

Kendal to the Brockhole Visitor Centre



The Route

National Route: 6

Distance: 11.5 miles

Terrain: a mix of country lanes and dedicated cycle path. Undulating.

Public transport: railway stations at Kendal, Burneside, Staveley and Windermere. The Cross Lakes Shuttle bike bus and ferry service operates from Bowness.

Bike hire: Country Lanes Cycle Centre, Windermere station - 015394 44544; Askew Cycles, Kendal - 01539 728057

OS maps: Explorer OL 7, Landranger 97

Tourist information: Bowness and Windermere - 015394-42895, Kendal - 01539 725758

Towns to search for on Sustrans website mapping: Kendal, Burneside, Staveley, Bowness-on-Windermere



Riding beside the River Kent.

This ride is a feast for the eyes, giving you a taste of some of England's most beautiful countryside. On a more prosaic note, it runs more or less parallel to the railway line between Kendal and Windermere, so you have the option to return by train, or to use the train for some of your outward journey.

Kendal is an appealing market town with many attractions including Kendal Castle, the riverside, the Brewery Arts Centre and a wide range of shops and café bars. It is well worth a visit in its own right. National Route 6 follows country roads northwestwards out of the town, often alongside the River Kent, through Burneside to Staveley, where the twin riverside attractions of Wilf's Café (very family-friendly and a mecca for outdoor lovers) and a particularly comprehensive bike shop (Wheelbase - the largest in the UK) may detain you for a while.

The ride continues on a dedicated cycle route alongside the main road through

Ings and on to Windermere. The town is now effectively the quieter end of the lakeside town of Bowness-on-Windermere, and cooks, gadget fiends and the houseproud might want to pay a visit to the big Lakeland shop next to the railway station. From Windermere, the route continues through Troutbeck Bridge to the to the Brockhole Visitor Centre.

You could easily spend the whole day at Brockhole, a beautiful lakeside mansion set in landscaped grounds. As well as the adventure playground and well-laid-out exhibitions there are wonderful gardens, spectacular views of Lake Windermere and excellent walks, and you can even take a cruise on the lake without having to fight your way through the tourist honeypot of Bowness.

National Route 6 is still being developed through South Lakeland, but will ultimately continue through Ambleside to Grasmere, linking to the existing northern section of route at Thirlmere.