

# 8 traffic-free bike rides in Yorkshire



Suitable for all abilities



  
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# Easy and enjoyable rides

With its arresting scenery and rich heritage, Yorkshire is among the UK's top destinations for cycling.

As custodian of the **National Cycle Network**, we've put together some of our favourite traffic-free rides in this unique region, from the old industrial heartlands of South Yorkshire to the majestic expanses of the East Riding and the buzzing centre of Leeds.

## Key to route maps:



Bike Hire



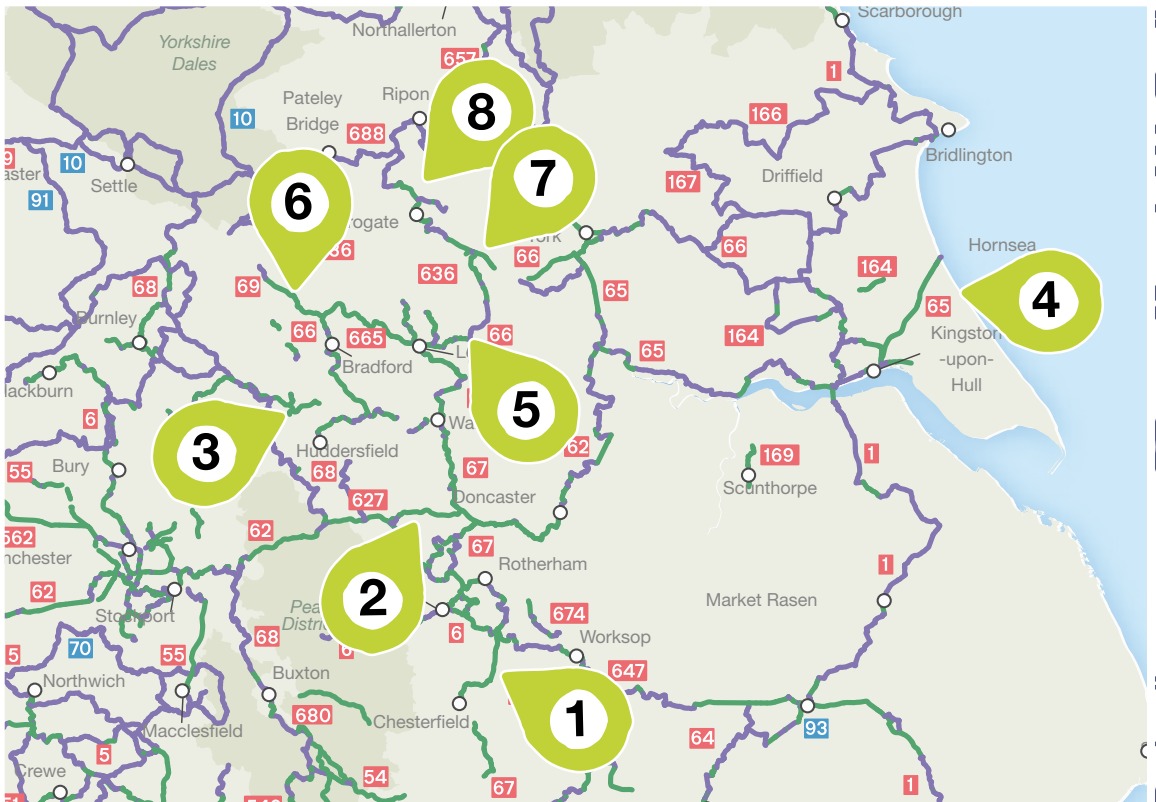
Pub



Café



Restaurant



# Routes Menu

Tap on a desired route below or scroll

MENU



Route one – South Yorkshire  
Poolsbrook to Rother Valley Country Park



Route two – South Yorkshire  
Dove Valley Trail via RSPB Old Moor



Route three – West Yorkshire  
Spenn Valley Greenway



Route four – East Riding of Yorkshire  
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Route five – West Yorkshire  
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Route seven – West Yorkshire  
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Route eight – North Yorkshire  
Nidderdale Greenway



Top Tips



Buy the guide







# Route one

Poolsbrook to Rother Valley  
Country Park, South Yorkshire





## Poolsbrook to Rother Valley Country Park

This gentle route along the track of the old Great Central Railway joins two former collieries turned country parks. On leaving the open water and grassland of Poolsbrook, you'll join a section of the Trans Pennine Trail, passing through scenic countryside and sheltered woodland. Then, it's over the river into Rother Valley Country Park, with its five lakes and a visitor centre set within an 18th-century mill.



Key route information:

**Start:** Poolsbrook Country Park

**Finish:** Rother Valley Country Park

**Time:** 1 – 2 hours

**Length of ride:** 7.5 miles



## Start

### Poolsbrook Country Park

Staveley  
Chesterfield  
S43 3LS

GPS: 53.258446,  
-1.350810

## Finish

### Rother Valley Country Park

Sheffield  
S26 5RN

GPS: 53.339842,  
-1.319611

## Terrain, gradients and access

A gently descending route on fine gravel track and stony trail. There are some road crossings, and rail station access via Chesterfield and Woodhouse.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Set yourself up with hot drinks and snacks at the Coffee Stop Café in Poolsbrook Country Park – check their social media for opening times
- Get involved with one of the many activities you can try at Rother Valley Country Park’s visitor centre, including windsurfing and pedal-boating
- Tackle one of the cycling trails around Rother Valley Country Park – there’s an easy loop around the nature reserve along with a trickier mountain-biking route

# Route one

Poolsbrook to Rother Valley



Follow the  
**67**  
little red sign





# Route two

Dove Valley Trail via RSPB  
Old Moor, South Yorkshire



## Route two

Dove Valley Trail, S. Yorks

# Dove Valley Trail via RSPB Old Moor

With its attractions and opportunities for nature-spotting, this section of the Trans Pennine Trail is ideal for a fun-filled day out. Starting from Elsecar Heritage Centre, a hotspot hosting exhibitions, craft workshops and more, you'll enjoy the green surroundings of the Elsecar Canal. After passing two RSPB nature reserves, you'll be treated to views of Stainborough Park.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Elsecar</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Silkstone Common</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>13 miles</b>

# Route two

Dove Valley Trail, S. Yorks

## Start

### Elsecar Heritage Centre

Wath Road  
Elsecar  
S74 8HJ

[GPS: 53.494662,  
-1.418972](#)

## Finish

### Silkstone Common Train Station

Silkstone Common  
S75 4PU

[GPS: 53.535176,  
-1.562872](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

A steady ascent, particularly from Worsbrough to Silkstone Common, on a mixture of fine gravel track and stony trail. There are train stations at either end of the trail. There are also two road crossings in Worsbrough, and a brief on-road section at Silkstone Common.

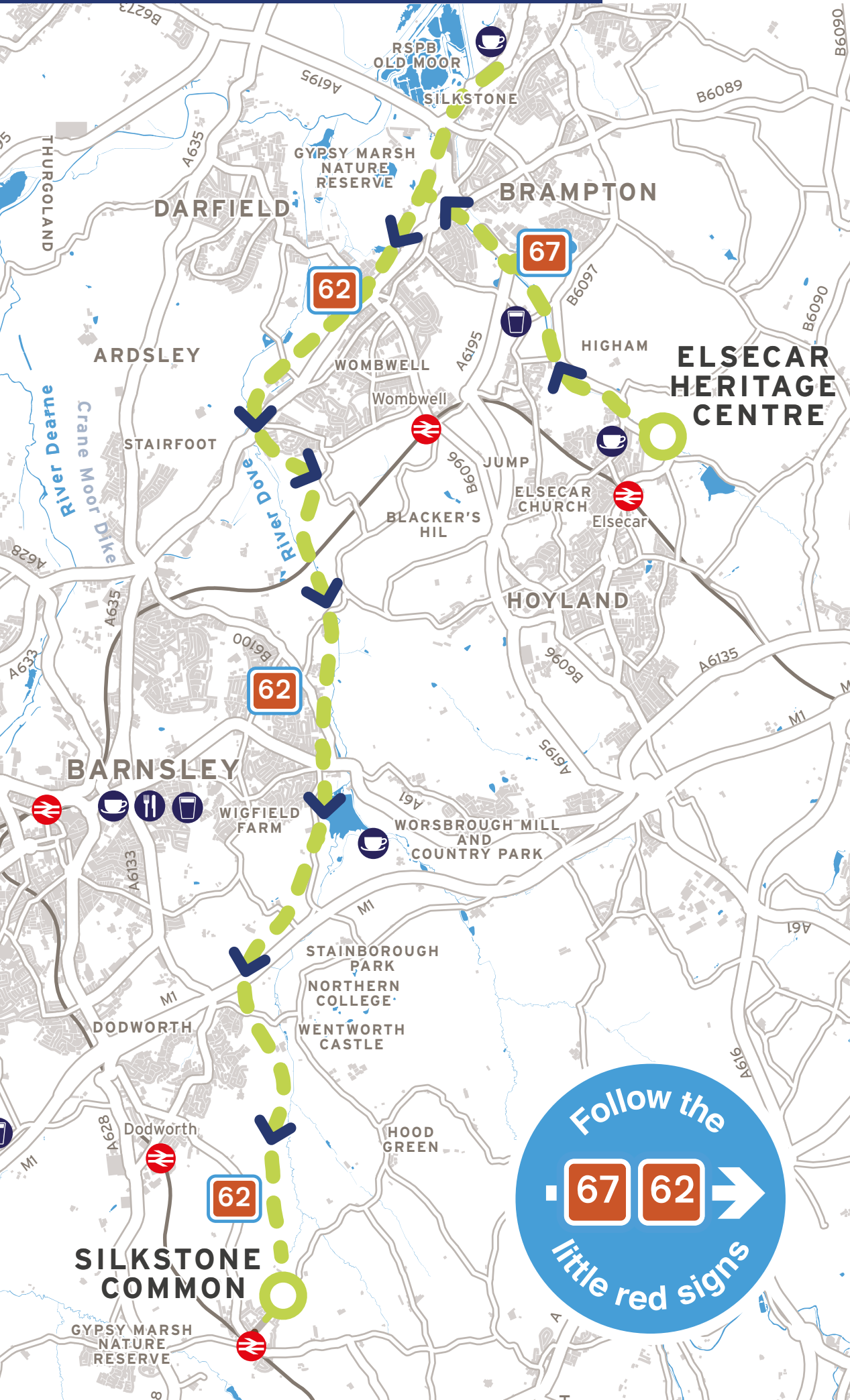
## Ideas for things to do:

- Start your trip off right with something tasty at Elsecar Heritage Centre's Brambles Tearoom
- Spot yellowhammers and green woodpeckers at RSPB Gypsy Marsh nature reserve, or wading birds at RSPB Old Moor
- Take a trip back in time at Worsbrough Mill – a 17th-century working water mill and museum set in a 240-acre country park



# Route two

Dove Valley Trail, S. Yorks



Follow the  
**67 62** →  
little red signs



# Route three

Spenn Valley Greenway,  
West Yorkshire





# Spen Valley Greenway

There's plenty to look at on this relaxed, greenery-filled route which uses a smooth railway path. Joining the River Calder at Dewsbury, you'll spot the Pennines rising in the distance, and the lush wetland, meadows and woods of the Lower Spen Nature Reserve. That's not to mention the many artworks dotted along the track, which includes a flock of recycled scrap-metal sheep and a series of giant steel hoops.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Dewsbury</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Oakenshaw</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>1- 2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>8 miles</b>





## Start

### Dewsbury train station

Bond Street  
Dewsbury  
WF13 1BQ

[GPS: 53.691926,  
-1.632411](#)

## Finish

### Victoria Park

Oakenshaw  
BD12 7AT

[GPS: 53.749318,  
-1.752066](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

A smooth tarmac path, with a gentle, climbing gradient. There is an on-road section between Dewsbury station and the start of the trail.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Explore Dewsbury's famed open market, which runs on Wednesdays and Saturdays
- Charge your batteries at The Pie Shed, Dewsbury's artisan café serving brunch and lunches
- Follow National Route 66 on to Bradford and see what the city has to offer, including the Industrial Museum and National Media Museum

# Route three

Spenn Valley Greenway, W. Yorks





# Route four

Hornsea Rail Trail,  
East Riding of Yorkshire





# Hornsea Rail Trail

Passing through Hull's evocative Old Town, this gentle route takes you out of the city onto a traffic-free path with open views of the flatlands of Holderness Plain. Towards the end of the ride, a short detour will take you to Hornsea Mere, the largest freshwater lake in Yorkshire. However, the real pay-off is arriving at the Hornsea's South Promenade, where you can look out over the North Sea.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Hull</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Hornsea</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>15.5 miles</b>



## Start

### Hull Paragon Interchange station

Ferensway  
Hull  
HU1 3QX

[GPS: 53.743102, -0.348182](#)

## Finish

### South Promenade

Hornsea  
HU14 3DJ

[GPS: 53.911909, -0.160321](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

A flat tarmac path and gravel track, with on-road sections in Hull and Hornsea. There are some road crossings, and care is needed while crossing the A165 at Oubrough.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Get a bit of culture at the Ferens Art Gallery, which is near the start of the route
- Follow a signed link at New Ellerby to Burton Constable House, an Elizabethan Manor House with fascinating collections
- Reward yourself with some traditional fish and chips at The Trawlerman in Hornsea
- Find out what life was like in Hornsea in days gone by at the town's museum







# Route five

Wyke Beck Way,  
West Yorkshire



# Wyke Beck Way

Linking two country parks and passing through a series of local nature reserves, this is a picturesque route on the edge of industrial Leeds. Temple Newsam House makes for a grand start, and you'll want to savour the watermeadows of Killingbeck Fields. If travelling at dawn or dusk, you may well spot some roe deer. The impressive Waterloo Lake welcomes you to Roundhay Park and the end of your ride.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Temple Newsam</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Roundhay Park</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>1 - 2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>6 miles</b>



## Start

### Temple Newsam House

Temple Newsam Road  
Leeds  
LS15 0AE

[GPS: 53.785877,  
-1.459056](#)

## Finish

### Waterloo Lake

Roundhay Park  
Leeds  
LS8 2JL

[GPS: 53.835424,  
-1.497006](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

A combination of tarmac path and fine gravel track, descending at first and then climbing gently. There are some road crossings and on-road sections at Temple Newsam, Halton and Killingbeck.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Explore Temple Newsam, a historic Tudor-Jacobian mansion house and working rare breed farm, with a landscaped garden to boot
- Treat yourself with something tasty at the Lakeside Café in Roundhay Park, which serves a range of breakfasts and deli snacks
- Go wild at Roundhay Park's Tropical World, where you can see iguanas, monkeys and meerkats



# Route five

Wyke Beck Way, West Yorkshire



MENU





# Route six

Aire Valley Towpath,  
West Yorkshire





# Aire Valley Towpath

From the heart of Leeds to the surrounding countryside, this waterway route is a fantastic showcase of the area's industrial heritage. Hints of the countryside become more pronounced in the opening miles, and soon you'll see the ruined Kirkstall Abbey through the trees. The mills of Saltaire, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, welcome you before coming to the highlight of the route, Bingley's impressive Five Rise Locks.



## Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Leeds</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Bingley</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>16 miles</b>





## Start

### Granary Wharf

Wharf Approach

Leeds

LS11 5WA

GPS: 53.793138,  
-1.551130

## Finish

### Five Rise Locks

Beck Lane

Bingley

BD16 4DS

GPS: 53.856339,  
-1.838222

## Terrain, gradients and access

A combination of tarmac path, stony trail and fine gravel track, with a gentle climb throughout and sharp climbs at the locks. There are road crossings and a brief on-road section at Calverley Bridge. There are also stations at many points along the route, so you can take a train back if you like.

## Ideas for things to do:

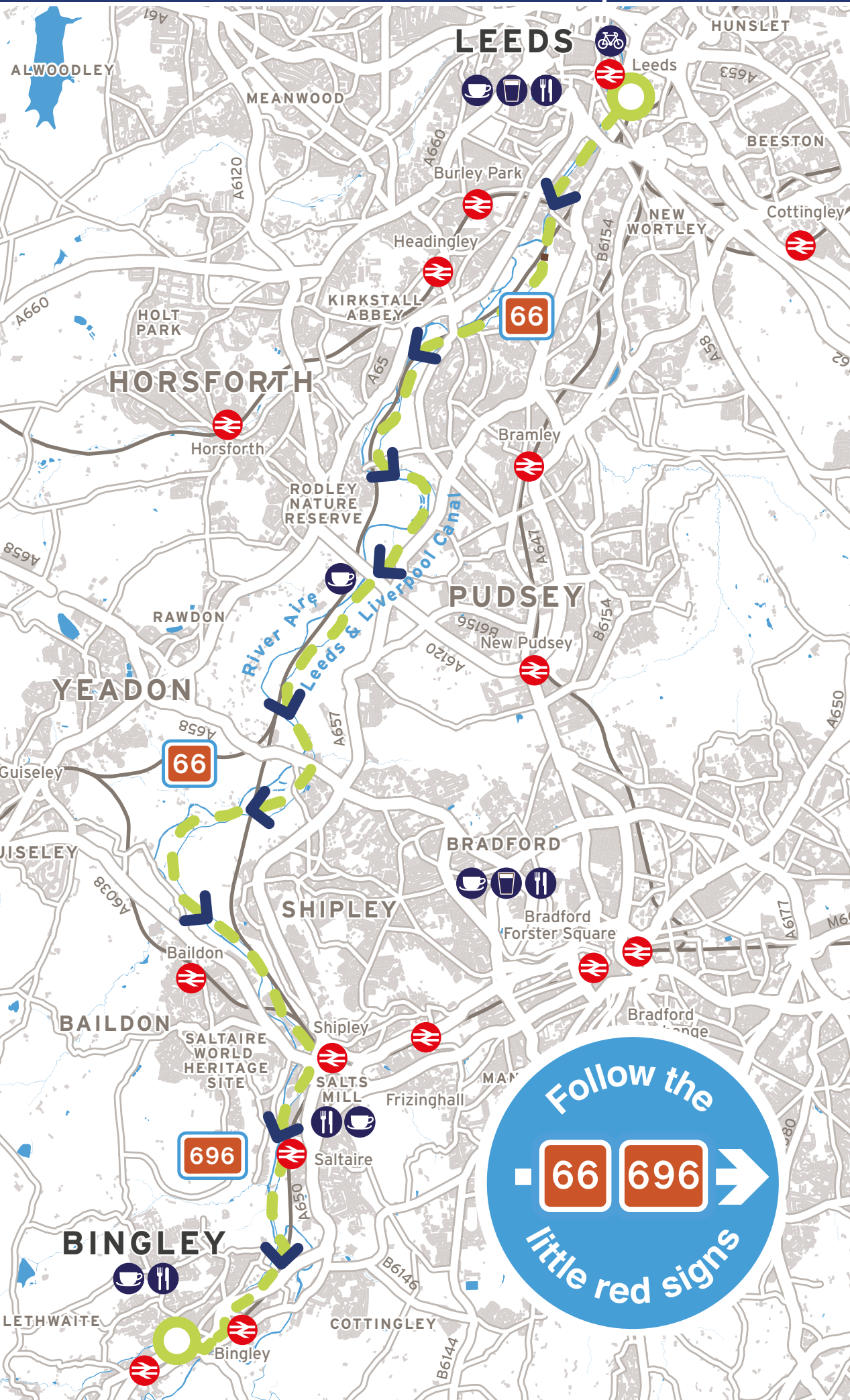
- Sample culinary delights of Granary Wharf – the beginning of the route where there are many places to eat and drink
- Explore Bramley Fall, an inviting park and woodland offering great views of the area
- Soak up the scene at Salts Mill at Saltaire. It's free to enter and it hosts a range of shops, eateries, events and exhibitions – including a collection by David Hockney

# Route six

Aire Valley Towpath, W. Yorkshire



MENU



Follow the  
66 696 →  
little red signs





# Route seven

Wetherby Railway Path,  
West Yorkshire





## Wetherby Railway Path

Starting this gentle ride at the retail park (or alternatively, further along at the bridge over the River Wharfe), you'll soon join the old railway path, which brings you past Leeds United's training ground. Wetherby Racecourse heralds your arrival in the picturesque market town, and the riverbanks by Wetherby Bridge are a tempting picnic spot. Soon, you'll come to the village of Spofforth, with its evocative castle ruins.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Thorp Arch Retail Park</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Spofforth Castle</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>1 - 2 hours</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>6 miles</b>



## Start

### Thorp Arch Retail park

Wetherby  
LS23 7FG

[GPS: 53.912799,  
-1.332774](#)

## Finish

### Spofforth Castle

Castle Street  
Spofforth  
HG3 1ND

[GPS: 53.955245,  
-1.450524](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

A largely flat route on tarmac path and stony trail. There are some road crossings and short on-road sections at Wetherby and Spofforth.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Explore the historic buildings in Wetherby's Market Square, from its 19th-century Shambles to its Grade II-listed Town Hall
- Grab some nourishment at Wetherby's North Street Deli or Wetherby Wailer
- Immerse yourself in the history of Spofforth Castle, the ruined 14th-century mansion house which is free to enter
- Follow the on-road link on National Route 67 to Follifoot, a pretty village with traditional pubs

# Route seven

Wetherby Railway Path, W. Yorks



MENU



Follow the

665

67



little red signs





# Route eight

Nidderdale Greenway,  
North Yorkshire





## Nidderdale Greenway

Within the opening mile of this short and sweet route, you'll be gliding over the Grade II-listed, seven-arch viaduct that spans the Nidd Gorge, with lush fields and coniferous forests off to either side. The route then heads into the trees and down to the riverbanks, where kingfishers can sometimes be spied. The picturesque village of Ripley, with its cobbled market square, makes for an idyllic end to the ride.



Key route information:

<b>Start:</b>	<b>Harrogate</b>
<b>Finish:</b>	<b>Ripley</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>0.5 - 1 hour</b>
<b>Length of ride:</b>	<b>3 miles</b>



## Start

### The Gardener's Arms

Bilton Lane  
Harrogate  
HG1 4DH

[GPS: 54.014029,  
-1.519720](#)

## Finish

### Ripley Castle

Ripley  
HG3 3AY

[GPS: 54.039981,  
-1.569263](#)

## Terrain, gradients and access

On tarmac path, this is a mainly flat ride, with a short climb up from the river toward the end of the route. There is a short on-road section at Bilton and a road crossing near Ripley.

## Ideas for things to do:

- Follow the largely traffic-free route from Bilton into the pretty spa town of Harrogate
- Rest up at The Boar's Head, an inviting inn serving quality food
- Explore Ripley Castle, a gorgeous mansion house with a walled garden and deer park
- Venture beyond Ripley on the traffic-free path toward Hollybank Wood, which is carpeted with purple hues in bluebell season
- Take a detour on National Route 636 to picturesque and historic Knaresborough



# Route eight

Nidderdale Greenway, N. Yorks



MENU



Follow the



little red sign



## Bike ride checklist

You don't need special or expensive equipment to enjoy a short bike ride but here are some items you'll certainly find useful.

### For you:

- A hat and suncream if it's sunny
- Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing
- Bike helmet – it's not compulsory to wear one in the UK but a well-fitted helmet is especially recommended for children
- Snacks and drinks to keep energy levels up
- Mobile phone and money

### For your bike:

- Water bottle
- Puncture repair kit and pump
- Tyre levers, a bike 'multi-tool' or Allen keys and adjustable spanner
- Spare inner-tubes (saves you having to repair a puncture immediately)
- Bike lights
- Bike lock
- Bike bell – when on a shared-use path a friendly tinkle will let people know you're approaching.

# Top Tips

Useful information to know

## Keep it safe and fun

Here are some tips to keep in mind when out on your ride:

- Let the slowest rider in your group set the pace for your ride.
- Ride in line on busy paths with any children in the middle of the adults. If there's only one adult, ride at the rear so you can keep an eye on everyone in front.
- Take extra care along any on-road sections and at road crossings. You may prefer to push your bike, especially with younger children or less experienced riders.

## Plan your route



The routes in this guide are signed and easy to follow – just look out for the National Cycle Network blue and red signs. You can also check out your route in detail on our website and Ordnance Survey's online mapping.

## Check your bike



Before you set off on your ride, check your bike is in good condition. We've put together a guide to help you safety check your bike in 11 easy steps.

## Fix a puncture



Thankfully, punctures don't happen often and are easy to fix yourself. All you need is a pump, puncture repair kit and a set of tyre levers. Watch our video to learn how to repair a puncture.





## Please be aware that routes in this guide may not be accessible to everyone.

One of our top priorities is making the National Cycle Network accessible to everyone.

But not everyone can easily access the Network.

We work hand in hand with communities to find the best ways to remove and redesign barriers.

This is to help everyone experience the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling in their local area.

### Improving accessibility



As custodians of the National Cycle Network, we're committed to making it safe and accessible for everyone.

We deal with restrictive barriers at a local level, working with communities, local groups and landowners to design alternative solutions together.

### How we remove barriers



Find out how our team go about removing barriers.

# Enjoyed your ride on the National Cycle Network?

## Donate to Sustrans



Please help us to look after and improve the National Cycle Network for everyone to enjoy.

## Buy the guide

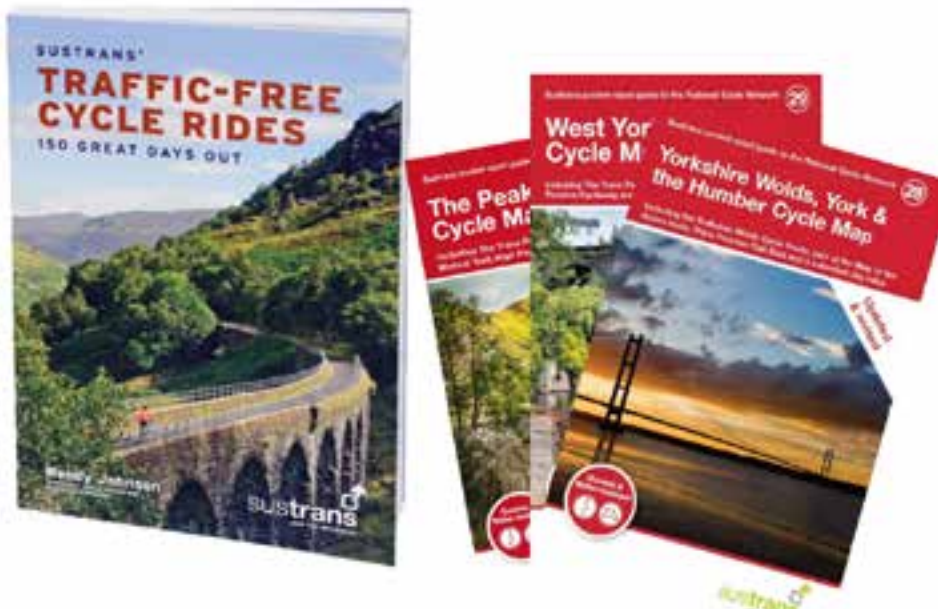


For more inspiring bike ride ideas buy our Traffic-Free Cycle Rides guidebook. It includes 150 hand-picked routes across the UK to help you plan the perfect day out.

## Buy a regional map



Find and explore every local route and mile of the National Cycle Network in the UK with one of our pocket-sized regional cycle maps.



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Find out more at

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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We have taken all responsible steps to ensure that these routes are safe and achievable by people with a reasonable level of fitness. However, all outdoor activities involve a degree of risk. To the extent permitted by law, Sustrans accepts no responsibility for any accidents or injury resulting from following these routes. Walking and cycling routes change over time. Weather conditions may also affect path surfaces. Please use your own judgement when using the routes based upon the weather and the ability, experience and confidence levels of those in your group.

Sustrans accepts no responsibility for any accidents or injury resulting from following these routes.

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