



The Ale Trail

A grand cycle tour
of Timothy Taylor's
country

KEIGHLEY CYCLE 20 MILES





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Traditional Timothy Taylor's Yorkshire pubs and classic South Pennines countryside are a match made in heaven. This 20¼-mile S-shaped route starts in Keighley which has been home to Timothy Taylor's since its foundation in 1858. The company still has its brewery and headquarters in the town as well as four pubs – Taylor's on the Green, Boltmakers Arms, The Royal Oak and Albert Hotel. There are four other of its hostelries to choose from elsewhere on the route – The Grouse Inn at Oldfield, The Fleece in Haworth, The White Horse in Thornton and The Dog & Gun in Oxenhope. The Brown Cow at Bingley is included in the Ale Trail Extra route.



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Directions

From the roundabout at **The Albert Hotel** in Keighley take the B6143 heading south-east. After ½ mile fork right up Fell Lane. Continue for about 1½ miles and, at T-junction, turn left up Mattingstone Lane then, soon after, at a crossroads turn right down Slack Lane signed to Oakworth Crematorium. Take the second left down White Lane which becomes a stony bridleway that bears right after entering some trees.

1 Emerge on a road opposite **The Grouse Inn**. Turn left, go downhill and then turn sharp right down Oldfield Lane. Proceed to and through Oldfield then, at the end of the road, turn sharp left onto Colne Road. Proceed to and through Stanbury on the opposite

THROUGH OLDFIELD



side of the valley. On the outskirts of Haworth, just after the sign for the Brontë Parsonage, turn right down Changegate (also signed for pedestrian access) which leads to the top of Main St. Descend to **The Fleece** and down to the bottom. (You may want to push your bike as the road is very steep and busy with pedestrians). Turn right to pass the entrance to Central Park.

2 Cross the river and railway then turn right up Brow Rd to begin a very steep (20%) ascent. Cross the A6033 and keep ahead. At crossroads with A629 keep ahead again towards Cullingworth. In the village pass under the old railway viaduct then, at roundabout, left down Halifax Rd. Soon turn left signed to The Great Northern Trail. At the end of the road fork left to join the trail. Continue over two viaducts to the end of the trail. (For a good view of the Hewenden viaduct leave you bike here. Turn right through a stile beside a gate and along a walled path then turn left into a field. The public right of way south from this point is a footpath only so you can't cycle along it).



HEWENDEN VIADUCT

3 Turn left onto a gravel track that soon becomes Station Rd. Turn right at T-junction in Harecroft then soon right signed to Thornton down Old Allen Rd. Keep ahead at crossroads. At the Rock & Heifer pub on Egypt Road turn right down Rock Lane. At T-junction turn right to reach **The White Horse**. At the end of the road turn left at the T-junction just after Keelham Primary School.

(Note: Don't turn right which appears to provide a more direct route to Oxenhope as it is a no through road. Even if you push you bike along the short one-way stretch at the end you will have to cross a dangerous road with poor sight lines immediately after). Soon, at the crossroads turn right onto the B6145 signed to Denholme.



OXENHOPE STATION

4 At T-junction with lights turn right onto the A629 signed to Keighley. Just before Denholme turn sharp left down Long Causeway. Ascend then descend to **The Dog & Gun**. Continue ahead towards Oxenhope along Station Rd going over a small roundabout to reach Oxenhope Station. Use the Keighley & Worth Railway to return to the start. Alternatively, you can cycle along the A629 to Keighley (about 5 miles).



To download a map to your phone see www.my.viewranger.com/route/details/Njg4NDA

Places to visit en route

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. Opened in 1867, this is the only complete preserved standard gauge branch line anywhere in the UK. Famous for providing locations for The Railway Children film. The exhibition shed at Oxenhope displays some coaches and locomotives that are not currently in service.

Brontë Parsonage Museum, Haworth. The lovingly preserved, original home of the literary family includes family memorabilia, manuscripts, letters, early editions and original furniture.

Parking

You can park free of charge at weekends in the car park at Keighley station (on Low Mill Lane) providing you are using the railway (£1 charge Mon-Fri) and also in Keighley College car park next door. There is also free parking on the road beside the car park too.

Bikes on trains

It's free and easy to carry your bike on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. Load your bike in the goods wagon which is often roughly in the middle of the train. The wagon is used by wheelchairs which means the doors open up wider allowing easier access for bikes. A single adult fare from Oxenhope to Keighley costs £7.00 (Jan 2022) and the journey takes 20 mins. For more information and timetables see kwvr.co.uk.

For more bike rides in Yorkshire see greatbritishbikerides.co.uk

Pubs highlighted in bold are part of the Timothy Taylor's estate. For more information visit www.timothytaylor.co.uk/pubs

It is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1981 to cycle while under the influence of drink.

What are the best bits?

The secluded *Worth Valley* west of Haworth provides superb cycling. The route descends nice and gently down the northern side of the valley through Oldfield so the fine views don't whizz by too quickly. The ascent on the southern side isn't too precipitous either. See if you can spot your earlier route with **The Grouse** perched high above the valley.

Haworth is impossibly quaint. This is traditional English countryside at its best which is why it is firmly established as one of Yorkshire's leading attractions especially with overseas visitors. The village provided some of the iconic pictures of Le Grand Depart of the Tour de France in Yorkshire in 2014. Follow this route, though, and you'll be heading down the dreaded cobbles and not up like the elite cyclists!

The Great Northern Trail in Cullingworth may not be all that great yet (it's just 1¼ miles long with plans for an extension) but this stretch of the National Cycle Network is great fun to ride. Opened in 2005, the trail once formed part of the railway line connecting the mill towns of Keighley, Halifax and Bradford. It became known as the Alpine route because of the stunning scenery and sequence of tunnels and viaducts. The Hewenden viaduct is 312 metres long, includes 16 masonry piers and rises 38 metres above the beck.

As you crest a hill after Denholme a *fine moorland vista towards Oxenhope* opens out with **The Dog & Gun** placed invitingly in the centre. From here it's freewheeling most of the way to Oxenhope. Your legs can take even more of a rest on the steam train back to Keighley.



What's the cycling like?

Yes: the South Pennines are hilly but the inclines within this route are creases within the landscape rather than towering mountains. The ascents don't last for long, there are some great long descents and you will be more than compensated for your efforts by the panoramic views. The bridleway just before **The Grouse** is a bit bumpy but downhill which makes the going fairly easy. The Great Northern Trail provides tremendous traffic-free cycling. The route around Denholme involves short sections of busy main roads where care is necessary. Other than that most of the roads are quiet country lanes.

Ale Trail Extra

As an alternative for less experienced and younger cyclists, cycle from Keighley along the canal towpath to Bingley and back, all of which is along a signed cycle route and mostly off-road. The route passes the National Trust's East Riddlesden Hall, a 17th century manor house with romantic gardens, as well as Bingley Five Rise Locks. These are staircase locks meaning that the bottom gates of one lock are also the top gates of the next and the water from one lock fills the lock below. Boats take 1½ hours to work through the locks, the steepest in the UK.

Your destination is **The Brown Cow**, a family-friendly pub with a superb riverside location. The return distance is 9 miles. Nearby is St Ives, an intriguing estate with lake, mansion, follies and carved wooden figures lurking in the trees. Explore on foot or by bike using the bridleways. You can always return to the towpath and continue to Saltaire or even Leeds with railway stations in both places providing the option of a swift return passage.

Directions

From Keighley station turn right then right again at Asda down Dalton Lane. At Dalton Mill turn left down Worth Bridge Rd signed (on a lamp-post only) for route 696 of the National Cycle Network. A short way down fork right onto the Aire Greenway. The cycle path bears right to run parallel to the A650 then sharp left to go beneath it via an underpass. Emerge on Aireworth Grove and proceed to the end. Turn left down Aireworth Rd. At the end cross over the main road using the pelican crossing and turn right. Use the cycle path that runs immediately alongside the road. Cross the river then, just after the Co-op, turn left down Bar Lane. Go ahead at the roundabout and at the canal turn right and keep going all along the towpath all the way to Bingley.

At Three Rise Locks, just as you begin to descend, dismount and leave the towpath to the right using a green steel footbridge to cross the A650 and railway. Descend to the B6265 and cross it using the pelican crossing. Turn left then immediately right down Millgate passing the Azzurri hairdressers. Cross the bridge over the river and **The Brown Cow** is on the left. Return the same way.

To download a map to your phone see
www.my.viewranger.com/route/details/Njg4ODY

