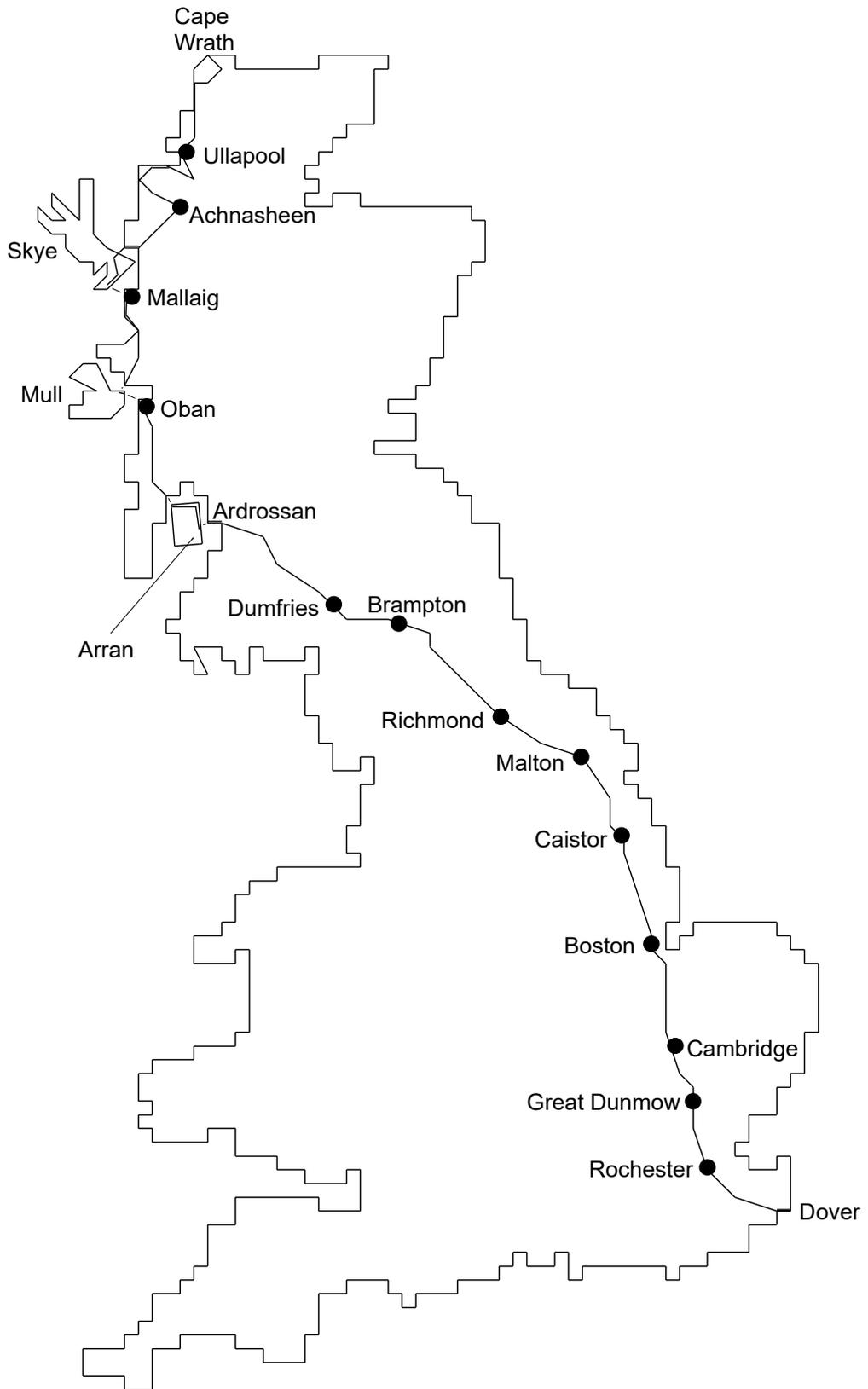


Dover to Cape Wrath by Bike
Linda Brackenbury



Route Summary: From **Dover**, the route heads west-northwest on quiet lanes across the foothills of the North Downs, passing through charming **Wye** and historic **Charing** to reach the larger historic town of **Rochester**. Cycle route 1 with many off-road sections is then taken to the ferry at **Gravesend** where the River Thames is crossed to **Tilbury**. The route then worms its way north to **Brentwood** using a mixture of lanes and B-roads which either pass under or over the major roads. The route continues northwards on lanes but latterly on a quietish main road to reach **Chipping Ongar** from where there's a B-road to **Great Dunmow**. Continuing northwards through Essex, a B-road takes bikers through **Thaxted** to **Saffron Walden**. Cambridgeshire is entered shortly afterwards and cycle route 11 is joined to reach **Grantchester**, just south-west of Cambridge's centre. Student routes through the west side of **Cambridge** ensue followed by a B-road to the stage stop at **Chatteris**; Cambridgeshire is noticeably flatter than Essex!

Continuing up the eastern side of England, the Fenland town of **March** is the next objective. Beyond, a dedicated cycle track leads to a crossing of the River Nene. Lincolnshire is entered at the next drain crossing with the southern part of the county characterised by its flatness, drains and grid-like road layout. **Holbeach** is reached by quiet straight lanes and beyond, cycle route 1 is followed across The Wash and on to **Boston**. A B-road leads on to the nice market town of **Horncastle** on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. There's then a relatively short section on a main road followed by a B-road across the Wolds to the small historic town of **Caistor**. Predominantly minor roads lead to **Barton-Upon-Humber** where cycle route 1 is joined to cross the Humber Bridge into the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Over, the route turns generally north-westwards to the Scottish Border but first picks up the Trans-Pennine cycle route into **North Ferriby** and then strikes east-of-north through quiet villages to **Beverley**. A B-road to the North Yorkshire market town of **Malton** ensues and after pretty **Hovingham** village, lanes lead to **Coxwold** village in the North Yorkshire Moors park. Here cycle route 65 is joined and this plus cycle route 71 are used to pass through **Northallerton** and reach **Yafforth**. From here, B-roads lead into classy **Richmond**. It's a steep haul out of Richmond with lanes taken to the A66 and County Durham is entered just after crossing this A-road. Cycle route 165 is joined and is followed over the River Tees at **Whorlton** and on to **Barnard Castle**. The route continues on B-roads through **Middleton-in-Teesdale** to **Alston** from where a quiet A-road leads to **Brampton**; Cumbria is entered on the moorland road into Alston. An A-road leads through **Longtown** to **Gretna Green** where the border into Scotland is crossed. From here, cycle route 7 through **Annan** to reach **Dumfries** is adapted to provide an equally quiet but shorter route.

Dumfries is a good place for a rest day as it has plentiful accommodation and eating places plus two good cycle shops. There's plenty to do in the day due to its Robert Burns associations, there is nice walking along the River Nith and its Camera Obscura at the Dumfries Museum is particularly recommended. Dumfries is left on a cycle path followed by lanes to **Thornhill**. The River Nith is followed through **Sanquhar** to **New Cumnock** using a mixture of lanes and the A76 road. Beyond, lanes and then B-roads take riders through **Cumnock** to **Mauchline**. More lanes and B-roads are used to reach **Dundonald**. Beyond, after crossing the River Irvine and then Annick Water, the route turns left on cycle route 73 and this (mainly) traffic free route is taken all the way to the ferry at **Ardrossan** on the west coast of Scotland. The remainder of the ride stays on Scotland's west side.

After crossing to **Brodict** on the Isle of Arran, the route follows Arran's east coast northwards to **Sannox** before the road turns inland, north-westwards, to the ferry at **Lochranza**. After the ferry lands on the mainland at **Claonaig**, on the Kintyre peninsula, the single track B-road is taken to meet an A-road into picturesque **Tarbert**. The A-road has to be taken to **Ardrishaig** but then the cycle path along the towpath of the Crinan Canal can be used before the A-road is rejoined again. There are a few small settlements before **Oban** is reached and the ferry to **Craignure** on the east coast of the Isle of Mull taken. On Mull, the coast road is taken north-westwards for a few miles to the ferry point at **Fishnish**. It's then a short trip across the waters of the Sound of Mull to **Lochaline**

on the mainland.

A single track main road leads to the village of **Strontian** then proceeds along Loch Sunart and on to the small village of **Acharacle** overlooking Loch Shiel. The main road continues wending its way through Moidart, an area of few habitations. At **Lochailort**, the main road connecting Mallaig to Fort William is met and the route turns left for Mallaig. On the way to Mallaig, the touristy coastal village of **Arisaig** is passed. Ferries from **Mallaig** go to several destinations but the bike route heads over to **Armadale** on the Isle of Skye and then follows the main road northwards to meet the Inverness to Portree (on the Isle of Skye) road. Here the route turns right to cross the Skye Bridge into the **Kyle of Lochalsh**. After a few miles, the Inverness road is left to go northwards on the road to tiny **Strathcarron** village. Beyond the road north-eastwards to **Achnasheen** is taken before the route turns westwards, to **Kinlochewe**. Beyond, there's a spell along Loch Maree before the route turns westwards to the coast and follows it to **Gairloch**. After, the road cuts inland to **Poolewe** (with the famous Inverewe Gardens just beyond) it continues up the coast before cutting across to **Laide** on the coast. The coast is now largely followed to **Dundonnell** and then follows the line of its river before leaving it to meet a busier main road at Braemore Junction; the path to view the awesome Corrieshalloch Gorge is just before this road junction.

The route turns northwards here to **Ullapool**, the largest habitation before Cape Wrath and continues northwards through **Elphin** to Ledmore Junction. The hamlet of **Inchnadamph** is passed through on the way to Skiag Bridge. Beyond, the route passes through the small settlements of **Unapool**, **Kylesku** and **Scourie** before arriving at Laxford Bridge. After **Rhiconich** village, the road ascends and then descends past **Keoldale** to **Durness**. The final part of the journey involves taking the morning ferry from Keoldale across the Kyle of Durness to the jetty on the Cape Wrath side and then taking the rough track to the lighthouse at **Cape Wrath** which marks the end of the journey. It only remains to retrace the route to the jetty for the afternoon ferry across the Kyle.

Notes: This is an unsupported bike ride of 23 days in the saddle averaging about 42 miles per day.

Wonderfully scenic route with time to enjoy the views and visit features of interest.

The route uses mainly B-roads, minor/quiet roads and cycle paths/routes.

Some of the cycle paths/tracks used are quite rough, so a hybrid bike is recommended.

The ferry information is correct for summer 2018 and no need to book, just turn up. Note that some times can change due to low tidal conditions.

It's as well to leave two days to complete the ride to the Cape Wrath lighthouse as the ferry may not run due to weather, tidal conditions, MoD activity or a local event.

Good B&B accommodation is available at all the stage stops with an evening meal or a shop usually within (short) walking distance except at Lael and Unapool.

Regard the ascent and descent figures as a relative guide only; a *ft* is approximately *0.3metres*.

A normal ascent rate is around 1000ft (305metres) every 10miles, less indicates fairly flat terrain while more indicates harder work for the legs. So, stage distances in northern Scotland tend to be lower to take account greater ascent while distances covered in eastern England tend to be higher because of the gentler terrain.

I believe the listed bike shops all have workshops and do repairs and are close to the route.

If using trains to transport bikes then these need to be booked on the trains. There is no transport with a bike out of Durness at the weekend. The Durness Bus Company has an attachment to carry two bikes down to Lairg Monday to Friday in time for the 10:38 train to Inverness. Like the train, it is necessary to book the bike carrier on the bus from Durness in advance.

For other coast to coast routes, see www.brackwalks.co.uk

The Route

Day 1: Train to Dover Priory then bike Dover Promenade to Stowting (15.2miles, ascent 1640ft, descent 1355ft)

From **Dover Priory Station** follow the approach road leftwards and very shortly meet the B2011 (Folkestone Road). To get to the Promenade (0.7mile), turn left on the B-road and soon meet a roundabout. Turn right here onto York Street and immediately past a pedestrian crossing, turn left into New Street. Go straight ahead, into a narrow alleyway and emerge on a shopping street. Turn right and wheel the bike down pedestrianised Cannon Street into Market Square and turn left to meet King Street. Remount and turn right but when the road bends right go straight ahead into Bench Street (where motorbikes and cars are prohibited) which shortly leads to an underpass. Through, continue in the same direction and shortly reach the Promenade where there's a tasteful plaque inlaid into the pavement marking the start/finish of the North Downs National Trail; this also marks the start of the bike ride to Cape Wrath.

It's now necessary to reverse the route to reach the railway station. So return to the underpass to reach Bench Street and then go straight on into King Street along the cycle section (on the left) and turn left into Cannon Street following it to the right to the alleyway turn off left into New Street (just after a church on the right). When New Street meets York Street, turn right on the right pavement to the pedestrian crossing and use this to cross to the other side of York Street. Continue right to the roundabout, take the first exit onto Folkestone Road and shortly pass the railway station entrance. Well-signed cycle route 17 is now followed for the next few miles.

About 0.5mile (at a mini-roundabout) beyond the station turn off right onto Elms Vale Road, signed to Hougham; there's a fancy bus stop at the junction. Keep to the major lane following cycle route 17 signs. The lane becomes Elms Hill then Lowslip Road. Immediately after the 30mph sign for West Hougham turn off right down a minor lane and at a fork curve right (sign). Get to a cross-road and turn left onto Capel Street, signed for Capel & Folkestone. Take the first turn off right onto W Hockley Sole Lane (sign). Keep to the major lane which becomes Hockley Sole Lane and signed to Alkham. Cross a busy road opposite right and follow Standen Lane keeping to the major lane which becomes Cowgate Lane and in turn The Street. Continue to meet a more major road (Canterbury Road) in **Hawkinge**.

The route continues on cycle route 17. Take Barnhurst Lane opposite left (signed as a 'No Through Road'). It becomes rough and when it curves right, go straight on past a bollard to emerge on Campbell Road. Turn left briefly to a more major road and turn right for a few metres to a roundabout. Take the second exit onto Aerodrome Road (signed Hawkinge West). At the next roundabout take the second exit (signed Paddlesworth and still Aerodrome Road). Follow the major road/lane through Paddlesworth and shortly after, at a triangular junction, bear left. After a further 0.3mile ignore a cycle route 17 left turn in order to go straight on; cycle route 17 is left here. Keep to the major lane (which becomes Teddars Leas Road) and reach a cross-road in **Etchinghill**. Turn right on Canterbury Road for 0.7mile then turn off left onto Sandling Road but then immediately turn off right onto Loughborough Lane. Follow the 'major' lane to the B2068. Turn right but shortly take the first left and descend to a cross-road. Turn right along Whiteways (road) signed for Stowting. Follow Whiteways past the Tiger Inn (food) in **Stowting**.

JR Cycles Servicing & Repair, Eaves Road, Dover CT17 9LX. Tel. 01304 219 338/Mob. 075544 35968. Works from home but will come out if local.

Day 2: Stowting to Rochester (39.5miles, ascent 3380ft, descent 3655ft)

Beyond the Tiger Inn in **Stowting** keep on the major lane which becomes Scot's Lane. At a left curve junction with two lanes off right, turn off on the second lane right (slightly right of straight ahead) signed for Wye (but the sign is hidden); this is the Pilgrims' Way. Continue on the major lane

until there's a sign off left for Wye (which is the third turn off left). Follow the major lane latterly named Brabourne Road to meet a more major road and turn right onto Amage Road (signed for Wye). When it meets Coldharbour Lane, turn left into Wye. Continue on the 'major' road until Wye's parish church is on the right when turn left down Church Street. The T-junction at the bottom is Bridge Street. **Wye** (5.8m, 550ft, 705ft).

Wye Turn right along Bridge Street to a T-junction. Turn left, cross the Great Stour (river) then cross the level crossing and immediately after turn off left, signed to Ashford. Follow Harville Road to the A28 and cross to Wye Road opposite. Turn off left in **Boughton Lees** (before the Flying Horse) and pass down the left side of the Village Green to meet the A251. Turn left for just under a mile then turn off right on Sandyhurst Lane, signed to Westwell. After 130metres (140yds) take the first right onto Lenacre Street, signed to Westwell. Follow the 'major' lane into **Westwell**. When the Wheel Inn is reached, don't curve left with the lane but go straight on westwards (not right); it has a broken sign to Charing. Take the second turn off right (which is still Westwell Lane). Keep right at the next fork (a small triangular junction) and continue to a T-junction. Turn right on Pett Lane and keeping to the 'main' lane arrive at a T-junction and turn left into the High Street of **Charing** (8.3m, 720ft, 485ft).

Charing Continue down the main street and meet the A20. Want to take the minor road opposite (signed to the Station) and there are pedestrian lights to the left. Follow the road over the railway line and 0.3mile beyond the station take the next road off right (Charing Heath Road) which is signed to Charing Heath. Keep to the main lane and 90metres (100yds) after passing the Red Lion (in Charing Heath village), turn off right onto Church Hill lane signed to the Church. Continue to the second lane off left, signed to Lenham Heath & Harrietsham. Keep to the 'major' road following signs to Harrietsham and cross over a railway line. Beyond continue to a cross-road in **Sandway** village. Take Sandway Road opposite left, signed to Harrietsham & Maidstone. Ignore turn offs and arrive at the A20.

Want the road into Harrietsham which is left down the A20 briefly and then take the next right right signed West Street Harrietsham; there's a pedestrian crossing of the A20 close to the right turn. Follow West Street westwards through **Harrietsham**; it leads back to the A20 but immediately before meeting the A20 turn off right onto Goddington Lane which looks like a slip road. It isn't and shortly moves away from the A-road. At the top of the rise turn left on Holm Mill Lane; right is a No Through Road. At the next T-junction, turn right on Forstal Lane and on meeting a road turn right onto Greenway Court Road. Shortly after passing under a railway line the lane turns 90° left (by left chevrons) and keeping straight on after the curve meets a more major road. Turn right and follow the road into **Hollingbourne** (9.9m, 780ft, 845ft).

Hollingbourne At the cross-road by The Dirty Habit pub turn left onto the Pilgrims Way signed to Thurnham. At the cross-road at **Thurnham** continue opposite on the Pilgrims Way signed to Detling. At the T-junction opposite the Cock Horse in **Detling** turn right briefly then take the ramp (off right) to the footbridge over the A249. Over, re-meet the Pilgrims Way. Turn right for 1.2miles and take the second turn off left (Styles Lane); the turn off is immediately after a big equestrian place on the left. When Styles Lane shortly meets a road (The Street) turn left. Follow the road through **Boxley** and 0.5mile beyond turn off right onto Grange Lane which soon runs parallel to the M20. When Grange Lane meets a road, take the footpath opposite left (cycle route 17) which leads to the end of Chatham Road. Follow the road up to a cross-road and take Old Chatham Road opposite (cycle route sign). It is two-way here but soon becomes one-way in the opposite direction to the cycle route, so use the sectioned-off part of the road on the right. As the A229 is approached, need to get on the right hand pavement on a tarmac track which diverges from the road, turns right and then left along the back of the Kent Motorhomes Centre and reaches a track junction. Curve right round the back of the garage and continue by curving left to an underpass of the A229.

Through, immediately turn right and very shortly meet a road which is a slip road of the A229 (and

one-way in bike direction). Turn left on the slip road and when it shortly meets Rochester Road turn left. After 0.2mile turn off right onto the Pilgrims Way, signed for Eccles, Burham & Wouldham. Keep to the 'major' road, pass through Burham and eventually (just after passing under the railway line) meet Wouldham Road. Turn right, pass under the M2 and keep straight ahead. Wouldham Road becomes Borstal Street. After passing a parish church on the left, turn off left onto Shorts Way. This leads down to a road along the River Medway. Look for a turn off left into Esplanade Park to continue by the Medway but then have to rejoin the road to reach **Rochester Bridge** which crosses the river (15.5m, 1330ft, 1620ft).

Cycle King, 353-357 High St, Medway, Rochester ME1 1DA. Tel. 01634 811 147.

Day 3: Rochester to Great Dunmow (52.5miles, ascent 3595ft, descent 3330ft)

Cycle Route 1 is followed to Gravesend and is well signed. Turn left to cross **Rochester Bridge** over the River Medway (there's a cycle lane). At the end of the bridge, want to turn immediately right into Canal Road (signed as a 'No Through Road'), so use the pedestrian crossing at the end of the bridge to cross the A2 and effect this turn. When Canal Road ends, continue on the section marked as OK for bikes and buses and meet Commissioner's Road at lights. Take the steeply ascending tarmac path opposite (cycle route sign) and at the top of the ascent go right (i.e. straight on). At the lane end, pass through a gate and continue on the cycle/pedestrian path which emerges on the A289. Turn right on the cycle path alongside the A-road and immediately before the roundabout, use the pedestrian lights to cross the A-road. Turn right on the cycle path which almost immediately leaves the A-road. Follow the track (Tower Hill) and it emerges at the bottom of Upchat Road. Follow Upchat Road and when the 'main' lane swings sharp left, turn off right (sign) to continue northwards on Upchat Road and reach a cross-road. Cross to continue on Upchat Road opposite. Keep to the 'major' road, cross over the A228 and come to a roundabout.

Turn left (on the tarmac cycle path) just before the roundabout and when this very short path meets Woodfield Way (the roundabout's first exit), turn left. Woodfield Way passes through MoD buildings and when it meets Islingham Farm Road at a T-junction turn left (sign). Follow the lane to a T-junction and turn right on Higham Road (sign). The road quickly becomes Bunters Hill Road. Keep straight on along the 'main' lane to a cross-road where the B2000 is met. Cross to the lane opposite (Two Gates Hill) and at a T-junction turn right onto Lower Rochester Road. Keep to the 'main' lane and in **Lower Higham** when the road swings left turn off right and then immediately turn left onto Canal Road. Follow Canal Road which has the (disused) Thames & Medway Canal to its left and shortly after crossing under a railway bridge, the road ends. Continue on the unsurfaced cycle path (sign) along the course of the canal.

The cycle path becomes an access road for factories and continues to a road junction. Take the road opposite right (Wharf Road). When the road shortly ends, continue on an enclosed passageway to emerge on a rough track. Go ahead into another passageway which becomes an alleyway. Keep ahead to cross a footbridge and over, pass the Sailing Club Buildings then leave the road (sign) to take the wide tarmac track to the right down to the River Thames and turn left. Follow the track which returns to a road (Commercial Place) when no further progress along the Thames is possible. Turn right, follow the road as it curves left and then turn right into The Terrace (sign). At a road junction where traffic (except bikes) has to turn left (and straight ahead is 'No Entry'), turn right into Royal Pier Road and follow it as it bends left. Immediately after passing St Andrews Art Centre, take to the ascending ramp starting on the left of the road. When this soon meets a road, turn right on the pavement. After 90metres/100yds turn right through gates into Town Pier Square in **Gravesend**; the Mug and Meeple is on the corner. To get to the ferry, go through the automatically opening doors ahead (saying 'Restaurant') and then turn right down a ramp to the ferry boarding point. **Gravesend Town Pier** (10.8m, 660ft, 660ft).

Gravesend Town Pier the ferry across the River Thames to Tilbury takes 10mins. Half hourly service Mon-Sat only leaving 10:00 onwards up to 19:00 (but no 14:30 ferry). No Sunday or Bank Holiday service. The ferry docks at **Tilbury**.

At **Tilbury** follow the pier exit out onto Fort Road. Turn right onto the path for cycle route 13 which closely follows the river. Shortly take a tarmac path off half-left to re-meet Fort Road and reach the World's End pub. Turn left onto a cycle track which re-meets Fort Road. Turn right, take the second turn off left after 1.4miles, signed to West Tilbury and follow the 'major' road to a T-junction. Turn left on Linford Road signed for Chadwell St Mary. Go straight on at two roundabouts to reach lights at a cross-road in the centre of **Chadwell St Mary** (3.3m, 200ft, 100ft).

Chadwell St Mary At the lights the route turns right (but go straight on for a cafe). Go straight on at the first mini-roundabout then turn off left onto Heath Road at the second mini-roundabout. Follow Heath Road (the 'major' road) (going straight on at a mini-roundabout) for just over a mile and meet the (busy) A1013. Need to turn right for a few metres then turn off left onto the B188, signed to Orsett; there's a short cycle path on the right of the A-road leading to a central crossing island. The B-road passes under a slip road for the A13 then passes under the A13 and continues to a Give Way sign at a cross-road. Turn right here to stay on the B188. Go straight on at a mini-roundabout and continue on the B-road to a T-junction in **Orsett**. Turn left for 1mile on the B-road but then turn off left on Parkers Farm Road (it's signed as this) and follow the lane to a T-junction in **Bulphan**.

Turn left on Fen Lane. Follow the lane over a brick bridge and immediately after turn off right onto Dunnings Lane (there's a road name here). Follow the lane to a cross-road and turn left onto St Mary's Lane following it to a T-junction where the busy B186 is met. Turn right on the B-road, follow it over the (mega) A127 and 0.5mile beyond turn off right onto Bird Lane ('Unsuitable for HGVs'). Take the first turn off right onto Magpie Lane (with a Warley Park Golf Club sign) and go right again almost immediately at a T-junction. Take the next turn off left onto Home Farm Road and at the T-junction turn left onto Childerditch Lane. At a cross-road, cross to take Hartwood Road opposite and continue northwards to traffic lights where the A128 is met. Turn left (or short cut by taking the one-way street just before the lights), go straight on at a roundabout (2nd exit) and the Cathedral is on the left. Just after the cathedral turn left into Cathedral Place. Keep to the 'major' street and shortly at a T-junction turn right into St Thomas Road. Ignoring a 'No Entry' road on the right, follow the road as it curves right to meet High Street (the A1023) in **Brentwood** (15.3m, 1060ft, 790ft).

Brentwood Turn left and immediately before the traffic lights where the London and Chelmsford roads split, turn up right past a bollard into Western Gardens (passageway). At the top turn left on Western Road to a mini-roundabout and turn right onto Weald Road. Follow this (going straight on at a mini-roundabout) over the A12. Stick to the 'major' road and after passing the three entrances to Weald Country Park, take the next turn off right onto Lincolns Lane (cars and motor cycles prohibited except for access); it's difficult to see the road name in the bike direction. Ascend Lincolns Lane to a T-junction. Turn left then immediately turn off right onto Mores Lane and take the first turn off left onto Snakes Hill (lane); again it's not easy to see the road name. At its end, meet a T-junction and turn right on Navestock Side (road) to a T-junction. Turn left signed Dudbrook but take the first turn off right onto Howard Lodge Road (named) and at a cross-road take the lane opposite (Beacon Hill) to shortly arrive at a T-junction. Turn left onto Kelvedon Hall Lane and follow it to meet the A128. Turn left, signed for Ongar. When the road reaches a mini-roundabout in Ongar turn right to remain on the A128 (signed for Chipping Ongar & Great Dunmow) and follow the main road through Chipping Ongar's High Street. **Chipping Ongar** (9m, 815ft, 985ft).

Chipping Ongar Continue on the main road and beyond the town reach a roundabout with the A414. Want to go straight across (second exit) onto the B184 signed for Great Dunmow. Follow the

B-road through **Fyfield** and on to meet the A1060 at a T-junction 6.8miles from Ongar. Turn right signed for Chelmsford. After 0.8mile turn left at a mini-roundabout back on to the B184 and signed for Great Dunmow. As Dunmow is approached, the B-road crosses over the A120. Shortly after, reach a mini-roundabout and go straight on (second exit). Shortly reach another mini-roundabout and turn left onto the B184 (Chelmsford Road), signed Town Centre. The road becomes High Street. Go straight on at the next mini-roundabout (first exit) signed town centre. Continue on High Street and shortly turn left into New Street just after the Post Office; there's a war memorial at the entry to New Street. After 65metres/70yds, take the first right into Harmans Yard. Go straight on in the same direction into a tarmac passageway which comes out in High Fields (road). Continue straight on following the road as it curves right becoming High Stiles. When it meets the B1256 (Stortford Road), the route turns right (towards the town) but there's a good B&B just to the left. **Great Dunmow** (14.1m, 860ft, 795ft).

Bike Shop, 18 Windmill St, Gravesend DA12 1AS. Tel. 01474 533 748.

Day 4: Great Dunmow to Chatteris (56miles, ascent 3385ft, descent 3630ft)

Great Dunmow Turn right along Stortford Road and at a mini-roundabout turn left into Rosemary Lane. Follow the 'major' road which becomes The Downs to a mini-roundabout. Turn left onto the B184 (coincident with B1008 here); the B-road to Saffron Walden is the 'major' B-road. At the next mini-roundabout go straight on. At the next roundabout, go straight on (2nd exit) onto the B184. Just keep to the B184 through **Thaxted** and beyond. As Saffron Walden is approached go straight on at two mini-roundabouts and then get to traffic lights. Go straight on and shortly reach a T-junction. Turn left into Ashdon Road. At the mini-roundabout (with the castle visible half-right) go straight on into one-way Church Street and then turn first left into one-way Market Hill. At the bottom enter the Market Square, the centre of **Saffron Walden** (13.9m, 985ft, 1030ft).

Saffron Walden Retrace the route up Market Hill to Church Street and turn left. Follow it down to a T-junction at the bottom and turn right onto the B184. Follow the B-road up Windmill Hill. When a roundabout is reached, turn left (signed village). Follow the lane (High Street) through **Little Chesterford** and shortly after crossing the River Cam the B1383 is met at a T-junction. Turn right for 0.8mile to a right bend and turn off left, signed for Ickleton. Keep to the 'major' road to take the low bridge route beneath the railway line and beyond leave Essex for Cambridgeshire. Continue on the lane passing under the M11 and its slip roads. Beyond, in **Ickleton**, take the second turn off right into Butchers Hill (the road is named) and join well-signed cycle route 11 which will be followed into the south-west end of Cambridge. At the T-junction at the top of Butchers Hill turn left into Brookhampton Street. Follow the lane over a level crossing then cross the River Cam and take the next turn off left (High Street) through **Hinxton**. Take the next turn off left into Mill Lane (which is named) and follow it as it shortly curves right to meet Duxford Road. Turn left and shortly come to a ford crossing of the River Cam, although there's a usable footbridge alternative. Shortly after, go over a main line level crossing and later a small defunct-looking level crossing. Continue along the 'main' road and come to a T-junction by a small triangular village green (with a village pump) in **Duxford** (7.7m, 570ft, 660ft).

Duxford Turn right into Chapel Street and follow the main lane to the A505. Use provided crossing islands to cross to Duxford Road opposite right (cycle route sign). Follow the road for 0.8mile and then turn off right into Mill Lane (cycle route sign and signed to Public Weighbridge). Shortly take the first turn off left (sign). Follow The Lawn (lane) round as it curves right and look for a surfaced path off left to Church Lane. Take the path to the church opposite right and keeping left of the church exit its grounds onto an excellent surfaced track. Turn right, follow the cycle path to a footbridge over the River Cam and continue beyond to reach a lane. Turn right over a level crossing and shortly beyond meet the A1301. Use the provided traffic island (to the right) to cross into the

lane opposite right. Shortly, just after a 'No Through Road' off left and the 30mph sign for **Sawston**, turn off left into New Road and follow it to a cross-road with lights.

Turn left here onto Cambridge Road (cycle route sign) and use the cycle path on the left of the road. The A1301 is re-met at traffic lights. Use the provided crossing points to cross to the right pavement of Cambridge Road and then cross the A-road to the cycle track. Turn right on the cycle path towards Cambridge. As Stapleford is approached, the cycle path ends and need to join the road but very shortly after, turn right into Church Street; the turning is after passing The Rose (eating place) and just after a pedestrian crossing with a Spar shop on the corner on the right. Keep to the 'major' road, pass **Stapleford's** church and continue to a T-junction.

Turn right briefly then turn off left into Chaston Road. Follow Chaston Road keeping left and when Chaston Road curves right, turn off left here (signed Chaston Road Nos. 9-45 (Odd)). At the end of this section of Chaston Road, take the surfaced cycle path (to the left of No. 9) which runs parallel to the railway line on its left. When the path emerges on Granham's Road take the cycle path continuation opposite which soon runs parallel to the railway. After passing under a road bridge, the cycle path curves right (leaving the railway line) to reach a large roundabout. Turn left on the cycle path which continues into Francis Crick Avenue (the 1st exit). Use the cycle lane where provided up the Avenue; the large buildings to the right are Addenbrooke's Hospital. At the 'Cyclists turning left leave the carriageway' notice, mount the pavement on the left and swing left on a surfaced cycle track that runs alongside a guided busway. When it meets the busway running from the Park & Ride at Trumpington into Cambridge, leave cycle route 11 by crossing this busway and turning left (south-westwards) on the cycle track alongside the Trumpington busway. Follow the busway and emerge on an access lane at the Park & Ride. Turn left on the access lane and meet Hauxton Road (the A1309). Turn left on the cycle path which runs alongside Hauxton Road. Keep heading straight on until there's a sign off left for Grantchester (also Parish Church). Turn off left here into Maris Lane and at a T-junction turn left. Follow the lane into **Grantchester** (9.9m, 530ft, 590ft).

Grantchester Carry on through Grantchester and immediately before the church turn right on a shared cycle/pedestrian (surfaced) path signed to Newnham. Follow the surfaced path and on the Cambridge side of the path, pass through a small parking area and continue straight ahead up Grantchester Meadows (road) to a road junction. Here ignore the 'No Through Road' off left but take the road off half-left so entering Eltisley Avenue. Follow the 'major' road which becomes Grantchester Street and ignoring turn-offs left and right, follow it to meet the A603 at a cross-road with traffic lights. Turn left (or use the cycle path) then take the 2nd road off right into Grange Road (just after a bus shelter and a postbox); the road is named. Follow Grange Road up, going straight on at traffic lights and meet the A1303 at a T-junction controlled by traffic lights. Turn left (or use the cycle path) then take the next road off right (Storey's Way). Keep to the 'major' road as it turns left then, later, right (at a peculiar road arrangement near a post box) before continuing to meet the A1307 (Huntingdon Road) at a T-junction. Turn left for 0.85mile then turn off right on a minor road signed for Girton & Oakington. Go straight on at a mini-roundabout, cross over the mega A14 and follow the road through **Girton** village.

Continue on the 'major' road until there's a road off right signed to Histon. Take this and after 0.5mile New Road meets a guided busway at traffic lights. Turn left (left pavement) alongside the busway. The busway crosses Station Road in **Oakington** village and the cycle path changes side here. Continue for 2.5miles to where the busway crosses the next road, the B1050; it's just after a Park & Ride. Leave the busway here by turning right on the B-road. Follow the B-road northwards going straight ahead at traffic lights in **Willingham** and on to meet the A1123 at a mini-roundabout. Turn left, cross the New and Old Bedford River (drains!) into **Earith** and shortly take the second turn off right onto the B1050 signed for Somersham & Colne. As **Somersham** is entered, turn off right onto Chatteris Road (signed to Chatteris) to stay on the B1050. Follow the winding B-road into the outskirts of Chatteris. Go straight on at a mini-roundabout and continue into the town.

When March & Huntingdon are signed off left ignore this and keeping to the 'major' road go through the centre of **Chatteris** (24.5m, 1300ft, 1350ft) passing its Parish Church.

Selection of bike shops in Cambridge; there are others.

Bicycle Ambulance, Park St Cycle Park, Cambridge CB5 8AS. Tel. 01223 322 549.

Lensfield Road Cycles, 69-71 Lensfield Rd, Cambridge CB2 1EN. Tel. 01223 323 559.

Chris's Bikes, 2 Thornton Way, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0NJ. Tel. 01223 276 004.

Day 5: Chatteris to Boston (47.4miles, ascent 2450ft, descent 2500ft)

Chatteris Continue on the 'major' road to reach a mini-roundabout. Turn right and follow High Street which becomes Bridge Street to a roundabout with the A141 and A142. Go straight on (second exit) onto a minor road (Doddington Road), signed to Ramsey and Benwick. Follow the 'major' road through **Doddington** and **Wimblington**. Keep going to a roundabout with the A141 and go straight on (second exit) onto the B1101 (signed for March). Follow the 'major' road into March and after crossing the River Nene, keep straight ahead into Broad Street's left side (the right side is no entry) which is the centre of **March** (8.4m, 450ft, 460ft).

March At the lights at the end of Broad Street (by the iron Pagoda), get in the left hand lane for a left turn onto a B-road. After 0.6mile turn right at a mini-roundabout into Norwood Road. Follow the 'major' road going straight on at a mini-roundabout. Just before a metal gate at the road end, branch right onto a passageway (cycle route 63 sign) into Longhill Road. After nearly 0.3mile along Longhill Road, turn off left on a signed cycle path. Follow the unsurfaced path (which latterly is along a disused railway line), cross Twenty Foot River (a drain) and then immediately emerge on Twenty Foot Road. Take the track opposite to continue on the disused line. After nearly a mile, at a bridge, cycle route 63 goes half-left away from the line to meets a farm track. Leave route 63 here by turning left and follow the track which swings right past houses and then left to meet the A141. Turn right on the A141 and follow it to a roundabout where the (even busier) A47 is met; there's a pavement on the left that can be used.

Turn left (1st exit) on the A47, signed for Peterborough. Immediately cross the River Nene and 230metres/250yds later turn off right onto the B1187, signed to Wisbech St Mary; there's a traffic island near the turn off if needed. Very shortly reach a T-junction and turn left (signed to Murrow) to stay on the B1187. Pass through **Guyhirn** and **Murrow** and continue on the 'major' B-road which becomes the B1166 to cross the North Level Main Drain; Lincolnshire is entered here. After the crossing, the B-road turns westwards and after 0.3mile take the second lane off right (Broadgate) signed to Sutton St Edmund; the road is named. Keeping to the 'major' lane, follow this very straight lane northwards through **Sutton St Edmund**. Later, the lane curves left and shortly after when the lane curves right, turn off left on a lane. Keep to the 'main' lane and arrive at a T-junction. Turn right and immediately cross Leedsgate Bridge. Beyond, continue on the 'main' lane to a cross-road. Turn left on Old Fendyke (lane) (signed to Holbeach St Johns) but then take the first turn off right into Jiggles Gate (lane), signed to Fleet & Gedney. When the B1165 is met at a T-junction, turn left (signed Holbeach) but then take the next turn off right (into named Ravensgate) and immediately cross Little South Holland drain. Take the next turn off left into Strong's Bank, signed for Holbeach. Keep to the 'main' lane and eventually when it meets the B1515 in Holbeach at a T-junction, turn left and the B-road becomes the High Street. **Holbeach** (20.7m, 1150ft, 1200ft).

Holbeach Keep along High Street to traffic lights (just past the church) at a cross-road. Turn right onto the B1168 (signed for Boston) and follow it (past a big Tesco) to meet the A17 at a roundabout. Want to go straight on here (second exit) onto a minor road (Boston Road) signed for Cackle Hill. Keeping to the 'main' lane, Washway Road is met at a T-junction. Turn right signed for Holbeach Clough but then take the next turn off left (Clough Road) also signed for Holbeach Clough. Continue to a cross-road and take the road opposite (signed Sluice Road). Eventually Sluice Road

swings right to run eastwards (past factories) and meets Leadenhall Road at a T-junction. Turn left signed Fosdyke (the first crossing of the Wash); well-signed cycle route 1 is joined here and is followed into Boston. Follow the lane as it twists over drains. Take the first turn off right onto named Middle Marsh Road and follow the 'main' lane which meets the busy A17 at a T-junction. Just before the A17, turn right on a cycle path, cross the River Welland by Fosdyke Bridge and keeping on the cycle path to the right of the main road, shortly turn right on a minor road (Wash Road) signed to Kirton (cycle route sign).

Keep to the 'main' lane for 1.8miles then turn off right onto Low Mill Lane; there's a cycle route sign and a sign to Kirton Marsh here. Follow Low Mill Lane to a T-junction and turn right (sign) on Bucklegate Lane to a T-junction. Turn left on Marsh Road (cycle route sign & sign to Kirton) and follow the 'main' lane to a T-junction in **Frampton**; its church is on the left. Turn right (cycle route sign & sign to Frampton Marsh) then take the first turn off left onto Hall Lane (cycle route sign). Follow Hall Lane to meet Low Road at a T-junction. Turn right (sign) and follow the road in through the outskirts of Boston. The road becomes Wyberton Low Road and reaches traffic lights at a cross-road. Go straight on (there's a pedestrian crossing if needed) along Wyberton Low Road then pass through a gap in a barrier and curve left to a T-junction. Turn right over the bridge to cross South Forty Foot Drain and beyond continue on London Road. Cross a level crossing and continue on London Road which becomes High Street. When the mega A16 road is met, use the pedestrian crossing at the junction to cross into High Street opposite right. Follow High Street (northwards) going straight on (right) at lights and then curving right to cross Town Bridge over The Haven (drain). Very shortly after, turn off left into the Market Place, the centre of Boston (keep left of the ornamental lamps). **Boston** (18.3m, 850ft, 840ft).

Bike Care, 92 The Avenue, March PE15 9PR. Tel. 01354 660 049.

The Cycle Shop, 3 Nene Parade, March PE15 8TD. Tel. 01354 656 150.

Noel Craft Cycles, Mountain Tamers House, Nelson Way, Boston PE21 8TS. Tel. 01205 311 888.

Launchbury's, Old Schoolroom, Pump Square, Boston PE21 6QW. Tel. 01205 334 071.

Day 6: Boston to Caistor (41.9miles, ascent 2730ft, descent 2470ft)

Boston Pass up the left side of the Market Place, keep just to the right of the church and then go just right of straight ahead down the right side of H. Samuel (jeweller) into the pedestrianised passageway called Strait Bargate. Strait Bargate curves right and emerges into Wide Bargate. Keep to the left side of Wide Bargate and get to traffic lights. Turn left into Tawney Street. At traffic lights, Norfolk St which is the A1137 is met; there's a good B&B on the corner. Turn right down the A1137 for 0.3mile to traffic lights and turn left on the B1183 for Horncastle (which can be followed all the way). The B-road follows the west side of Maud Foster Drain northwards. When the B-road curves right to cross the drain and then follow its east side, go straight on (i.e. turn off left) to follow the quieter lane on its west side. (called West Side Drainside); when this lane meets a B-road at a T-junction, turn right to cross the drain, immediately cross a lane entry/exit and re-meet the B1183. Turn left to follow the sign to Horncastle and the B1183 leaves the drain here to go northwards on a road aptly named Seven Mile Straight which passes through **Carrington**. When the B-road meets the A155 at a T-junction, turn left for a few metres then turn off right (Horncastle signs). Go through **Moorby** and past the lovely parkland of the Scrivelsby Estate. When the B-road meets the A153 at a T-junction, turn right. As the road gets into Horncastle, get to traffic lights at a cross-road. Go straight on here (crossing the A158) into Bull Ring (road) and very shortly turn off left at The Bull/Red Lion (inn) into High Street and come to the Market Square in **Horncastle** (18.4m, 1100ft, 1010ft).

Horncastle Continue through the square on the 'major' road, cross the River Bain and reach a cross-road at traffic lights. Get in the right hand lane to turn right onto the A158, signed for Louth; the A-

road is busy and fast. After nearly 3miles, turn off right onto the B1225, signed for Caistor. When the A157 is met at a cross-road, cross to continue on the B1225 opposite (signed for Ludford and Caistor). The B-road meets the A631 at a cross-road and again cross to continue on the B1225 opposite (signed for Caistor). The B1203 is met at a cross-road and again cross to continue on the B1225 opposite. After passing a 'Welcome to Caistor' sign, turn off left just after this on Whitegate Hill (road) and descend to the A46. Cross to South Street opposite and follow it into Caistor's Square. **Caistor** (23.5m, 1630ft, 1460ft).

KAB Mobile Bicycle Mechanic and covers Horncastle area. Tel. 07484 320 603.

Day 7: Caistor to Bainton (47miles, ascent 3275ft, descent 3395ft)

Caistor Pass up the left side of the Square and turn right to a T-junction. Turn right, signed Grimsby. Ascend for 0.5mile to meet the A1173 and turn left signed for Immingham. After 0.8mile leave the A-road as it curves right by going straight on along a minor road. After 0.5mile, when the minor road curves right, turn off left (i.e. go straight on and not signed). Keep to the 'major' road following signs to Kirmington and give way at a cross-road where the A18 is met. Take the road opposite and keeping to the 'major' road follow it to a T-junction just beyond (tiny) **Croxton**. Turn right onto the B1211, signed for Ulceby. Follow the B-road under the A180 and just less than a mile later, turn off left on a minor road, signed for Wootton. Keep going to a turn off left which is ignored but a few metres further on, turn off left (at a triangular junction) signed for Barton & Barrow. Follow the lane (Barton Road) keeping to the 'major' road and following signs to Barton.

When the B1206 is met at a cross-road, take the lane opposite, signed for Barton. As Barton-Upon-Humber is entered, cycle route 1 has been joined and its signs will be followed to and over the Humber Bridge; note that some cycle route signs are missing or turned round. Follow the road in and Caistor Road becomes Whitecross Road. When the A1077 is met at a cross-road, take the road opposite and at a mini-roundabout turn right. Turn off first left into Soutergate (towards the church) and at its end (at a T-junction) turn right briefly then turn off left into Catherine Street. When Queens Street is met (T-junction) turn right to meet Butts Road at a T-junction. Turn left and follow the 'major' road which becomes the B1218 and passes Barton Station. Continue until the road is signed as a 'No Through Road' ahead and turn left by the Sloop Inn into Far Ings Road. Pass under the Humber Bridge and turn immediately left at a walkers/cyclists Humber Bridge sign. Ascend the ramp turning left to the bridge over the Humber. **Humber Bridge (south side)** (16.9m, 940ft, 1230ft).

Humber Bridge (south side) Cross the bridge over the River Humber on the dedicated cyclists/pedestrian track. Over, follow the cycle path down to an access lane into the Humber Bridge Country Park. Turn right for a few metres then go left on a short descending tarmac track to a surfaced track below. Turn left then follow the cycle route 1 sign right to pass under the Humber Bridge and after swing left out into Cliff Top Lane. Shortly at a T-junction turn right (Woodfield Lane). Don't take the next turn off left but leave cycle route 1 (and join Trans-Pennine cycle route 65) by going straight on over the mega A63. Beyond, curve left with the road then take the next turn off right (Cliff Road) signed to the Hessle Foreshore and shortly reach the shoreline of the Humber. Turn right here (still Cliff Road) and pass under the Humber Bridge. Continue to the road end at the Country Park Inn car park. At the end of its car park, pass through a gate onto a track and continue ahead between the shoreline and the railway line. After passing through a barrier, the cycle track diverges from the shoreline and emerges at the end of a short access track which meets a rough lane. Turn left briefly to meet Ings Lane (at the south-east end of North Ferriby). Turn right as directed onto Church Road, almost immediately cross under the railway line and follow the road up to meet the 'major' road in **North Ferriby** (5.5m, 540ft, 465ft).

North Ferriby Leave cycle route 65 by taking the B1231 road opposite which soon crosses over

the A63. Keep ascending on the 'major' road into **Swanland** and Give Way at a T-junction. Turn right briefly then take the next turn off left into Dale Road and follow it to a T-junction. Turn right (signed Willerby) on Swanland Dale (road) for a mile then take the turn off left (Riplingham Road) signed to South Cave. After 2.5miles, take the second turn off right, signed to Little Weighton and follow Rowley Road to a T-junction. Turn right through Little Weighton village but very soon after the Black Horse pub, turn off left onto Walkington Road (signed to Walkington & Beverley). **Little Weighton** (7.9m, 690ft, 540ft).

Little Weighton Follow the major lane with its signs to Walkington and come to a cross-road. Turn right onto the B1230, signed for Beverley. The B-road passes through attractive **Walkington** and continues to traffic lights at a cross-road. Go straight across at the lights (still the B1230) and a cycle path starts on the right. The B-road crosses over the A1079 and beyond, the road leads into Beverley. With the Minster just visible ahead, reach a double mini-roundabout. Want to go straight on, so go left (first exit) at the first then immediately get in the right hand lane at the second for Keldgate (road). Follow Keldgate which becomes Minster Yard South (road) and the Minster is on the left. **Beverley Minster** (5.4m, 280ft, 450ft).

Beverley Minster Just beyond the Minster get to a T-junction and turn left on Eastgate (signed Town Centre). Follow Eastgate to a T-junction. The pedestrianised shopping centre is straight ahead but turn left on the A164 (Lord Roberts Road) which curves right to a mini-roundabout. Go left here and shortly at a cross-road, get in the right hand lane to turn right into Lairgate, signed for York and Drifffield. Keep straight ahead, pass through a gateway entry to the town (lights) and continue straight ahead to a roundabout. Go straight on here (second exit) onto the A1035 signed for Malton; there's a designated cycle path on the right pavement. Shortly reach another roundabout and go straight on (still on the right pavement). After 1.2miles reach another roundabout where a right turn is required onto the B-road to Malton; the cycle path effects this right turn but avoids the roundabout and joins the B-road about 0.4miles beyond the roundabout. Follow the B-road which meets the A614 just south of Bainton. Turn right, signed for Malton, pass through **Bainton** and meet a roundabout. Go straight on (second exit) onto the B1248, signed for Malton and Wolds village (accommodation/food), the end of this stage, is immediately on the left. **Bainton** (11.3m, 825ft, 710ft).

Wilsons Wheels, 89 Grovehill Rd, Beverley HU17 0EJ. Tel. 01482 882 881.

Minster Cycles, 5-7 Norwood, Beverley HU17 9ET. Tel. 01482 867 950.

Beverley Cars & Cycles, 112 Norwood, Beverley HU17 9HL. Tel. 01482 861 222.

Day 8: Bainton to Kilburn (37.7miles, ascent 3260ft, descent 3100ft)

Bainton Continue on the B1248 for Malton and in **Wetwang** immediately before meeting the A166 turn left into Pulham Lane. Turn off first left into Southfield Road but then turn off first right (still Southfield Road) and follow the road as it curves right to meet the A166. Turn left for 0.3mile then turn off right onto the B1248 signed for Malton. When the B1251 is met at a roundabout, go straight on here (second exit) to stay on the B1248. The B-road descends into **North Grimston** and continues into the outskirts of Malton. Go straight on at mini-roundabouts and come to a T-junction. Go right on Wold Street and shortly at the mini-roundabout turn left into Church Street. The road curves right over a level crossing and immediately after, turn left into Norton Road. Follow Norton Road which curves right past the railway station and crosses the River Derwent. Very shortly, just past Yates (big hardware shop), turn half-right up one-way Wells Lane and meet a B-road. Turn left to traffic lights in the centre of **Malton** (17.5m, 1465ft, 1535ft).

Malton At the lights, go straight across onto the B1257 signed for Helmsley. Just follow the B-road which soon crosses over the A64 road. Keep on the B-road and arrive in lovely, classy **Hovingham** (8.2m, 560ft, 515ft).

Hovingham The road turns sharp right as Hovingham is entered and just beyond the corner, at the Worsley Arms Hotel, take the minor road off left (Park Street) signed to Coulton & Easingwold. Pass through stone posts and keep to the 'major' lane following signs to Thirsk and eventually meet the B1363 at a cross-road. Take the road opposite, signed to Thirsk and follow it to a Give Way sign at a cross-road in **Yearsley**. Turn right (signed for Coxwold) but ignore the 1st turn off left signed to Coxwold. Continue, descend a steep hill and near the bottom turn off left on unsigned Colley Broach Road; it's 1.5miles from the right turn at Yearsley and there's a footpath sign opposite the turning. This is a gated, grass down the middle-of-the-road lane that Mr Google hasn't visited; enjoy! When a better road is met after a couple of miles turn right for Coxwold; cycle route 65 is joined here and this plus cycle route 71 will be followed to beyond Northallerton. Keep to the 'major' road through sizeable **Coxwold** and beyond the village take the first turn off right, signed for Kilburn. Follow the 'major' lane, with its views of the White Horse on Sutton Bank, into **Kilburn** (12m, 1235ft, 1050ft).

Northern Ride, 19 Saville St, Malton YO17 7LL. Tel. 01653 699 070.

R. Yates & Sons, Railway St, Malton YO17 7NR. Tel. (cycle dept) 01653 605 400 or 01653 693 215.

Day 9: Kilburn to Barnard Castle (47.4miles, ascent 3900ft, descent 3650ft)

Kilburn Just after the Forresters Arms turn off left, signed for Thirsk. After another 1.5miles turn off right (signed for Local Traffic and cycle route 65) and follow the lane northwards to the A170. Turn left for 0.8mile to a turn off right in **Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe**, signed for Thirlby & Felixkirk (and cycle route 65 sign). Keep to the 'major' lane and in Felixkirk get to a T-junction. **Felixkirk** (5.1m, 530ft, 460ft).

Felixkirk Turn right signed for Kirby Knowle but after 300metres/320yds turn off left (signed Kirby Knowle and cycle route 65). Come to a T-junction in **Kirby Knowle** and turn left onto cycle route 71, signed for Upsall. Take the next turn off right which is in **Upsall**; there's a cycle route sign and it's signed for Knayton. When a cross-road is reached, turn left (signed Knayton) and follow the road over the A19. Just beyond, reach a cross-road and take Allerton Wath Road opposite. Follow the 'major' road into **Northallerton** and meet the A168 at a T-junction. Turn right briefly then turn off left on Racecourse Lane, signed for Bedale & Ripon. On shortly reaching a small roundabout (where the A167 is met) get in the right hand lane to go straight on along Mill Lane. After passing under the railway line and then going over a level crossing, continue for another 130metres/140yds to a mini-roundabout. Turn right here, signed for Yafforth & Richmond. Follow the lane to meet the B6271 at a T-junction.

Turn left, signed for Richmond. Follow the B-road into **Yafforth**. Beyond, keep on the B6271 (so leaving the cycle route). Continue to a right bend before Bolton-on-Swale with two lanes off left, with one signed to Ellerton. If conditions are dry on the ground, take the other left turn (unsurfaced Back Lane) which is shown as a white road – it's quite rough but improves as it swings right and becomes a lane which meets the B6271. The alternative is to continue on the B-road to a T-junction. In both cases, turn left along the B6271 to Richmond. When the B6271 meets the A6136 at traffic lights go straight on to continue on the B-road. Shortly after, the B6271 passes under the A1 and continues through **Brompton-on-Swale**. As the B-road gets into Richmond, there's a noticeable ascent before it meets the A6108. Turn left, go straight on at lights* into Pottergate and continue to a roundabout where turn left. Follow Dundas Street which becomes Frenchgate. On a sharp left corner turn off right up a one-way street (still Frenchgate) and arrive at the Market Place **Richmond** (25.8m, 1880ft, 1820ft).

* the right turn at the lights into Gallowgate (signed to Ravensworth) is the required exit road from Richmond.

Richmond At the far end of the Market Place (by Barclays Bank), turn right (cobble) and on

reaching the far end of the square turn right on a surfaced road which passes between a church on the right and a tall pillar on the left. This continues into (one-way) King Street and at the roundabout go straight ahead (second exit) into Queens Road. Very shortly reach the next roundabout and go straight ahead (second exit). Continue to traffic lights and turn left into Gallowgate, signed for Ravensworth. Ascend the long, steep hill and keep to the 'major' lane until there's a lane off left after 4.3miles, signed to Kirkby Hill and Dalton. Pass through **Kirkby Hill** then **Gayles**. Half a mile beyond Gayles turn off right onto Low Lane and follow to a T-junction. Go right signed for the A66 and shortly reach this A-road. Cross this race track with care (it's in two halves) to Lanehead Lane opposite right, signed to Whorlton (and enter County Durham). After 0.8mile, follow the road as it turns sharp left and just beyond **Hutton Magna** village cross Hutton Beck. Shortly after, turn off left on a lane signed to Wyecliffe and Whorlton. Follow the main lane which turns right after 0.3mile and continues to a T-junction. Turn left, joining cycle route 52 which will be followed into Barnard Castle. Take the second turn off right, signed for Whorlton and cycle route. Cross classy Whorlton Bridge and ascend into **Whorlton**. Take the first turn off left just after the Fernaville's Rest pub (cycle route sign). Follow the lane westwards, passing the Bowes Museum as it enters Barnard Castle. Continue down Newgate to the Market Place; the town centre lies to the right. **Barnard Castle** (16.5m, 1490ft, 1370ft).

Cowley Cycles, 12 Zetland St, Northallerton DL6 1NA. Tel. 01609 776 656.

Arthur Caygill Cycles, Borough Road, Gallowfields Trading Estate, Richmond DL10 4SX. Tel. 01748 825 469.

Day 10: Barnard Castle to Brampton (51miles, ascent 4640ft, descent 4905ft)

Barnard Castle Turn left at the Market Place, signed for Bowes. Follow the A-road as it descends to cross the River Tees. Immediately beyond, swing right with the road (signed for Bowes etc.) but 185metres/200yds later go straight on signed Middleton-in-Teesdale; the A-road to Bowes turns off left here. The B6277 is the 'major' road all the way to Middleton-in-Teesdale and passes through the villages of **Cotherstone**, **Romaldkirk** and **Mickleton**. There's then a crossing of the River Lune followed by a crossing of the River Tees just before arriving at a T-junction in the small town of **Middleton-in-Teesdale** (10.1m, 1090ft, 855ft).

Middleton-in-Teesdale Turn left onto the B6277 for Alston and just follow the 'major' road all the way through **Forest-in-Teesdale** and **Langdon Beck** to the Market Place in **Alston** (21.9m, 2170ft, 1950ft).

Alston Curve left at the Market Place and descend to a T-junction. Turn left, cross the River South Tyne and almost immediately after turn off right onto the A689 signed for Brampton. In **Slaggyford**, ignore the sign off left for cycle route 68 to stay on the (quiet) A689; the cycle route is unsurfaced, gated and very rough and there's a steep ascent to rejoin the A-road! Follow the A689 as it curves left in **Lambley** to run westwards through **Hallbankgate**. Keep to the A-road and at **Milton** go over a level crossing. Beyond continue to meet the (busy) A69 at a T-junction. Turn right briefly then turn off left and follow Station Road to meet the A6071. Turn left for a short distance. Turn left immediately before the Spar shop (into High Cross Street) and at the T-junction at the bottom, turn right into the Market Square (Front Street) in the centre of **Brampton** (19m, 1380ft, 2100ft).

RocktoRoll Cycles, Unit 3b, Townfoot Industrial Estate, Brampton. Tel. 016977 42739. Mob. 07507 883 078.

Day 11: Brampton to Dumfries (42.8miles, ascent 2280ft, descent 2460ft)

Brampton From the Market Square continue along Front Street and re-meet the A6071 at a T-

junction. Turn left but almost immediately get in the right hand lane to turn off right onto the A6071 (for Longtown). Follow the A6071 to a T-junction with the A7 in Longtown. Turn right on the A7 for a short distance into the centre of **Longtown** (11.1m, 560ft, 740ft).

Longtown Continue on the A7 over the River Esk then shortly turn off left onto the A6071 for Gretna. Keep to the 'major' road to cross the M6 and over, the A6071 becomes the B7076. Cross the River Sark and enter Scotland (sign). Continue on the B-road to a roundabout and take the second exit onto the B721 signed for Annan; the B721 passes to the left of The Gretna Inn. Follow the B-road into **Gretna** (4.3m, 240ft, 220ft).

Gretna Shortly in Gretna come to traffic lights. Turn left here down Central Avenue (cycle route 7) and keeping straight on at a cross-road, reach a T-junction at the bottom. Turn right and keeping to the 'major' lane, cross Kirtle Water and continue to re-meet the B721 at a T-junction, Turn left on the B-road (cycle route 7). Pass through **Eastriggs** then **Dornock** and continue on the B-road following signs to Annan. As Annan is approached go left at a mini-roundabout (1st exit). At the next roundabout, go straight on (3rd exit) to continue on the B721. Continue on the B-road into the centre of **Annan** (8.3m, 360ft, 370ft).

Annan At traffic lights in the centre go straight on (signed for Dumfries), cross the River Annan and shortly after turn off left onto the B724 signed for Cummertrees. Just before **Cummertrees** village, pass under a railway line and pass under the line again at the end of the village. Continue on the B-road and once again pass under the railway line. Take the next road off left onto Roxburgh's Road (opposite a large farm on the right of B-road). Shortly take the first turn off right (rejoining cycle route 7). Keeping to the 'major' lane, pass through **Ruthwell** and continue westwards to meet the B725 on a bend. Turn left and follow the B725 westwards to a T-junction at **Bankend**.

Bankhead Leave cycle route 7 by turning right (signed for Dumfries). Follow the 'major' road (Bankend Road), pass a war memorial and 3miles beyond there's a (standard) triangular road sign indicating a turn off left. Take this turn off onto Stanehouse Loaning (lane). When this lane shortly meets the B725 (and cycle route 7) at a T-junction, turn right on the B725. After just over 0.5mile turn off left at a roundabout (1st exit) onto Kingholm Loaning. The road swings right when it reaches the River Nith and shortly beyond at The Swan (eating place), turn off left at a cycle path sign and follow the riverside cycle path. It leads through a parking area to meet the the A756 at traffic lights; St Michael's road bridge is just to the left. Go straight on into Dockhead (road) and keep with the cycle path alongside the river. As the next road bridge over the Nith is approached, join the road and meet the A780 at lights. To the A780, the stage end, **Dumfries** (19.1m, 1120ft, 1130ft).

*DG2 Wheels, 12-14 Terregles St, Dumfries DG2 9AB. Tel. 01387 256 808. Mob. 07585 308 518.
C&G Cycle Centre, 10 Academy St, Dumfries DG1 1BY. Tel. 01387 9 483.*

Day 12: Dumfries to Cumnock (46.6miles, ascent 4245ft, descent 3900ft)

Dumfries At the traffic lights, turn right onto Buccleuch Street (the A780). The road curves right then left round a church; the pedestrianised zone off right here leads through the town centre. Just past the church, the C&G Cycle Centre is on the right and very shortly after go straight on at lights (signed for Edinburgh and Glasgow). Shortly at the next set of lights turn right into Lovers Walk which has a lot of accommodation; there's a church on the right corner at the turning. Immediately at the entry to the railway station take the cycle path off left. This shortly emerges on the A701. Turn right for 240metres/260yds crossing the railway line then take a track off right (cycle route sign) and after a brief distance turn first left marked as a cycle route to Moffat Road and Locharbriggs. Follow it, cross Moffat Road then cross an estate road and reach the bridge over the A75 where there's a descending spiral on the far side; follow signs to Locharbriggs at forks. Come off the cycle track at the next road crossing, Tinwald Downs Road. Turn left to shortly meet the

A701 at a roundabout and turn right (signed for Glasgow & Edinburgh) but after 0.2 mile take the first turn off left onto a minor road signed to Kirkton. Follow the 'major' road through **Kirkton, Duncow, Dalswinton** and into **Auldgirith**. In Auldgirith when the road curves left to the A76, turn off right (past a row of single storey houses) and follow the road then cycle path to the A76. Turn right for 1.5miles to the first turn off left on a (minor) minor road; the turn off is immediately after a bus stop on the left. After passing a few houses, the lane ascends to reveal fabulous views. At a junction, the lane continues opposite left. The lane meets and crosses the B731 then ascends steeply along Townhead Street before curving right to the monument-roundabout with the A76 in the centre of **Thornhill** (16.7m, 1440ft, 1225ft).

Thornhill Turn left on the A76 for 7.8miles then turn off left on a minor road; it's before an overtaking lane and just before a sign to a forest picnic area and toilet. The lane immediately crosses the River Nith on a stone bridge and immediately over, turn off right on a (gentle) lane which follows the west side of the Nith. Keep with the Nith, ignore all left turn-offs and take the next lane crossing of the Nith on another stone bridge to re-meet the A76. Turn left into **Sanquhar** (12.4m, 1380ft, 1155ft).

Sanquhar Immediately before the Market Place building (and immediately after the Airte Cafe), turn left into South Lochan and follow this road as it curves right becoming Queen's Road. At a T-junction, turn left (still Queen's Road). The road descends, becomes minor and curves right to reach a T-junction. Here, turn left crossing the River Nith on a substantial stone bridge. At the lane junction immediately beyond, turn off right, north-westwards. Follow the 'major' lane and eventually re-meet the A76 (5miles from Sanquhar). Turn left, signed Kilmarnock and follow the A76 into **New Cumnock**. In New Cumnock, at a mini-roundabout where the A76 goes right, turn off left onto the B741 signed to Dalmellington. Follow the B-road for 0.8mile and turn off right on a minor road (Boig Road). Keep on the 'major' road following signs to Cumnock. The road becomes Glaisnock Road and is followed to a roundabout with the A76. Go straight on here onto the B7083 (signed for Cumnock). Follow the B-road into Cumnock. When Ayr is signed off left, go straight on at the lights signed Town Centre but almost immediately as the road bends right, get off bikes and wheel them a short distance up the 'No Entry' road (the B7083). The Royal Hotel (accommodation) is just round the corner on the right. **Cumnock** (17.5m, 1425ft, 1520ft).

Rik's Bike Shed, Drumlanrig Castle, Thornhill DG3 4AQ. Tel. 01848 330 080. Mob. 07722 828139.

Day 13: Cumnock to Sannox (Isle of Arran) (42.5miles, ascent 2635ft, descent 2980ft)

Cumnock Wheel bikes further up the road for a few metres and take first road off on the right (Barrhill Road and one-way in the bike direction); it's signed to the A70. Turn left on the A70 briefly then turn off right (at lights) onto the B7083, signed for Auchinleck. Go straight on at a mini-roundabout to stay on the B7083. In **Auckinleck**, go straight on at lights (there's a big Tesco's to the right) then shortly come to a mini-roundabout with the B705 signed off right to Catrine. Take this (it's the major B-road) following it through **Catrine** and on to meet the A76. Turn right for 0.3mile to lights at a cross-road in the centre of **Mauchline** (8.1m, 685ft, 585ft).

Mauchline Continue straight ahead on the A76 for 0.5mile then turn off left signed for Tarbolton; there's a Burns Memorial Tower on the corner. Follow the road and at a cross-road (where the B744 is signed right and straight on), go straight on following the sign to Tarbolton. However very shortly after, take the first turn off right and follow the lane to the A719. Turn left (signed Ayr) and take the second turn off right (signed to Craigie). Keep to the 'major' road which bends left to go westwards and meet the B730. Turn right signed for Kilmarnock. Follow the B-road to a roundabout. Take the first exit (left) on a road which soon curves right to cross over the mega A77 and reach a roundabout on the other side. Turn left here (1st exit) onto the B730 to Dundonald. At a Give Way sign, turn right signed Dundonald but almost immediately turn off left to stay on the B730 (signed

Dundonald). Keep straight on at a mini-roundabout and enter **Dundonald** (11m, 625ft, 975ft).

Dundonald Continue on the B730 beyond Dundonald and shortly meet the A759. Continue on the B730 opposite right; there's a (good) garden centre cafe on the right corner. After crossing the River Irvine, the B-road passes under the A71. Beyond, keep to the 'major' road which goes straight on to meet the B7081 at traffic lights. Take the road opposite (Station Brae) and follow the road down to and across Annick Water. Just beyond turn left on a tarmac path with a cycle route 73 sign; this well-signed cycle route is taken all the way to Ardrossan and keeps cyclists out of the traffic. The cycle path initially follows a disused railway line. At a triangular track junction, go left and very shortly cross Annick Water. Continue on the main path which eventually comes close to Annick Water's left bank (water is on the right). The cycle path now follows the line of Annick Water, passing beneath a dual carriageway B-road and then the A78 dual trunk road. Beyond, when the cycle path rises to emerge on the B7081 road, turn right to cross Annick Water and then immediately turn off left on the continuation of the cycle path but now along Annick Water's right bank.

The path crosses under the A71 and soon goes half-right ascending to meet the A71 at a pedestrian crossing. Cross, turn left and just before the modern bridge turn off right on a tarmac path along the River Irvine's right bank (cycle sign). Soon cross to the opposite bank on a footbridge (as signed) and over, immediately turn right to follow the left bank (including passing under a building!). When the cycle path meets Waterside (road) turn right along this road to a footbridge off right, signed 9miles to Ardrossan; cycle route 7 is joined here. Across, turn left. The cycle path follows the line of the river's right bank. After passing under the A737, the path climbs above the right bank and eventually curves left to a railway line. From here, the path turns away from the railway line to a golf course access lane which it crosses. The cycle track leads back to the railway line which it then follows before turning to emerge on a Recycling Centre access lane. The path continues opposite right, running alongside (and to the left of) the B779.

The River Garnock is crossed on Garnock Bridge and immediately over, turn off right on a tarmac path which passes under the A78 then leads back to the River Garnock's left bank. The left bank is now followed to a track junction with a footbridge off right. Don't cross but take the track by the Garnock river. Shortly, cycle routes 7 and 73 part with route 73 continuing westwards to meet the B779; route 7 turns right to go northwards. Cross the B779 to the path continuation opposite and the path shortly curves left to emerge at a lane corner. Take Byrehill Road opposite left, pass under a railway line and later the A78. The lane, now called Dubbs Road, passes under another railway line. and then continues westwards to meet the B752 at a T-junction. The cycle path continues opposite right through Ardeer Park. Here, at an unsigned junction go straight on. The track then curves right to a track junction with the end of Moorpark Road East just to the left.

Turn up Moorpark Road East. Shortly reach a cross-road and turn left into Station Road. Cross over the level crossing (Stevenston station is just to the left) and immediately over turn right into George Street. When the road shortly finishes, continue on the cycle path beside the railway line which meets Seaview Road. The cycle route now keeps with the promenade. Eventually, when the promenade can no longer be followed join Princes Street on the right (it's the B780). Princes Street quickly curves right, crosses a level crossing and is followed to a cross-road with lights (the centre of Ardrossan). Go left here into Harbour Street (still the B780) and follow to a roundabout (there's an ASDA supermarket with a cafe just before it on the left). Go straight on at the roundabout, signed Arran Ferry, cross a level crossing and follow the road as it curves right and continue to the Caledonian MacBrayne ticket office. **Ardrossan Ferry** (15.4m, 700ft, 820ft).

Ardrossan Ferry to Brodick on Isle of Arran – takes just over an hour with sailings at 09:45, 11:05, 12:30, 13:50, 15:20, 18:00. Additional sailing at 16:40 on Mon-Wed & Sat. Same timetable for Sunday but no 13:50 boat. Check in closes 10mins before departure for passengers, 30mins for vehicles. 35miles to Ardrossan from Cumnock. **Brodick on Isle of Arran**

Brodick (Isle of Arran) After disembarking, follow the 'All Traffic' sign and at a Give Way sign turn right to meet the A841. Turn right on the main road (which is the major road on the island) and follow the A841 with signs to Corrie and Lochranza. The road follows the coast through **Corrie** to **Sannox** (8m, 625ft, 600ft).

Irvine Cycles, 23 Eglinton St, Irvine KA12 8AX. Tel. 01294 272 712.

Brodick Cycles, Roselynn, Isle of Arran KA27 8DL. Tel. 01770 302 460. (opposite village hall).

Day 14: Sannox (Arran) to Kilmartin (mainland) (39.2miles, ascent 4265ft, descent 4175ft)

Sannox Continue on the A841 road which after Sannox turns west-northwest, inland, to reach (small) **Lochranza Pier** (7m, 900ft, 925ft)

Lochranza ferry across Kilbrannan Sound to Claonaig in the Mull of Kintyre (mainland) - takes 30minutes. Daily sailings 09:30, 10:45, 12:00, 13:15, 14:30 (passenger numbers may be restricted), 15:45, 17:05, 18:25. Check in closes 10mins before sailing. **Claonaig (mainland) in Mull of Kintyre**

Claonaig (Mull of Kintyre) The pier meet the single track B8001. Turn left north-westwards (signed for Tarbert). When it meets a road at a T-junction, turn right signed B8001 to Tarbert (and cycle route sign). Follow the B-road to meet the A83 (5.2m from Claonaig). Turn right, signed for Glasgow and follow it into **Tarbert** (10.6m, 1140ft, 1115ft).

Tarbert The A83 is the major road through Tarbert and stay on this to **Ardrishaig**. Here turn left at a cycle route 78 sign to Lochgilphead. Proceed up East Bank Road but when the road turns left to cross the Crinan Canal, go straight on along the canal towpath following cycle route 78 signs (canal on left). After 1.5miles (with a bridge over the canal) there's a signed turn off for Lochgilphead 0.5mile away. **Lochgilphead turn off** (13.1m, 1480ft, 1440ft).

Lochgilphead turn off Stay on the excellent towpath until its termination after another 2.4miles on the B841. Turn right on the B-road for 280metres/300yds and meet the A816. Turn left signed for Oban. This is a quiet A-road but does pass through one or two small settlements, the first of which is **Kilmartin** (8.5m, 745ft, 695ft).

Crinan Cycles, 34 Argyll St, Lochgilphead PA31 8NE. Tel. 01546 603 511.

Day 15: Kilmartin to Lochaline (mainland) (35miles, ascent 4545ft, descent 4395ft)

Kilmartin Continue on the A816. The next settlement is **Arduaine** and then comes Kilmelford village which has a hotel and an excellent cafe at the general store/Post Office just past the church. **Kilmelford** (13.8m, 1785ft, 1800ft).

Kilmelford Keep on the A816. When the road finally gets to Oban, cross a stream then pass the 'No Entry' High Street on the left then get in the left hand lane and turn left into (one-way) Albany Street (signed to Gallanach). Keep going following signs to the ferry, cross over the railway line. Then follow the road as it curves right into Alma Crescent and after a very short distance turn off right to follow parallel to the railway line and reach the Ferry Terminal building. **Oban Ferry** (15.5m, 2175ft, 2025ft)

Oban ferry to Craignure on Isle of Mull – takes just under an hour. Daily sailings 09:50, 11:10, 12:20, 14:00, 15:55, 17:00, 18:10. Check in closes 10mins before sailing. Nearly 30miles with 3960ft ascent to reach Oban. **Craignure on Isle of Mull**

Craignure At the top of the pier meet the A849 and turn right (signed Salen) north-westwards. After 4.8miles turn off right onto the A884, signed to 'Lochaline Car Ferry' and after nearly a mile arrive at the end of the road and the **Fishnish Bay Ferry** (5.7m, 585ft, 570ft).

Fishnish Bay Ferry across the Sound of Mull to Lochaline (mainland) – takes 18mins. Sailings Mon-Sat 10:00, 10:45, 11:30, 12:15, 13:10, 14:50, 15:40 (passenger numbers may be restricted), 16:25, 17:10, 18:15. Sailings on Sunday 10:25, 11:10, 13:10, 14:10, 15:10, 16:25, 17:10, 18:05. Check in closes 10mins before sailing. **Lochaline (mainland)**.

David Graham Cycles, 13-15 Combie St, Oban PA34 4HN. Tel. 01631 562 069.
Oban Cycles, 87 George St, Oban PA34 5NN. Tel. 01631 566 033.

Day 16: Lochaline to Acharacle (31.6miles, ascent 4280ft, descent 4260ft)

Lochaline (mainland) From the pier follow the road up (crossing the yellow cross hatch box lines) and meet the (single track) A884, Turn right, signed Strontian. Follow the A884 for 18.3miles, cross the Carnoch River and just beyond meet the A861 at a T-junction. Turn left to **Strontian** (20.3m, 2775ft, 2755ft).

Strontian Continue on the A861. There are a couple of small settlements on the road. The first is **Salen** (9.5m, 1315ft, 1260ft).

Salen Continue on the A861 through scattered **Ardshealach** to Acharachle where there's hotel accommodation and a village store. **Acharacle** (1.8m, 190ft, 245ft).

Day 17: Acharacle to Mallaig (35.4miles, ascent 4995ft, descent 4985ft)

Acharacle Continue on the A861 through **Mingarry** and on to the small settlement of Glenuig which has a community shop and inn. **Glenuig** (11.5m, 1615ft, 1615ft).

Glenuig Continue on the A861 and meet the A830 at **Lochailort** (8m, 990ft, 900ft).

Lochailort Turn left on the A830, signed to Mallaig. Divert left to **Arisaig** village which has a good cafe. Continue on the 'major' road through the village which ascends back to the main road and turn left. **Arisaig** (8.8m, 1610ft, 1595ft).

Arisaig Continue on the A830 to a roundabout in Mallaig. Straight on (2nd exit) is the **Mallaig Ferry** (7.1m, 780ft, 875ft).

Day 18: Mallaig (mainland) to Strathcarron (41.3miles, ascent 5020ft, descent 5000ft)

Mallaig Ferry across the Sound of Sleat to Armadale on the Isle of Skye – takes 45mins. Sailings Mon-Sat 09:40, 11:00, 12:00, 13:30, 14:00, 15:20, 16:00, 18:10. Check in closes 10mins before sailing. **Armadale on Isle of Skye**

Armadale Disembark and follow the road from the pier and turn right onto the A851. Keep to 'major' road which initially goes northwards along the coast (sea on right); there seem to be few on-route refreshment places through Skye so the excellent cafe at the Torabhaig Distillery is recommended. When the A851 meets the A87 at a T-junction, turn right (signed Kyle of Lochalsh) to the Kyleakin Roundabout and take 1st exit. Use the cycle path on the left on roundabout approach then cross the 1st exit to the cycle path on the right. **Kyleakin Roundabout** (20.6m, 1815ft, 1740ft)

Kyleakin Roundabout stay on the A87 over Skye Bridge (cycle path continues on right after bridge) into **Kyle of Lochalsh** (1.6m, 175ft, 240ft).

Kyle of Lochalsh Follow the A87 and after 5½miles at **Auchtertyre** turn off left onto the A890 (signed to Gairloch & Lochcarron) and very shortly at a T-junction turn left again. Stay on the A890 to **Strathcarron** (19.1m, 3030ft, 3020ft).

*Alternative route for **Kyle of Lochalsh to Strathcarron***

The A87 is quite busy. So in retrospect, a route via quiet lanes towards Plockton and through the

village of Achmore to the A890 as described next is preferable. It saves a mile on distance while there's a very small saving in the ascent and descent.

Kyle of Lochalsh Over the bridge, shortly, at traffic lights, turn left off the A87 up one-way Main Street, signed for Plockton. At a T-junction, turn right signed for Plockton. Shortly cross the railway line and almost immediately reach another T-junction. Turn left, signed for Plockton. Very shortly turn off left into Church Road and keeping to the 'major' road reach a T-junction. Turn left and keeping to the 'major' road reach a T-junction. Turn left, signed Plockton 2m but shortly turn off right, signed for Achmore. Follow the lane, ignore a turn off right to Achnandarach and keep on past Loch Lundie to a lane junction. Plockton is signed off left but take the right fork signed for Achmore. Keep right at the next fork (left leads to a railway station) and keeping to the 'major' road pass through **Achmore** village to meet the A890 road beyond. Turn left on the A890 and follow it to **Strathcarron**.

Day 19: Strathcarron to Gairloch (47.8miles, ascent 4920ft, descent 4865ft)

Strathcarron Continue on the A890 and after 1mile reach a T-junction. Turn right, signed Achnasheen and Gairloch, to stay on the A890. After 18miles reach Achnasheen and meet the A832 at a roundabout. Turn left (1st exit) on the A832 (signed to Gairloch & Kinlochewe) and follow the main road to **Kinlochewe** (28.2m, 2815ft, 2740ft). Kinlochewe's (popular) Whistle Stop cafe is recommended.

Kinlochewe The A832 is the major road in Kinlochewe and continue straight ahead on this (signed Gairloch) to **Gairloch** (19.6m, 2105ft, 2125ft).

West Coast Cycling, Hallin, Kinlochewe, Wester Ross IV22 2PA. Tel. 01855 811 032; Mob. 0774 224 7617. Would be prepared to do emergency repair but not always at Kinlochewe base.

Day 20: Gairloch to Lael (45.9miles, ascent 5455ft, descent 5340ft)

Gairloch Continue on the A832 passing through **Poolewe** and **Laide** (which has a General Stores/Post Office with a tea/coffee drinks machine and it stocks sandwiches); this will be the only place for refreshments if it's a Dundonnell Hotel closed day. Continue from Laide on the A832 along Gruinard Bay to the **Dundonnell Hotel** (29.5m, 3420ft, 3460ft).

Dundonnell Hotel Continue on the A832 passing the entry to the Corrieshalloch Gorge (worth visiting). A shortish distance beyond meet the more major A835 at the T-junction named **Braemore Junction** (13.9m, 1880ft, 1255ft).

Braemore Junction turn left on the A835 to **Lael** (2.5m, 155ft, 625ft).

Day 21: Lael to Unapool (42.2miles, ascent 4860ft, descent 4950ft)

Lael Continue on the A835 into **Ullapool** (9.8m, 1145ft, 1290ft).

Ullapool Keep to the 'major' A835 road which turns right signed for Kylesku (but turn off left along the water front for the main part of the town). This is a lonely A-road but after 14miles, pass the Elphin Tearooms on the right. Meet the A837 at a T-junction named **Ledmore Junction** (17.4m, 2290ft, 1835ft).

Ledmore Junction Turn left (northwards) on the A837 signed to Kylesku. Inchnadamph has a hotel on the right. **Inchnadamph** (6m, 295ft, 525ft).

Inchnadamph Continue on the A837 to where the A894 starts at **Skiag Bridge** (2.1m, 230ft, 235ft).

Skiag Bridge Turn off right onto the A894 (signed for Kylesku & Scourie). There's a noticeable

ascent followed by a long descent into **Unapool** (6.9m, 900ft, 1065ft).

Day 22: Unapool to Durness (35.1miles, ascent 4260ft, descent 4185ft)

Unapool Continue on the A894 to **Scourie** (9.9m, 1590ft, 1595ft); Scourie has a Spar shop and a nearby hotel.

Scourie Keep on along the A894 to **Laxford Bridge** (6.6m, 770ft, 775ft).

Laxford Bridge At Laxford Bridge keep to the major A-road which becomes the A838 signed to Durness. Follow the A838 into **Rhiconich** (4.6m, 610ft, 590ft).

Rhiconich Continue on the A838 with its big climb out of Rhiconich. As **Keoldale** is passed, check on the ferry schedule, MOD activity etc. Continue on the A838 into **Durness** (14m, 1290ft, 1225ft).

Barnes Bits & Bikes, Scourie IV27 4SX; there's a sign in the village. Tel. 01971 502 259.

Day 23: Durness to Cape Wrath and back (26.8miles, ascent 2935ft, descent 2935ft)

Durness take the A838 back to **Keoldale Pier** (2.3m, 150ft, 255ft).

Ferry across Kyle of Durness at 09:00 – takes 10mins and crossing dependent on tide and wind conditions. No other ferry crossing is possible. Before taking morning ferry (if it runs), need to check with ferryman that he will be operating across the Kyle in the afternoon. Need to get 16:00 boat back and need to be at jetty by 15:30 to ensure getting it.

Jetty on west side of Kyle take the lane to Cape Wrath; the lane to the lighthouse is sufficiently rough that care is needed not to damage the bike or to part company with it, so progress will be slow. **Cape Wrath** (11.1m, 1440ft, 1090ft).

Cape Wrath return by the lane to the **Jetty on west side of Kyle** by 15:30 for 16:00 ferry (11.1m, 1090ft, 1440ft).

Ferry across Kyle of Durness. Return to the east side of Kyle on 16:00 ferry

Keoldale Pier take the A838 back to **Durness** (2.3m, 255ft, 150ft).