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www.midtyneustrust.uk; email: midtyneustrust@btopenworld.com Registered charity no. 1095760

Refreshments	Wark - The Black Bull, The Battledeads Hotel, Bellingham - there are numerous pubs and cafes in the village. Barrasford - The Barrasford Arms, Birtley - The Percy Arms
Other cycle routes	Pennine Cycleway 68 , Hadrian's Cycleway 72 , Reivers Route 10 , National Byway 1032
OS maps	Explorer 0143 Hadrian's Wall, Haltwhistle & Hexham, scale 1:25 000, Landranger 87 Hexham & Haltwhistle, scale 1:50 000.
Cycle repair	The Bike Shop 16 St. Mary's Chare, Hexham, tel: 01434 601032, Bicycle Repair Man Unit 6b Earls Court, Low Prudhoe Industrial Estate, tel: 01434 830618, The Bike Shop , 17 Westgate, Haltwhistle, tel: 01434 322544 Don't forget your puncture repair kit and/or spare inner tube!
Type of routes	Moderate/strenuous . Circular routes on quiet country lanes. Road bikes or hybrids. Routes largely follow existing National Cycle Network: Reivers Route 10 , National Byway 1032 , and National Byway Loop. Allow a day for each route. Terrain . This is Northumberland, so there are hills to negotiate on all the routes, but nothing too steep
Railway station	Hexham. Trains run on the Tyne Valley line every hour from either Newcastle or Carlisle. Trains carry 2 and 6 cycles free of charge on a first come, first served basis. For details pick up a timetable, or phone 08457 484950
Car parking	1. Wark: by the green, 2. Bellingham: the village centre, by the village hall, 3. Stonehaugh: Warks Burn picnic site
Start point	Wark village green GR 861771. These routes are circular - alternative start points are Bellingham or Stonehaugh

The Mid Tyne is an area of quiet country lanes, wooded valleys, and open vistas. The area is steeped in history, from the early Iron Age, the Roman Period and Hadrian's Wall, to the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Periods with associated Bastle Houses, Peel towers and Castles. The countryside is dotted with the remains of this turbulent past.

Essential information

Places of interest

Chipchase Castle. Built between 1370 and 1390. A fine, medieval tower house. By 1541 a house had been added to the tower, and later (1621) a Jacobean manor house. Still a family home, Chipchase is open to the public during June.



Chipchase Castle

Haughton Castle. The tower house at Haughton was extended and fortified in 1373, but by the 16th-century had fallen into disrepair. In 1816 work began to transform the castle into a gentrified country residence, which involved demolishing of the village of Haughton to make way for a country park. The castle is reputed to be haunted by 'Archie', a notorious clan chieftain. He was imprisoned in the dungeon by the Swinburn's who neglected to leave instructions to feed the prisoner. Some days later Armstrong was found dead, having in desperation gnawed the flesh from his own arm.



Haughton Castle from Barrasford, by the river North Tyne

St Aidan Church, Thockrington. 13th-century. Restored in 1876.

Bellingham Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre preserves and displays the heritage of the North Tyne and Redesdale area of Northumberland. Open Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun, and Mon, 10.30 am to 4.30 pm, Easter to mid-October.



St Aidan Church, Thockrington

Northumberland National Park stretches from Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site on its southern boundary to the Cheviot Hills and the Scottish border in the north. Find out more at www.northumberland-national-park.org.uk



CIRCULAR CYCLE ROUTES AROUND THE MID-TYNE

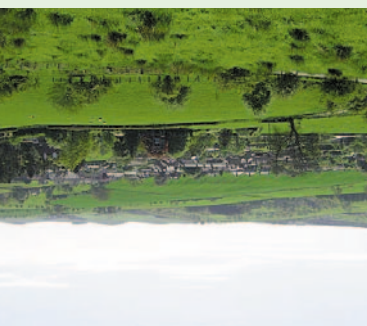
Wark

A full colour map with three easy to follow cycle rides in the North Tyne Valley

Route 1: Wark - Bellingham - Stonehaugh - Wark. 25 miles (15 miles if taking shorter route)
Ride through the North Tyne countryside, on quiet country lanes and skirt the Wark Forest to Stonehaugh. The route follows both the **Reivers Cycle Route 10** and the **Pennine Cycleway 68**. Allow a day to explore Bellingham and Stonehaugh.

Route 2: Wark - Chollerton - Thockrington - Wark. (24 miles)
Taking riders through typical Tynedale countryside. The route follows the **Reivers Cycle Route 10** for some of the way. A moderate ride, allow for a day as there are some hilly sections.

Route 3: Wark - Barrasford Park campsite. (10 miles)
Circular route, along quiet country lanes from Barrasford Park. Discover Wark and neighbouring Birtley via Chipchase Castle.



The villages

Wark is a delightful village on the banks of the North Tyne. The village green is dominated by a chestnut planted in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's golden jubilee. The town hall was built 1875, and the bridge over the North Tyne constructed in 1878. In the middle ages, Wark was the seat of the "Lordships of Tynedale" and a motte and bailey castle dominated the village. From 1150 to 1295 the Scottish kings held court in Wark as the village was then part of Scotland. The Lordship remained in royal hands until 1604. The Lordship is now held by the Duke of Northumberland.

Birtley stands on a ridge over the North Tyne valley. The place name means "bright clearing" derived from the old-English word "beorht". The remains of several British camps encircle the village indicating the area has been settled since the iron age. Birtley Hall occupies the site of the old castle. On the opposite side of the road stands the 12th-century church of St Giles.

Bellingham is a small market town, and is said to be sited on a Roman station. St Cuthbert's church was consecrated in 1180 and is unique in having an arched stone roof in response to the repeated burnings of its former wooden roof by border raiders. "Cuddy's Well" is said to have been used by St Cuthbert for baptisms, and to retain miraculous healing powers. Hareshaw Linn, a waterfall hidden in a wooded glen, is a short walk from the village centre.

Stonehaugh is a former logging village built by the Forestry Commission in 1957. The Pennine Way passes through the village, as does the Pennine Cycleway **68**. By the Warks Burn is an attractive picnic spot, with tables and "totem" poles created by a local artist. The "Long Drop" is well worth a visit, and is reputed to be the most spectacular "netty" (outside toilet) in Northumberland. The long drop refers to the drop to the Warks Burn below!



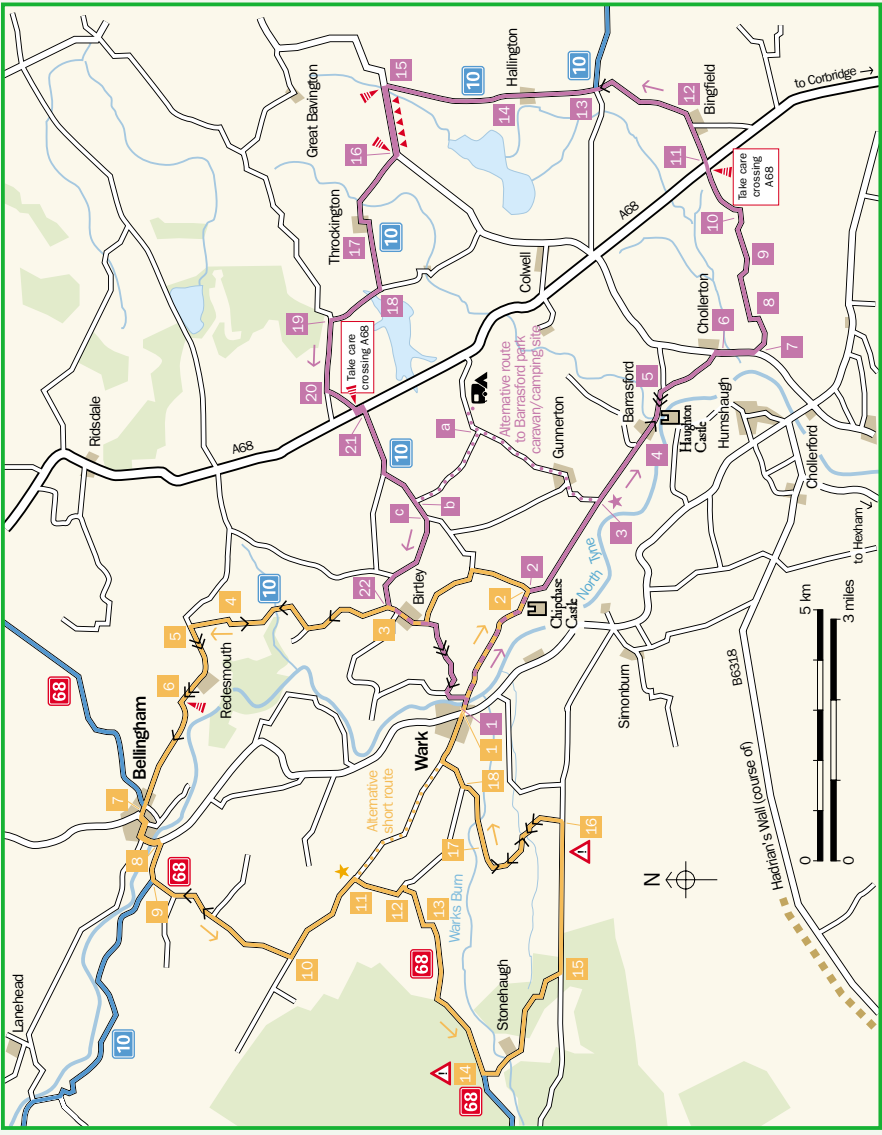
Buteland Farm, near Birtley



Stonehaugh

Route 1: Wark – Bellingham – Stonehaugh
Distance: Long route: 25 miles Short route: 15 miles
Type of route: Day ride. Moderate to strenuous in places. Quiet country lanes. Short road sections.
Start point: Wark village green (alternatively route can be picked up at Bellingham or Stonehaugh).

- 1 Leave **Wark**, cross over **Wark Bridge**. Turn right, **Chipchase**, **Barrasford** and **Gunnerton**.
- 2 **Easy to miss**. Second left opp. **Chipchase** over the old railway line, signposted **Birtley**.
- 3 Go up through **Birtley** village. Road forks, take left, **Reivers Cycle Route 10**, **The Heugh**, and **Buteland**. Gated road with *spectacular views*.
- 4 **Buteland Farm** (4½ miles). Large farmstead. The lane here can be 'clary' or muddy when wet.
- 5 Tjunction, left down hill. **Redesmouth**, **Bellingham 10**. **Take care, fast moving traffic**.
- 6 **Redesmouth** (6 miles)
- 7 **Bellingham** (8 miles). Tjunction, left, **Hexham** and **Pennine Cycleway 68**.
- 8 Leave **Bellingham** on **68** cross bridge. Turn first right **68**. Follow **Pennine Cycleway 68** to **Stonehaugh**.
- 9 After ½ mile take first left. **68**. Climb up **Ealinghamrigg Common**. Gated road.
- 10 (11 miles). Turn left at the junction, signposted **Wark** and **Hexham** and **68**.
- 11 ★ **DECISION POINT**. For alternative shorter route back to **Wark**, continue on down the hill and back to **Wark** (2½ miles). If staying on the longer route, turn right, signposted **Hetherington 68**.
- 12 Tjunction, by the gate turn right. **68** **68**
- 13 Cross the **Pennine Way** and enter **Northumberland National Park**, staying with **68**.
- 14 **EASY TO MISS**. (17 miles) Left, **Stonehaugh**, **68** Do not go ahead to **Once Brewed**. Past the picnic site, road then bears right with the village on your left.
- 15 Tjunction. Left, **68**. Long, straight road for approx. 2 miles, over **Standard Hill**, to un-signposted side road on your left.
- 16 **EASY TO MISS** (20 miles). Turn left up this **un-signposted road**, for **Newtonrigg** and **Longlee**.
- 17 A beautiful, quite back road to **Wark**, hilly in places, down to **Goffon Burn**, and the **Warks Burn**. Enjoy.
- 18 **Longlee Farm**.
- 19 At **Ramshaw Mill** (23 miles) the road bears left up to a T-junction.
- 20 Tjunction. Right, indicated 'Wark'
- 21 Tjunction. Right. Follow the road back down the hill and into **Wark** village. Continue ahead at the junction and back to the start point.



Key

- Route 1 (orange line)
- Route 2 (purple line)
- National route (blue line)
- Very steep hill (orange arrow)
- Steep hill (yellow arrow)
- CAUTION: at this point, on this section of the route (red triangle with exclamation mark)
- Junction easy to miss - careful navigation required (red triangle with exclamation mark)

The representation on this map of a road or track is no evidence of the existence of a right of way.

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The Mid Tyne Community Trust cannot be held responsible or liable for any loss or damage whatsoever arising from the use of the National Cycle network or this guide.

Route 3: Barrasford Park Link
Distance: 10 miles

- ★ Leave **Barrasford Park**; Down the hill towards **Gunnerton**.
 - a Right fork to **Gunnerton Fell farm**.
 - b Tjunction. Left, blue sign **Reivers Route 10** and **Reivers Cycle Route 2** to **Birtley**.
 - c Bear right, **10**, and pick up **Route 2**.
- Continue left into **Birtley 22**. Do not be tempted right to the **Heugh** and **Buteland (Route 1)** and **Reivers Cycle Route 10**).
- Pass the **Percy Arms** (left) and after the church take the right fork down hill to **Wark**.
- At **Wark Bridge** keep on **Route 2** as far as the **Gunnerton** turn **3**.
- Go up the hill past **St Christopher's**, and through **Gunnerton** village. To your right is the **Whin Sliff** forming the ridge along which **Hadrian's Wall** was built. On your left is the **Gunnerton Burn** gorge.
- Bear right at the road forks and return to **Barrasford Park**.

Route 2: Wark – Chollerton – Throckington
Distance: 24 miles
Type of route: Circular day ride on marked roads and quiet country lanes. Moderate
Start point: Wark Village Green

- 1 Leave **Wark** over **Wark Bridge**. Turn right to **Barrasford**, **Gunnerton** and **Chipchase Castle Nursery**.
 - 2 **Chipchase Castle**. (2 miles).
 - 3 ★ **OPTION** of detour to **Barrasford** campsite (see below left). Otherwise continue to **Barrasford**, passing **Barrasford Quarry** on your left.
 - 4 **Barrasford** village. Go through the village. At the **Swin Burn**, look right and up to **Houghton Castle** standing on the ridge opposite.
 - 5 Top of the hill stay on the road bearing right and gently descend into **Chollerton**.
 - 6 **Chollerton** (6 miles). War memorial and Tjunction, turn right **Hexham**.
 - 7 **EASY TO MISS**. First left after the railway viaduct, signposted 'Bingfield'.
 - 8 **West Cocklaw** and **East Cocklaw** farms. Note the decaying **Pele Tower**, a sign of the regions turbulent past.
 - 9 **Keepwick Farm** (8 miles).
 - 10 Climb up to **Errington Farm**.
 - 11 **A68**. Cross the road to **Hallington** and **Bingfield**. **TAKE CARE CROSSING! FAST MOVING TRAFFIC**.
 - 12 Tjunction, left to **Hallington**.
 - 13 Descend to **crossroads** by **Bingfield** and **Hallington** war memorial. Cross the road to **Hallington**. The route now joins the **Reivers Cycle Route 10**, which we follow to **Birtley**.
 - 14 **Hallington** (12 miles) Go through the hamlet following the **Reivers Cycle Route 10**.
 - 15 Tjunction with the **B6342**. Turn left **10**.
 - 16 First 'right' 'Throckington' **10**.
 - 17 **Throckington Church** (16 miles). **St Aiden's** medieval church. The lane now descends to **Colt Crag** reservoir. Gated road. Please close the gates behind you.
 - 18 Tjunction; right 'Carrycoats' and **Colt Crag** reservoir. **10**
 - 19 Tjunction; left 'Birtley' and 'Wark' **10**.
 - 20 Fork bears left **10**.
 - 21 **A68**. (19 miles). Follow **Reivers Cycle Route 10** to **Birtley**. **TAKE CARE CROSSING! FAST MOVING TRAFFIC**.
 - 22 Stay on **Reivers Cycle Route 10** but go on into **Birtley** (22 miles). Do not follow **10** to **The Heugh** and **Buteland**.
- Continue through the village past the **Percy Arms**, and down hill towards **Wark**. Take care leaving the village as this is a very steep hill. This is **Kiln Bank**, and the remains of a **lime kiln** can be seen on your right. At **Wark Bridge** turn right and return to **Wark** village green.