

Roger & Caroline C's End to End Cycle Ride - September 2009

My wife Caroline and I decided that we would cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats in September 2009, treating it as a holiday and therefore taking our time.

For the planning of the route and the overall approach to the project I am indebted to Phil Horsley and his book - Land's End to John O'Groats - The Great British Bike Adventure (ISBN 1-904207-26-X).

In summary the trip took us 25 days and we covered 1,086 miles End to End plus a further day returning home by train from Thurso and a further 40 miles getting to Lands End and returning from John O'Groats.

We are both regular cyclists and reasonably fit yet prior to this adventure our longest cycling trips were over 4/5 days such as London - Paris; Padstow - Bristol and Holyhead - Bristol. We are in our early 50s and decided that we would endeavour not to exceed 50 miles in any one day.

I have attached a spreadsheet that shows where we stayed each night and the distance we covered each day. We avoided A roads as much as possible, indeed we used canal towpaths, NCN redundant railway lines, country lanes and many B roads. In many cases the A roads were the shorter option yet these were shunned if an alternative was available. We also decided to avoid the two main conurbations around Warrington and Glasgow. As a result we had great fun on the Birkenhead - Liverpool ferry across the Mersey and the Ardrossen - Brodrick and Lochranza - Claonaig ferries getting to and from the Isle of Arran.

We had a lot of laughs; we were lucky with the weather (full water proofs on only three occasions); we had one navigational error that cost us all of three miles; one puncture and one attack from a farm dog. We learnt a lot about the geography of the British Isles, especially Scotland; tasted a wide range of regional ales and learnt a lot about 'The Clearances' in Scotland - what a disgrace!

I thoroughly recommend the experience and would be delighted to pass on some of the knowledge gained. I can be reached by email at selby55@btinternet.com

Roger Chubb
5 October 2009

Roger and Caroline C's End2End Overnights 2009

Date		Overnight	Distance	Comments
Mon	Sept 7	St Ives - Hellesveor Farm campsite	20	
Tue	Sept 8	St Columb Major - Trewan Hall campsite	42	
Wed	Sept 9	Launceston - Hurdon Farm B&B	42	
Thu	Sept 10	Crediton - Beare Mill campsite	41	
Fri	Sept 11	Milverton - stayed with friends	35	
Sat	Sept 12	Bristol - stayed at home	58	
Sun	Sept 13	Abbey Dore - The Neville Arms	50	Don't stay here!
Mon	Sept 14	Bucknell - The Willows B&B	44	
Tue	Sept 15	Maesbury Marsh - White House B&B	52	Veggie food a speciality, do stay here
Wed	Sept 16	Chester - Chester Backpackers	35	
Thu	Sept 17	Southport - Crescent House B&B	47	
Fri	Sept 18	Lancaster - Royal Kings Arms Hotel	55	
Sat	Sept 19	Grasmere - YHA Thorney How	44	Fantastic range of evening meal
Sun	Sept 20	Annan - The Old Rectory B&B	63	
Mon	Sept 21	Penpont - Scourbridge House	36	More expensive but worth it
Tue	Sept 22	Stair - Stair Inn	43	Excellent food
Wed	Sept 23	Catacol, Arran - Catacol Bay Hotel	47	Have a kipper for breakfast
Thu	Sept 24	Kilmartin - Rosebank B&B	37	Have dinner at the museum restaurant opposite
Fri	Sept 25	Oban - SYHA Oban	30	
Sat	Sept 26	Fort William - Fort William Backpackers	46	Have a pint at the Grog & Gruel
Sun	Sept 27	Loch Ness - SYHA Loch Ness	43	
Mon	Sept 28	Ardgay - SYHA Carbisdale Castle	64	Fantastic, how often do you get to sleep in a castle?
Tue	Sept 29	by Lairg - Crask Inn	28	Understated, hospitality excellent
Wed	Sept 30	Strathly - Strathly Inn	42	Highly recommend
Thu	Oct 1	Thurso - SYHA Thurso	42	Have dinner at the Captain's Galley at Scrabster harbour
TOTAL DISTANCE			1086	