



## Northumberland Cycle Survey – Overall (Apr-Mar 2015-16)

Between April and March 341 complete responses to the survey were received. Some of the main referral sources to the survey were social media, websites and the postcards within the maps.

Respondents were primarily from England (90.9%), with 47.2% coming from the North East region. 12.9% were from Yorkshire & Lincolnshire and 10.6% from the North West. 6.2% came from Scotland.

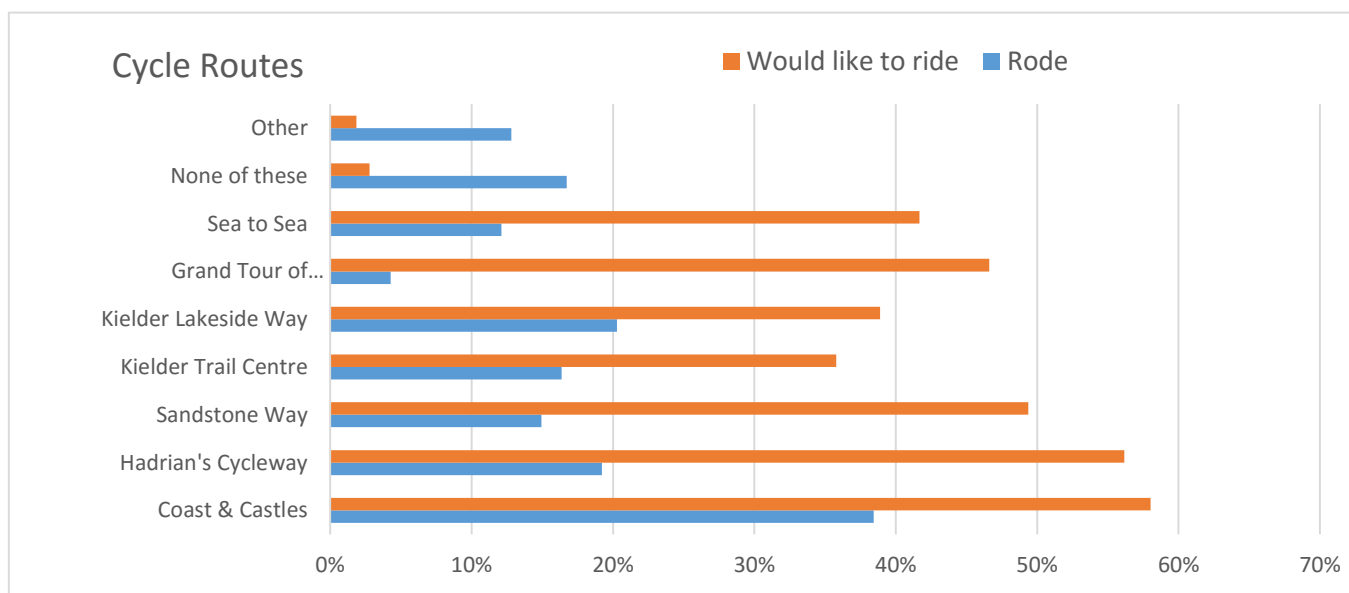
The gender split was fairly even, with slightly more male respondents. 48% of respondents fell into the 45-59 age category. 37.2% are under 45 and 14.7% 60 or over.

27.6% class themselves as an 'Infrequent cyclist', with 70% saying they cycle regularly (weekly). 70% would describe themselves as a leisure cyclist, 40.8% as a short distance road cyclist, 28.7% as a long distance road cyclist and 32.6% as a mountain biker. 23.8% said they are a commuter. 31.8% are part of a cycling club or group. For those who live locally we added a question to ask how often they cycle for leisure in Northumberland; 31% said several times a week, 38% said once or twice a month.

When holidaying, 16.5% said they would look to hire a bike locally. 69.4% said they are interested in an organised cycling holiday, but 92.5% said they are currently organising their own cycling trips. 27.8% go on specific cycling holidays, while 29% plan cycling as part of their holiday. 43.2% will cycle on holiday if the opportunity arises.

26.2% said their inspiration for cycling holidays comes from recommendations, followed by cycling interest websites at 14.5%, brochures & leaflets from a TIC at 11.1%, travel websites at 10.8%, search engines at 9.9% and 8.3% said they use cycling press & magazines and some said they use a combination of methods. A popular 'Other' answer was using Maps.

99.1% said Northumberland was a destination they would visit more than once for a cycling holiday.





32.4% of people cycle with a group of adult friends, followed by 32.1% who cycle with their partner. 17% cycle with children.

May was the month when most people visited (14.2%) followed by June (11.4%) and August & April (both on 9.3%). 8% live locally (this question was added in from July onwards). The average length of stay was 3.9 nights, with people favouring 1-4 night and 7 night stays. The average number of days spent cycling during their most recent holiday was 2.6 days.

The main inspirations for cycling in Northumberland were the beautiful scenery, personal recommendations, exciting and challenging routes. The Sandstone Way Brochure (12%), visitnorthumberland.com (11.7%), the Northumberland cycle map (10.8%), specific cycle events (10.8%), and other cycle leaflets (8%) were also important in the decision making process.

Below are the average spend figures from the 253 respondents who answered those questions. They clearly show the importance of accommodation providers, food & drink businesses and attractions of being cycle friendly.

	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Mar	Overall
Accommodation	£197.71	£180.86	£176.71	£188.02
Food & Drink	£127.16	£91.18	£121.52	£110.07
Travel	£76.06	£63.71	£51.21	£67.17
Days Out	£49.10	£31.12	£52.78	£41.38
<b>Total Average Spend</b>	<b>£445.07</b>	<b>£337.21</b>	<b>£375.24</b>	<b>£390.03</b>



## **Feedback**

On the whole, feedback given was very positive about Northumberland as a destination. The following are common suggestions for improvement:

- Improve quality of roads/fix potholes and flooding issues
- Public transport links and more bike friendly public transport
- More designated routes with downloadable maps
- A cycle map which features places to stay/cafes/attractions etc
- Accessibility in winter
- Generally improved awareness of cycle friendly/relevant businesses – lots of feedback for more marketing and communication of what is there and about the existing routes, some hadn't heard of them until completing the survey.
- Better cycle storage facilities in towns and villages and at attractions.
- Several comments about better waymarking and clear signs on shared parts of routes
- More routes in general, maps and leaflets
- Several comments about unpassable gates – implied farmers/landowners had recently blocked the way.
- Sandstone Way specifically – several comments on problems with waymarking and route instructions, gates as in above point, unsafe fields containing bulls and stampeding cattle(!), overgrown parts, GPS only available North to South.
- General route maintenance needed and upgrade surface if possible
- More cycle safety features on roads
- Information on long stay parking for walking/cycling from a point for the day
- Public consultation on cycle routes with cyclists
- Help with preparing for all weather – awareness and shelter
- Prices of accommodation can be prohibitive – cheaper options
- More bike hire options
- More food & drink places to stop off – could be to do with lack of awareness.
- More info for family friendly information.