

## Wear & Rookhope Valleys



*Burnhope Reservoir*



*Weardale Meadows*



*Horsley Hall Hotel*



*Lintzgarth Arch*

A good introductory route to cycling in Weardale covering the small country lanes running parallel with the main dale road.

Leaving the main road this route follows the Horsley Valley on the south side of the river Wear passing Horsley Hall the once ancestral home of the Hildyard family now available for self catering. This family once owned the land between Westgate and Unthank east of Stanhope as well as the shooting rights on Bollihope Common. The route rejoins the main valley road at Daddry Shield passing through Ireshopeburn the small village that is the home of the Weardale Folk Museum and the oldest Methodist Chapel in England where John Wesley once preached. A small detour at Wearhead on the outward journey

takes in the Reservoir at Burnhope. (Turn left before bridge take local road to the water treatment works) return to the route turning left onto the road to Cowshill. Over the climb of Burtree Fell out of Cowshill (1935ft) to Allenheads once the site of the largest silver mine in the world. It closed in 1896. Climbing out of the Allen valley to Rookhope Head (1578ft) to the cairn which marks the border between Northumberland & County Durham and down the Rookhope valley passing the disused lead mine on Wolfcleugh Common. After the descent we pass the remains of the Lintzgarth Arch on the right hand of the road. The arch is one of the few remaining parts of the two mile Rookhope Chimney which was used to carry poisonous gases from the Rookhope lead smelting works up onto the high moor. Leaving the village of Rookhope we return to Stanhope via Brandon Walls and Greenhead.

Weardale & Rookhope Valleys 27 miles

- 1 Leaving the Dales Centre at Stanhope turn RIGHT onto the A689 main valley road.
- 2 Turn LEFT onto B6278 after half mile.
- 3 Avoid the ford and stay on local road, after 400 yds take the RIGHT hand turn after the bridge to Brotherlee.
- 4 Stay on local roads to Brotherlee
- 5 Keep on local road until Westgate, bear LEFT towards A689 joining main valley road at Daddry Shield
- 6 At Daddry Shield turn LEFT at T Junction and keep on main road through St John's Chapel, Ireshopeburn (*Weardale Museum*) and Wearhead (*Burnhope Reservoir*)
- 7 At Cowshill take B6295 to Allenheads (*Burtree Fell*)
- 8 In Allenheads turn RIGHT to Rookhope (*Rookhope Head/Linzgarth Arch*)
- 9 0.2 mile after leaving Rookhope turn LEFT to St Johns Church
- 10 Continue on local road (*Brandon Walls & Hill Top*) until junction with A689
- 11 Turn LEFT on A689
- 12 Arrive at the Durham Dales Centre, Stanhope.

## **The Hills**

### **Burtree Fell**

Height approx 1836ft

Length 1.8 miles

Steepest section 1 in 8

The climb starts outside the Cowshill Hotel in the village of Cowshill and climbs up Copthill a short section of 1 in 8 for about 400 yds to the start of the long drag up Burtree Fell past disused quarries to the summit which marks the County Durham border. The climb is long and gradual but not too difficult.

### **Rookhope Head**

Height approx 1745ft

Length 0.75 miles

Steepest section 1 in 9

Starting in the village of Allendale the hill climbs through the tree line. The more exposed upper part of the climb is less steep to the summit where a stone cairn marks the top of the hill and the county boundry.

### **Brandon Walls & Hill Top**

Height approx 1570ft

Length approx 2 miles

Steepest section 1 in 5

After leaving Rookhope there is a left hand turn marked St John's Church, The road climbs steeply from the start over the hills in short sharp climbs to Hill Top before descending into Stanhope.