

Cycle route: Great Ayton

including Easby, Kildale and Lonsdale and offering views of the Cleveland Hills and Roseberry Topping

The route: A nine-mile (14.3km) circular cycle starting in Great Ayton.

Difficulty: Moderate, some steep gradients. You will need OS Explorer Map OL26 (North York Moors-Western area)

Parking: Car parking is available in Great Ayton.

Before your journey

- Make sure your bike is fit for use. If in doubt, have it checked

at your local bike shop.

- Make yourself as visible as possible to other road users.

During your journey

- Always wear a cycle helmet. Stay alert to poor road surface, other road users, blind bends, correct road positioning, give clear and correct hand signals, and in wet weather occasionally apply brakes to remove excess water.
- For more safety



VIEW: Hannah's picture of Roseberry Topping

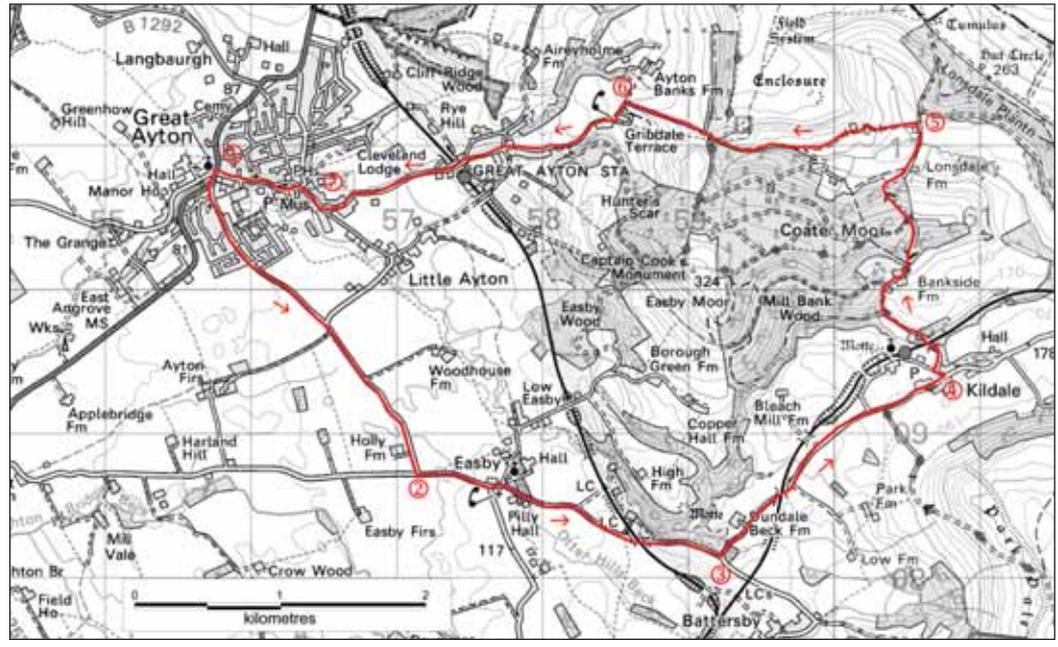
information, contact the County Council road safety and travel awareness team at roadsafety@northyorks.gov.uk.

This circuit is based on a route submitted by Hannah Gawthorpe, of Great Ayton. Hannah says: *As petrol prices and concern for the environment have soared, I decided that instead of driving myself to college I'd cycle the five miles to Stokesley. One night when I was in a particularly adventurous mood, I took a longer route (as a distraction from doing coursework!), going from Stokesley along the back road to Easby, Kildale, Lonsdale and back through Gribdale to Great Ayton. The roads are continually up and down, weave through woodlands and fields and give a wonderful view of the Cleveland Hills, Roseberry Topping and Teesside on the descent into Great Ayton.*

Notes

Historic environment

Easby is mentioned in Domesday Book as Esebi. It was probably never wealthy, as in 1301 only five households were taxed. *The motte on the map at 3 is Easby Castle. It was probably a watch tower or temporary refuge during the civil wars of the 12th century.* From Kildale to Gribdale Terrace, the road is quite modern; it seems to have arisen from the need to transport stone off the moors from the quarries and mines to the railways after 1890. *Great Ayton Moor contains a prehistoric landscape of Bronze Age burial mounds (tumuli), field systems and enclosures, showing it was once a busy farming landscape.* Two railways cross the route, the Ayton and the North Yorkshire and Cleveland branches of the North Eastern Railway. They were important in the development of the stone industry, enabling easy transportation around the country or to the coast for shipping onwards.



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1. From the centre of Great Ayton, cross the bridge and follow Easby Lane out of the village.
2. At the T-junction, turn left and follow the road through Easby.
3. Follow the road round to the left, go under the railway and on into Kildale (where there is a post office/shop).
4. In Kildale, take the road on your left (signposted to the station), then almost immediately turn right onto a minor road (signposted

Cleveland Way). Follow this road up a steep hill past Bankside Farm, through fields and woodland. At the top of the hill the Cleveland Way turns off left towards Captain Cook's Monument (using Forestry Commission tracks you could take a short detour here to see the monument – the Cleveland Way is on a public footpath here, so no bikes allowed). Our route continues along the road, down a steep hill into picturesque Lonsdale.

5. After a short climb the road turns left immediately after a barn. Go through a gate here and follow the road through fields, past Oak Tree Farm, then through another gate and out onto the edge of the moors.
6. Follow the road down a steep hill, through Gribdale and over the railway at Great Ayton station.
7. Turn right at the mini roundabout, then left at the T-junction and back on to the main street in Great Ayton.



Ecology

Arable fields and hedgerows between Great Ayton and Easby hold flocks of wood pigeons and both rooks and crows feeding in stubble fields. Yellowhammers and linnets may be seen in small fields. *On the moorland sections, red grouse could be seen or heard and kestrels hunt along the ridges. Meadow pipits are common in the summer months.* Where the route runs close to woodland, watch out for green woodpeckers, which sometimes fly out onto the moorland to feed on the ground. *During the spring, the woods have bluebells and wood sorrel, and in August the moor tops shine purple with flowering heather. Gorse is a common bush and forms extensive areas of scrub in some areas.*