

GETTING HERE



The Swale Trail

in the Yorkshire Dales National Park



To find out more about The Swale Trail, and cycling in the area, visit www.cyclethedaes.org.uk

For children, download our Viking Challenge leaflet.

To discover more about Swaledale and the National Park see www.yorkshiredales.org.uk

Cycle Sprog rode the trail find their write up at www.cyclesprog.co.uk

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YORKSHIRE DALES
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YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park

one of Britain's breathing spaces

THE SWALE TRAIL



The Swale Trail is a multi-user route sweeping through the heart of Swaledale, one of the most beautiful valleys in the Yorkshire Dales.

Stretching 12 miles (20km), the trail follows surfaced tracks and country lanes. It offers mountain bikers the chance to enjoy the natural beauty and take on the physical challenge of the landscape, alongside walkers, horse riders and – in places – motor vehicles.

Reeth makes a great starting point, with Dales Bike Centre on hand to hire out and service bikes.



The Swale Trail is a route of two halves.

Between Reeth and Gunnerside it's an **easy mountain bike trail** – there are a few climbs, lots of stone tracks, and very quiet roads. This part of the Trail is a family-friendly ride suitable for children old enough to handle a bike with gears, use their brakes and get up hills.

From Gunnerside to Keld, the route is **tougher with a few technical elements** – a couple of hard climbs and a more remote feel. To tackle this part of the Trail you will need to be a fit and competent mountain biker.



At each end of the Trail and in the middle there are seasonal cafes and toilets but please check opening times before you set off. You'll also find pubs at Reeth and Gunnerside.



SHARE THE TRAIL

As well as cyclists, the Swale Trail can be used by walkers, horse riders and – in places – off road motor vehicles. Parts are popular for people using mobility scooters or with pushchairs.

Please take care and share the Trail – when passing horses riders or other people call out “hello” and pass wide and slow.



RIDE RIGHT

- Make sure your mountain bike is in good condition – help could be a long way away. Check your tyres, brakes and gears;
- Wear a helmet, and use lights if visibility is poor;
- Match your speed to the surface and your skills, and cycle within your capabilities – particularly on the descents. The Dales has hazards you might not always come across, such as cattle grids, narrow lanes with dry stone walls, and free roaming sheep;
- Be aware that your mobile phone may not work on the trail as reception is patchy;
- Carry enough food and water with you.



BIKE SHOPS & HIRE

Dales Bike Centre Reeth: 01748 884908
Stage 1 Cycles Hawes: 01969 666873

TRAIL STATS

Choose how far you want to ride and what your technical ability is. Either go the full distance or enjoy the easier riding from Reeth to Gunnerside.

KEY

- ⋯ REETH TO GUNNERSIDE: EASY
- ⋯ GUNNERSIDE TO KELD: TECHNICAL
- B ROAD
- MAIN ROAD
-  ROAD BRIDGE
-  HAZARD

TECHNICAL RIDING NEAR KELD



BELDI HILL

KELD

DOWN HILL SPEED!

LOOSE GRAVEL



DISTANCE
8M12M

The easier half of the route from Reeth to Gunnerside is approximately 8m (12.5km). The full route from Reeth to Keld is 12m (20km).



TIME
1.5HR3HR

This will vary depending on your fitness levels and how often you pause to take in the views. Allow around 1.5 hours to reach Gunnerside from Reeth, or 3 hours to cycle on to Keld on the more technical uphill part of the route. Keld to Reeth is downhill and generally quicker so a round trip is an achievable, but challenging, day's ride.



TERRAIN
EASYTECH

The route is mainly on stone tracks and quiet roads. The surface may be loose, uneven or muddy at times and might include natural features such as roots, grass and rock. Most gradients are moderate but there are a few short challenging sections where more novice riders might want to get off and push (no shame in that!). The route from Gunnerside to Keld includes steep, rough sections and rocky climbs and descents and is a more technical trail.

TRAIL NOTES

REETH TO GUNNERSIDE

- 1** Take the road towards Grinton, past the Dales Bike Centre and over the bridge, then carefully turn right at The Bridge Inn. Go past the church and turn right (signed The Swale Trail and to Harkerside). After 0.3 miles (500m), turn right onto the stone track before Swale Hall Farm.
- 2** Follow the walled lane. The track continues over fields and turns right down to the River Swale. It then follows the river before a tough little grass climb. Follow the wall to meet the road.
- 3** Turn right down the road. Go straight on at the next road junction, past some farm buildings, then, at a sharp bend, turn right with care onto the next track (signed Low Lane).
- 4** Continue along this quiet lane, but be aware you could meet farm traffic, motorbikes and 4x4s.
- 5** Follow the road to the junction. Take the left fork (signed to Crackpot) and head towards a prominent large house. Turn right here onto Dubbing Garth Lane.
- 6** Continue along the lane, past the farm, and then along a further 1.5 miles (2.5km) of stone track. There is a steady climb to reach the road.
- 7** This is a good place to re-group before you cross the cattle grid (or use the gate) and turn right to Gunnerside. This road is a bit busier so take care as you come down the hill and cross the river over the bridge.
- 8** As you come into the village the road swings right over a bridge where there are toilets, cafes and pub.

GUNNERSIDE TO KELD

- 9** To continue from Gunnerside to Keld, turn left and make the long climb out of the village on a tarmac road (signposted The Swale Trail). Drop down over a cattle grid and up a short, steep climb to a junction. Turn right.
- 10** Continuing along the road, at a fork, keep to the right. A long gentle descent takes you to the end of the tarmac road where the trail continues as a stone track.
- 11** Take care as you descend the track towards the river and follow it up the valley to reach Swinner Gill. Cross the ford (or use the bridge) and go up through a gate.
- 12** The track climbs, levels out then drops to East Gill waterfall. Turn left (signed Keld), and take care as you drop to the River Swale. Cross the river by the cart bridge. Then it is up the other side and keep right to Keld and a well deserved stop at Rukin's campsite café (in summer) or the honesty café in Keld village hall (in winter).

RIDE STARTS HERE



EASY RIDING IN THE VALLEY BOTTOM



ROUTE SWITCH OVER

STEADY CLIMB TIME!

