

The Route

Where: Keswick to Threlkeld

National Route Number: 71

Distance: 3 miles each way

Terrain: fairly flat and traffic-free railway path

Bike hire: Keswick Mountain Bikes - 017687 75202; Keswick Cycle Hire Centre - 017687 73216

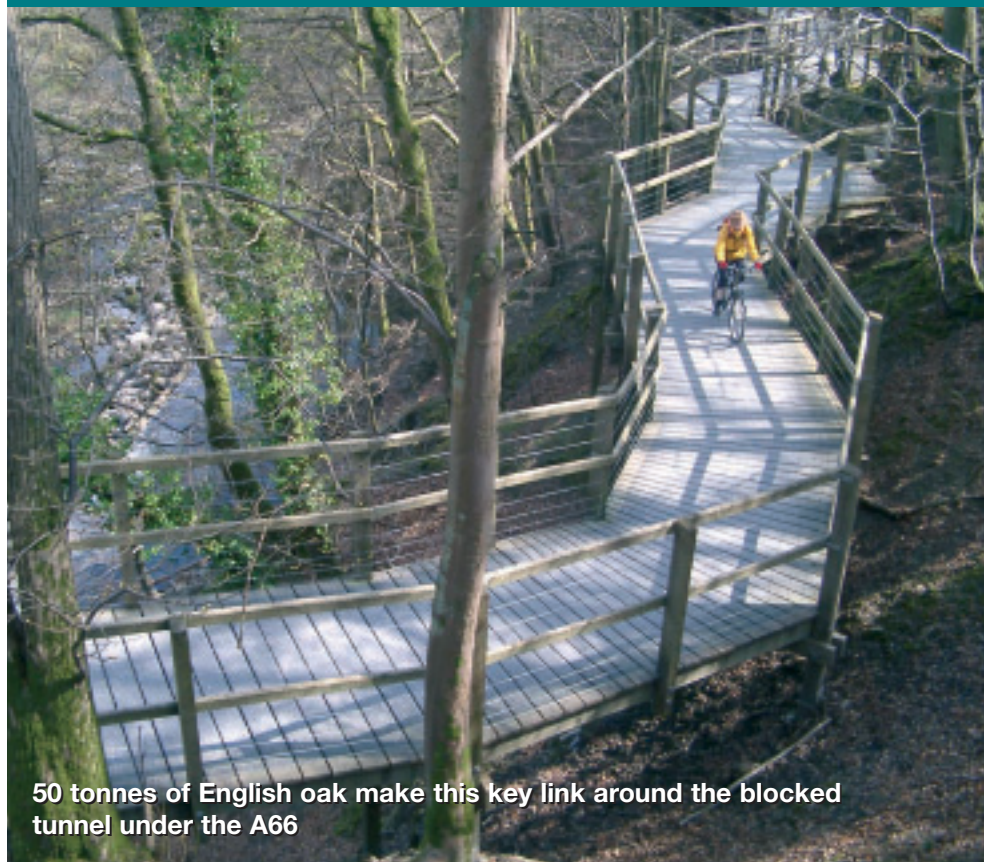
Maps: Sea to Sea National Cycle Network map

OS maps: Explorer OL 4&5, Landranger 90

Tourist information: Keswick - 017687 72645

Towns to search for on Sustrans website mapping: Keswick (Allerdale), Threlkeld

Keswick to Threlkeld



50 tonnes of English oak make this key link around the blocked tunnel under the A66

The ride begins in the car park of the swimming pool at Keswick and continues along the trackbed of the old Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith railway - an easy ride through the beautiful tree-clad Greta Gorge which is ideal for traffic-free family rides. Eight bridges engineered by Thomas Bouch, designer of the ill-fated Tay Bridge, take the route across the river Greta. Part of the route runs along a wooden boardwalk installed when the path was renovated in 2000.

Keswick lies at the west end of the path, sandwiched between Derwentwater and the Skiddaw Massif. A locally important market town, it now doubles as a thriving centre for holidays and outdoor activities. If the surrounding fells and lakes are not attraction enough, it also boasts the Cumberland Pencil Museum, the Theatre-by-the-Lake and Castlerigg Stone Circle. Threlkeld, at the eastern end, is a village in the shadow of the

Blencathra mountain with a quarry and mining museum. Its Field Studies Centre was formerly a tuberculosis sanatorium!

The more adventurous might like to continue on a round trip back to Keswick via Castlerigg Stone Circle. Future plans for the region include a new link to National Route 6 at Kendal along St John's in the Vale, and a route north of Keswick along the eastern side of Bassenthwaite Lake to link up with Regional Route 10 (the Reiver's Route).

