

CYCLING

This year the cycling group have clocked up 210 miles over 10 rides and have ventured to Staveley, Arnside, Leyton Moss, Lindale, Windermere, the Lyth Valley, Coniston, Dufton and most recently the annual two days of riding which this year was once again based on Keswick.

The first of the two rides was around Derwentwater. We set off from the old railway station in Keswick and via various cycle paths went to Braithwaite from where we could see stunning views of Grisedale Pike and Causey Pike. We then started the upward climb towards Newlands Pass. The views if anything were becoming even more spectacular with Causey Pike now on our right and across the valley Catbells on our left. As always, we could spot lots of walkers making their way up Catbells no longer all in orange cagoules as they were in days gone by but in large numbers and all enjoying the views. I counted 19 before I hit a pot hole and decided I needed to concentrate on the road. Before we hit the really steep sections of the Newlands Pass we turned left and whizzed down hill to Little Town and up the other side where I stopped to look at the views but really so as I could get my breath back before riding along the base of Catbells to turn left to join the road along the back of Derwentwater with very different but equally stunning views.

We stopped in Grange for a well-earned coffee and cake before setting off back to Keswick for fish and chips.



Day two was the big one, 34 miles of beautiful but challenging terrain which took us around the base of both Blencathra and Skiddaw. The first section is along the very impressive old railway line cycle path to Threlkeld where we followed the Coast-to-Coast cycle route for several miles to ride along the bottom of Blencathra and onto Mungrisdale.

We then headed over the Caldbeck Fell to eventually arrive in Caldbeck itself. Here we had expected to take lunch at the Watermill Café but we arrived just after a coach and several other groups so no room for us. But we headed to the village shop where we sat on the bench outside drinking very good coffee and eating whatever the shop had left as we watched the old petrol pump in front of us being used and read this sign. We weren't tempted to see if London really was 301¾ miles away but decided against it. After lunch we headed upwards (as always) onto the open fell and great views. Unfortunately, the weather decided it had been too kind to us and

at this point the rain and wind (against us of course) came and we all struggled into our raincoats. Fortunately, the rain didn't last long and before we dropped down to Bassenthwaite Village we had removed our coats and were once more able to enjoy the views. We crossed the A591 onto a little road towards the lake. Unfortunately, the last couple of miles back to Keswick have to be done on the A591 but it is the less twisty part of the road and the traffic was light and considerate. Once back on the outskirts of Keswick we took the quiet road back to the old railway station to reflect on an excellent two days of riding.

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