



L&DL route section: Kirkby Lonsdale to Orton

Distance: 29 miles (47 kilometres)

Gradient profile:



Overview: A day of quite dramatic scenery rewards riders on this section of the L&DL, making use of minor roads that hug the western facing outreaches of the Yorkshire Dales. A quiet start heading north out of Kirkby Lonsdale, then swinging east to take in the not-to-be-missed-despite-the-climb Barbondale. The book town of Sedbergh offers a welcome breather for rest and refuelling, between the remoter southern and northern halves of this route. It then heads into the upper Lune Valley, where the encroaching Howgills to the east and Lake District fells to the west create a growing sense of enclosure, before the landscape opens out again north of Tebay.

Terrain: As this section of the L&DL starts at a relatively low altitude, but finishes quite high, riders will correctly have the impression that the general trend of the day is uphill! However, this should be viewed in perspective. An overall height gain of less than 200m in 30 miles is very gradual. After initially skirting the lower western slopes of Barbon Fell, the route then takes in the delightful Barbondale, involving a gradual climb followed by an exhilarating descent. It then follows the valley of the River Dee west into Sedbergh, before turning north up the Lune Valley, via an undulating little road clinging to the western flanks of the Howgills.

L&DL route description *

At the eastern end of Mitchelgate turn R into Market Street. Follow Kirkby Lonsdale's high street as it bears round to the R in front of the SPAR shop, into Main Street. SA at the Market Square, continuing along Main Street. L at the T-jct with the A65, signed 'Skipton', then first L after a short distance into a 'no-through' road (for motor vehicles) with perpendicular parking bays. Cross the River Lune via the historic Devil's Bridge, then SA at the A683 into another minor road now largely given over to parking for Kirkby Lonsdale's visitors. Where this road bears R after a little way, turn L into a very minor road that climbs steeply through trees for a short distance. L at the T-jct adjacent to the access to Woodclose Park holiday accommodation site. Follow this little road as it bears round to the L in High Casterton, then R at the minor x-roads, signed 'Cowan Bridge'. Over the disused railway bridge and L at the next x-roads, signed 'Sedbergh'. Where this road bears L to re-cross the old railway track-bed, bear R, signed 'Sedbergh'. Continue on this road for a couple of kms as it climbs towards, then contours along the lower slopes of Barbon Low Fell. R at the next T-jct, signed 'Dent'. For the next 5 kms the road climbs steadily up Barbondale. However, your efforts will be amply rewarded by impressive views of the surrounding landscape, reminiscent of a remote Scottish glen. Over the summit the road plunges quite steeply into the hamlet of Gawthrop, where L at the T-jct, signed 'Sedbergh'. This little road twists and turns just above the valley of the River Dee for some 7 km. Take care to avoid a detour into Dillicar Farm, where the road you need bears sharply R. A little way beyond passing through a gate across the road, look out for an acute turn to the R, with a 'Narrow bridge' warning sign. Take this, descending to cross the River Dee by that picturesque narrow bridge, then passing Sedbergh Golf Course. L at the T-jct, dipping to cross the River Rawthey, then climbing into the 'Book Town' of Sedbergh on Loftus Hill.

At the jct with Main Street, adjacent to the historic St Andrew's Church, bear L along the A684, Station Road, then almost immediately R into Howgill Lane. You continue along this minor road in

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a northwards direction for some 12 kms, as it climbs the shoulder of Winder then undulates along the eastern side of the Lune valley, affording grand views to of the Howgills to the right. After passing under the railway (West Coast Mainline) and the M6, R onto the A685, signed 'Tebay'. Take the next L after a little over a km, signed 'Roundthwaite', to continue for 2.5 km over Loups Fell to Greenholme, where SA, signed 'Shap'. After 2 km at Scout Green the road turns sharply R uphill, back under the railway and the M6, to reach a crossroads in just over 2 km, where SA on the B6261, signed Orton.

Scenic highlights: Barbondale, the views east over the Howgill Fells north of Sedbergh.

Points of interest: The 'book town' of Sedbergh.

Refreshments: Kirby Lonsdale (numerous cafes, pubs and restaurants), Sedbergh (several cafes and pubs), Orton (two cafés, pub).

Accommodation: Kirby Lonsdale (numerous B&Bs, small hotels, camping), Gawthrop, (B&Bs, camping), Sedbergh (several B&Bs, small hotels, camping), Orton (B&Bs, small hotel).

*** Key to route descriptions**

R	=	right
L	=	left
SA	=	straight ahead / across
T-jct / jct	=	T-junction / junction
x-roads	=	crossroads
m	=	metres
km	=	kilometres