

Penrith-Heart of Cumbria

Tour Organiser: Helen & Harvey Bell

Friday 08th to Monday 11th August 2025

A three day fixed-based tour exploring the Eden Valley and northwest Lake District using quiet, scenic roads, often following National Cycle routes. Staying in a Guest House in Penrith within easy distance of the town centre and railway station, we will ride 67 to 89 km a day of rolling hills, visiting local cafes on-route.

Itinerary

Friday 08th August 2025 Overnight stay in Penrith

There will be a briefing for the next day in a local pub or restaurant

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Blue Swallow Guest House or Abbey House B&B
- Meals: Self-Catering

Saturday 09th August 2025 Appleby and the Eden Valley

We head north east towards Renwick on NCN route 7 and then south on NCN route 68 to the picturesque fell side village of Melmerby, nestling at the foot of the Pennine scar on the eastern edge of the Eden Valley for an optional café stop in The Old Village Bakery. Note that, locals here still have grazing rights on the village green! We next ride towards Dufton with dramatic views of Cross Fell, passing over the Pennine way and carrying on to the charming historic market town of Appleby for a lunch stop. The town is at the crossroads of many long distance routes such as the Coast to Coast, Pennine Way and the Settle to Carlisle railway. We then join NCN 71, turning west and north through Morland with its ancient Saxon church and public gardens where there is also the Millyard café. In the evening there is the chance to eat at one of the many venues in Penrith or meet up for a possible group meal.

- Route distance: 85.0km
- Route altitude gain: 1038m
- Accommodation: Blue Swallow Guest House and Abbey House B&B
- Meals: (B)

Sunday 10th August 2025 Dalston and Ullswater

We ride north west of Penrith on NCN 7 past Newton Rigg college, then head north on relatively level ground to Dalston near Carlisle, our most northerly point. This is by the River Caldew and has 96 listed buildings including Rose castle and Dalton Hall. We then head south to Caldbeck to visit The Watermill Café. Continuing south towards Ullswater, we cross the A66 at Beckces and continue to the A592 on the beguiling shoreline of Ullswater. After 2km of main road we reach Pooley Bridge by the River Eamont. The name means 'The hill by the pool' and the bridge part was added in 1800. The main bridge was destroyed by the floods in 2015 and replaced by a metal one. Back on the B road we ride to Socksbridge and use a bridleway and cycle route to return to Penrith. A group meal is provided for the evening.

- Route distance: 89.0km
- Route altitude gain: 1040m
- Accommodation: Blue Swallow Guest House and Abbey House B&B
- Meals: (B, D)

Monday 11th August 2025 Orton

We ride south following the previous days cycle path from Penrith to go through Askham and Bampton Grange crossing the A6 then M6 at Shap. The main road was notorious for being blocked with snow in winter. Shap summit on the A6 is about 411 meters, and is the highest point on the West Coast Main Line. We carry on southwards to our stop at Orton Scar Café after 36km. Retracing our route we head north to Kings Meaburn and a welcome flatter section back to Penrith where the trip ends.

- Route distance: 67.0km
- Route altitude gain: 916m
- Accommodation: N/A
- Meals: (B)

Dates and Prices

Cost

- Land only price: £220

Payment Schedule

A deposit of £50 per person is required as soon as possible once the Tour Organiser has confirmed your booking, with the final balance to be paid by 16-May-2025

Price includes:

- 3 nights accommodation including 3 breakfasts.

- 1 evening meal.
- Overnight cycle storage

Price does not include:

- Lunches, snacks or evening meals not listed above
- Travel insurance
- Any transport costs
- Single room supplement of £50

Cancellations

Written Notice Received	Cancellation Charge
15/05/2025	£50-deposit
16/05/2025 to departure	Full price of tour

The price of £220 is based on a minimum number of 6 people taking part in the holiday. If there are insufficient bookings by Friday 16th May 2025, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

Holiday Information

Grade and area covered by the holiday

This holiday is classed as energetic.

We will ride through the Eden Valley south east of our base in Penrith visiting Appleby and also into the north west Lake District through Dalston, Caldbeck and riding along Ullswater, our most southerly ride is to Orton via Shap.

Travel and communication

The tour starts and finishes in Penrith. The nearest rail station is Penrith.

Travel to the start and from the finish is not included in this holiday. It is very important that you note that neither your Tour Organiser nor Bikexplore are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed time for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional expenses you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group. Before finalising travel arrangements, you should ensure that the tour is definitely going ahead.

Should there be insufficient bookings or pandemic travel restrictions are re-imposed, we reserve the right to cancel the tour at any time. It is therefore recommended that you book fully flexible and refundable transport and accommodation or wait until you have

been told the tour will go ahead. In the event of the tour being cancelled we will not be responsible for any losses incurred outside what you pay us.

We will use WhatsApp to communicate details like café stops, meal arrangements, places of interest and any emergencies on route. Ideally everyone will bring a smart phone and be happy to be included in the group.

If you are unable to join the WhatsApp group I can only communicate with you in an emergency.

Accommodation

The maximum number of participants will be 10 excluding the tour organisers.

We will stay in Blue Swallow Guest House and Abbey House B&B in the centre of Penrith.

There are 4 double/twin on-suite rooms and 2 singles on-suite.

Prices are based on two people sharing and there is a single supplement.

When booking with a partner to share please specify twin or double bed.

Meals, health and diet

Breakfast is provided on three days at our accommodation.

Dinner is provided on Sunday evening in a local restaurant.

We will frequently be travelling through rural areas and will stop at cafes during the rides whenever possible but you should buy and carry sufficient food and drink for lunch in case of emergencies.

Check which meals are provided in the Payment Schedule and ensure you have access to sufficient monies to cover any meals you will need to buy.

Check that you have informed the Tour Organiser of any dietary requirements in your Booking Form.

Please remember to pack any medications that you need to take regularly.

Cycles and equipment

A touring cycle, hybrid, tandem or lightweight road bike would all be suitable for this holiday.

You are advised to use 28mm tyres, or larger, to suit the variable terrain.

You will be expected to carry sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs, including two inner tubes, pump, a spare gear cable, split link and spare brake pads.

I will carry basic general tools and a basic first aid kit, but I suggest you also bring a small first aid kit and any tools that are specific to your bike. Two water bottles should be ample as we are stopping at cafes.

You should ensure your bike is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. A low (easy) bottom gear is useful on the hills.

Mudguards are optional, but if it is wet then it's not so much fun cycling behind someone without them.

A lightweight lock is advisable for when we stop at cafes.

Emergency rations e.g. energy bars are good to have, and I suggest a map, or some means of navigation.

Ride and rest days

A three-day long weekend break which is fixed-base, i.e. no need to carry luggage each day.

Most of each day will be spent cycling, there is no rest day. People will be able to ride with the led group at around 19-23 km/h (on level sections) or by themselves, usually meeting up at cafes for lunch and refreshment breaks.

We'll mainly be on quiet country roads and minor urban roads plus a short section of rough path. There is one short stretch on the A592. Option to include a rough track another day.

It is expected that you may want to stop for photographs, look at the view or explore some local object and this is okay. You are on holiday.

Inevitably, parts of the route are hilly and there is no back-up vehicle, so you do need to be fit to get the most out of this tour. It is essential to get out on your bike and do at least 30 to 50 kilometre rides before the tour starts. There are some descents too, so you should be able to negotiate these safely. Please note it may not always be possible to follow the itinerary exactly due to road works or weather etc, as things do not always go as planned. In these circumstances, you will be advised of alternative arrangements, you will need to be aware of the route each day. This information will be given to you before, or at the beginning of the holiday, and again at daily briefings.

The Organiser will not always be at the front of the group but may be anywhere within it, as circumstances require, so you will need to be aware of the route and likely stopping places each day.

Weather, clothing and culture

Lightweight clothing, suitable for a range of temperatures is needed and possibly smarter, warmer clothing for the evenings.

Lightweight waterproofs/windproofs will be needed.

Sun cream, lip balm and sun glasses are recommended along with insect repellent and bite cream.

My packing list is available on request - advisable if this is your first tour.

UK and Mid-Northern Europe climates

The temperature in August in Cumbria is likely to be between 18-22 degrees C (day) and 10 degrees C (night).

The weather can be variable, with a possibility of both heat waves and cold, wet weather, so be prepared for all possibilities including storms.

Maps and guides

A gpx file of each day's route will be provided before the start of the tour.

Recommended OS paper maps: Landranger 85, 86, 90 & 91 or digital OS.

Travel Insurance and vaccination

Travel insurance is not compulsory for UK nationals traveling in the UK.

Current Covid and Influenza vaccinations are recommended for participants of 75 years of age and over and those deemed medically vulnerable.

It is recommended that you are vaccinated against hepatitis A, typhoid, polio and tetanus and that protection has not expired. You should contact your doctor at least 3 months prior to travel to obtain these vaccinations and the latest advice for travelers.

Passports, visas and monies

Holders of non-UK passports are advised to check whether they require a visa.

Tour Organiser contact details

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