

7 traffic-free bike rides in the North East



Suitable for all abilities




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Easy and enjoyable rides for all abilities

Roman ruins, remote moorland and magnificent cities. Many of the north east's paths follow former railway lines through it's stunning coast and countryside landscapes.

As custodians of the **National Cycle Network**, we've put together our favourite traffic-free rides in the region to help you discover its wonders.

Key to route maps:



Bike Hire



Pub



Café



Restaurant



Routes Menu

Tap on a desired route below or scroll

MENU



Route one – County Durham

Middlesbrough to Darlington



Route two – Country Durham

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk



Route three – County Durham

Waskerley Way



Route four – County Durham

Derwent Walk



Route five – Tyne and Wear

Newcastle to Tynemouth



Route six – Northumberland

South Tyne Trail



Route seven – Northumberland

Berwick-upon-Tweed to Holy Island



Top Tips & Accessibility



Buy the guide





Route one

Middlesbrough to Darlington,
County Durham



Middlesbrough to Darlington

A memorable ride combining spectacular bridges, handsome market towns and local visitor attractions. Begin at Middlesbrough's historic Transporter Bridge and follow the River Tees to Stockton-on-Tees. Detour over the traffic-free Infinity Bridge to reach the town centre. Or continue along National Route 14 as quiet roads give way to a stretch of rural railway into Darlington.



Key route information:

Start:	Middlesbrough
Finish:	Darlington
Time:	1 hour 45 minutes
Length of ride:	17 miles



Start

Middlesbrough

Transporter Bridge,
TS2 1PL

GPS: 54.583518,
-1.229326

Finish

Darlington

Town Centre,
DL1 1LS

GPS: 54.526094,
-1.551642

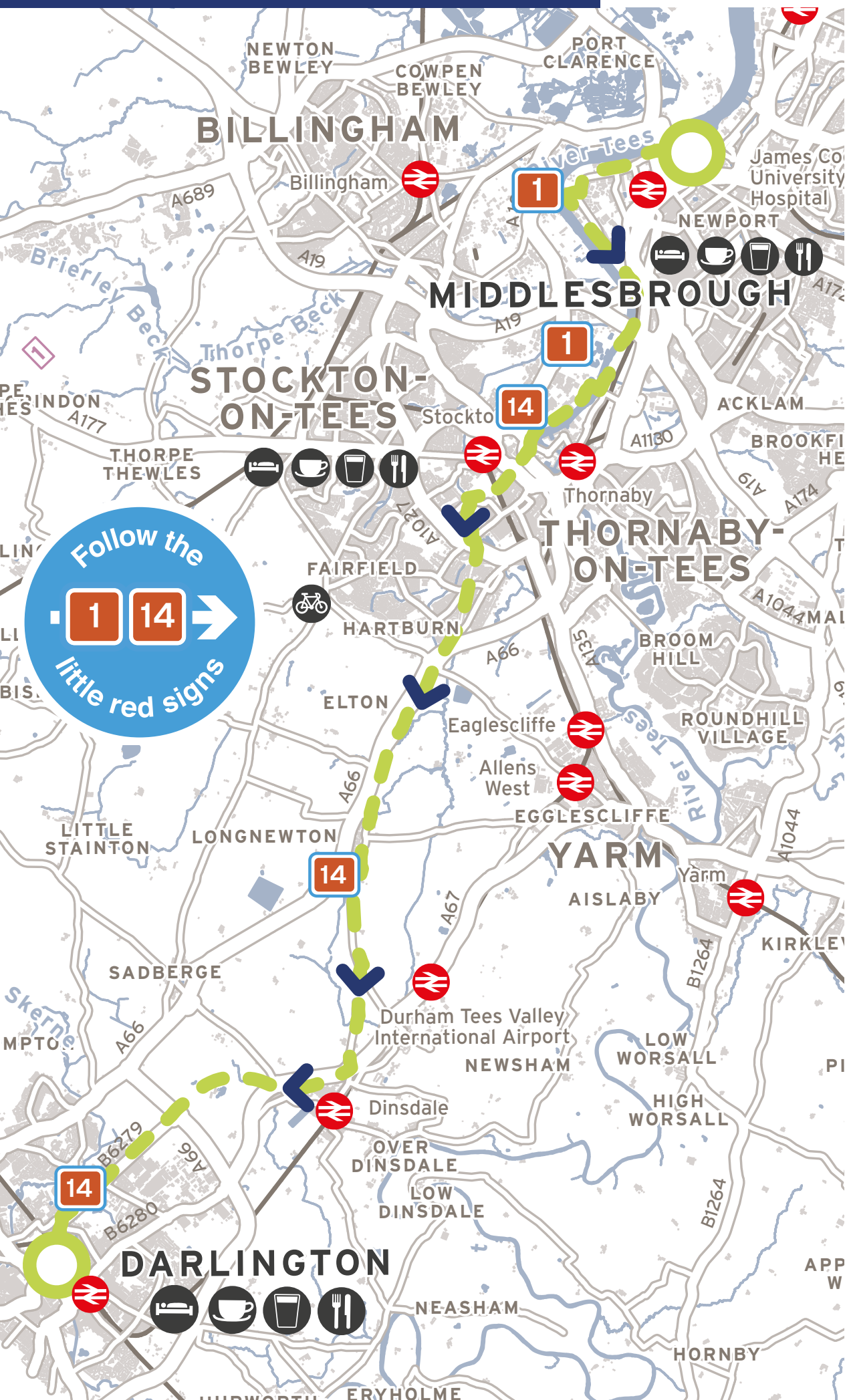
Terrain, gradients and access

Shallow steps over the Infinity Bridge. Flat tarmac paths and some minor road with a couple of extended sections of crushed stone path. Special care should be taken crossing the short section of fast road after Longnewton village.

Ideas for things to do:

- Visit our Stockton-on-Tees Active Travel Hub for cycle advice, bike maintenance courses and walking and cycling route ideas.
- Follow National Route 1 to the east of your start point to reach the coast at Redcar.
- Pack a picnic and have lunch spotting the lurking steel skeleton dinosaurs in Teessaurus Park.

Middlesbrough to Darlington, Du.





Route two

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk,
Country Durham

Route two

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk

A beautiful route enjoyed by both people and wildlife. This old coal railway line ride begins at the magnificent 11-arch Newton Cap Viaduct. You'll travel along woodside trails, over meadows and grassland through the stunning scenery of the Wear Valley.

There are plenty of opportunities to stop and admire the sweeping vistas. The old railway station at Brancepeth is a perfect mid-ride picnic spot.



Key route information:

Start: Bishop Auckland

Finish: Durham

Time: 1 hour

Length of ride: 9.5 miles

Route two

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk

Start

Newton Cap Viaduct

Bishop Auckland,
DL14 7SE

GPS: 54.668069,
-1.682179

Finish

Broompark Picnic Area

Durham,
DH7 7QX

GPS: 54.768271,
-1.611941

Terrain, gradients and access

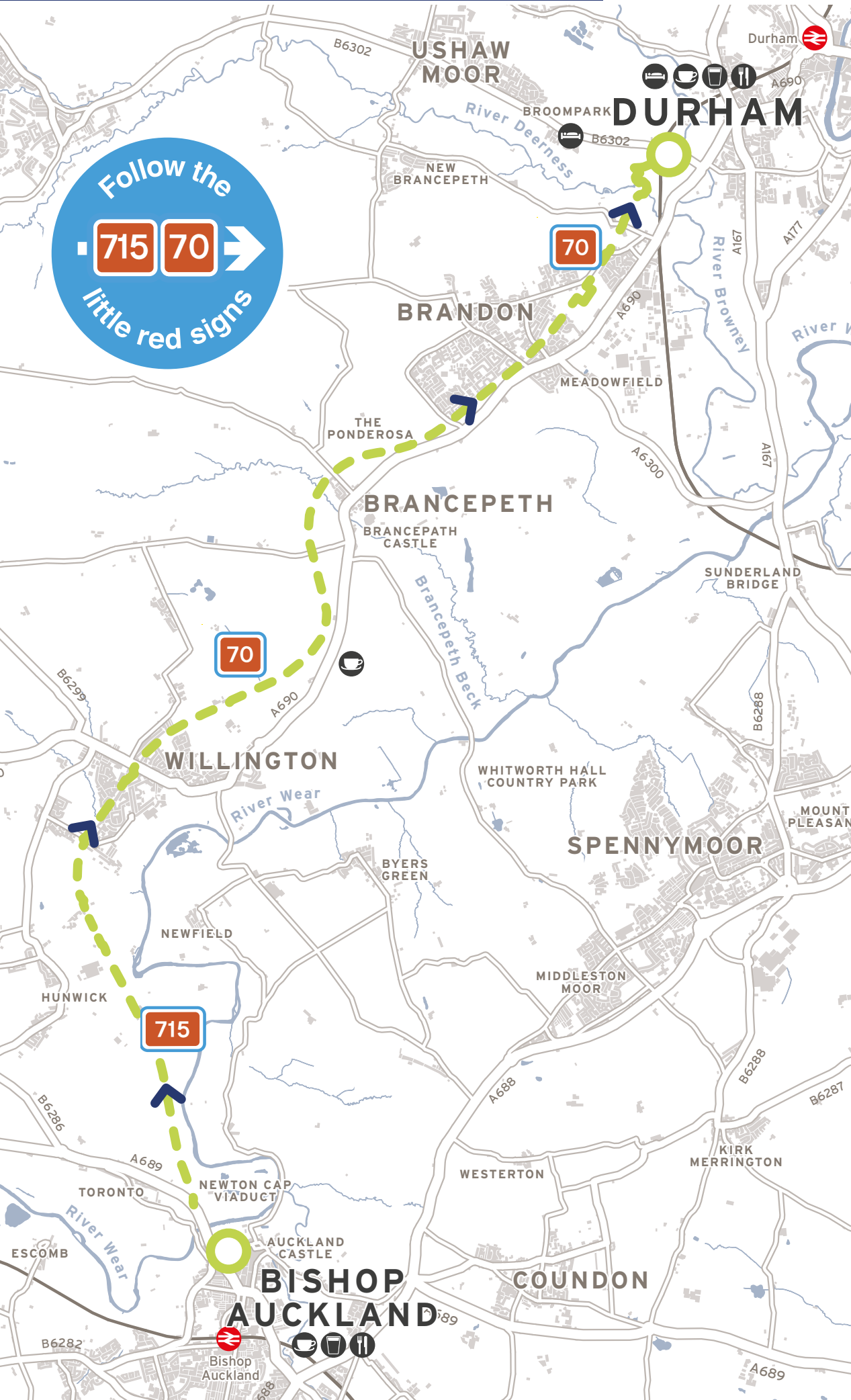
Largely flat with some short, steep gradients where bridges once stood and into Broompark. Fine gravel track, stony trail and tarmac path. Some road crossings.

Ideas for things to do:

- Follow the short country lane at Brancepath to visit the pretty village centre, home to Brancepath Castle and St Brandon's Church.
- Enjoy spotting the abundant wildlife. Keep an eye out for movement as you cross the River Deerness, it may well be an otter.
- Extend your ride at Broompark where the route meets Lanchester Valley Walk and Deerness Valley Walk, an 8-mile traffic-free route to Crook.

Route two

Brandon & Bishop Auckland Walk





Route three

Waskerley Way, County Durham



Waskerley Way

An exhilarating short ride through rugged heather moorland, grassy meadows, and mixed woodland. The route boasts incredible views over the North Pennines and the lush green fields of Derwent Valley with a couple of nice picnic stops at the old railway stations en route. In the final mile, you'll ride over the impressive 46-metre structure of the Hownsgill Viaduct.



Key route information:

Start: Stanhope Moor

Finish: Consett

Time: 55 minutes

Length of ride: 9 miles



Start

Parkhead Station

Stanhope,
DL13 2ES

GPS: 54.783334,
-1.997580

Finish

Lydgetts Junction

Consett,
DH8 7NU

GPS: 54.839661,
-1.847771

Terrain, gradients and access

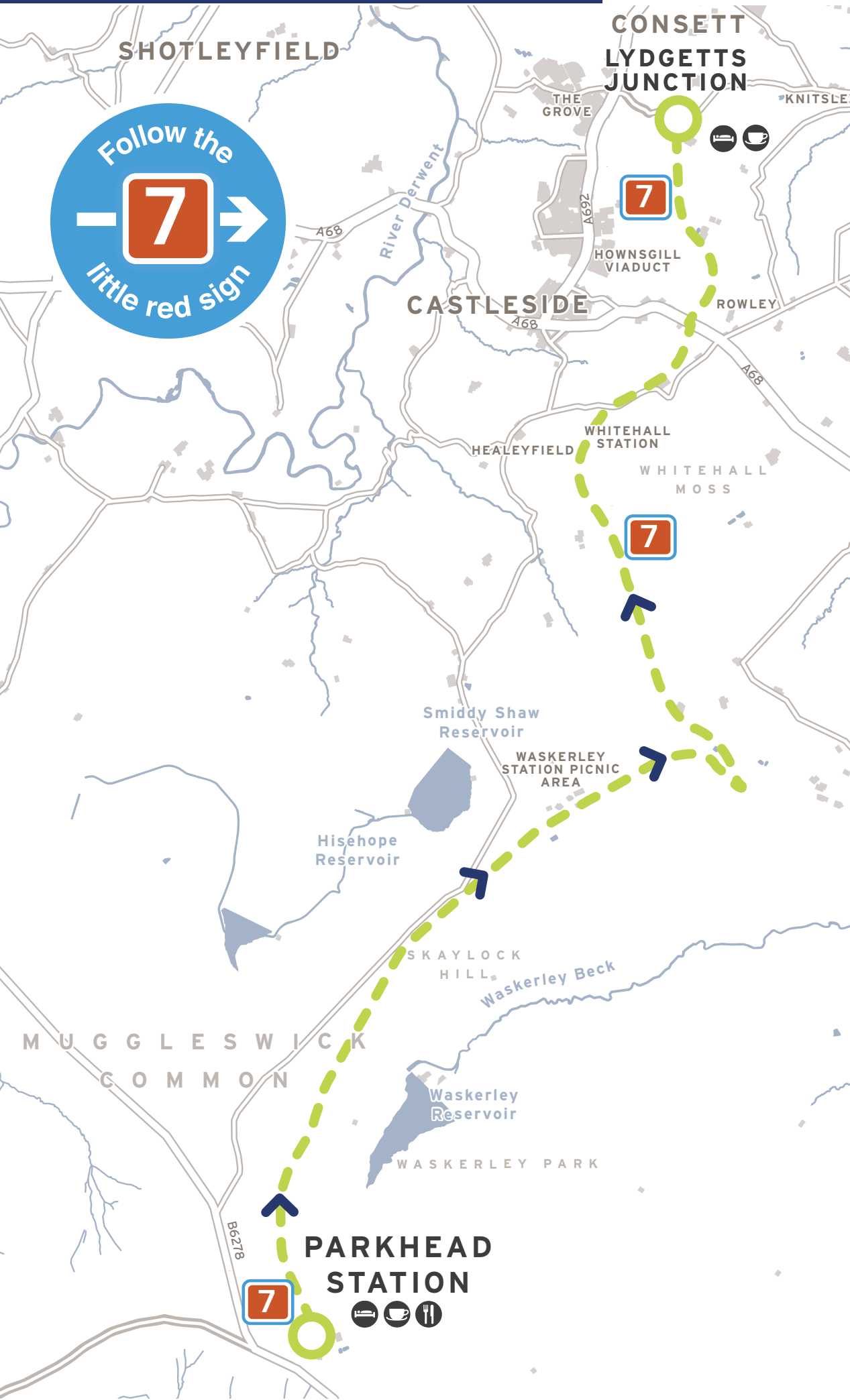
Gently descending along fine gravel path.
Several gates and a couple of road crossings
along the way.

Ideas for things to do:

- Extend your ride at Lydgetts Junction where this route meets three other traffic-free walking and cycling routes: Consett & Sunderland Railway Path, Lanchester Valley Walk and Derwent Walk.
- Looking for a challenge? This path makes up part of the 140-mile Sea to Sea (C2C) route across the north of England.
- Picnic among the grassy meadows at Waskerley Station.

Route three

Waskerley Way, County Durham





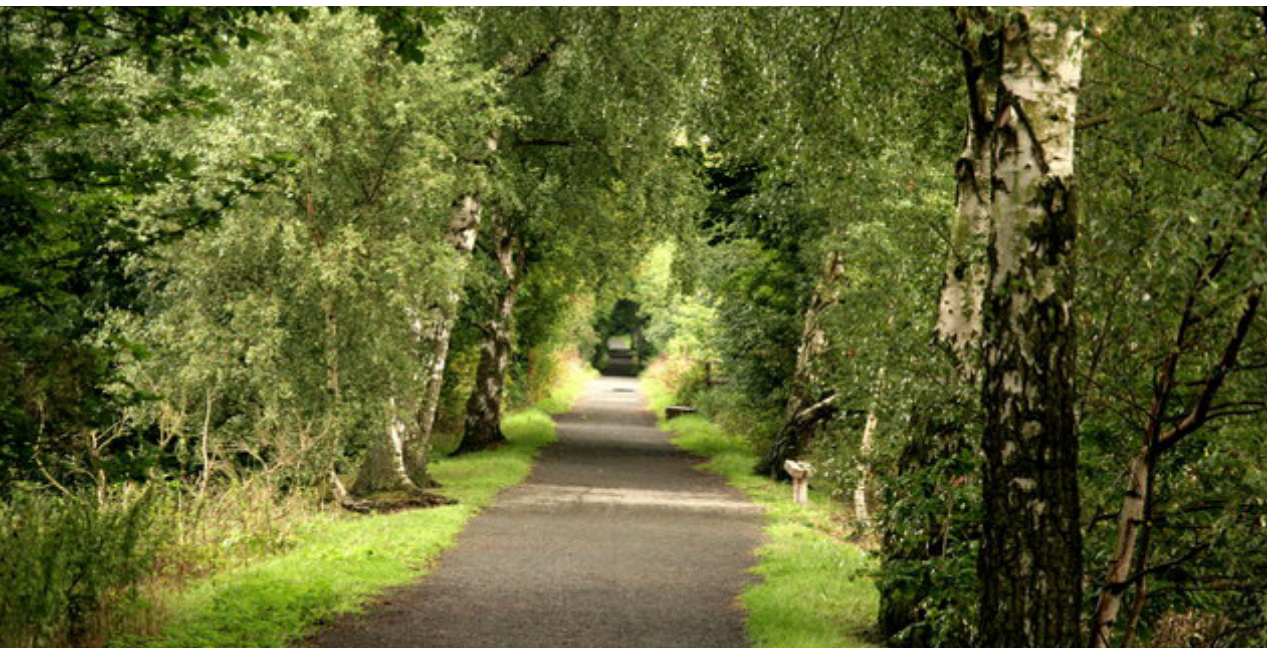
Route four

Derwent Walk, County Durham



Derwent Walk

A scenic and richly historic railway path through the Derwent Valley. The stunning views from the multiple viaducts along the route make this a very memorable ride. Try and spot the red kites overhead at the Pontburn and Fogoesburn viaducts. And take time to admire the Georgian grandeur of the Gibsite Estate as you cross the 152-metre Nine Arches Viaduct near the end of your ride.



Key route information:

Start:	Consett
Finish:	Gateshead
Time:	1 hour 5 minutes
Length of ride:	11 miles



Start

Lydgetts Junction

Consett,
DH8 7NU

GPS: 54.839661,
-1.847771

Finish

Blaydon Rugby Club

Swalwell, Gateshead,
NE16 3BN

GPS: 54.954499,
-1.690915

Terrain, gradients and access

Gently descending but with some short, undulating sections. A mixture of tarmac path, stony trail and dirt track. Several road crossings. There is one step near the start to lift bikes up.

Ideas for things to do:

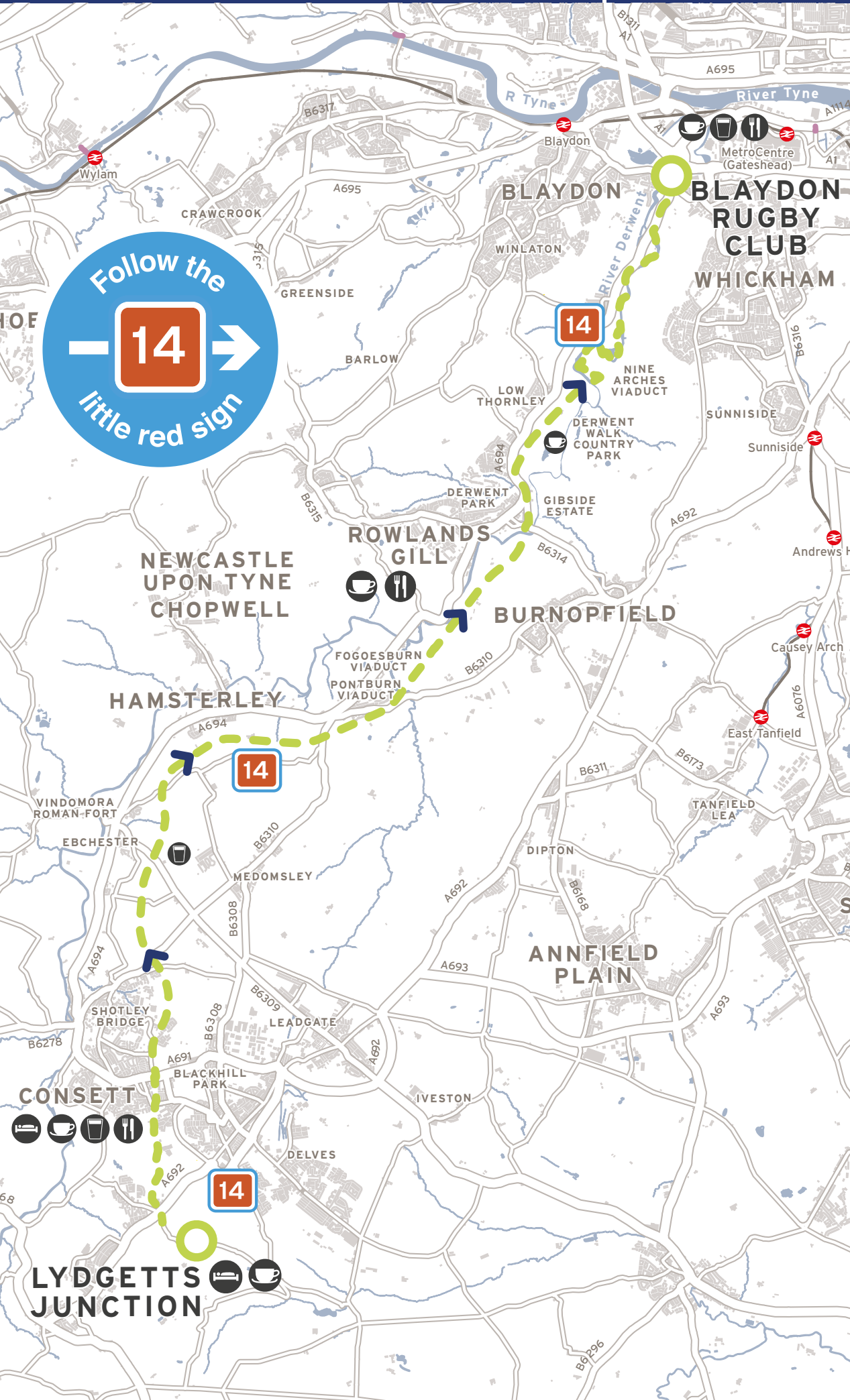
- Grab an ice cream at the family-friendly café in Derwent Park near Rowlands Gill.
- Extend your ride at the River Tyne where Derwent Walk meets the 14-mile Keelman's Way path, a largely traffic-free route from Wylam to Hebburn.
- Finish your ride at the retro cycling coffee bar, Pedalling Squares, at The Old Brassworks, Gateshead.

Route four

Derwent Walk, County Durham



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ON TYNE

Route five

Newcastle to Tynemouth,
Tyne and Wear





Newcastle to Tynemouth

A diverse route taking in the stylish city of Newcastle and its lively Quayside. You'll also pass by the remarkable ancient Roman fort of Segedunum, the easternmost point of Hadrian's Wall. Wildflower meadows, cityscapes and sandy bays are all part of this eclectic riverside ride.



Key route information:

Start:	Newcastle
Finish:	Tynemouth
Time:	1 hour 5 minutes
Length of ride:	11 miles



Start

Gateshead Millennium Bridge

Quayside, NE1 3DX

GPS: 54.971035,
-1.599211

Finish

Pier Rd

Tynemouth,
North Shields NE30 4BZ

GPS: 54.048739,
-2.897648

Terrain, gradients and access

Mostly flat along tarmac path with several road crossings. There are short on-road sections.

Ideas for things to do:

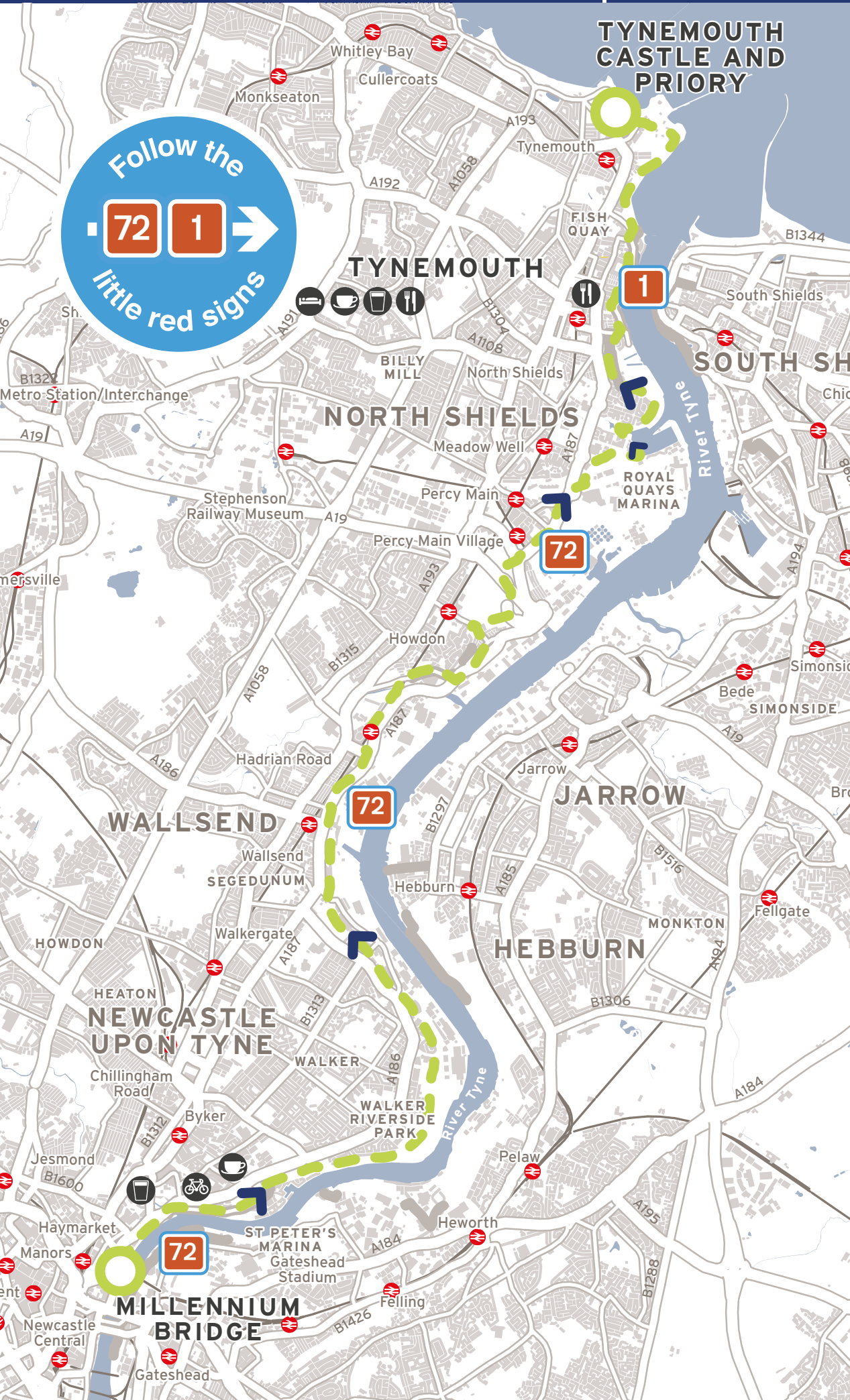
- Visit Segedunum, a Roman fort and museum where an 80-metre section of Hadrian's Wall can still be seen.
- Grab some fish and chips at Fish Quay in North Shields.
- Follow the mostly traffic-free National Route 1 north or south at the end of your ride to visit St Mary's Lighthouse or Souter Lighthouse respectively.

Route five

Newcastle to Tynemouth



MENU





Route six

South Tyne Trail, Northumberland



South Tyne Trail

Weave through the remote and unspoilt landscape of the beautiful South Tyne Valley. Finish your ride at the magnificent nine-arch Lambley Viaduct or continue your ride by taking a steep detour (the views at the top are worth it) and re-join the traffic-free path all the way to Slaggyford.



Key route information:

Start:	Haltwhistle
Finish:	Lambley Viaduct 1a (or Slaggyford 1b)
Time:	30 minutes (1 hour)
Length of ride:	5.5 miles (10 miles)



Start

Haltwhistle Station

NE49 0AH

[GPS: 54.968305,
-2.464344](#)

Finish

Lambley Viaduct

Brompton, CA8 7LJ

[GPS: 54.919282,
-2.508175](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

A steady climb all the way with a steep descent and ascent around Lambley. Tarmac path and fine gravel track with a short on-road section and road crossing. There are gates on this route.

Ideas for things to do:

- Take a short detour north of Haltwhistle before your ride to spot remains of Hadrian's Wall.
- Turn left at the old platform of Featherstone Park station for a short on-road ride to the Wallace Arms at Rowfoot. A good mid-way pub spot.
- Fancy a challenge? The South Tyne Trail is part of The Pennine Cycleway, a 354-mile route crossing Northumberland, the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District National Parks.

Route six

South Tyne Trail, Northumberland



MENU





Route seven

Berwick-upon-Tweed
to Holy Island, Northumberland



Berwick-upon-Tweed to Holy Island

A route rich with history. Travel from the historic town of Berwick-upon-Tweed to Holy Island (also known as Lindisfarne), a short distance from the Northumberland Coast. There are impressive coastal views throughout this ride and chances to spot grey seals and migratory birds at the National Nature Reserve. Check the tide times before you ride if you plan to visit Holy Island.



Key route information:

Start:	Berwick-upon-Tweed
Finish:	Holy Island
Time:	1 hours 30 minutes
Length of ride:	15 miles



Start

Railway Station

Berwick-upon-Tweed
TD15 1NF

GPS: 55.773764,
-2.010517

Finish

Holy Island

Berwick-upon-Tweed
TD15 2SH

GPS: 55.669146,
-1.785390

Terrain, gradients and access

Includes some quiet on-road sections. Some rough off-road sections require more skill and fitness on your cycle. Particularly, the grassier sections leaving Cocklawburn beach and approaching Holy Island. Small number of access gates.

Ideas for things to do:

- Time your arrival at Holy Island with a low tide and visit Lindisfarne Castle and the dramatic ruins of the ancient Priory.
- Spend time exploring Berwick-upon-Tweed with its Elizabethan defence walls, Georgian Barracks and views over the Tweed estuary.
- Extend your ride south along National Route 1 to eventually visit Bamburgh and Dunstanburgh castles (part of the Coast and Castles long-distance route).

Route seven

Berwick-upon-Tweed to Holy Is.



MENU





Bike ride checklist

You don't need special or expensive equipment to enjoy a short bike ride but here are some items you'll certainly find useful.

For you:

- A hat and suncream if it's sunny
- Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing
- Bike helmet – it's not compulsory to wear one in the UK but a well-fitted helmet is especially recommended for children
- Snacks and drinks to keep energy levels up
- Mobile phone and money

For your bike:

- Water bottle
- Puncture repair kit and pump
- Tyre levers, a bike 'multi-tool' or Allen keys and adjustable spanner
- Spare inner-tubes (saves you having to repair a puncture immediately)
- Bike lights
- Bike lock
- Bike bell – when on a shared-use path a friendly tinkle will let people know you're approaching.



Please be aware that routes in this guide may not be accessible to everyone.

One of our top priorities is making the National Cycle Network accessible to everyone.

But not everyone can easily access the Network.

We work hand in hand with communities to find the best ways to remove and redesign barriers.

This is to help everyone experience the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling in their local area.

Improving accessibility



As custodians of the National Cycle Network, we're committed to making it safe and accessible for everyone.

We deal with restrictive barriers at a local level, working with communities, local groups and landowners to design alternative solutions together.

How we remove barriers



Find out how our team go about removing barriers.

Top Tips & Accessibility

Useful information to know

Keep it safe and fun

Here are some tips to keep in mind when out on your ride:

- Let the slowest rider in your group set the pace for your ride.
- Ride in line on busy paths with any children in the middle of the adults. If there's only one adult, ride at the rear so you can keep an eye on everyone in front.
- Take extra care along any on-road sections and at road crossings. You may prefer to push your bike, especially with younger children or less experienced riders.

Plan your route



The routes in this guide are signed and easy to follow – just look out for the National Cycle Network blue and red signs. You can also check out your route in detail on our website and Ordnance Survey's online mapping.

Check your bike



Before you set off on your ride, check your bike is in good condition. We've put together a guide to help you safety check your bike in 11 easy steps.

Fix a puncture



Thankfully, punctures don't happen often and are easy to fix yourself. All you need is a pump, puncture repair kit and a set of tyre levers. Watch our video to learn how to repair a puncture.

Enjoyed your ride on the National Cycle Network?

Donate to Sustrans



Please help us to look after and improve the National Cycle Network for everyone to enjoy.

Buy the guide

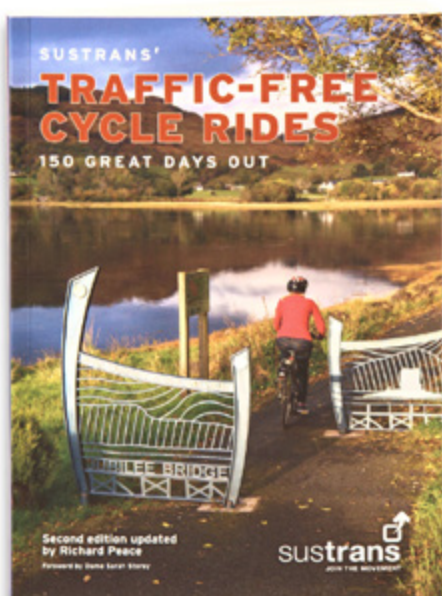


For more inspiring bike ride ideas buy our Traffic-Free Cycle Rides guidebook. It includes 150 hand-picked routes across the UK to help you plan the perfect day out.

Buy a regional map



Find and explore every local route and mile of the National Cycle Network in the UK with one of our pocket-sized regional cycle maps.



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Find out more at
www.sustrans.org.uk

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We have taken all responsible steps to ensure that these routes are safe and achievable by people with a reasonable level of fitness. However, all outdoor activities involve a degree of risk. To the extent permitted by law, Sustrans accepts no responsibility for any accidents or injury resulting from following these routes. Walking and cycling routes change over time. Weather conditions may also affect path surfaces. Please use your own judgement when using the routes based upon the weather and the ability, experience and confidence levels of those in your group.

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