

River Tyne Cycle Trail

References to places of interest detailed in the main text are in brackets

Stage 1 Tynemouth to Newcastle 11½ miles (18.5km)

The route starts at the Daft as a Brush marker stone at the end of the access road to beginning Tynemouth Pier. Return up the access road, turn left and cycle straight up the road and down to the coastal promenade and a C2C sign. The NCN 72 follows the RTT virtually the whole way to Newcastle but it avoids steps while the RTT keeps closer to the riverside. Continue along the promenade for about ¾ mile. You pass the Fidlers Green fishermen's memorial statue and the walls of 17th -century Cliffords Fort. You continue on the road through North Shield Fish Quay before passing the North Shields Ferry Landing(P166) The road rises through modern housing then descends down Ballast Hill Road to join a track which leads past the side of Royal Quays Marina. You turn right to follow a shared path through Redburn Dene Park . A left turn takes you across a dual carriage way before turning right up Coble Dene Road with the Outlet Shopping Area on your left (P163). At a roundabout turn left (A187) and follow the shared path past a second roundabout. right Just before a further roundabout bear left onto a surfaced path . You soon reach a main road (A187) which you need to cross with care to continue ahead onto a surface path (NCN72) that leads between houses and eventually exits past some industrial units onto a road where you turn right. Now follow the signs for the RTT and NCN 72 (Hadrian's Cycleway You pass under the imposing Willington Viaduct (P160). You go along shared pavements (A187) until you join an old wagonway to continue past the former Swan Hunters Shipyard and Segedunum (P158-9). Thereafter waymarks will lead you to Newcastle Quayside and the Gateshead Millennium Bridge (P152).

Stage 2 Newcastle to Hexham 24¾ miles (39.8km)

From the Millennium Bridge continue along Newcastle Quayside passing under six bridges (PXX) and the Business Park (PXX) before reaching Scotswood Road. Turn left, continue for a short distance before crossing the road at the traffic lights and then bear right to follow the NCN72 off-road practically all the way to Wylam on Hadrian's Cycleway (P). You go through Newburn Riverside and Industrial Park, pass Tyne Rowing Club (PXX), go through Tyne Riverside Park (PXX) and follow an old waggonway past George Stephenson's Cottage P138) to Wylam (P132). Continue straight past the car park to go over the Hagg Bridge . Bear right and follow the NCN72 to Prudhoe (P130). Cross the Ovingham Bridge to the north side of the Tyne. Turn immediately left on the minor road passing the church on your right. After about a mile bear left along the NCN 72. Follow the road to Bywell Bridge bearing right on the B6309 for a short distance before the NCN72 continues straight ahead at the crossroads. Keep on the NCN72 as goes under the A69 at Styford Bridge and then climbs inland to meet the B6530 at a T-junction. Turn left and follow the road into Corbridge (P121). Keep straight ahead on the one way system to follow the B6529. Then look out for a sharp left turn to follow the NCN72 at Trinity Terrace. You pass the Roman Site and eventually go under the A69 before passing through an industrial estate to reach the A695 at Bridge End. Here you need to turn left and carefully cross Hexham Bridge before turning right at the roundabout to follow the access road into Tyne Green Country Park (P115).

Stage 3 Hexham Tyne Green to Bellingham 18 ¾ miles (30.2)km

Follow the access road and NCN72 through the park to Tynedale Golf Course club house and café. Carefully cross the railway line and continue ahead on the NCN72 for about ½ mile before carefully crossing back across the railway. Bear left and follow the surfaced path which eventually leads to a road junction. Turn right and cross the bridge to The Boatside Inn (P111).

Here you have a choice of routes either continuing as below to Bellingham and then via Stages 4 & 5 to Deadwater: Source of the North Tyne, or via Stages 6 & 7 to Tynehead: Source of the South Tyne.

Fork right at The Boatside Inn, direction, “Chollerford”. This is on minor roads for about ¾ miles until you meet a junction with the B6318. Turn right on this busier road, known as the Military Road. Turn right at a roundabout at the George Hotel and cross the bridge over the North Tyne. After a short way turn left at the crossroads, direction, “A6079) Barrasford”. Continue to Chollerton (P59) where you fork left to follow the road to Barrasford (P55). Continue ahead. Turn right at the entrance to Chipchase Castle (PXX). Climb steeply out of the valley. Turn left then bear right. You pass Birtley. Ignore the first left and take the next fork left onto the NCN10. Eventually you meet a main road (B6320). Turn left and follow the road as it descends past Redesmouth (P47) and continues along NCN10 to a T-junction at the centre of Bellingham (P42).

Stage 4 Bellingham to the Kielder Dam, Yarrowmoor Car Park 15½ miles (24.9km)

Leave Bellingham on the B6320, direction, “Kielder 18 NCN 10/68”. At a fork turn left passing the RC Church on your right and crossing a bridge over the Tyne. After a further 360yds turn right to follow the NCN 10. Soon an NCN 10 sign indicates, “Falstone 10 miles; Kielder Dam 11 miles. Ignore roads off and after about 5 miles you arrive at a junction. Turn right and cross back over the North Tyne as you follow the road for about a mile to Lanehead (P38). Here you need to turn left past Tarsset Backpackers. After a cattle grid turn left on the NCN10 at Rushend and continue on the gated road past the former Thorneyburn Station (P38). Continue the NCN 10 through Donkleywood before reaching Falstone (P33). Unless you wish to take refreshments in Falstone, continue ahead on what was once the Border Counties Railway. You pass a monument commemorating the opening of the Kielder Dam by HM Queen Elisabeth in 1982 and then turn left to cross the dam wall to arrive at Yarrowmoor Car Park (P29).

Stage 5 Kielder Dam-Yarrowmoor to Deadwater 16½ miles (26.56km)

This is almost entirely off-road as you follow the well-marked Lakeside Way signed, Kielder Castle 14½ miles (23Km); Tower Knowe Centre ¾ mile; Leaplish Waterside Centre (now named “Kielder Waterside) 8½ miles. (This is very popular with cyclists many of whom enjoy following the trail round both sides of lake!). The trail winds around the lakeside, passing through the visitor centres. Take care cross Bull Crag as indicated by the RTT waymarks unless you want to add an extra 3 miles. You pass Matthew’s Linn with the Calvert Trust Activity Centre before doing a loop around the long inlet of the Lewis Burn. Eventually you reach a road junction where you follow the sign “Kielder Castle & Village ½ “. Cross a main road, turn left then right and again left (unless you wish to visit the Castle and its café). You pass the Anglers Arms and go through the campsite. At the main road turn right and shortly, just before the old chapel, turn left leave and the road to join the Shared Trail which goes along the former Border Counties Railway (P20). If heavy rain has made the initial overgrown track section too difficult, return to the main road and rejoin the Shared Trail just before a road bridge). Continue ahead for about 1½ miles to what was once Deadwater Station (now a private residence). Don’t go through the gate, instead turn right and proceed up the track to the main road at Deadwater Farm. Turn left and follow the road for a couple of hundred yards to the tree-line where a gate on the right leads to the huge stone that marks the source of the North Tyne (see P18).

Stage 6 Warden to Haydon Bridge (6½) to Haltwhistle (12) 18½ miles (28.8km)

Fork left at The Boatside Inn up the road (B6319) towards Fourstones (P109). Continue on the relatively quiet road all the way into Haydon Bridge (P105). Go past the railway station to the pedestrian bridge (PXX).

Stage 7 Haltwhistle to Alston 23 miles (37km)

Cross the pedestrian bridge over the South Tyne and turn right. After about 150yds turn right onto a minor road (Land Ends Road). Continue along this road, ignoring an access road. At a junction turn right and continue on this road which eventually descends to pass the entrance to the National Trust Allen Banks and Staward Gorge car park and toilets (P101). After a few hundred yards, turn left at a junction to follow the road which climbs steeply. Turn right at a junction and proceed downhill to Beltingham (P100). Continue out of the village as the road descends further until you reach a pedestrian bridge on the right. Cross the bridge and turn left into Bardon Mill (P). Now continue along the road on B6322/ NCN72 to Haltwhistle (P93).

Just before entering the town turn left onto the B6322 towards Haltwhistle railway station. Turn left to go over a footbridge across the South Tyne. Continue ahead and turn right onto a road (Bellister Road). Follow the road under the A69 to a road junction. Cross over the road and go through a gate on the left. Follow the track which runs parallel to the A69. Exit through a further gate onto a minor road (Plenmeller Road). Turn right and proceed up the road for about 150yds to an opening on the right onto the NCN68 and the South Tyne Trail. Follow this for about 5½ miles until you reach a parking area (Coanwood). Turn right onto the road and continue for about 1¼ miles until you arrive at a junction with a main road (A689). Turn left and, after a short distance, leave the road turning left at a NCN68 sign. Go down the track before turning right to rejoin the South Tyne Trail. Continue for about 6 miles to Slaggyford.

Turn left to join the main road (A689). After about ¼ mile turn left to follow the NCN68 on a minor road across a bridge over the South Tyne. Follow the road until you reach the main road (A686). Turn right and continue ahead to Alston Station.

Stage 8 Alston to the Source 9¾* (15.7km)

Exit from the station and turn right at the main road (A686) into Alston (P78) Continue past a garage on your right and then turn left on the A689. Proceed to climb through the Market Place and bear right to continue along the B6277 for 3½ miles before bearing right onto a minor road which descends into Garrigill. Bear left at the Village Green and follow the road out of the village. Ignore roads off and continue climbing for just over 2 miles until the road ends at a cattle grid. From here it is a further 2 miles, on what is initially a stony track, to the stone that marks the source of the South Tyne and the end of the RTT Cycle Trail (P68).

*As there is no vehicular access for the final 2 miles (3.2km) to the Source, it will be necessary for any transport home to add either 2 miles (3.2km) back to the cattle grid or 4 miles (6.4km) back to Garrigill or 9 ¾ miles (15.7km) back to Alston.