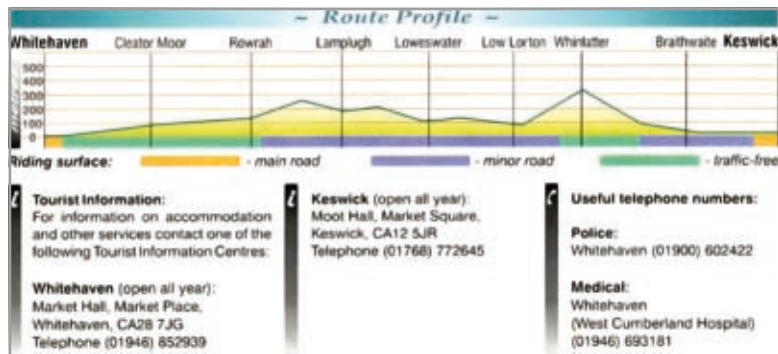


# Whitehaven, or St Bees & Egremont to Keswick



## Whitehaven

### DIRECTIONS



### Leaving Whitehaven

As you leave Whitehaven harbour you will join the Whitehaven-Rowrah cycle path, which links the sea to the fells. But first some detailed instructions for getting onto the route proper:

Out of the harbour head right up Quay Street.

Left past the Tourist Information Centre through Market Place and into Preston Street. Look out for signs on the left for the path behind Focus DIY.

Onto Esk Avenue, only to rejoin the path by the

school. You then cycle along Croasdale Avenue and Wasdale Avenue before linking up with the path to exit the town.

You now follow the railway line built in the 1850s to carry limestone, coal and iron; it is now a sculpture trail interpreting the geology and industrial history of the region. You might find yourself stopping to check signage; this is routine, there are several other routes around here including the Egremont link.



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### ABOUT THE TOWN

**W**hitehaven has the distinction of being both the starting point of the C2C and the finish for the Reivers Cycle Route. It may not be quite the place it was in the 18th century, when it played a significant role in the British slave trade, but it has undergone a major transformation in the last couple of years and its fine Georgian architecture is now looking spruce and proud again.

Perhaps the most impressive feature is the large harbour, which has undergone a £68 million facelift. There is a fine 100-berth marina, now choc-a-bloc with pleasure craft of all sizes and shapes. The town has, in short, re-acquired some of the prosperity it lost in the years after it became the world's first new town.

Not so long ago it would have been hard to imagine that early Manhattan's street grid system was

based on the pattern the Lowther family laid out for Whitehaven in the late 1690s, when it became apparent that the Cumbrian settlement was destined for great things.

Shortly afterwards the streets filled with rum and sugar merchants, slave traders and tobacco speculators as well as America-bound settlers waiting for their boat to come and take them off to a new life in the New World. The harbour was teeming with coal transporters, which plied the Irish Sea to supply Dublin's houses and industries with black stuff dynamited from under Whitehaven's seabed.

There was also shipbuilding; more than 1,000 vessels were built in the Whitehaven yards, and one of the oldest surviving iron-built ships was constructed here. After London and Bristol, this was the busiest port in England.

## AMERICAN LINKS



Whitehaven's connections with America go deep: John Paul Jones, founder of the American navy and erstwhile scourge of Britain's own, gained his sea legs as a merchant seaman from Whitehaven.

Indeed, the last invasion of the English mainland, in 1778, was perpetrated by Jones upon the town. The incursion was part of the only attack on British soil by US forces; and we should not forget that George Washington's granny, Mildred Warner Gale, lived here and is buried at St Nicholas's churchyard.

The town has been impressively preserved, one suspects, because a sudden lack of prosperity after the boom years disinclined planners from bulldozing in the name of progress. This left the Lowther architectural heritage preserved, as it were, in aspic. It is worthwhile walking the streets, admiring this memorial to an earlier and prosperous age, when sea captains and merchants lived in style.

There are many interesting and quirky sculptures around the harbour (such as the one pictured on the right), street mosaics featuring different aspects of the heritage, plus a mural in Washington Square and

a plethora of shiny plaques above doorways giving clues to the past.

It is one of my favourite places on the whole route and it seems a shame just to use Whitehaven as a point of departure without spending the previous night exploring. There are plenty of distractions, in the form of pubs, restaurants and venues. The following day's ride out of this port is nothing if not leisurely - a stark contrast to the undulations that are to follow. A late night is not going to spoil it.

The traditional way to start this route is by christening your bike on the slipway behind the big C2C sign by dipping the front wheel in the briny. Then you might wish to get your first route stamp at the New Espresso café in the Market Place.



## PLACES OF INTEREST

### Michael Moon's, Bookshop & Gallery

*Roper Street*  
One of the largest bookshops in Cumbria, "vast and gloriously eccentric!"

### The Rum Story

An exhibition celebrating the Jefferson family business, the oldest booze empire in Britain.

### The Beacon

Local maritime and industrial history within the Harbour Gallery. Sections of it will be closed for refurbishment during 2007.  
☎ 01946 592302.

### The Haig Mining Museum

*Haig Enterprise Park, High Rd.*

## CYCLE SHOPS

### Haven Cycles, Cycle Hire/Repairs

*Preston Street Garage*  
☎ 01946 632 633

### Dave Milling, *Preston Street*

☎ 01946 63380

## PLACES TO EAT

### American Connection

*Marlborough Street*  
☎ 01946 693671

### Zest Restaurant

*Harbourside*  
☎ 01946 66981

### Georgian House

*Church Street*  
☎ 01946 696611

### Casa Romana [Italian]

*Queen Street*  
☎ 01946 591901

### Jasmine Palace, [Chinese/Thai]

*Duke/Strand Street*

### Blue Wine Bar & Restaurant

*Tangier Street*  
☎ 01946 691986

### Hornblowers

*Church Street*  
☎ 01946 590492

### Westminster Restaurant

*Lowther Street*  
☎ 01946 694404

### Askash Tandoori Restaurant [Indian]

☎ 01946 691171

### Ali Taj Restaurant [Indian]

☎ 01946 592679

### Golden Harbour [Chinese]

*George Street*  
☎ 01946 693388

### Howgate Brewster & Travel Inn

*Howgate*  
☎ 01946 66286

## PLACES TO STAY



### Waverley Hotel

Tangier St, CA28 7UX

Run by: Cheryl Twinn

Bustling privately owned town centre hotel, traditional in style, licensed and with busy restaurant. Close to harbour and popular amongst cyclists.

- ☎ 01946 694337
- 🌐 www.thewaverleyhotel.co.uk
- ✉ thewaverleyhotel@hotmail.com
- 📍 10S, 5D, 6T, 3F
- 💰 £26-£48
- 🍷 Evening meal: £5.95-£15
- 🍱 Packed lunch: £4.95
- 🚗 On route
- 🍷 Fully licensed

### Glenfield Guest House

Back Corkickle, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 7TS.

Run by: Margaret Davies

Set in a conservation area close to the town centre, home from home atmosphere specialising in real home cooking and luxury en-suite accommodation. Licensed lounge with open fire.

- ☎ 01946 691911
- 🌐 glenfield-whitehaven.co.uk
- ✉ glenfieldGH@aol.com
- 📍 1S, 2D, 1T.
- 💰 £27.50-£55 (price per room)



- 🍷 Evening meal: £4.50-£8.50
- 🍱 Packed lunch: £4.50
- 📍 400m from route
- 🚗 Nearest pub: 50m
- 👁 AA 4 stars LU and DF

### Corkickle Guest House

1 Corkickle, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 8AA

Run by: Jayne Santon

Warm, friendly Georgian house on a cobbled terrace. Easy walk to the town centre. Comfortable rooms and a full fry up (or something lighter) to set you on your way.



- ☎ 01946 692073
- 📍 2S, 3D, 1T.
- 💰 £24-£35
- 🍷 No evening meal
- 🍱 Packed lunch: £4.50
- 📍 300m from route
- 🚗 Nearest pub: 200m
- 👁 AA 4 stars LU and DF

### The Mansion

Old Woodhouse, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 9LN

Run by: Tom and Philip

Friendly, relaxed and with all mod cons. Super big screen TV and swimming pool opening this year.

- ☎ 01946 61860
- ☎ 01946 691270
- ✉ commenus4@aol.com
- 🌐 www.themansion-whitehaven.co.uk
- 📍 12
- 💰 From £20 - £25
- 🍷 £3.50
- 🍱 £6.00-£10
- 🚗 1km from route. Pub 100m



Photo: David Martin-Stratton



Whitehaven harbour has recently undergone a complete facelift

## St Bees & Egremont



*St Bees Head is the westernmost point in the north of England*

**T**hrough popular request we have decided this year to introduce a third possible start to the route: St Bees, the seaside neighbour of the newly vibrant Egremont.

St Bees is the tried and trusted start to the Coast to Coast walk, famously founded by Alfred Wainwright in 1973. It is also a lovely coastal setting and a splendid but smaller alternative to the bustling charms of Whitehaven and Workington.

The area has been mining iron ore and quarrying for more than 800 years and it is home to Florence Mine, the last deepest iron ore mine in Western Europe.

There is plenty of eager and competitive accommodation, plus numerous hostelrys and eateries in the area. Indeed, huge efforts are being put into the regeneration of this former weaving and dyeing town. Egremont's hidden gems include the Norman Castle with its literary connection to Wordsworth's *Ballad of the Horn of Egremont*; Hartley's ice cream factory and shop; Lowes Court Gallery and Tourist Information Centre (01946 820693) with exhibitions of Cumbrian artists and local crafts.

As a 'Fairtrade Town' Egremont has a number of shops selling locally produced and sourced foods and

holds a Farmers Market on the third Friday of every month in the Market Hall.

The main street has a variety of facilities, shops, pubs and takeaways catering for visitor needs.

During the annual Crab Fair, which in September 2007 celebrates its 840th anniversary, the greasy pole climbing and gurning (face pulling) events draw large crowds of locals and visitors. The town is synonymous with that time-honoured English tradition of gurning.

This year will see further improvements to the town and its facilities, such as circular cycling routes, riverside walks and new planting to the town's entrances as part of the Egremont Market Town Initiative work. Visit the Tourist Information Centre at Lowes Court Gallery for details of things to do in and around the town.

☎ 01946 820693

The local regeneration partnership is keen to improve the visitor offer further and welcomes your comments, suggestions and information by contacting:

✉ [regeneration@visitegremont.co.uk](mailto:regeneration@visitegremont.co.uk)

🌐 [www.visitegremont.co.uk](http://www.visitegremont.co.uk)

📍 Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, Charles Edmonds Library, Wyndam Street, Egremont, CA22 2DH.

## DIRECTIONS

Those arriving at St Bees by train should leave the station to the Priory Church side and make their way along the 'Coach Road' past the petrol station and garage to the beach.

St Bees Head is the most westerly point in the North of England and on a clear day from the promenade you can look out to the Isle of Man, 20 miles or so off the coast.

The first stage of the route takes you to Egremont, four miles away.

Leave the beach car park and take the first right along the straight road to the Station. Cross the level crossing and continue up the Main Street past the Platform 9 restaurant and the Queens Hotel on your right, the Manor House Hotel and the post office on your left.

At the next junction you have the choice to take:

🚲 The challenging route left up Outrigg (20%) and over Baybarrow, with rewarding views over to Ennerdale, Wasdale and down the coast to Eskdale and further

🚲 Continue up the Main Street to take the second right – signposted for the Hadrians Way C72 route – and follow the coast (Nethertown Road) and charming single-track lanes to Couderton, where one heads inland for Egremont and the Lakes.

At the T-junction in Couderton head right to Middletown, taking first left just before the telephone box. Follow the lane for a short while, but instead of heading right, go straight on past Black Ling and Pickett How, up the narrow minor road. Make sure to enjoy views across to Dent Fell – the western edge of the Lake District as you

head towards Egremont. Arriving in Egremont, take time to visit the Castle (pictured below), then follow the national cycle route 72 which is clearly signed through the town and out to the north.

About a mile north of Egremont is Clintz Quarry Nature Reserve, a limestone quarry of dramatic proportions, with manmade cliffs 100ft high, which is home to some rare orchids in May and June, as well as a sanctuary for birds.



*Check out Egremont's many historic sites*

## PLACES TO STAY

### Shepherds Arms Hotel

Ennerdale Bridge, Ennerdale, Cumbria, CA23 3AR

*Run by:* Malcolm Thomas-Chapman

A small gem of a country hotel with public bar serving real ales and pub meals. Situated on the famous Coast to Coast walk and on the new start to the C2C out of St Bees, the area fast becoming popular with cyclists using the new start. A busy local pub with comfortable rooms.

☎ 01946 861249

🌐 www.shepherdsarmshotel.co.uk

✉ shepherdsarms@btconnect.com

🚗 3D, 3T, 2D/T

💰 £37.50-£47.50



🍷 Evening meal: Under £10 for a main course

🍷 Packed lunch: £3.45-£4.95

### Bookwell Garth Guest House

16 Bookwell, Egremont, CA22 2LS

*Run by:* Wayne and Jeanette Powell

Friendly Guest House with good accommodation, TV in all rooms. Drying facilities, good location. Early breakfast.



☎ 01946 820271

✉ jeanette.powell@tesco.net

🚗 5S, 7T

💰 £21-£26

🍷 Pub nearby. On new leg of route

### The Manor House Hotel and Coast to Coast Bar

11/12 Main St, CA27 0DE

*Run by:* Margaret Fee

Traditional ales (it's in the Good Beer Guide), the Manor House is comfortable and clean and has a great atmosphere (the mixture of locals and tourists works well in the bar). The dining room turns into a cafe during the day, but serves lunches and dinners, too. This 18th century coaching inn welcomes cyclists and walkers and has a secure lock-up.

☎ 01946 822425

🌐 www.themanorhousestbees.com

✉ manorhousemaz@aol.com

🚗 1S, 4T, 3D, 1Q.



💰 £29-£35

🍷 Evening meal: £4.95-£14.95

🍷 Packed lunch: £5-£7

👁 Under new ownership and awaiting inspection



**The Cycle Barn gives easy access to the High Street**

### Egremont Cycle Barn

Horse & Groom Court, Egremont CA22 2AE

*Run by:* Rob Merrett

Right in the town centre, the Cycle Barn aims to be open in early 2008 and is taking bookings now. It is self-catering and there are plenty of shops, pubs and restaurants nearby. There is a secure lock-up for bikes and cleaning facilities.

☎ 01946 824052

🌐 www.horseandgroomcourt.co.uk

✉ info@horseandgroomcourt.co.uk

🚗 3Q, 2T. All en-suite wet rooms

🍷 Evening meal: Self catering or plenty of pubs/restaurants nearby



**The castle in Egremont is a must-visit if you have time**