

ADVANCED RIDES

CYCLING ON & OFF THE
Weavers
Wheel

by **KEVIN
RIDDEHOUGH**

K. Riddehough

A series of cycle routes
starting and finishing in
Blackburn with Darwen

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN
CONNECT

As I started to put these routes together I didn't realise just how difficult it would prove to be.

It wasn't the actual act of mapping the routes and taking the reader through turn by turn routes, that was the easy part. What has proved to be a really tough task has been deciding which routes to include and harder still, which to leave out!

I've been cycling now for many years and I'm very happy to say that for the majority of those countless thousands of miles I've really enjoyed the riding.

How could I or anybody else fail to enjoy the areas that surround us? In Lancashire we have the enviable position of being spoilt for choice on where to ride on any given day.

Whichever route I choose to ride the one thing that I'm sure of finding in abundance is hills, and lots of them, but don't let this put you off, the rewards for your efforts are the views that could adorn any of the finest calendars that we buy each year. With a little bit of patience and riding at a pace to suit you, there's no reason why you can't begin to enjoy hill climbing as part of your rides.

I couldn't begin to compile a list of my favourite routes without mentioning a huge thanks to a few guys who have ridden regularly with me: Craig (satnav) Rawcliffe, Shutts, Gilly, Dave Southward, Kev Buck & my wife Victoria. The above first mentioned is one of the greatest inspirations to anyone who chooses to ride a bike. His vast knowledge of not only routes but all things cycling has become stuff of legends within our group. To all others mentioned, and sorry for those missed out, it really is a constant source of pleasure riding with you. I also couldn't forgive myself if I wasn't to give a very special thanks and a mention to somebody who's been a great inspiration to me. James Syson of BwD has unrivalled enthusiasm when it comes to encouraging people to take up alternative travel and, for me he's been a constant guide, thanks James.

When we get a new rider join us I often hang back and chat with them trying to find out general information but mainly what they get out of cycling. The answer more often than not is always the same. It's not just about the cycling, it's also and often more importantly about the camaraderie. We've developed our own unique brand of welcoming new riders who join us, and its thanks largely to the above guys and those I've missed out who have created this.

This isn't unique to our group though and, cycling seems to attract and nurture the social side of people.

So, along with my wife Victoria, we've enjoyed over the last several years encouraging new or returning riders. In particular, we try and encourage families to get out and about and ride together as a family. We've enjoyed some fantastic rides with our 10-year-old daughter, Summer. You'd be amazed at just how resilient younger kids can be and often will be still going strong when the adults are beginning to flag a little.

A ten-mile ride is possible for even the youngest riders, all we need to do is make it fun, or better still an exciting adventure. Riding on the road with youngsters is a very real hazard and I wouldn't suggest this to just anyone, but even this with the right amount of care and planning is an achievable goal for you.

In compiling these rides I set myself the challenge that each route should achieve four objectives which I feel could help encourage local people to consider cycling:

- 1 Through routes that are accessible to all levels, I want to encourage as many riders to experience and enjoy the benefits of a simple bike ride.
- 2 By gradually building confidence on the bike I want to give riders the self-belief that they can go that little bit further next time they venture out, and maybe even think of swapping their existing journey plans one day a week to riding to school or work.
- 3 With clever use of local cycle paths and quiet lanes, I want to show riders just what's on offer just a very short distance out of our town centres.
- 4 In completing each section, I want to inspire riders to have a go at the routes in the next section, and in doing so work their way towards the advanced rides.

We are truly blessed in the area we live in. I couldn't think of a nicer way of travelling around on these routes than by bike. In the warmer months, a ride into the countryside is probably the best stress buster I can have. But don't just take my word, have a ride and see for yourself.

Also why not download for free the new and brilliant Cycling App for Blackburn with Darwen and enjoy reading about these rides at any time.



Kevin Riddehough

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In February 1894 in Birmingham, a meeting was called by Tom Groom to talk about cycling and how working people could benefit.

That meeting in Birmingham 122 years ago established an early social movement for health and the club they set up was joined by 69 more across the country by 1897. Cycling was a way of getting around from which almost everyone could benefit and “it offered to members of a cycling club the health and freedom of the open road in the company of others of like mind”.

Rolling forward to 2017, it's clear that those cycling clubs embodied the spirit of the five ways to wellbeing, more than 120 years ago, finding ways for working men and women to connect, be active, notice, learn and give. However, we live in a different era and while life expectancy continues to increase, the burden of non-communicable disease continues to grow.

Physical inactivity is a major risk factor for 6% of global mortality, and fourth major risk after high blood pressure (13%), tobacco use (9%) and high blood glucose (6%). Levels are growing and acting as a driver for non-communicable disease including diabetes and cancers, and for other health risk factors including increased blood pressure, blood sugar and obesity. Physical inactivity is the leading cause of the burden of 21-25% of breast and colon cancers; more than a quarter of all diabetes (27%) and almost a third of all ischaemic heart disease (30%).

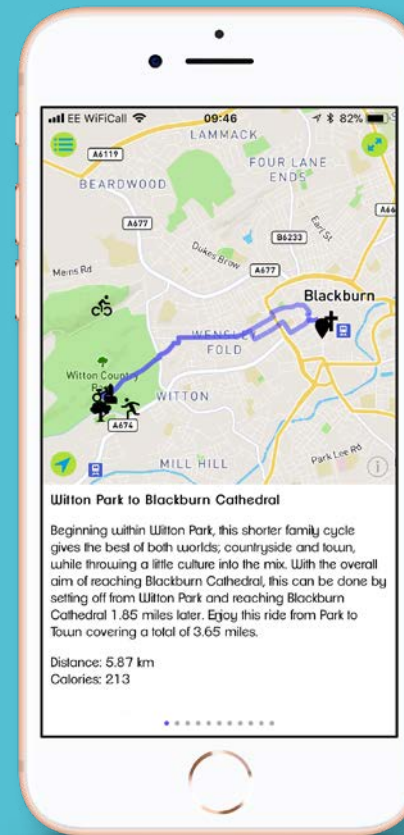
In the UK, physical inactivity plays a major role in the burden of disease and its impact on the Health and Social Care system and the economy, with estimated spending of £1bn on ill health due to physical inactivity. It has been estimated that significant increases in walking and cycling would save £17bn for the health service in England and Wales.

There is strong and consistent evidence that increasing physical activity participation will reduce future risk for all-cause mortality and non-communicable diseases including coronary heart disease and stroke, diabetes, respiratory diseases and cancers, hypertension, colon cancer, breast cancer and depression.

This booklet should provide great inspiration to cyclists and non-cyclists alike to try out some of the wonderful local routes. The Weavers Wheel is a fabulous local resource and these routes which run around it and out from it confirm Blackburn as a great place to cycle however far you want to go. So in the words of the world's greatest ever cyclist “Ride as much or as little, or as long or as short as you feel. But ride” (Eddy Merckx). As Hippocrates acknowledged more than 2,400 years ago the right amount of exercise is part of a safe route to health.

Ken Barnsley, Public Health, BwD

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The app is **FREE** to download on all Apple and Android phones and can be found on the Apple store or Google Play Store by searching '**Connect East Lancashire Cycle App**'.

Alternatively scan the QR codes below, visit or visit our website:

bwdconnect.org.uk



APPLE APP



ANDROID APP



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BWDCONNECT.ORG.UK

ADVANCED LEVEL RIDES

Up next are the Advanced Level Rides – come on you can do it!

Moving up to the more advanced level rides, you're in for some **delightful cycling routes**. All of the routes in this section use a mix of main road and quiet lanes. I keep the use of **main roads** down as much as I can, cycling is after all a **social** thing and using quiet lanes allows us to have a **chat while you ride**.

In this section the step by step instruction will take on a little less of turn by turn instructions and relies more on giving general direction of where you're heading for the next several miles. This makes route finding and riding the route a little more **enjoyable**.

Some of the rides will take you off the beaten track so you'll need to carry some basic spares with you. There's a **café stop** on each route, some of these have great pedigree as a cycling café stop.

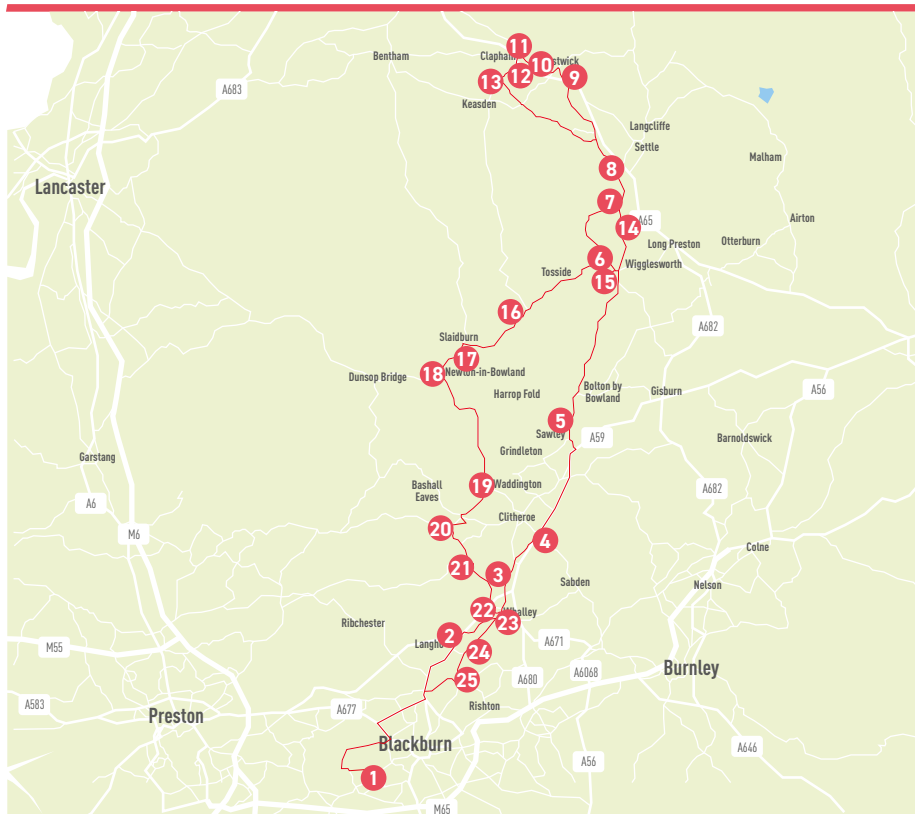
It's been extremely hard to decide not so much which routes to put in this section but more as to which I leave out. I've been very lucky to have ridden some of the finest lanes around **Lancashire** and **Yorkshire** hopefully I've chosen a good selection to share with you here.

RIDE NO.	RIDES	DISTANCE	PAGE
ADVANCED LEVEL RIDES			
12	Brownhill to Clapham, back via Eldroth, Tosside, Slaidburn & Waddington	113km	8
13	Scorton for refreshments from Witton Park	94km	12
14	Malham Cove, Langcliffe, Settle and back from Sunnybower	99km	14
15	A Stonyhurst delight via Hurst Green, Chaigley & back via Jeffrey Hill & Painter Wood	49km	18
16	Wheelton, Rivington, Belmont, back via Chapelton	59km	20
17	Pendle Hill spectacular from Whitebirk	54km	22
18	Ribblehead Classic via Clapham & Ingleton & back via Horton in Ribblesdale & Settle	156km	24

RIDE 12 BROWNHILL TO CLAPHAM & BACK

VIA ELDROTH, TOSSIDE, SLAIDBURN & WADDINGTON

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Café stops: **Clapham, Tosside, Slaidburn & Waddington**

Facilities en-route: **Café at Witton Park Pavillion**
Toilets at Witton Park

RIDE 12 BROWNHILL TO CLAPHAM & BACK

I have started this section with a full day classic taking you out through the Ribble Valley and just flirting with the Yorkshire Dales before returning through the majestic Forest of Bowland and heading up and over the impressive Waddington Fell.

A lengthy ride with a few lumps to climb you'll be in danger here of overdosing on scenery and quiet lanes that are some of my favourite.

There's a choice of café stops. You can stop at the Reading Room at Clapham or if you wanted to continue to Tosside which is a Café I strongly recommend you visit or onto Slaidburn where there's also a great little café. Another option is the popular cyclist's café at Waddington; all are good and cycle friendly too.

1 Starting from the bottom of Pleckgate Road near the Knowles Arms head out through Brownhill and follow Spur G signs to the main A666 continuing on through to Langho.

2 Just after you go under the railway bridge, take a right turn to avoid the main roundabout. This brings you out near the Petre Arms, continue now down through Whalley centre and out through Barrow.

3 As you pass the Clitheroe Golf Club you come to a junction. Cross this road heading towards an iron gate on a path. This is the old section of the A59 and will keep you off the main by-pass for a while. A lovely little section, follow this all the way crossing two main roads until you come out onto the main A59.

4 Turn left and follow this for about 3 miles turning left when you see the sign for Sawley. Passing the remains of a Cistercian Abbey founded in 1148 set within the dramatic back drop of Pendle.

5 Follow these lanes through Sawley (over the bridge), Forest Beck and out towards Wigglesworth.

6 Before reaching Wigglesworth you will take a superb quiet lane over to Rathmell. Turn right at the junction and then take an immediate left.

7 At the junction where the Rathmell Reading rooms is situated, take a left onto Main Street that will take you down to the A65.

8 Turn left and follow the main road for a short distance taking the first left off the main road. You are now following these lanes that run parallel with the A65.

9 On meeting the A65 again cross this busy road with care and follow the signs for Austwick. Once you reach the little village follow signs for Clapham (heading west).

10 When you reach the main A65 take the cycle path on your right saving you having to ride along the busy road. At the end pick up the quiet lane again and continue along to Clapham for a well-deserved break.

11 Leaving here we follow for a short while the Way of the Roses route 68 taking us over once again the busy A65 to Clapham Train Station.

12 As we descend down past Clapham station on our right we pass under the railway and then over the River Wenning, take the next junction on our left signed to Settle (Lawsings Brow).

13 At the next junction turn left to go under the railway bridge heading towards Eldroth.

14 Follow this series of lanes, heading towards Settle. Soon you will pick up your outbound route, turn right at this junction (onto Paley Green Lane) and retrace your steps via the A65 section and then onto Rathmell. When you reach the Reading Room here, do not turn right to follow your outbound route; instead keep on this road to take you on the more direct route back to Wigglesworth. ▶

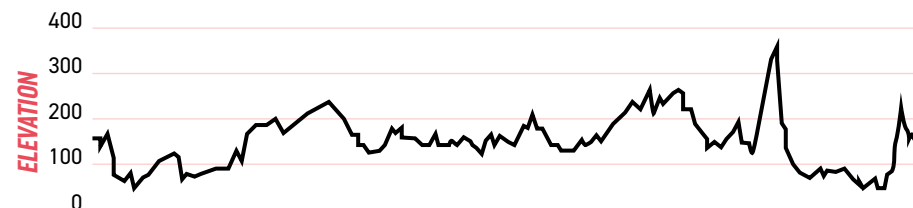
RIDE 12 **BROWNHILL TO CLAPHAM & BACK**

- 15** When you reach the junction with the Plough Hotel & Restaurant on your right, turn right and follow this road. After half a mile you reach the junction you passed earlier, instead of turning left continue on this road signed Tosside and Slaidburn and visit the Café at Tosside for a brew and something to eat. Enjoy the next 7 miles of riding on top quality cycling roads. At the top of here keep a look out not only at the stunning scenery but off slightly to the left you are given glimpses of Pendle Hill, assuring you that you're on the road home.
- 16** There's a steep descent into Slaidburn with some sharp bends, take care at the bottom.
- 17** Leaving Slaidburn you're now heading away following the signs for Newton in Bowland.
- 18** When reaching Newton-in-Bowland we turn left onto Hallgate Hill following the signs for Clitheroe. This is the start of a long steep climb up and over Waddington Fell. The reward after the climb is a great descent down into Waddington, but take care when you reach the tree line as there's some sharp bends to negotiate.
- 19** Waddington is a beautiful little village and well worth a stop here even if just for a short breather. On departing Waddington take Belle Vue Lane and pass St Helen's church on your left. This continues around passing the playing fields and park and becomes Twitter Lane taking you down to Bashall.
- 20** Turning left and then right, continue on for a short while before making the next left turn.
- 21** After a couple of bends, turn right onto New Lane at the junction. We're now heading to Whalley via Mitton using Church Lane (next left turn). At the end of Church Lane take a left turn onto Mitton Road, crossing the river.

- 22** At Whalley railway station turn right just before the bridge down a lane that takes you along the back road that passes Whalley Abbey on your right. The Cistercian Abbey of Stanlow, in Cheshire, moved to Whalley in 1296. The Church was built between 1330 and 1380, but the Abbot's lodging and Infirmary were not completed until c. 1440. After the dissolution of the Monastery in 1537, the property passed into private hands, and Ralph Assheton adapted it to make an Elizabethan Manor House. It remained a private residence until 1923, when the Church of England acquired possession. The Retreat House and Conference Centre, together with the Abbey ruins, are now owned by the Diocese of Blackburn.
- 23** At the end turn right and head out of Whalley passing over the River Calder.
- 24** Around the bend take the 1st left turn almost doubling back on yourself and follow this road up through Painter Wood, a steady two-mile climb.
- 25** At the top once you begin to descend slightly turn right onto York Road. Follow this all the way down along Parsonage Road, at the lights turn left and now retrace your steps through Brownhill to your start point.

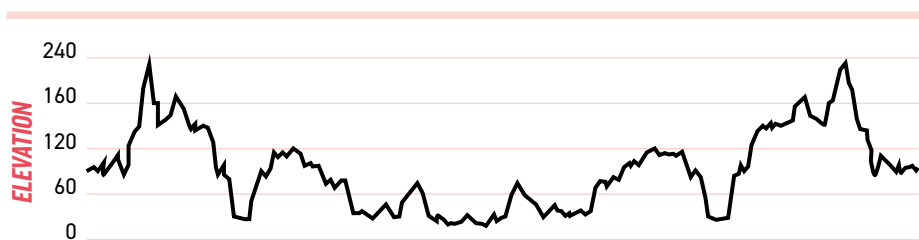
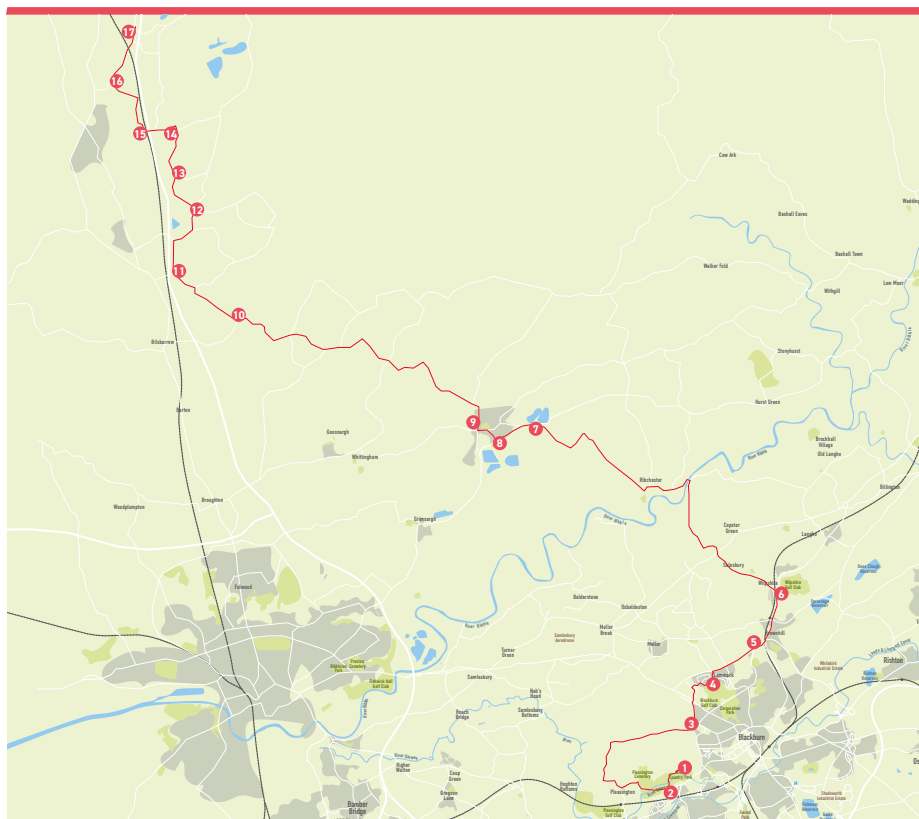


Photo: Adam Symons

Descent: **802m** / Ascend: **802m**Altitude at start: **157m** / Altitude at end: **157m** / Altitude difference between the start & finish: **0m**Highest altitude: **358m** / Lowest altitude: **43m**

RIDE 13 SCORTON FOR REFRESHMENTS FROM WITTON PARK

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Descent: **517m** / Ascend: **517m**

Altitude at start: **93m** / Altitude at end: **93m** / Altitude difference between the start & finish: **0m**

Highest altitude: **231m** / Lowest altitude: **20m**

RIDE 13 SCORTON FOR REFRESHMENTS FROM WITTON PARK

This is one of our yearly favourites that oddly enough I prefer to ride in the cooler weather as it gives me a reason to buy the world's best broth from the Barn at Scorton. This broth is not for the faint hearted and served with some fabulous crusty bread this is food to make this lengthy ride well worth the effort.

Taking you through some lovely Lancashire villages there's nothing major on this ride that will have you struggling too much, in fact you'll be surprised at how many relatively flat sections the route has overall.

- 1 Starting from the Cycle Centre head out of Witton Park following the Weavers Wheel, you'll pass the children's play area on your right and head out to the duck pond and Priory.
- 2 Continue cycling along the Weaver's Wheel taking a right onto Tower Road, the next left onto Old Hall Lane, and a right onto Sandy Lane within Pleasington. Continue on this road until reaching the main junction with the A677 Preston New Road.
- 3 Turn left onto Preston New Road and then make a right onto Beardwood shortly after, continuing along here until you reach the next T-junction where you will turn right onto Quebec Road.
- 4 Exit onto St Lawrence Avenue, then Whinney Lane (left turn) before crossing the A6119 and turning right onto the service road that runs parallel with the main road.
- 5 At the main roundabout take the left turn following signs for Clitheroe and heading towards Ramsgrave and Wilpshire station following Spur G signage.
- 6 Our route is now heading out into the Ribble Valley. At the traffic lights with the Wilpshire Hotel in front of you, turn left and continue all the way now through Ribchester (after crossing the A59), a village steeped in history dating back to the Bronze age. It was also known as a significant Roman site being used as a Roman cavalry fort called Bremetennacum, some parts of which have been exposed by excavation. Continue on now through to Longridge.

7 When you pass the Corporation Arms follow the road round and take the next left fork in the road, taking Lower Lane.

8 After half a mile and opposite St Lawrence's Church, turn right onto Chapel Hill and the first left onto Little Lane. At the end turn left onto Kestor Lane and down to the roundabout.

9 Turn right at the roundabout and follow the road passing Sainsbury's on your right for Inglewhite, bearing left at the Alston Pub.

10 After approx. 4½ miles turn right onto Lydiate Lane. This will take you down towards the M6.

11 Upon reaching the M6 keep right to run alongside it for a short period before again keeping right onto Smithy Lane.

12 Following the left bend, keep left where the road becomes Sandholme Lane.

13 At the next junction continue straight on, and at the next main right bend take a left turn instead signposted Barnacre Church, Scorton, and Lancaster.

14 Continue to follow the road round, crossing the bridge over the M6.

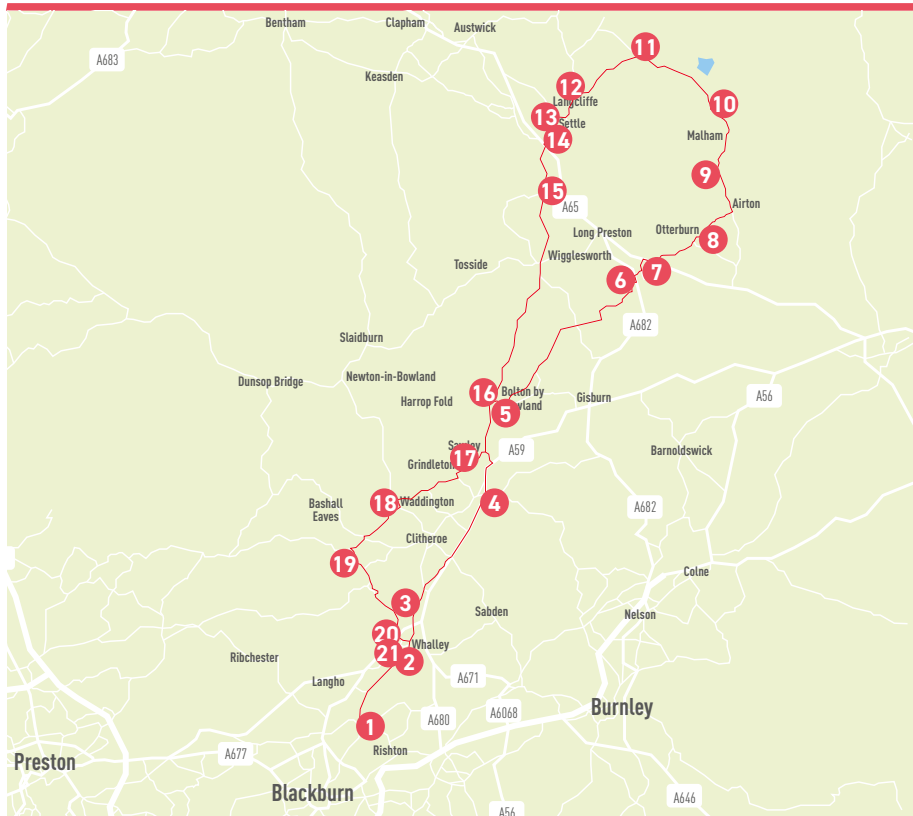
15 Once you cross the motorway take a sharp right hand bend and continue along to a T-Junction.

16 Turn right at this junction and follow this road now all the way into Scorton, the Barn café is on the left just as you enter the village with an old tractor outside. A very popular cyclist's stop you'll be made very welcome here and the food is excellent.

17 The return route is an exact mirror of our inbound route, almost turn for turn. Heading back to Inglewhite, Longridge, Ribchester, and Salisbury before picking up the Weavers Wheel Spur G again at the Wilpshire Hotel. At Brownhill, continue now along The Weavers Wheel all the way back to Witton Park and our start point.

Facilities en-route: **The Barn at Scorton**

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Facilities en-route: Numerous cafés in Settle

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RIDE 14 MALHAM COVE, LANGCLIFFE, SETTLE AND BACK

12 Langcliffe is a quaint little village with a nice little tea room. If you haven't already stopped to refuel then there's plenty of choice on offer here and most are very cycle friendly. At the junction with the main road, turn left signed to Settle. Take the first left turn off here onto Highway; this is the back road and the quiet way into Settle.

13 When entering Settle take a left turn onto Castle Hill. When reaching the junction turn right and keep left onto Kirkgate. After the railway bridge take a left turn onto Band Lane before a right at the junction onto Station Road.

14 Follow Station Road along to the mini roundabout and turn left here onto Raines Road. Follow this to the end to reach the A65. Taking care to cross here this busy, fast main road you make a left then almost immediate right off the A65.

15 Pass under the railway bridge and continue along passing through Rathmell and onto Wigglesworth. At the Plough Pub turn right and then take the left fork at the next Junction signed Bolton by Bowland.

16 This takes you down to Bolton by Bowland, turn right and continue on to Sawley.

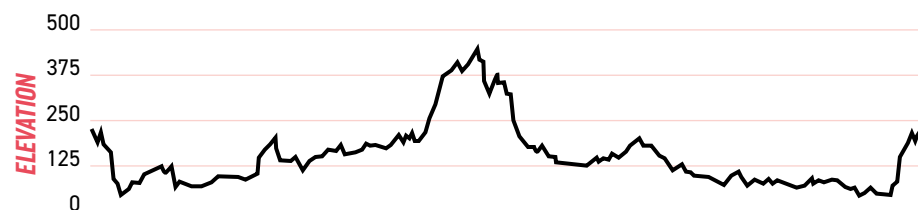
17 Before the bridge that crosses the River Ribble take the right turn towards Grindleton and Waddington. Follow this now all the way to Waddington.

18 Waddington is a beautiful little village and well worth a stop here even if just for a short breather to admire the village gardens near Waddington Hall. Departing Waddington take Belle Vue Lane and pass St Helen's church on your left. This continues around and becomes Twitter Lane taking you down to Bashall.

19 Turning left and an immediate right, and then another left turn after a further 850m, we're now heading to Whalley via Mitton using Church Lane. At the end of Church Lane turn left onto Mitton Road towards Whalley.

20 At Whalley railway station turn right just before the bridge down a lane that takes you along the back road that passes Whalley Abbey on your right. The Cistercian Abbey of Stanlow, in Cheshire, moved to Whalley in 1296. The Church was built between 1330 and 1380, but the Abbot's lodging and Infirmary were not completed until c. 1440. After the dissolution of the Monastery in 1537, the property passed into private hands, and Ralph Assheton adapted it to make an Elizabethan Manor House. It remained a private residence until 1923, when the Church of England acquired possession. The Retreat House and Conference Centre, together with the Abbey ruins, are now owned by the Diocese of Blackburn.

21 At the end turn right and head out of Whalley passing over the River Calder. Around the bend take the first left turn almost doubling back on yourself and follow this road up through Painter Wood, a steady two-mile climb. At the top continue over picking up the Weavers Wheel Spur F taking you back to your start point.



Descent: 712m / Ascend: 712m

Altitude at start: 227m / Altitude at end: 227m / Altitude difference between the start & finish: 0m

Highest altitude: 445m / Lowest altitude: 43m

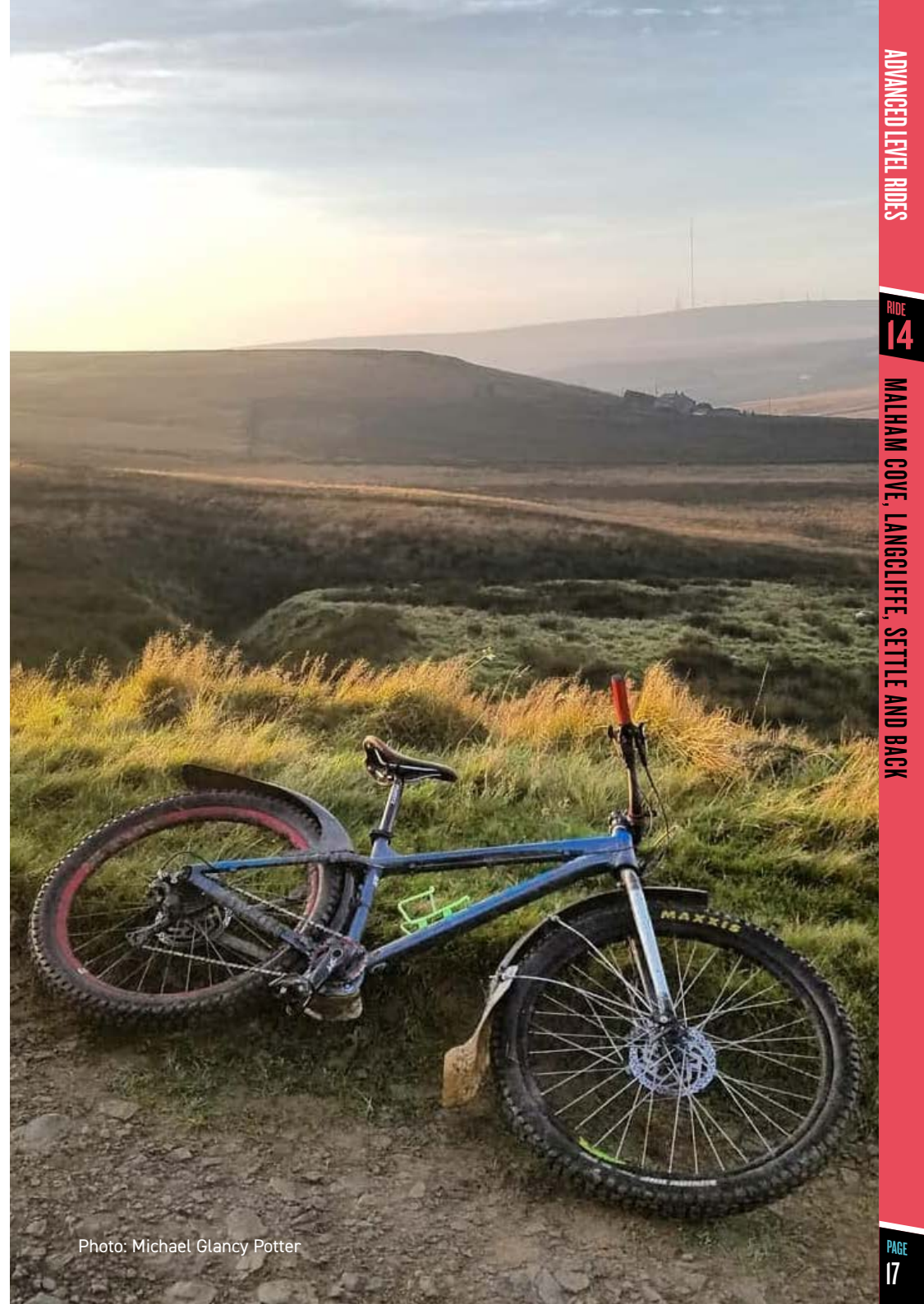
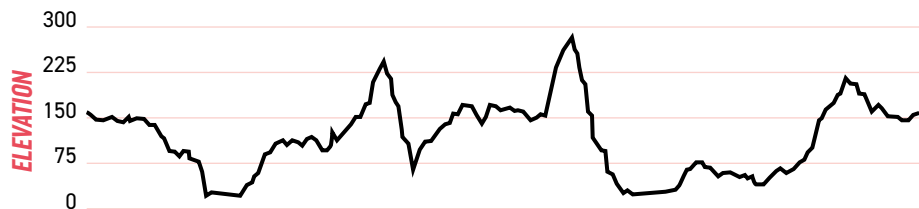
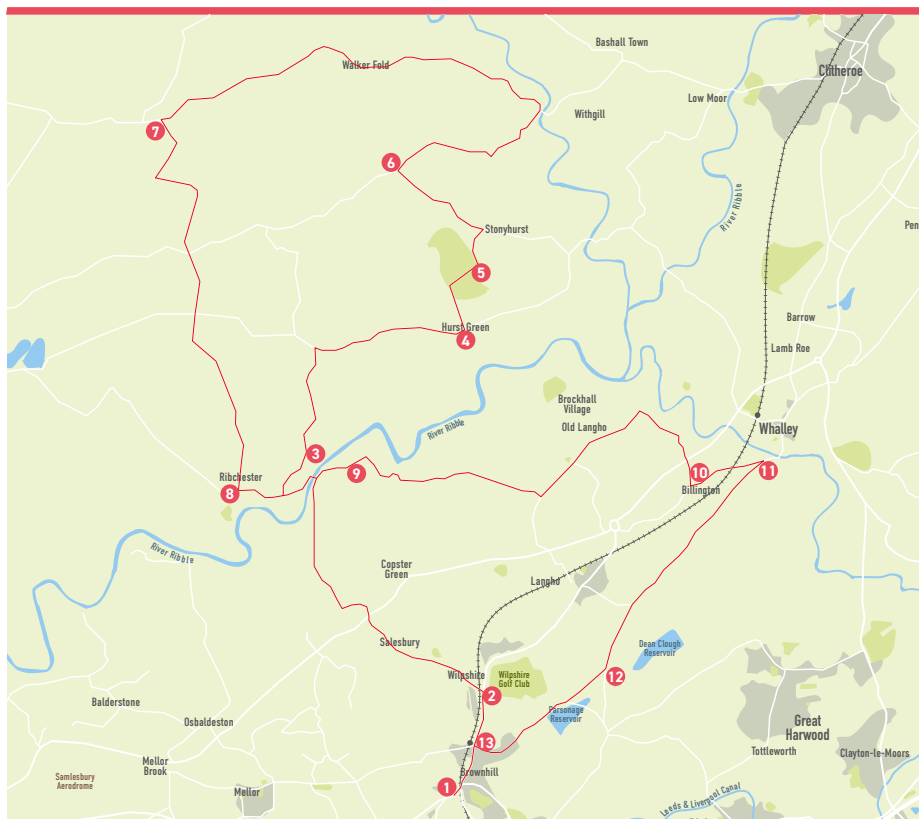


Photo: Michael Glancy Potter

RIDE 15

A STONYHURST DELIGHT VIA HURST GREEN, CHAIGLEY, BACK VIA JEFFREY HILL & PAINTER WOOD

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Descent: **535m** / Ascend: **534m**

Altitude at start: **157m** / Altitude at end: **156m** / Altitude difference between the start & finish: **-1m**

Highest altitude: **282m** / Lowest altitude: **26m**

RIDE 15

A STONYHURST DELIGHT VIA HURST GREEN, CHAIGLEY

Whilst shorter than the previous rides in this section, it's by no means less in character. This route can be ridden in full or if time is a constraint, in sections. This really does tick all the boxes for me as to what a ride needs. Lumpy in parts, but it just wouldn't be Lancashire without our little hills, ride them and enjoy the views from the top.

Passing through some superb Lancashire villages, you'll be transported through time. Ribchester is one of the finest examples of Roman history with some Roman Ruins still on display. Whilst the route doesn't take you right to the ruins, you're only a stones throw away from them. Next up is Hurst Green, home to Stonyhurst College.

This is one of the finest, colleges in northern England. As you round the corner and you see the college for the first, second or even 100th time, you'll still be taken aback by the imposing beauty of the front façade of the building. This area is also known to have been an inspiration for J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of The Rings trilogy, it really does have an inspirational beauty about the whole area, and you're not even half way round the route yet...

- 1 Starting from the bottom of Pleckgate Road near the Knowles Arms head out through Brownhill and on the main A666 following Spur G of the Weavers Wheel. At the second set of traffic lights the Wilshire Hotel is facing you.
- 2 Turn left and follow this road all the way down through the lights, through Clayton le Dale and Salisbury, crossing the A59 onto Ribchester Road before crossing the River Ribble at Little Town. Following the road round, take the first right turn onto Gallows Lane.
- 3 Climb this lane and turn right at the top. Just under 1 mile, take a left onto Shire Lane, taking you over to Hurst Green. A short but steep ascent brings you out just before the Bayley Arms pub, for those wanting an early coffee stop turn right here and in 200m you'll find an excellent coffee shop just next to the Shireburn Arms. There are not a many more options for a stop on this ride.

- 4 If you don't want to stop or if you're leaving the coffee shop, turn left and head up past the Bayley Arms with the pub on your right. Follow this road up through a tree covered lane that takes a 90 degree right turn. Ahead of you now lies the impressive Stonyhurst College. The college dates back to the late 16th century. Take your time riding down here and soak up the surrounding beauty. This area has inspired greats such as Arthur Conan Doyle so let it inspire you as you ride around these great lanes.
- 5 Follow the road round and bear left in front of the college. This takes you to a junction where you turn left.
- 6 Turn right at the next junction signposted Clitheroe 5 miles, and follow this round and over Birdy Brow, take care on the descent, this is a very steep descent. Turn left at the bottom onto Bailey Bank and head through Chaigley.
- 7 Turn left onto Forty Acre Lane and the first left. Begin the climb of one of Lancashire's finest hills, Jeffrey Hill takes us up and back over to Ribchester.
- 8 Turn left at the bottom onto Blackburn Road and as you cross the River Ribble for a second time, turn left at the far end of the bridge onto Ribchester Road.
- 9 Follow this lane through Dinckley taking the left turn at the junction onto Old Langho Road before reaching Billington via Elker Lane.
- 10 Passing St Augustines School and reaching the main road, turn left.
- 11 After a short ride double back on yourself by heading up Whalley Old Road by taking a right turn.
- 12 At the top continue over picking up the Weavers Wheel Spur F taking you back to your start point.
- 13 As you descend from the top of Sunnybower, you reach the main A6119 by-pass. Turn right here picking up the Weavers Wheel and follow this all the way to Pleckgate Road and you're back at the start point.

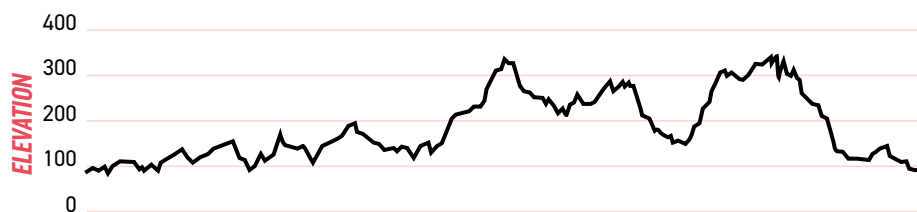
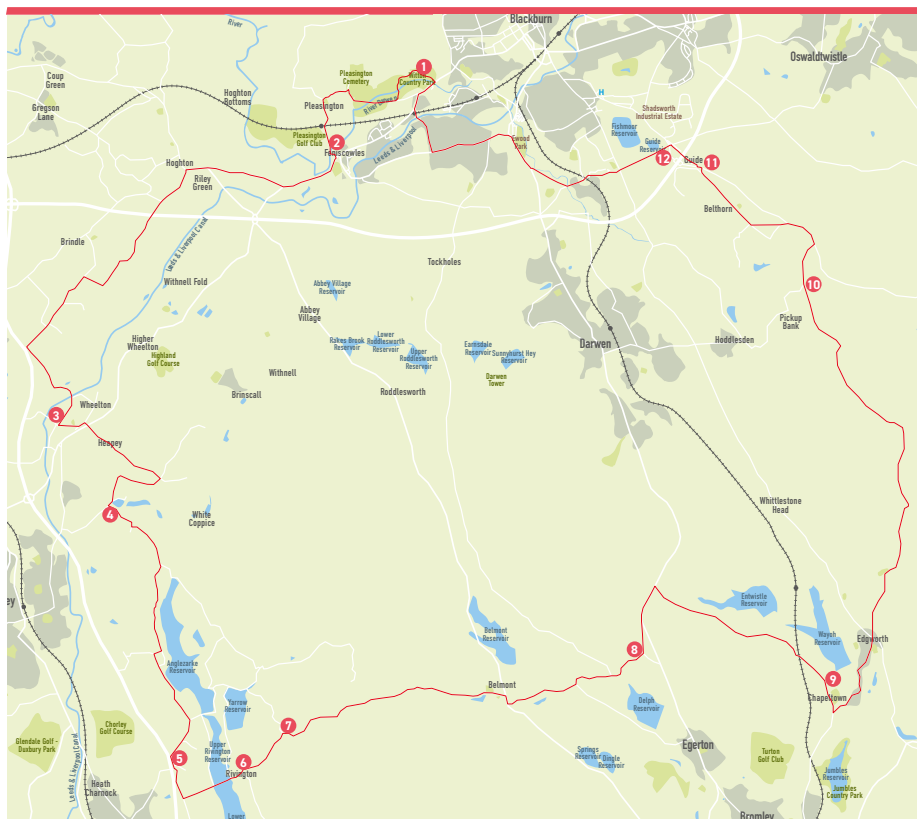
Facilities en-route: **Hurst Green Coffee Shop**

RIDE 16

WHEELTON, RIVINGTON, BELMONT & BACK

VIA CHAPELTOWN, EDGORTH & BELTHORN

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Descent: **632m** / Ascend: **632m**

Altitude at start: **93m** / Altitude at end: **93m** / Altitude difference between the start & finish: **0m**

Highest altitude: **339m** / Lowest altitude: **88m**

RIDE 16

WHEELTON, RIVINGTON, BELMONT & BACK

It's time for a sortie south of the border. On this route we head out to explore south Lancashire. This area has a different look to the routes around the Ribble Valley or venturing into the Yorkshire Dales. There's a bleak, rugged look to some of the moors you pass over, but this in itself offers a different beauty to the previous rides in this section.

We're passing through Wheelton, Rivington, and Belmont before crossing over the main Darwen to Bolton road to return via Edgorth, Belthorn and Guide. A lumpy route but one that's attracted cyclists for years for its

fine views over the Pennines and south towards Manchester on clear days, a worthy route for a good day's ride.

- 1 From the Witton Cycle Centre we leave on the Weavers Wheel and go out towards Pleasington Priory. When leaving Witton Park turn right after the car park onto Tower Road. Take the next left onto Old Hall Lane. At the end of Old Hall Lane turn left and leave the Weavers Wheel behind.
- 2 Follow Victoria Road all the way up to the main A674 junction (Preston Old Road). Turn right and head out through Riley Green to Sandy Lane turning left here.
- 3 When reaching Wheelton, take a left at the junction onto own Lane, then a right, immediate left, and immediate right onto Chapel Lane towards and beyond Heapy.
- 4 Turn left off Tithe Barn Lane onto Higher House Lane. After one mile turn right through the gate onto Heapy Fold Lane towards Anglezarke Reservoir. Turn left at the end onto Back Lane and then right onto Nick Halton's Lane.
- 5 Meeting back up with the M61, turn left onto New Road and then left again onto Horrobin Lane over to Rivington.

6 A great coffee stop at the Village tea room is recommended after which we head up Sheep House Lane, a decent climb taking us over the moors to Belmont. Winter Hill can be seen on our right as we pass over the moor and in front and left you can see Darwen Jubilee Tower, built in 1878 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

7 Reaching Belmont Road we turn right and then left onto Rivington Road. At the end turn right onto High Street and then left onto Egerton Road. Follow this all the way over now to the main Blackburn Road coming out just before a right hand bend on the main road the A666.

8 You're turning left heading towards Darwen and then in just under half a mile turn right onto Green Arms Road. Take care on this section of main road as this is a fast section of the road.

9 Following Green Arms Road, we're now heading first to Chapeltown before turning left and heading to Edgorth and then over the moors through Pickup Bank before picking up the main Grane Road.

10 Turn left here and then take the first left again onto Belthorn Road passing through the charming village of Belthorn. Continue along here stopping at the Dog Inn for coffee if you didn't take the opportunity at Rivington.

11 We reach Guide at the end of this road where we turn left and an immediate right to cross over the M65.

12 Once over the M65, turn left onto Blackmoor Road and cycle through Lower Darwen and along Branch Road heading towards the Ewood Park Football Ground. Once we reach Ewood, we go via Livesey Branch Road, Green Lane and then right at the bottom of here taking us back into the Park.

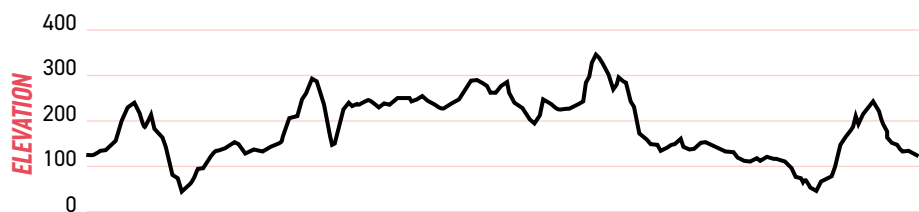
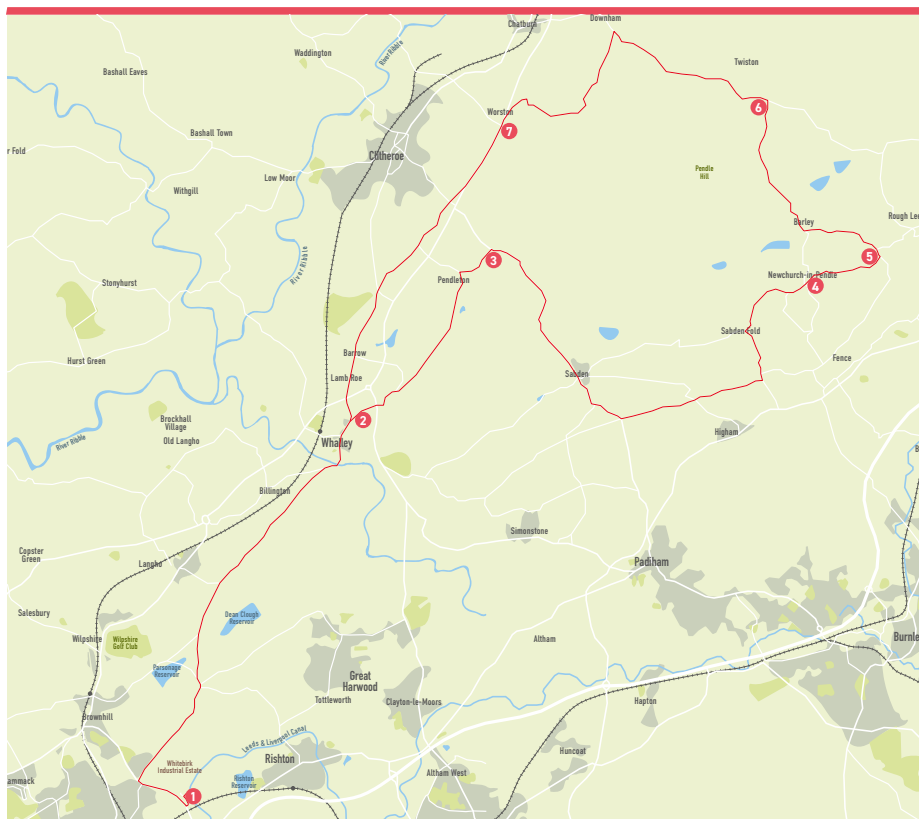
Facilities en-route: The Village Tea Room at Rivington

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RIDE 17

PENDLE HILL SPECTACULAR FROM WHITEBIRK

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Descent: **632m** / Ascend: **632m**

Altitude at start: **93m** / Altitude at end: **93m** / Altitude difference between the start & finish: **0m**

Highest altitude: **339m** / Lowest altitude: **88m**

RIDE 17

PENDLE HILL SPECTACULAR FROM WHITEBIRK

I could never forgive myself if I compiled a list of routes that didn't include a circuit of Pendle. A shorter ride but huge in character this whole area is steeped in history, tradition and folklore that has given countless authors a great deal of inspiration.

In addition to this, artists have reproduced the dramatic scenery in numerous sketches and paintings. It really does hold a special kind of magic, some would say due to the link with witches and black magic, but for me, it's just a special magnetic draw that the area has.

The ride passes through Pendleton, Sabden, and Newchurch in Pendle before reaching the truly unique Clarion House. The Clarion House was built to be a non-profit making co-operative with any excess money to be used in spreading the word of socialism. This was no accident or coincidence. It was planned in the hope that others would take it as a model of how society as a whole ought to be organised.

Visitors could come and witness how people - lots of people - were prepared to devote their lives to the Clarion movement for no personal gain, other than the knowledge that they would leave the world a better place than when they entered it. Open on Sundays cyclists come, and have done so for years, from far and wide. On a cold autumn day, the hardest thing here isn't reaching the wonderful coffee stop; it's actually leaving the roaring fire behind. It really has a special place in so many cyclists heart, and mine too.

From here we head back through Barley and Downham, the latter is quite possibly one of the best kept villages in Lancashire.

1 The ride starts from near the Rocket Centre at Whitebirk. Turn right at the junction onto Whitebirk Drive, and then the second right onto Whalley Old Road after 1km. Continue on this road until reaching Whalley Road. Turn right here.

2 Once through Whalley, take a right turn on Wiswell Lane, at the top of here cross the busy A671 and head towards Pendleton. Turning right onto Pendleton Road just before Wiswell we continue on to Pendleton turning right within the village before reaching a T-Junction and turning right. At this point you begin the ascent of Pendle Hill, following in the footsteps of the Pro cyclists in the 2015 Tour of Britain as you climb over the Nick of Pendle.

3 Take care on the steep descent from here as you head down to Sabden. As the road starts to climb again out of Sabden take a left turn onto Padiham Road and begin the short but very steep climb. At the crossroads take a left and you're now following a series of roads over to Newchurch in Pendle.

4 Take a left and almost immediate right. On the left as you take this right turn is the Witches Galore shop, if you've time this is really well worth a look around here. Once you've taken the right turn, Clarion House is about ¾ mile on your left; it's quite easily missed so keep an eye out as you descend down here. (Please note Clarion House does not serve food just tea, coffee and a small selection of biscuits so take a pack up!).

5 On leaving Clarion House, go left and continue down the hill to the junction. Turn left and ride into Barley turning right at the next Junction and now begin the steady climb out of Barley in the constant shadow of Pendle Hill on your left.

6 At a crossroad turn left onto Pendle Road and continue all the way to Downham. Arriving in Downham before you cross the little river bridge turn left and follow a delightful quiet lane that takes you through to Worston. Keep left once through Worston.

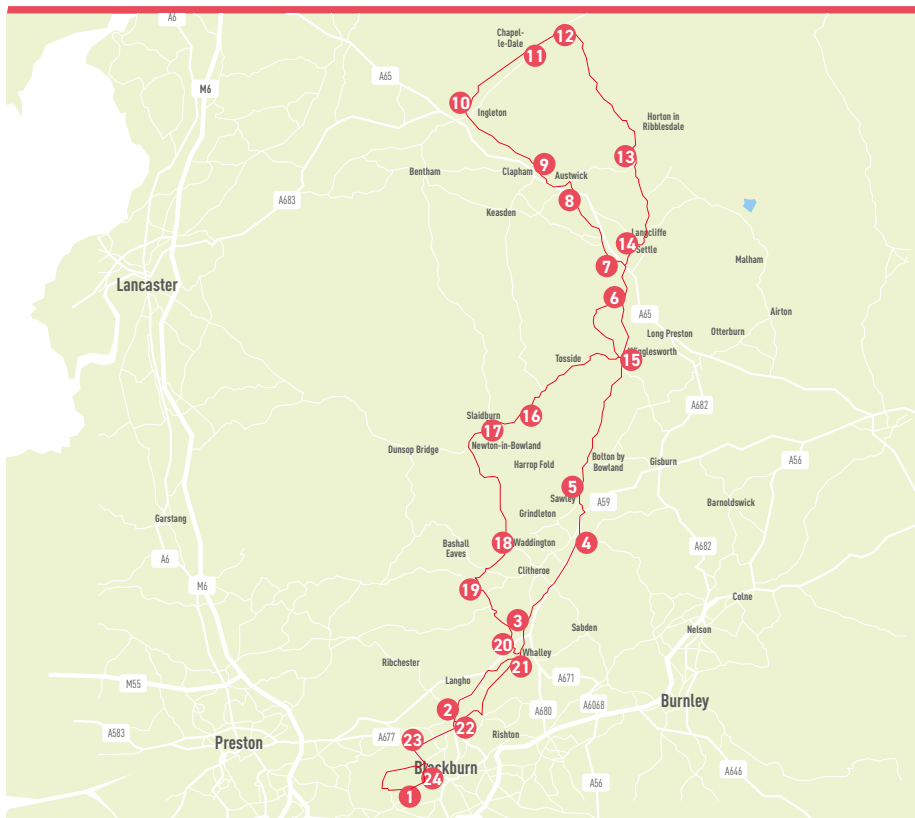
7 Following the cycleway cross the main A59 and follow the safe cycleway back into Whalley. From here head back up Painter Wood continuing straight on and following Spur F of the Weavers Wheel before picking up the Weavers Wheel to take us back to our starting point.

Facilities en-route: Clarion House, Newchurch in Pendle

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RIDE 18 RIBBLEHEAD CLASSIC VIA CLAPHAM & INGLETON & BACK VIA HORTON IN RIBBLESDALE & SETTLE

Suitable for: **ADVANCED RIDERS** / Mix of quiet lanes & some main road riding



Facilities en-route: Cafés in Clapham, Ingleton and Tosside

RIDE 18 RIBBLEHEAD CLASSIC VIA CLAPHAM & INGLETON & BACK

I've saved the best for last, and even this wasn't an easy choice but this route is special for me in so very many ways. I've spent so many hours out in this area that in the end I had to opt for this one.

The full credit for this route though must go to Craig Rawcliffe (satnav), he really does have some of the finest routes you could ever wish to ride along, and this truly is straight out of the top drawer.

There are simply too many places of beauty to list out each one. It is therefore just easier to say that on this ride some of the steep climbs won't be the only thing to take your breath away. This ride has scenery in abundance at every turn, coupled with some quiet lanes that seldom see cars on them.

If I had to choose just one ride to stand out above every other, I wouldn't hesitate choosing this one.

1 Starting from the cycle centre head out of Witton Park following the Weavers Wheel, you'll pass the children's play area on your right and head out to the duck pond and Priory. This route continues by following the Weavers Wheel taking you over Billinge and through Lammack areas. As you reach Brownhill, follow Spur G of the Weavers Wheel.

2 Our route is now heading out into the Ribble Valley towards Langho. Just after you go under the railway bridge, take a right turn to avoid the main roundabout for the A59. This brings you out near the Petre Arms pub to continue down through Whalley and Barrow.

3 As you pass the Clitheroe Golf Club you come to a junction. Cross this road heading towards an iron gate on a path. This is the old section of the A59 and will keep you off the main by-pass for a while. A lovely little section just keep following this all the way crossing two main roads until you come out onto the main A59.

4 Turn left and follow this for about 3 miles turning left when you see the sign for Sawley. Passing the remains of a Cistercian Abbey founded in 1148 and set in dramatic Pendle scenery.

5 You are following these lanes now through Bolton by Bowland and out Wigglesworth where here you take a superb quiet lane over to Rathmell by taking a right and immediate left at the junction.

6 Turning left at the Rathmell Reading rooms and head out to the A65.

7 Turn left at the A65 and follow the main road for a short distance taking the first left off the main road. You are now following these lanes that run parallel with the A65 running down on your right and gradually coming back to meet you.

8 Cross this fast busy road with care and follow the signs for Austwick. Once you reach the little village follow signs for Clapham. A beautiful little village and at almost 40 miles in makes a perfect refuel stop. While cycling between Austwick and Clapham there is a moment where the route re-joins the A65 briefly. This can be avoided by using the available cycle path and keeping right to Clapham.

9 Leaving Clapham you are now following Ncn route 68 over to Ingleton. Quite a lumpy road but one that gives you superb views over the whole area. If you've saved the coffee stop until you reach here, good choice and I can't recommend highly enough Bernie's Café on Main St. A great age old cyclists stop off. Leaving Clapham, head towards Ingleton Falls. ▶

RIDE 18 RIBBLEHEAD CLASSIC VIA CLAPHAM & INGLETON & BACK

10 Reaching Ingleton turn right through the car park, right onto Bank Top and then cross the bridge over River Dee taking an immediate right onto Oddies Lane. This climbs now quite sharply up for a while before the lane bears right and begins to level off. As you ride along here you're running parallel with the main road taking you from Ingleton to Ribblesdale, and all on your right is Ingleborough with the impressive White Scar Caves that go underneath the mountain, a first class cycling lane.

11 This lane comes out at Chapel-le-Dale where you turn left and follow the road down to Ribblesdale. Before long the impressive Ribblesdale viaduct comes into view. A viaduct with a history attached that has tales of shanty towns and tragedy. The end result though is a viaduct that over the years has become an iconic view to anybody visiting this area of the Dales. It's been photographed in all weathers and most recently provided probably the most dramatic scene for the Flying Scotsman as she passed over the viaduct after a lengthy restoration project.

12 Do not just ride under this piece of Yorkshire Dales history; take a minute to marvel at a tremendous feat of engineering dating back to the late 1800's. Once you've passed under the viaduct take the first right and head down to Horton-in-Ribblesdale. As you ride down this road you have the Settle to Carlisle railway line following you on your left. When you pass under the railway bridge, there's a fantastic little café on your left.

13 Once through Horton-in-Ribblesdale take the right turn to Helwith Bridge and then within a short distance turn left taking route 68 down to Settle passing Stainforth Force down on the left. At the end of this lane, turn left to Settle.

14 Heading out of Settle on the B6480 take the right turn after Barclays bank signed to the Railway Station. Follow Station Road along to the mini roundabout and turn left here onto Raines Road. Follow this to the end to reach the A65. Taking care to cross here this busy, fast main road you make a left then almost immediate right off the A65.

15 Once you are beyond the railway bridge continue through Rathmell and onto Wigglesworth. When you reach the junction with the Plough Hotel & Restaurant on your right, turn right and follow this road. After half a mile you arrive back at the junction you came in on, instead of turning left carry on right signed Tosside and Slaidburn and make sure you visit the café a Tosside for a brew and something to eat. Enjoy the next 7 miles of riding on top quality cycling roads. At the top of here keep a look out not only at the stunning scenery but off slightly to the left the glimpses of Pendle Hill, assuring you that you're on the road home.

16 There's a steep descent into Slaidburn so please take care on this section as there are some sharp bends.

17 Leaving Slaidburn you're now heading towards Newton in Bowland. Reaching here we turn left and follow the signs for Clitheroe. This is the start of a long steep climb up and over Waddington Fell. The reward after the climb is a great descent down into Waddington, but take care when you reach the tree line as there's some sharp bends to negotiate.

18 Waddington is a beautiful little village and well worth a stop here even if just for a short breather. Departing Waddington take Belle Vue Lane and pass St Helen's church on your left. This continues around and becomes Twitter Lane taking you down to Bashall.

19 Turning left and then right at the end of this lane followed by the next left turn, we're now heading to Whalley via Mitton using Church Lane. At the end of Church Lane turn left onto the B6246 to Whalley.

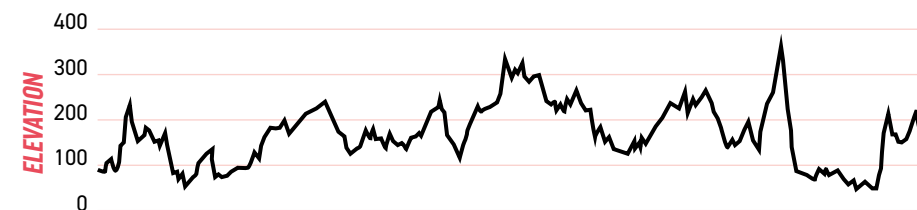
20 At Whalley railway station turn right just before the bridge down a lane that takes you along the back road that passes Whalley Abbey on your right. The Cistercian Abbey of Stanlow, in Cheshire, moved to Whalley in 1296. The Church was built between 1330 and 1380, but the Abbot's lodging and Infirmary were not completed until c. 1440. After the dissolution of the Monastery in 1537, the property passed into private hands, and Ralph Assheton adapted it to make an Elizabethan Manor House. It remained a private residence until 1923, when the Church of England acquired possession. The Retreat House and Conference Centre, together with the Abbey ruins, are now owned by the Diocese of Blackburn.

21 At the end turn right and head out of Whalley passing over the River Calder. Around the bend take the first left turn almost doubling back on yourself and follow this road up through Painter Wood, a steady two-mile climb. At the top once you begin to descend slightly turn right onto York Road. Follow this all the way down along Parsonage Road, at the lights turn left and now retrace your steps through Brownhill.

22 At the junction of Pleckgate Road turn left and start the climb up and over Revidge down to Billinge.

23 Turn left onto Preston New Road, then right at the next roundabout.

24 Turn right at Witton Park High School and return to the cycle centre at Witton Park where you started.



Descent: 1164m / Ascend: 1164m

Altitude at start: 93m / Altitude at end: 93m / Altitude difference between the start & finish: 0m

Highest altitude: 358m / Lowest altitude: 43m



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Photo: Adam Symons