

Dear Cyclist,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding your planned cycle-ride from Lands End to John O'Groats.

The National Cycle Network was not designed for this sort of challenge, but rather for linked local routes suitable for everyday use and novice cyclists.

A good guidebook is 'The Great British Bike Adventure' – by Phil Horsley, this is a route on quiet roads and uses National Cycle Network routes where they fit in. This is featured in our mail-order catalogue and at www.sustransshop.co.uk code RB02 or direct link: <http://www.sustransshop.co.uk/products/5096>



You could follow National Cycle Network routes most of the way, but the best currently signed and open route is about 1350 miles, and in parts quite hilly, compared with the most direct recommended by the CTC of 1000 miles, and on quiet roads about 1100 miles:

www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3397

The CTC have also put together an “off-road” Land's End to John O'Groats suitable for mountain bikes using bridleways, parts of the National Cycle Network and minor roads:

www.ctc-maps.org.uk/routes/route/1372 (only CTC members can view the detailed route online)

Our most useful signed and mapped routes for LEJOG are:

National Route 3 - Lands End to Bristol (320 miles)

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1215164966156

National Route 41 – Bristol to Gloucester (53 miles)

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1099324230593

National Byway West Midlands – Cirencester to Chester:

www.sustransshop.co.uk/products/5317-the-national-byway-west-midlands

National Route 6 – Lancaster to Kendal (57 miles)

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1215165045875

National Route 7 – Glasgow to Inverness (215 miles)

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1215165071078

Going north from Pitlochry you will find the route up through the Drumochter Pass, particularly useful in avoiding the main A9.

National Route 1 – Inverness to John O'Groats (169 miles)

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1215164805562

An alternative option would be to join the Pennine Cycle Way (National Route 68) at Etwell, near Derby:

www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?sID=1099580716968

and follow this all the way to Norham near Berwick-on-Tweed and then pick up National Route 1 to John o'Groats



The NCN has many proposed future routes. Some of these planned routes will be suitable for an End to End journey, and many have been partially implemented already. These routes include:

National Route 45 (Gloucester to Chester):
www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?SID=1099394800828
National Route 56 (Chester to Preston):
www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?SID=1099488626187
National Route 74 (Gretna to Motherwell):
www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?SID=1099662782281

You can download our national map here:

http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/general/sustrans_nationalmapposter_2010_web.pdf

You can also view all of the National Cycle Routes any many other cycle routes on our online mapping which is updated every two weeks with new route information:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map>



The Lands End John O'Groats Association is also a great source of advice (and inspiration!) and can be contacted c/o Jack Adams, 19 Imperial Crescent, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 2ER, tel: 01642 657752 e-mail: jack_adams41@msn.com or visit www.landsend-johnogroats-assoc.com

Maps which are useful on such a long distance ride are the Ordnance Survey Road maps at 1:250,000 scale. Though not so hot through urban areas they are

fine for rural roads and lanes. See <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/products/250k-raster/index.html> and <http://www.shop.ordnancesurveyleisure.co.uk/products/digital-maps/digital-maps-for-personal-computer/digital-maps-for-personal-computer-250000-scale>

For accommodation details, there are a few useful websites:

www.ctc-maps.org.uk/cyclists_welcome/
<http://www.thecyclepeople.com/>
<http://www.cycle-n-sleep.co.uk/>
<http://www.yha.org.uk/>
<http://www.syha.org.uk/home.aspx>
<http://www.independenthostelguide.co.uk/>
<http://www.hostel-scotland.co.uk/>

The AA Close Up Britain Road Atlas is a 1:100,000 scale road atlas which also shows cycle routes: www.sustransshop.org.uk/products/5122-aa-close-up-britain-road-atlas

Other sources of routes include:

Open Street Map Cycle Map: www.opencyclemap.org (not yet complete)

The CTC: www.ctc-maps.org.uk

The National Byway: www.thenationalbyway.org/national_map.asp

User driven route websites include: <http://www.cyclestreets.net/>
www.bikely.com
www.cycle-route.com
www.gps-routes.co.uk
<http://www.gpsies.com/home.do>

Details of canal towpaths which can be used by cyclists are given on the British Waterways' Waterscape website: www.waterscape.com

You can also use the "By Bike" option on the Via Michelin website: www.viamichelin.com
You have to plan the route in a maximum of 200km sections using Via Michelin.
This does not include details of traffic-free cycle routes.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any further queries regarding Sustrans and the National Cycle Network. We would also welcome any feedback you may wish to share with us on your experiences on the National Cycle Network or any alternative routes to those suggested above.



If you are thinking about doing the LEJOG as a sponsored ride perhaps you would consider raising money for Sustrans. As we are a charity, people's support is vital to maintaining and expanding the National Cycle Network, and fundraising through sponsorship is a very rewarding way of doing this. If you would like to find out more please contact Pru Comben in our Supporters department for a fundraising pack pru.comben@sustrans.org.uk or http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/Supporters_06/Sustrans_fundraising_pack_Oct_2010.pdf

Many Thanks

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