



END TO END
CYCLE CHALLENGE

This pack contains:

- End to End Introduction & Practical Advice
- Four End to End Routes:
 - YHA
 - B&B with Accommodation List
 - Main Road or Faster Route
 - Off-Road – Grade Black
- End to End Record Sheet
- End to End Merchandise Order Form

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Ride content was last updated in summer 2016.

Dear End to Ender

Cycling UK's (formerly CTC) End2End pack has earned itself a reputation over the years for the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the information contained in it, not to mention the quality of the four routes described, don't rely just on our directions, clear though they might be, work out what route will be best for yourself and your ability.

Updates: We try to keep the pack as up-to-date as possible and, to a large extent, rely on feedback from users of the pack for this, so please let us know if you find anything wrong or which could be improved in your opinion. If you're a member of Cycling UK, you have the added advantage of being able to print off an updated version of the pack (or part of it) prior to setting off; check out the date in the 'footer' at the bottom of each page to see if it's more recent than your original copy.



Land's End is the extreme southwestward (but not southern or western) point of Great Britain, situated in western Cornwall at the end of the Penwith peninsula, O.S. Grid Reference SW342250, Post Code TR19 7AA. The most southerly point is Lizard Point.

John o' Groats is the traditionally acknowledged extreme northern point of mainland Scotland, in northeastern Caithness, O.S. Grid Reference ND380735, Postcode KW1 4YR. The actual northernmost point is at nearby Dunnet Head. The point that is actually farthest by road from Land's End is Duncansby Head,

about 2 miles (3 km) from John o' Groats.

Records: The oldest person to cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats is Tony Rathbone (UK, b. 10 December 1932) who was aged 81 years and 162 days when he completed the journey on 21 May 2014. Roger Anthony "Tony" Rathbone started his journey from Land's End to John O'Groats on 7 May 2014 with his friend, William "Billy" Skipper. They cycled a total of 1,526.46 km (948.5 miles) and were riding for a total of 79 hours 34 minutes.



Proof of Passage: Once you've completed the ride, you are entitled to purchase an End to End Certificate, embroidered badge and / or T shirt. However, we need evidence that you've done it, which is why there is a record sheet enclosed with this pack.



Get this record sheet stamped as you progress along the route – one at the start, one at the finish and some in between. How many you obtain in between is up to you. A stamp is available at youth hostels but can be hard to track down elsewhere. Try the hotels or B&Bs you're staying at, or you can try garages and post offices (although the latter are sometimes not too keen to oblige). Failing stamps, photos with you and your bike in front of appropriate town or village signs, till receipts or bank ATMs which show your location are all acceptable.

When you return from your trip, order your merchandise online at www.cyclinguk.org/shop and send it, together with a photo/scan of your record sheet and any other proof– keep the originals safe! Alternatively, you can send copies into the address on the front page.

Have a great ride!

Riding LEJOG is an experience that will stay with you for a long time. Make sure it's for the right reasons by riding safely at all times.

The information contained in this pack is provided in good faith. We've done our best to ensure it is accurate, and the route is easy to follow. However, new roads get built & signposts can change at any time, so please be aware that the directions may not now be 100% accurate.

Practical Advice

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INTRODUCTION

People seldom follow our routes precisely; rather they use them as a guide. All sorts of factors will have a bearing on the route *you* finally arrive at. (You might have relatives you want to stay with on the way, for example.) Our routes were originally created by highly experienced cycle tourers who made great efforts to devise the best route. Over the years, changes have been made as a result of changes to the road infrastructure and also as a result of recommendations by End2Enders who have kindly provided us with feedback. We sincerely hope that you'll have no trouble following the instructions and find our routes to be good. When you deviate off one, do avoid busy main roads where possible unless you are a very experienced cyclist. Also prepare for the ride well in advance, with care and with attention to detail. You'll enjoy it so much more if you do.

For the majority, the End 2 End is a challenging and very special undertaking. Do take time to read through these notes. The chances of them being of no value to you whatsoever are slim. Do yourself a favour and don't make it any harder for yourself than it has to be.

We advise that you check our regularly updated and very detailed thread on the Cycling UK [forum about LEJOG](https://forum.cyclinguk.org/). <https://forum.cyclinguk.org/>

WHAT IS THE END TO END?

Land's End to John o' Groats is the traversal of the whole length of the island of Great Britain between two extremities; in the southwest and northeast. The traditional distance by road is 874 miles (1,407 km) and takes most cyclists ten to fourteen days; the record for running the route is nine days. Off-road walkers typically walk about 1,200 miles (1,900 km) and take two or three months for the expedition. Two much-photographed signposts indicate the traditional distance at each end.

- Land's End is the extreme south-westward (but not southern or western) point of Great Britain, situated in western Cornwall at the end of the Penwith peninsula, O.S. Grid Reference SW342250, Post Code TR19 7AA. The most southerly point is Lizard Point.
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The straight-line distance from Land's End to John o' Groats is 603 miles (970 km) as determined from O.S. Grid References, but such a route passes over a series of stretches of water in the Irish Sea.

According to a road atlas of 1964, the shortest route using classified roads was 847 miles (1,363 km). According to a road atlas of 2008, the shortest route using classified roads was 838 miles (1,349 km). In 2011 an online route planner calculated the quickest route by road as 838 miles (1,349 km), estimating a time of 15 hours 48 minutes for the journey (this uses A30, M5, M6, A74(M), M74, M73, M80, M9, A9 & A99). However, the overall shortest route by road, using minor roads in numerous places and utilising modern bridges, has been reduced to around 814 miles (1,310 km). This route is roughly follows:

Land's End, Bodmin, Okehampton, Tiverton, Taunton, Bridgwater, the M5 Avon Bridge, the M48 Severn Bridge, Monmouth, Hereford, Shrewsbury, Tarporley, St Helens, Preston, Carlisle, Beattock, Carstairs, Whitburn, Falkirk, Stirling, Crieff, Kenmore, Dalchalloch, A9, Inverness, Kessock Bridge, Cromarty Bridge, Dornoch Firth Bridge, Latheron, Wick, John o' Groats.

BEST TIME OF YEAR TO DO THE RIDE

The ride can, of course, be undertaken any time, but you'll find it easier and more pleasant when (a) the days are long – and the nights short; (b) when it's not cold; (c) when the midges aren't biting – or are biting less! Thus May and June are probably the best months.

If staying at YHAs, you may find that they are so booked out in school term time that you have no choice but to choose late July / August.

If staying at B&B's, obviously it's always safer to book in advance. B&B's will have different busy and quiet periods based on various factors so it's impossible to recommend a good time, although it's more likely to be in low season (when length of day and temperature are less than good). You take your choice.



What you really want to avoid is doing the ride when certain areas could be icy. Thus, according to statistics, you should avoid late October to early May since ground frost is present in Inverness for three days in May and four in October. (See Climate further on in this booklet)

SOUTH TO NORTH OR THE OTHER WAY? LEJoG or JoGLE?

This is a perennially popular question. There are a few factors to consider.

Firstly, the prevailing winds in the UK blow from the south west. This means that there is a greater likelihood of the wind blowing you towards your destination if you start from Land's End. How *much* greater is the question! Note that in May, the wind more often blows from the other direction.

<http://www.weatheronline.co.uk/reports/philip-eden/Mays-blocking-highs.htm>

Secondly, terrain: yes, of course there are hills – and plenty of them. By far the worst section in this respect is the south west. Once you're over the Severn Bridge, you can relax in the certain knowledge that anything else you encounter on your journey north will seem a mere triviality by comparison. Don't quote me, but it's almost true. Cornish hills are short(ish) and steep; Devonian ones are less short...oh, and steep too! You can either choose to get this section over early, getting fit in the process or you can build up your fitness as you head south. By the time you reach Devon and Cornwall, you'll be as fit as a flea. Then again you might be exhausted and in need of a week in bed and the final leg might put you off riding a bike ever again (which would be a shame). Navigation is also relatively tricky in the south west too, whereas in Scotland it's pretty easy.

Thirdly, annoyingly, all four routes in this pack are described from south to north. If you choose to go the other way, then you will need to turn all the instructions on their head. (Some of the ‘other’ routes are described north to south – see page 11.)

Finally there is the question of getting to your chosen starting point and back from your finishing point. John o’Groats is by far the more difficult, with limited rail services (and spaces for bikes) plus the sheer distance (in most cases). You might want to go against the flow and get the travel challenges over with before the ride, in which case it’s JoGLE for you.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

The total distance of each of our routes is a little over 1,000 miles or 1610 kilometres. Many cyclists choose to ride the End to End in two weeks, averaging 71 miles per day. In hillier areas (e.g. south west England and central Scotland) such daily mileages can be hard work, depending on your level of fitness. You may like to plan lower mileage days in these areas. If you choose to do the ride in two weeks, you may not have very much time available for stopping for refreshments, taking photos or perhaps doing a spot of sightseeing. For example if your average cycling speed is 10 miles per hour, it will take you 7 hours to ride a 70 mile day, not counting stops.

If you want to have time for all the above, then we suggest you take three weeks or longer over the route. (To cycle the route in three weeks means cycling an average of 48 miles per day). Please do give the above some thought before planning your ride and your overnight stops! Of course if you’re using YHAs your choices are much more limited and you’ll be hard pressed to shorten some days. You could always build in a rest day after a long day.

WHERE TO STAY

Details of accommodation are included in this pack for both our Youth Hostel and B&B routes. You could also stay in hotels or camp.

Other information sources include *Cyclists Welcome*, Cycling UK’s own accommodation guide, which is accessible via the following link:

www.cyclistswelcome.co.uk There is also a Cycling UK

information sheet (ref INF44) entitled ‘Where to Stay in the UK’ included in this pack (please note this is currently being updated June 2015). See also the booklist further on.



Tourist Information Centres (TICs) along the route offer another comprehensive information source on local B&Bs and might even make bookings for you. The telephone numbers of individual TICs can be obtained simply visiting the websites below:

For England: <http://www.visitbritain.com/en/Travel-tips/Traveller-tips/Tourist-information-centres.html>

For Scotland: <http://www.visitscotland.com/>

If you choose to camp, you’ll find some useful lists of campsites used by previous End2Enders in the extra routes at the end of this section, although you will need to contact us for copies of the relevant routes. Camping is obviously quite a challenging option because setting up camp and getting everything back in your panniers takes time out of your cycling day and of course you’ll have to lug your gear around with you on the bike (unless you have vehicle support). Very satisfying though!

Hotels are a good choice because they take all the hassle out of keeping yourself fuelled up (with food). Travelodge’s, Premier Travel Inns etc have helped beat the price of hotels down but you may have to stray some way off route to reach them, and this may involve cycling on busy roads.

REGIONAL INFORMATION

South West England is one of nine official regions of England. It is the largest such region in area, covering 9,200 square miles



(23,800 km²) and comprising Gloucestershire, Bristol, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Five million people live in South West England.

The region includes the area often known as the West Country and much of the ancient kingdom of Wessex. The size of the region is shown by the fact that the northern part of Gloucestershire, near Chipping Campden, is as close to the Scottish border as it is to the tip of Cornwall. The largest city is Bristol. Other major urban centres include Plymouth, Swindon, Gloucester, Exeter, Bath, and the South East Dorset conurbation of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch. All counties either include at least one unitary authority or are unitary authorities themselves, as is the case with Cornwall and the Unitary Authority of Bristol. The region has 8 cities: Salisbury, Bath, Wells, Bristol, Gloucester, Exeter, Plymouth and Truro. It includes two National Parks - Dartmoor and Exmoor - and four World Heritage Sites, including Stonehenge and the Jurassic Coast.

The region has a particularly strong cultural identity. Cornwall has its own language, Cornish, and the region is known for its rich folklore, including the legend of King Arthur and Glastonbury Tor, as well as its many centuries-old traditions and customs. Traditionally, the South West of England has been well known for producing Cheddar cheese, which originated in the Somerset village of Cheddar, for Devon cream teas, crabs, Cornish pasties, and for cider. It is also well known as the home of the Eden Project, Aardman Animations, the Glastonbury Festival, the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, trip hop music and Cornwall's surfing beaches. The region has by far the longest coastline in England, and is well known for its traditional seaside fishing towns.



The West Midlands is one of nine official regions of England at the first level of NUTS for statistical purposes. It covers the western half of the area traditionally known as the Midlands. It contains the second most populous British city, Birmingham, and the larger West Midlands conurbation, which includes the city of Wolverhampton and large towns of Dudley, Solihull, Walsall and West Bromwich. The city of Coventry is also located within the West Midlands County, but is separated from the conurbation to the west by several miles of green belt.

The region is geographically diverse, from the urban central areas of the conurbation to the rural western counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire which border Wales. The longest river in the UK, the River Severn, traverses the region southeastwards, flowing through the county towns of Shrewsbury and Worcester, and the Ironbridge Gorge, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. Staffordshire is home to the industrialised

Potteries conurbation, including the city of Stoke-on-Trent, and the Staffordshire Moorlands area, which borders the southeastern Peak District National Park near Leek. The region also encompasses five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Wye Valley, Shropshire hills, Cannock Chase, Malvern Hills, and parts of the Cotswolds. Warwickshire is home to the town of Stratford upon Avon, the birthplace of the writer William Shakespeare. The West Midlands and Greater London are the only regions of England and of the United Kingdom which are landlocked.



North West England, one of nine official regions of England, consists of five counties of Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside. The North West had a population of 7,052,000 in 2011. It is the third most populated region in the United Kingdom after the South East and Greater London.

North West England is bounded to the east by the Peak District and the Pennines and to the west by the Irish Sea. The region extends from the Scottish Borders in the north to the West Midlands region in the south. To its southwest is North Wales.

Amongst the better known of the North West's physiographical features are the Lake District and the Cheshire Plain. The highest point in North West England (and the highest peak in England) is Scafell Pike, Cumbria, at a height of 3,209 feet (978 m).

A mix of rural and urban landscape, two large conurbations, centred on Liverpool and Manchester, occupy much of the south of the region. The north of the region, comprising Cumbria and northern Lancashire, is largely rural, as is the far south which encompasses parts of the Cheshire Plain and Peak District.

The region includes parts of three National parks (all of the Lake District, and small parts of the Peak District and the Yorkshire Dales) and three areas of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (all of Arnsdale and Silverdale and the Solway Coast, and almost all of the Forest of Bowland).

Scotland (/ˈskɒt.lənd/; Scots: [ˈskɒt.lənd]; Scottish Gaelic: Alba [ˈal̪ˠapə]) is a country that is part of the United Kingdom and covers the northern third of the island of Great Britain. It shares a border with England to the south, and is otherwise surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, with the North Sea to the east and the North Channel and Irish Sea to the south-west. In addition to the mainland, the country is made up of more than 790 islands, including the Northern Isles and the Hebrides.

Edinburgh, the country's capital and second-largest city, was the hub of the Scottish Enlightenment of the 18th century, which transformed Scotland into one of the commercial, intellectual, and industrial powerhouses of Europe. Glasgow, Scotland's largest city was once one of the world's leading industrial cities and now lies at the centre of the Greater Glasgow conurbation. Scottish waters consist of a large sector of the North Atlantic and the North Sea, containing the largest oil reserves in the European Union. This has given Aberdeen, the third-largest city in Scotland, the title of Europe's oil capital.

The mainland of Scotland comprises the northern third of the land mass of the island of Great Britain, which lies off the north-west coast of Continental Europe. The total area is 78,772 km² (30,414 sq. mi), comparable to the size of the Czech Republic. Scotland's only land border is with England, and runs for 96 kilometers (60 mi) between the basin of the River Tweed on the east coast and the Solway Firth in the west. The Atlantic Ocean borders the west coast and the North Sea is to the east. The island of Ireland lies only 30 kilometers (19 mi) from the south-western peninsula of Kintyre;[145] Norway is 305 kilometers (190 mi) to the east and the Faroes, 270 kilometers (168 mi) to the north.



CLIMATE

As you are riding on your journey you are going to encounter many geographical changes, many regional changes but what you also need to consider is the climate changes that occur across England and Scotland on your journey. Up to date climate data for the various areas you will be cycling in is available from <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/summaries> which is updated regularly and will allow you to extra prepare for your journey ahead. Below are some summary tables for England and Scotland which are examples of the variation in temperature, rainfall and amount of potential sunshine you could experience (Data compiled in 2011). You may also find this link very helpful in planning your route and checking on the various weather conditions that could affect your journey. <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/summaries/anomacts>

England Weather Averages													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average maximum temperature °C (°F)	6.9 (44.4)	7.2 (45.0)	9.8 (49.6)	12.4 (54.3)	15.8 (60.4)	18.6 (65.5)	20.9 (69.6)	20.7 (69.3)	17.9 (64.2)	13.9 (57.0)	9.9 (49.8)	7.2 (45.0)	13.5 (56.3)
Average minimum temperature °C (°F)	1.3 (34.4)	1.1 (34.0)	2.6 (36.7)	3.9 (39.0)	6.7 (44.1)	9.5 (49.1)	11.7 (53.1)	11.5 (52.7)	9.6 (49.3)	6.9 (44.4)	3.8 (38.8)	1.6 (34.9)	5.9 (42.6)
Sunshine hours	54.2	74.3	107.6	155.2	190.6	182.6	193.5	182.5	137.2	103.1	64.5	47.3	1492.7
Rainfall mm (inches)	82.9 (3.3)	60.3 (2.4)	64.0 (2.5)	58.7 (2.3)	58.4 (2.3)	61.8 (2.4)	62.6 (2.5)	69.3 (2.7)	69.7 (2.7)	91.7 (3.6)	88.2 (3.5)	87.2 (3.4)	854.8 (33.7)
Rainfall ≥ 1 mm days	13.2	10.4	11.5	10.4	9.9	9.6	9.5	9.9	9.9	12.6	13.1	12.7	132.8

Climate data for Scotland (1981 - 2010) Extremes (1901 - Present)													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °C (°F)	18.3 (64.9)	17.9 (64.2)	23.6 (74.5)	27.2 (81)	30.9 (87.6)	32.2 (90)	32.8 (91)	32.9 (91.2)	32.2 (90)	27.4 (81.3)	20.0 (68)	18.3 (64.9)	32.9 (91.2)
Average high °C (°F)	5.2 (41.4)	5.3 (41.5)	6.8 (44.2)	9.3 (48.7)	12.4 (54.3)	14.3 (57.7)	16.1 (61)	15.8 (60.4)	13.7 (56.7)	10.5 (50.9)	7.5 (45.5)	5.4 (41.7)	10.2 (50.4)
Daily mean °C (°F)	2.6 (36.7)	2.6 (36.7)	3.9 (39)	5.8 (42.4)	8.5 (47.3)	10.8 (51.4)	12.8 (55)	12.6 (54.7)	10.5 (50.9)	7.7 (45.9)	4.9 (40.8)	2.8 (37)	7.1 (44.8)
Average low °C (°F)	0.0 (32)	-0.2 (31.6)	0.9 (33.6)	2.3 (36.1)	4.5 (40.1)	7.2 (45)	9.4 (48.9)	9.3 (48.7)	7.3 (45.1)	4.8 (40.6)	2.2 (36)	0.1 (32.2)	4.0 (39.2)
Record low °C (°F)	-27.2 (-17)	-27.2 (-17)	-22.8 (-9)	-13.3 (8.1)	-9.4 (15.1)	-5.6 (21.9)	-2.5 (27.5)	-4.5 (23.9)	-6.7 (19.9)	-11.7 (10.9)	-23.3 (-9.9)	-27.2 (-17)	-27.2 (-17)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	200.3 (7.886)	151.6 (5.969)	160.7 (6.327)	99.1 (3.902)	87.1 (3.429)	92.1 (3.626)	102.0 (4.016)	120.5 (4.744)	149.9 (5.902)	189.7 (7.469)	185.8 (7.315)	182.4 (7.181)	1,721.2 (67.764)
Avg. rainy days	20.4	16.9	19.5	14.9	13.7	13.8	15.2	16.0	17.1	20.2	20.0	19.1	206.8
Mean monthly sunshine hours	28.1	56.5	86.3	128.0	172.2	140.7	125.7	119.7	96.9	67.6	35.0	23.2	1,079.9

TRAINING, FOOD AND FITNESS

The amount of information available from books and on the internet is positively overwhelming – you'll feel worn out before you make your first pedal turn. Specific recommendations are difficult because none are bad, but many will actually provide you with more information than you actually need. Hopefully the following notes will prove sufficient for your needs. Getting fit doesn't need to be a science – it is common sense to a large extent.

Firstly the hardware – general principles...

The Bike

- Ensure the bike you use is appropriate for the ride you're going to do. Try to do all your training on the bike you'll be riding for the event. A triple chainset (three cogs where the pedals are) is highly desirable in the majority of circumstances. Choose a firm saddle as opposed to something full of gel, which will be great for a while but not at the end of a long day. Sadly there are no hard or fast rules for saddles – its trial and error.
- Make sure that the bike fits you properly. Have the bike set up, getting a shop or experienced friend / colleague to do it if you're not confident about doing it yourself. The importance of being comfortable on your bike cannot be emphasised enough.
 - Your knee should be slightly bent at the bottom of the pedal action (i.e. not too bent but not straight either); as a starting guide it is reckoned your saddle height should be 109% of your inside leg measurement; then adjust by 2mm at a time until comfortable.
 - Ideally you should not sit bolt upright, but leaning forward so that equal weight is on the saddle and arms. Position will depend on the type of bike you're riding – hybrid, trekking bike or road bike; flat or drop bars.
- If something starts hurting or aching when out on a ride (and this could easily happen as you increase the distance you ride, you might be able to 'ride through the pain' but, until you've learned through experience about how your body deals with long hours in the saddle, it's best to stop and think about why you're hurting and try and resolve the matter. At worst, limp gently home and allow your body to recover. Knees are usually the problem, so it's always useful to carry a knee bandage just in case. If the problem persists, you may have to consult a sports physiotherapist.



Before the Event

- Have the bike serviced, or get someone you know to check it over. Do try it out before setting off on your trip.
- Check no parts are too worn or loose.
- Have good and (reasonably) new tyres, pumped up to the correct pressure. Tyres are your connection with the road and 'rolling resistance' is an important factor. Seek advice before choosing.
- Have good / new break blocks.
- Have at least a rear mudguard, as on wet days there is nothing worse than a wet behind, especially if you are going to get up and do it all again the next day. Neither are you particularly welcome at refreshment stops if the bits that touch their chairs are covered in muck.

Clothing

Buying some cycling-specific clothing is worth the investment. It needn't be expensive if you shop around. Ron Hill tracksters on the bottom, reasonably priced padded shorts, a decent quality base layer for the top half, a cycling top (or three), cycling shoes, cycling mitts and of course, a waterproof jacket and a baseball hat. These should be your bare minimum. Check out the pages of Cycle magazine for shops, online or otherwise. If new to the game, try on before you buy! Look around, see what other cyclists wear, ask their opinions or look on the Cycling UK Forum.

Training ~ general principles

- Do the training on the bike you will use, so that you get used to each other, and correct any problems.
- Gradually increase the length of your training rides up to the daily distance you will be riding, and reduce the number of days between rides; remember that eventually you'll need to be used to riding that daily distance every day if you're on a multi-day ride. So do get used to riding on consecutive days.
- Get used to carrying the weight of the kit / food / tools you will have on the ride.
- Build up these capabilities in advance of the event and take it easy in the week or two immediately before your ride.
- Never start training hard from your front door. Try to have a period of low intensity at the beginning of any ride to get cold muscles warmed up. A few gentle warm-up exercises before setting off will help (and amuse the rest of the household!)
- Do some stretching exercises after your rides to increase your suppleness and reduce later aches and pains.

Further Notes

Create stepping stones to make your goal achievable and realistic. In principle any training you do that takes you beyond what you've done before pays dividends. Ideally, you should be on your bike three to four times per week throughout the year. You might ride to work, or use a turbo trainer, two or three times per week, and then cycle once or twice over the weekend. There is no substitute for 'getting the miles in'. Every two weeks or so, increase the distance you cover at weekends by about 5-10%. Soon you'll be covering greater distances with ease.

By counting 'hours on a bike' rather than 'miles covered' you can compare different types of cycling. If you go mountain-biking at weekends, you won't cover as many miles as if you were on your road bike, but you can compare the time and effort between the two activities. The variety is good for your mental motivation. Do remember, however, to do the long rides on the bike you'll be using for *the ride*.

If you just have the one bike, or 'don't do cycling in cold weather' and don't have a turbo trainer – or even know what one is! – and can't bear gyms, don't panic: there are plenty of exercises you can do at home and, unless you're doing your ride very early in the year, a month or six weeks of concerted, focused training *on the bike you're using for the ride* should be enough for the averagely healthy, moderately fit person.

You can actually do too much and become 'over-trained', which occurs when you increase the distance of rides and/or reduce your recovery time between rides too quickly. So, every four or five weeks, cut your riding back by about 20-25%. In the summer time, when you are spending more hours in the saddle at weekends, you don't need to spend so much time on your bike during the week. This is a good time to try riding shorter distances faster. You'll find you get faster as you become fitter anyway.

You should aim to be ready for your ride about 2 weeks before the start so you can have some time to relax a bit before you set off.

Interval Training

'Interval' training is a useful way to increase your peak fitness level more effectively by interspersing high intensity riding with a period of steady riding. The same level of fitness can be reached quicker using this approach. Hill riding naturally consists of intervals, so on hilly rides try to really power up the hills, and use the downhill's as a rest in between.

Training in Gym or at Home

Training in a gym or at home can be a very useful addition to your bike rides to build fitness, especially if these are organised 'Spinning' sessions at a gym, or well-planned home workouts with variety of pace and intensity (try using a techno soundbeat to keep to). Gym workouts are particularly good for improving your hill climbing because you tend to use your whole body when climbing.

Organised Rides

Riding with others is useful, particularly if you're planning on riding your event with others, because it allows you time to practice riding in a group and adapting to another rider's pace. It can also provide motivation; riding on your own can be dull. Try climbing hills at a speed that suits you. Be aware that everyone climbs hills at a different pace, so don't try to push it too much if someone is quicker than you. If you slow down to another person's slower speed, do so but only if it feels comfortable; it's a good way of conserving energy if you're able to do it.

Warm Down/Stretching

After your training rides/sessions be sure to warm down and do some stretching exercises to help keep supple and reduce muscle soreness,

Nutrition/Diet

- During your training get used to the sort of food and drink you will use on the event.
- Use of energy drinks can be effective, as these replace salts and are quickly absorbed (SIS- Science In Sport Go drink; Enervit G Sport Drink; Isostar Isotonic drink; ZipVit (discounts for Cycling UK members); are all good – try one and see what works for you – you may wish to make them up a little weaker than instructed as this is more refreshing.
- Energy and cereal bars are useful; find a type that you enjoy and can digest easily. Expensive sports energy bars can work well but bananas, dried fruit, mixed fruit and nuts, fruit cake is all good if it works for you. Again, don't be afraid to experiment with your body. Do avoid things like Mars and Snicker bars: owing to their high refined sugar content, you'll get a very quick boost but then possibly suffer a dramatic drop in energy later. They're great in an emergency however.
- On a ride eat and drink little and often; and, importantly, do so before you know you need it: if you become hungry or thirsty then it's usually too late.
- Try to eat less fat, while increasing protein and carbohydrate proportions during your training period.
- Generally eat more carbohydrate before a ride (for energy), and ...
- ...more protein after a ride (for repair and build of muscles)

- Try to eat within an hour after exercise (in training and on the ride) as this replaces energy in the muscles better; when its difficult to get a meal quickly use a post-event drink such as SIS ReGo (specially designed for replenishment)

Cycling Etiquette

- If you're wanting to keep together, then initiate a system which ensures you don't lose anyone off the back.
- Always be aware of who is behind you on the road; if they drop back out of sight, wait for them, and the next person up the road will be doing the same for you: this way we all keep in contact. This is particularly important if a turn is made or there is an ambiguous junction of any kind.
- On hills ride at your own pace because, as mentioned previously, it can be tiring to ride at someone else's.
- If you and / or others in the group want to put on, or shed, a layer, try to do it together in a safe and appropriate spot. Remember you'll normally get hot when you climb and cold when you descend.
- Do point out potholes and other dangers such as parked cars or walkers, with a call and an indication of which side the danger lies.
- If you need to stop, or make any other out-of-the-ordinary or unexpected maneuver, you must advise the people behind you in good time. Shout, 'stopping' or 'turning right' or whatever and look over your shoulder before making any maneuver.
- Where there is a chance that those behind you can't see as far up the road as you, call a warning of 'car down' for cars coming towards you. People at the rear may call 'car up' for cars approaching from the rear. However, if approaching vehicles are obvious, there is nothing more tedious than the person constantly calling 'car up' or 'car down'. Only say it when important for safety purposes.
- If you spend some time getting the advantage of slipstreaming/drafting the person in front, don't then use your rested legs to fly past them; rather cruise past and let them now slipstream you. Close slipstreaming can reduce effort needed by 20% and is commonly done. Practice riding within a foot or so of the back wheel of the rider in front of you. If you're confronted by a stiff headwind for hours on end, do what is known as 'bit and bit', where you each take a turn at the front while others behind you recover. Take it in turns with the person at the front doing a mile or two, then slipping to the back and the person who was second in line then moves forward to the front for a stint. This can make a hard ride considerably less so.

General

- On the ride the 2 most important aspects are cleanliness and food/drink: ensure you keep yourself and your cycling shorts clean (Savlon wound wash – a non-iodine spray, is very good for this). They always say proper cyclists don't wear underwear and, ideally, you shouldn't. However, many people balk at the thought and buy underwear that have minimally thick seams. Ensure you wash them daily.
- If you do get problems with Saddle sores use either Sudocrem or Metanium, as they soothe rather than inflame to treat soreness (both are readily available at chemists)
- If you buy no other special clothing, invest in some good cycling shorts; this will save a lot of pain and pay great rewards.
- Avoid a cotton base layer on your upper body unless it's very loose on you and it's hot enough to wear nothing else on top. A mildly 'technical' base layer is best as this will reduce discomfort

and chill in wet or sweaty conditions. Outdoor shops are good sources of such garments; check out the 'sales' rails.

FURTHER READING

The Long Distance Cyclists' Handbook [Doughty £14.99] this is an excellent book which will leave you feeling well prepared for the task ahead. Mainly aimed at the 'audax' rider but still good for longer events.

WEBSITES

Training / Getting Fit

<http://www.realbuzz.com/articles/top-10-cycling-training-tips/>

<http://cyclinginfo.co.uk/blog/cyclo-sportives/training-for-cycle-sportives/>

<http://www.sport-fitness-advisor.com/cycling-training.html>

<http://www.bikeradar.com/> Then select Guides and How To: Fitness, Nutrition and Technique

<http://www.netfit.co.uk/wkmen.htm>

Nutrition / Getting correctly fueled up

<http://www.cptips.com/nutrtn.htm>

<http://www.sport-fitness-advisor.com/sports-nutrition.html>

<http://www.bottombracket.co.uk/cycling-nutrition.html>

http://bicycling.about.com/od/cyclingforabetterbody/a/nutrition_bikes.htm

<http://www.bikeradar.com/fitness/article/nutrition-cereals-for-cyclists-1059>

<http://www.crispinbennett.freedomnames.co.uk/Nutrition.htm>

<http://www.ultracycling.com/nutrition/nutrition.html>

For more websites, do a search on Google for 'bicycle exercise program' or 'training for cycle fitness' or 'cycling fitness tips' or 'nutrition for cyclists' etc.

This information is also available as a separate info sheet (INF46) which can be requested from the Membership Team via email (membership@cyclingsuk.org) or by calling on 01483 238301.

ROUTE PLANNING & FINDING

There's a lot more to planning a route than just pouring over a map, whether it's on screen or on paper. Whatever you're planning, the most important first step is to analyse exactly what your parameters are.

Take a look at the example checklist below. A little thought will lead you quickly to appreciate that a route between two places may need to be very different, depending on a whole range of factors, including the ability of the cyclists in the group, the type of accommodation you need if it's a multi-day route, whether you want to allow time out for sightseeing and so on.

Question	Answer	Notes
Going from where?		
To where?		
Distance		

Need to ride via anywhere?		
Additional mileage		
Time available		
Thus est. miles per day		
Scenic or direct		
Traffic OK or as little as possible		
Overnights required (where)		
Type of accommodation		
Number on ride		
Purpose of ride		
Will you have back-up?		
Experience of riders		
Weather / Climate factor		
Etc...		

Next?

The advent of GPS has led to a revolution in the matter of finding your way around. Besides the portable gadgets that are becoming increasingly popular, the internet is full of mapping sites, aimed at helping people find their way around. A significant number of them enable you to store routes too. They're all slightly different and only by experimentation and trying them out will you come to appreciate the differences and find the one(s) you most like to work with.

Firstly let Google be your friend and start by typing in the names of the places you're going from and to (e.g. Cambridge to Ipswich). Go to Google (www.google.co.uk), then click on Maps; type in *Cambridge to Ipswich* and you could be in for a surprise if you've not done this kind of thing before. There before you is a map and next to it, a set of directions.

So what more could you possibly want? It all depends on what you're wanting. That was an easy example. For example the '[via Michelin website](#)' (see below) offers you an option of a cycle friendly route. Just click on the 'Options' button underneath the 'Destination' menu. Don't expect Michelin to route you down entirely cycle-friendly roads - it's not that clever - but it does a reasonable job. Also don't ask it for any routes over 200kms because it won't work. Clearly it doesn't expect anyone to want to ride a bike for any longer distance, so chop the route into segments.

Here's a collection of sites, most of which operate along similar lines. Be aware that most of these are aimed more at car drivers than cyclists.

<http://www.viamichelin.com/viamichelin/gbr/tpl/hme/MaHomePage.htm>

http://www.drive-alive.co.uk/route_planner.asp

<http://www.mappy.com/direct/mappy/accueil> (French site)

<http://www.bing.com/maps/>

<http://www.multimap.com/map/home.cgi?client=public&overviewmap=GB>

<http://www.streetmap.co.uk/>

<http://world.maporama.com/>

<http://www.rac.co.uk/web/routeplanner/>

http://www.theaa.com/travelwatch/planner_main.jsp

<http://route.anwb.nl/routeplanner/servlet/rp>

<http://journeyplanner.tfl.gov.uk/> (London based)

Here we have a number of cycle specific sites

<http://www.bikely.com/>

<http://www.cycle-route.com/>

<http://www.opencyclemap.org/>

(Good for the National Cycle Network routes)

<http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/>

<http://bikeroutetoaster.com/Default.aspx>

<http://www.openrunner.com/>

<http://www.bikemap.net/>

<http://www.routeyou.com/home.en>

<http://ridewithgps.com/>

<http://www.gps-routes.co.uk/>

<http://www.mapmyride.com/>

<http://www.cyclestreets.net/>

The Following sites are particularly interesting in that they both show an OS map adjacent to a Google map

<http://www.bikehike.co.uk/>

<http://wtp2.appspot.com/wheresthepath.htm>

Everyone has their favourite site for planning a route – often the one they're most familiar with using, because they can vary considerably and only by using one can you really get to know it. My favourite is <http://www.bikely.com/> (otherwise known as <http://www.bikeradar.com/routes/>). A colleague here prefers <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/>.

Utilising Other People's Routes

There's a very good chance that someone else might have wanted to ride the route you're planning to do and many websites offer you the option, not only of planning a route, but also of storing a route you've planned or already done and retained on, say, a bike-mounted GPS unit. There are various websites which specialise in providing a home for people's cycle routes. Cycling UK has one (available to members) although you can see what's there before joining. Go to...

www.ctc-maps.org.uk

The unique aspect of CTC-Maps is in the variety of ways that you can input your route information. Not only can you download your GPS on to it but you can simply write text describing your trip, just like a diary. You can also click on a map and create a route with an accompanying 'cue' or turning instruction sheet. Have a look at it – it's really very good. That's the plug over. However, there are drawbacks to the map site. The longer the route, the flakier the system becomes. Hit the 'save' button at very regular intervals and remember to complete loading your route in one sitting – you can't go back to it later if you're inputting your route by clicking on the map. Sadly improvements to the site and remedies to the glitches have not been forthcoming owing to a lack of financial investment mainly.

Although searching for a route can be more complicated than you might at first think, it's always worth having a root around to see if someone has already been the way you want to go because it will save you a lot of time. Most sites have a *search* facility which you can use: type in the name of

the start place, finish place or any place on your route and routes which pass through that place should come up in a list.

When all is said and done, you'll eventually come to realise that most of these route planning systems all come from a small number of original sources, usually Google Maps or Google Earth. The latter is quite amazing and well worth exploring: <http://earth.google.com/>

Dedicated Sites

If you have a specific ride you want to do and want to find out about it, it could be that someone has created a website totally dedicated to that route. For example, if you're planning on an End 2 End (Land's End to John O'Groats) then head this way...

<http://www.users.waitrose.com/~ianclare/links.htm>

If it's the Sustrans C2C ride then it's here...

<http://www.c2c-guide.co.uk/>

There are quite a few sites for National Cycle Network routes and, for those people keen on identifying quiet routes, as traffic free as possible, these are definitely the routes you should be looking at. Check out Sustrans' own website and you'll find that you can get to most places nowadays using their routes. Do be aware that their routes are not all 'traffic free' but generally use minor roads. Also, don't expect to get anywhere fast using an NCN route. Route finding is always time consuming. Often signs are removed and getting you and your bike past obstructions, designed to stop motorcycles getting on to the routes, is also time consuming. All that aside, it's still very satisfying riding from one end to the other of a recognised route and they are very often lovely routes, make no mistake.

Mapping Tools You Can Buy

What has not been discussed yet are the mapping systems you can buy and this information sheet does not intend to go into these other than mention a few names which you might wish to investigate:

Memory Map <http://www.memory-map.co.uk/>

Quo <http://www.mapyx.com/>

Anquet <http://www.anquet.co.uk/>

These systems are generally used in connection with a GPS device. Some of these come loaded with mapping software, some require it to be bought. Cycling UK had a couple of very useful articles on the subject of digital mapping and GPS in 2009. Check your back numbers. However, this is getting a little off the point which was planning a cycle route.

Travellers' Tales

If its inspiration and / or ideas you're looking for, perhaps prior to getting down to the nitty gritty of route planning, these too are readily available on the internet in massive quantity. There are some wonderful sites around where you can read about other intrepid travellers' travels. Of course, you're far more likely to find accounts of people cycling across the Nullarbor Plain than you are accounts of a trip from Scunthorpe to Cleethorpes, but there's plenty of stuff there which is achievable by the likes of you and me.

Here are a few sites you might want to take a look at just for starters; some are sites populated by just one cyclist and his exploits; others tend to focus on just one part of the world; others again contain a wealth of information from a range of contributors:

<http://www.trentobike.org/>

<http://www.lonebiker.dk/ehjem/index.html>

<http://www.crazyguyonabike.com./>

<http://www.biketouringtips.com/index.html?username=>
<http://www.bicyclingworld.com/templates/default.aspx>
<http://www.mrpumpy.net/>
<http://travellingtwo.com/>

And not forgetting the contributions on our own site:

<https://www.cyclinguk.org/article/cycling-guide/land-end-to-john-ogroats-riders-stories>

This list could be never ending, but the above will get you going. Remember that websites often contain a page of useful links to other similar sites. It's always worth having a look at these.

Other Options

Another way of obtaining lots of valuable information is to post a message up on a relevant cycling forum. Think carefully about how you word your message, be aware of security issues, ensure you post your message in the most appropriate topic area and when you join a forum in order to post a message, and don't forget to keep a note of your user name and password. Here are a few sites to look at:

<http://forum.cyclinguk.org>
<http://www.roadcyclinguk.com/forum/forum.asp>
<http://www.bikeradar.com/forums/>
<http://www.cyclingforums.com/>
<http://www.veloriders.co.uk/phpBB2/portal.php>
<http://www.cyclechat.co.uk/forums/>
<http://www.cycle-route.com/forum/>
<http://www.anothercyclingforum.com/index.php>
<http://yacf.co.uk/forum/>

There are also travellers' forums and tourist websites, both of which are quite useful.

<http://www.travbuddy.com/>
<http://www.virtualtourist.com/>
<http://realtravel.com/>
<http://www.world66.com/>
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/uk>
<http://www.travelblog.org/Forum/>

For more, just google for 'travel forums'.

None of the lists above are exhaustive – they are just an assortment of what's out there.

Paper Maps

The alternative to all this is, of course, getting back to basics and using a good old paper map. Choose the right scale for the job and you're away. Who needs computers! For advice on what map to use when and where to purchase see Recommended maps further on in this booklet.

Maps are expensive items and if you're planning anything but a local ride, you'll find you're spending a lot of money on maps. A cheaper alternative is to buy a large road atlas from a bookshop and take just the relevant pages with you. Buy 'Philips' atlases because they use Ordnance Survey maps which show minor roads much more clearly than other road atlases. Their 'Motoring Atlas' at 3 miles to the inch is adequate for most trips, although you could go mad and buy their 'Navigator' atlas at 1½ miles to the inch (except the Scottish Highlands where there aren't many roads anyway).

Before your ride we strongly recommend that you highlight your route on a map of a suitable scale (see below). This exercise will enable you (a) to familiarise yourself with the route and (b) to foresee

any potentially difficult sections (e.g. areas of hills or complicated road junctions in urban areas), both of which may take longer to ride. Also it will make route finding much easier. Experience suggests that studying your route on the map before your ride will save you time on the road and make your ride more enjoyable.

If you're not used to map reading/navigating it may take you a day or so to get used to it and this will slow your pace quite a lot to start with. When riding our Youth Hostel Route or B&B Route, be aware that they avoid main roads where possible, preferring scenic lanes, which can be more complicated to follow because there will be more road junctions. Keep alert and always be on the lookout for signposts. If you're riding with others, why not alternate responsibility for route finding. There is a real sense of achievement to be gained from successfully navigating your way through a complex network of country lanes.

Signposting: don't forget that minor roads (country lanes) in Britain do not have road numbers. Minor roads are used extensively on both our Youth Hostel Route and B & B Route. In order to find the correct road, you will need to follow signposts for the next VILLAGE on the route. Villages are normally well signposted and local people will usually be happy to provide directions if needed.

Signposts to larger places, e.g. the next town, will often direct you via the nearest main road, so follow signposts with close reference to your map & route sheet, and maintain a level of scepticism as to whether the signpost wants to get you there via lanes or via the nearest main road.

Digital mapping has really come of age and many people nowadays have GPS navigation aids on their bikes. You can buy digital mapping of various sorts and load it into your GPS - it's often there already installed. You can print off maps from your computer or even input a route into your GPS which will then display your route and advise you of every turn. (Members of Cycling UK will have seen articles on the subject in past editions of the magazine - Jun/Jul & Aug/Sep 09) Some digital mapping sites (including www.ctc-maps.org.uk of course!), www.bikely.com, www.gmapspedometer.com, <http://maps.google.co.uk/>, and <http://cycle.travel>) allow you to plan your routes on screen and even share them with others. You can also write a route sheet (similar to the ones in this pack). Bikely is best for this - it calls them 'cue sheets'. Some sites will create a route for you if you key in your start and finish points, but remember their route might direct you along main roads and motorways. With www.viamichelin.com you can specify that you're on a bike, but you're then limited to 200km stages - it doesn't believe you would want a longer route than this! See Information Sheet INF36 for further information. Of particular use is a printed map of any cities you might be travelling through - it makes navigation so much easier. Simply download one to a suitable scale straight from your computer. Well, I say simply - they don't actually make it that easy, so experimentation is required.

RECOMMENDED MAPS

We recommend buying a road atlas for the whole of Britain and cutting out the pages you'll need for the ride. We hope shortly to list these pages here, but it's a useful exercise to use a highlighter pen and plot your route on the map, in which case you won't need our help!

These road atlases are available at two scales. We recommend the larger scale, known as 'Navigator'. 'Navigator Britain' costs £13.59 on Amazon. This gives you the whole route at a scale of 1.5 miles to the inch (3 miles to the inch for northern Scotland).

Alternatively, buy the 'Complete Road Atlas Britain & Ireland' (£7.69 Amazon) which maps the whole country at a scale of 3 miles to the inch. This is fine for much of the country, but where there is a dense network of lanes, you're better off with the Navigator.

Both these atlases should be available at larger branches of W H Smith, Waterstones etc or you can purchase them by mail order direct from the publishers or from Stanfords in London (www.stanfords.co.uk) or the Map Shop in Upton on Severn (www.themapshop.co.uk). All are also available via www.amazon.co.uk

A word of warning: do not be tempted to buy any other make of road atlas, because none of them show minor roads as clearly as the Philip's. Neither do we recommend using Ordnance Survey Landranger maps at a scale of 1.25 miles to the inch: its overkill - you don't need that much detail and you would fill up a whole pannier with maps to cover the whole journey. By all means study

sections of your route online or at your library in more detail before you go; the network of lanes in Cornwall and Devon certainly deserve close scrutiny: you might even find a better route than ours!

Obviously up-to-date maps are preferable to old ones. Ongoing road improvements often mean changes to road classifications, road numbers and road junction layouts.

TRAVELLING TO THE START AND BACK FROM THE FINISH

TRAIN *Taking your bike with you on a train, if you don't already know, is not quite as simple as it might seem. We've done our best here to appraise you of the facts. Do remember that the information below can quickly go out of date so please advise us if anything written below turns out to be inaccurate or if you have any horror stories we can entertain others with.*

You really should have tickets and reservations for both you and your bike before travelling. Most reservations are free but where there is a charge it will cover the entire journey. Bookings may be made up to 90 days in advance and may be cheaper if you do.

Unlike other countries, Britain has many train operators. The carriage of cycles varies from operator to operator and is summarised in the leaflet *Cycling By Train* issued by National Rail and available online or at many railway stations or (sometimes) from Cycling UK. Similar information is available via these alternative transport websites:

<http://www.mytrainticket.co.uk/travelling-with-bicycles>

You can book at any manned railway station, any train operator, National Rail (www.nationalrail.co.uk; 08457 484950) or the Train Line www.thetrainline.com. Most do not offer online cycle reservations but several including East Coast (<http://www.eastcoast.co.uk/>) do. Making bookings for yourself and your cycle at different times is not advisable.

The nearest railway station to **Land's End** is Penzance. Land's End lies some 10 miles south west of Penzance by main road, slightly further by quieter roads. There are between 25 and 30 arrivals and departures (First Great Western or Virgin) each day.

The nearest railway station to **John o'Groats** is Wick, which lies some 17 miles south of John o'Groats by main road, slightly further by quieter roads. However, all rail services go via Thurso, which is 20 miles west of John o'Groats so the choice is yours. **Do not underestimate the difficulty of getting your bike back from John o'Groats!** Each day there are only 4 services (1 on Sundays). Book as soon as you know your finish date - delays of a week or more are not unknown! Full timetable information may be found here: <http://www.scotrail.co.uk/sites/files/10NHL.web.pdf> The timetables for services between the far north and civilization start at page 15.

If desperate, consider cycling 67 miles south: there are one or two extra services which start at Tain. Ride about 100 miles south to Invergordon and there are many more. First Scot Rail telesales: 08457 50 00 33. Other enquiries 0845 601 5929 or scotrailcustomer.relations@firstgroup.com.

Other ways of getting you and your cycle back from the north:

John o'Groats Bike Transport offer a full package of services. They're cyclists themselves too. www.JohnOGroatsBikeTransport.co.uk

Stagecoach have taken over the operation of bus services out of Inverness which cover all of northern Scotland. A timetables may be found here: <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetable-landing.aspx>. Carry a Cycling UK bike bag and pack the bike (or tandem) flat as you would if flying with your bike and you might get on OK – check with the bus company. Arrive in plenty of time at the bus stop. Where you get on the bus will depend on the service you're hoping to get on. Most services end up at the bus station in Inverness.

Puffin Express offer regular minibus tours in highland Scotland and might be able to accommodate you and your bike back to Inverness. Call for further information (01463 717181). <http://www.go-orkney.com/bike.htm>



John O'Groats <--> Inverness cyclist transport

D&E Coaches <http://www.decoaches.co.uk/> offer a hire service which is worth exploring if you are a group. Tel (0)1463 222444; they also run a regular seasonal (April – October) service which carries cycles between Inverness and Durness via Ullapool – useful if you want to include a trip to Cape Wrath in your plans. Here is the direct link to their timetables:
<http://www.decoaches.co.uk/timetables/>

National Express operates coach services to Penzance including one from Edinburgh, which connects with a service from Inverness. Bicycles are carried subject to the company conditions of carriage and space being available (bikes must be packed flat and in a purpose made case or bag).

You could also try <http://www.taxi2.co.uk/> for taxi options.

Other Ideas / Reports

Royal Mail: On 26 July 2000, a member reported being stuck without a train reservation at Wick. He ended up posting his cycle home for £9.80 plus £1 for insurance (- this to cover cycles to the value of £250; you can insure them up to a value of £500). The cycle arrived home two days after its owner, who took the coach – far cheaper than the train! **Note information received from an 'End to ender' in Sept 2001 states that Parcel Force will no longer accept packages longer than 1.5m or larger than 3m in circumference.**

Carrier AJG Parcels of Inverness will convey your *wrapped* cycle anywhere in the UK. The cost varies depending on the destination. Note that they will not insure your cycle. <http://www.ajgparcels.com/>
Tel 0845 4000 300 (The cycle shop in Thurso can sometimes help with wrapping material – tel 01847 895385 & ask for Sam).

Taxi (Reported in May 2005) “We pre-booked a taxi back from John O’Groats to Inverness, run by Ross` s Taxis of Thurso, 01847 891181. The company has a mini bus and a trailer that is very suitable for taking bikes; he was hoping to fit it out to take 4 bicycles. The cost was £130 for the 3hr journey.”

Another tale relates: “We went to the tourist information and finished up getting a local taxi to take the two of us and bikes (Vauxhall Cavalier estate) to Inverness Airport for £85 and then hiring a car (one-way rental) to our home in Chester for £63. With petrol costs shared between two people this was only marginally more than the train fare and in some ways better. (The TIC phoned to get three quotes for the taxi. I tried to cancel my Friday bike places on the train over the phone, but was unable to get any sense out of the rail company.”

MJ reports, “You can get a mini-bus from JO’G SYHA to Thurso railway station. YH will pre-book; takes 1 or 2 cycles at £20 each. A bargain at 6.15am!”

OTHER USEFUL CYCLING UK INFORMATION SHEETS:

Buying a Bike: For all you need to know about choosing the right bike for the job, whether it’s for the End 2 End or some other purpose, go to <https://www.cyclinguk.org/bikes-and-bits>

Where to Cycle in Britain (INF6); includes information on road classifications in Britain and route finding.

Get into Cycle Touring (INF1); includes a useful list of what to take with you on a cycle tour.

Bikes on Trains (INF10); a guide to the cycle carriage policies of the various railway companies in Britain + all the contact phone numbers.

Ferries (INF13); lists all UK ferry routes & contact numbers.

Riding for a charity (INF33); helpful hints on raising money.

Finding Somewhere to Stay in the UK (INF44)

Cycle Camping (INF3)

*Note: the above information sheets are **only** available to members of Cycling UK)*

BOOK LIST

Land’s End to John O’Groats [Horsley £12.95 pub: Cordee] Recommended routes with suggested alternatives for the lean and hungry.

On My Bike: Land's End to John O'Groats [Jordan £ varies] David Jordan is a shining example to us all. Boundless enthusiasm. Currently only available used via Amazon.co.uk

End to End Cycle Route: Land's End to John O'Groats (Cycling) (Cicerone £10.39) by Nick Mitchell – Divided into 14 stages and contains various information on here to say with full details on numerous B&B, Campsite, Hostels etc (Printed 2012)

Land's End to John O'Groats –The Official Cyclists' Challenge Guide [Smailes 2009 - £6.95 – available direct from the author/publisher, Brian Smailes, 7 Earlsmere Drive, Ardsley, Barnsley, S71 5HH, tel 01226 217695] Nicely produced volume that provides all the information you need.

The 'End to End' Story – 100 years of cycling records Includes riders' own accounts, comments and photos. Available on Amazon.co.uk in limited used quantities (Price varies)

Bike Britain (Epic Guides 2002 - £ varies) by Paul Salter; ISBN 0-9582256-1-3) Printed in New Zealand but available through Amazon.co.uk on the used marketplace

Land's End to John O'Groats End to End Cycle Route a Safer Way (By Royston Wood 2014 - £8.99 Amazon.co.uk) This book is not a traditional route book: it is supported by an online series of Google maps and GPX files designed to guide you across the country using a satellite navigation device, a smart phone or similar device that can navigate using GPX files. Links to these electronic files are contained within the book, along with instructions on how to access them and adjust the route to meet your needs.

The June/July 2006 issue of *Cycle* reviewed **four new E2E books**. If you don't keep old issues, contact Cycling UK for further information.

MORE GENERAL TITLES (INCLUDING HEALTH & FITNESS TRAINING FOR THE RIDE)

There are so many books on the subject and even your local bookshop is likely to have a title or two. Many originate from the USA which might give them a greater or lesser appeal to some, so check before you buy.

The Long Distance Cyclists' Handbook (Doughty £17.99): This is an excellent book which will leave you feeling well prepared for the task ahead.

Zinn & the Art of Road Bike Maintenance (Zim - £15.29): The world's best-selling guide to bicycle repair and maintenance. From basic repairs like how to fix a flat tyre to advanced overhauls of drivetrains and brakes

The Cycle Tourers' Handbook (Hughes £12.95): Published in 1987 and described by some as the definitive textbook on cycle touring. Not currently in print but used copies can be purchased via private sellers on Amazon

Accommodation

AA Bed and Breakfast Guide 2015 (AA Lifestyle Guides) [AA Publications] £11.99

Visit www.cyclistswelcome.co.uk, Cycling UK's cycle friendly accommodation guide.



WEBSITES

<http://www.pewseys.co.uk/>

www.users.waitrose.com/~ianclare/links.htm - Contains nearly 300 End-To-End accounts. However there's been no additions since May 08

www.cycle-endoend.org.uk/ - a newish website; worth a look; log your ride etc

<http://www.landsend-to-johngroats.co.uk/> a Very good and comprehensive site, well worth a look

Celebration Meal at Jo'G?

Try 'The Storehouse' KW1 4YR – Tel: 0844 384 3166

<https://www.naturalretreats.com/uk/destinations/scotland/john-ogroats/dining>

Another option to try is the 'The Cabin @ John O'Groats' which holds the record for being the most northerly food takeaway on the island of Great Britain. <http://www.thecabinatjohnogroats.co.uk> #1 On Trip Advisor open 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm, reduced hours operate towards the end of the season so call ahead on 01955 611400 for opening hours and to also phone ahead your order!

DOING THE END TO END WITH OTHERS

Riding LEJOG in company makes the job considerably easier. If you don't have anyone to do it with, you could put up a message on the Cycling UK Forum (<http://forum.cyclinguk.org>) via our website – it's very easy to do, but contact HQ for assistance if you find you need it. There are other message boards specifically cycling related.

Alternatively you could join an organised holiday and have all the hassle taken off your shoulders, so you can just concentrate on the riding. Try the following organisations / tour organisers:

CTC Holidays & Tours: www.cyclingholidays.org

Bike Adventures: <http://www.bikeadventures.co.uk/>

Saddle Skedaddle: www.skedaddle.co.uk

CYCLING UK END TO END RECORD SHEET

To repeat briefly the notes in the introduction to the pack, the Record Sheet enables you to collect youth hostel stamps or stamps from other places where you stayed or which you passed through. Many cyclists keep their Record Sheets as a souvenir of their ride. The Record Sheets also have a practical purpose – a copy can be submitted to us in order for you to qualify for an End to End T-shirt, certificate and badge.

LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS RECORD SHEET				
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15

CERTIFICATE, EMBROIDERED BADGE AND T-SHIRT

Successful riders can obtain a Cycling UK Land's End to John o'Groats certificate, cloth badge and T-shirt. Please see www.cyclinguk.org/shop for details. The cloth badge is shown below. The T-shirt is a new design and basically white with coloured bits and a smart new logo on the front (see below).



◀Old Badge

New badge ▶



The following organisations promote doing the End to End by whatever means people choose to do it; i.e. they are not 'cycling specific'.

The Land's End to John O'Groats Club

Find out more about this club at <http://www.endtoenders.co.uk/>

or by writing to The Administration Office, The Land's End to John O'Groats Club, The Custom House, Land's End, Sennen, Cornwall TR19 7AA

(Tel 01736 871501 – ext 306)

Email: lejogclub.landsend@tiscali.co.uk

The Land's End to John O'Groats Association

Find out more about this club at

<http://www.landsend-johnogroats-assoc.com/>



The record for riding the End to End is...
1 day, 20 hours, 4 mins & 19 seconds.
Ponder on that as you struggle along!

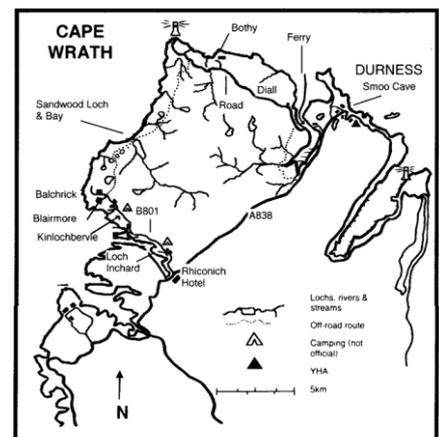
The Cape Wrath Fellowship



Cycling to John o'Groats? Extend your journey and visit Scotland's wild & remote north western tip – Cape Wrath.

Rex Coley (alias Ragged Staff) was a cycling journalist who in July 1949 formed what became known as the 'Cape Wrath Fellowship' (C.W.F). A C.W.F. badge and certificate were produced and cyclists would submit an account of their ride to Rex for validation. It was possible to sign the Visitors Book at the lighthouse in order to further validate claims. This

practice is not possible as the lighthouse is no longer manned! Interest in the Fellowship declined when Rex Coley retired, though the records were maintained by "Cycling" magazine journalist Peter Knottley. Peter retired in 1992 and the C.W.F. all but disappeared. As of 1994 the C.W.F. is in the hands of Cycling UK (formerly CTC). Where it is alive and well and sometimes calls itself the Cape Wrath Challenge. Around 30 people a year apply for



membership of the Fellowship, although this has declined in recent years.

To become a member of the Fellowship...

... Submit a brief (or longer if you wish) written account of your trip, plus a photo showing self or group next to Cape Wrath Lighthouse with cycle(s) and big grin(s) across face(s) (the 'challenge' is the grin – grimaces considered but grins preferred!) and receive a certificate. For more information, email competitions@cyclingsuk.org

Looking for a new challenge?

Mizen Head to Malin Head - Ireland's very own End2End

A useful and recently expanded Information Pack is now available from by email at competitions@cyclingsuk.org containing information on Northern Ireland and The Republic of Ireland, maps and a route to help with your planning.

A record cycling time of 19 hours 3 mins was set in 1993 by Alex Barry. However, the route is most commonly completed in around 5–6 days by cyclists. Like the Land's End to John O'Groats this route can be undertaken in either direction, the route supplied in the pack runs from North to South.





Looking to discover new and interesting places?

The British Cycle Quest

British Cycle Quest (BCQ) is a unique cycling challenge. Fed up with riding the same old circuits? Well here's the motivation you're looking for to discover new places: take the BCQ challenge! Your ultimate aim is to visit 402 checkpoints scattered throughout the UK.

A daunting number? Well, maybe, but it's a challenge you've got the rest of your life to complete - there are no time limits - and you're on your way once you've cycled down the road and located your very first one; it probably won't be far away at all.

Checkpoints are scattered evenly throughout the country, including several on offshore islands. So, wherever you are you'll usually find one or two checkpoints within easy cycling range. It's a brilliant way to motivate yourself to get on your bike and go exploring.

To prove you've visited a checkpoint, all you need to do is answer a question about it, noting your answer down on a BCQ Answer Card. We tell you where the point is - you choose your own route to get to it. It's that easy.

You can get certificates and medals for collecting clues. You'll gain your first certificate when you've visited 10 sites. When you've visited all 402 sites, we'll present you with an engraved trophy.

Needless to say, you are expected to arrive at each location on your bike, but you can drive or take the train to the general area of course. We hope you have some great times picking up BCQ checkpoints and, at the same time - and this is what it's really all about - discovering places you might never otherwise have visited.

The 402 questions and the current BCQ Leader Board are also available for download at www.cyclinguk.org/BritishCycleQuest

To get started, you need do no more than look at the Questions Book (see link below), work out which checkpoints are nearest to your current location - you'll probably need a map - then get on your bike and go! In order to obtain certificates and medals for your achievements you have to submit your answers on Answer Cards which you can obtain from Cycling UK using the order form on our website. A wallchart to record your progress is also available for a small fee, or free when buying a full set of answer cards.

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET STARTED?

The BCQ Questions Book and an Order Form to obtain Answer Cards may be downloaded here: www.cyclinguk.org/BritishCycleQuest

To order the BQC Questions Booklet please send an SAE with 2 2nd class stamped affixed to:

Cycling UK (BCQ), Parklands
Railton Road
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 9JX

T: 01483 238301.