Day 1, Morecambe to Skipton

(base route 84kms/948m - hard route 119kms/14673m)
We leave Morecambe Bay at 13.30 and head due east on the quiet lanes of the northern part of the Forest of Bowland. Clapham (not the junction) will be our first tea stop of the day. Then the groups split with those wanting a slightly harder day heading up and round the Ingleborough nature reserve and the rest of us heading straight for Settle. Either way we join together for a significant climb out of Settle called High Hill Lane. It’s steep at the bottom, but soon becomes less so as we reach up onto the moor. From there it’s mainly downhill through Gargrave and toward Skipton where we’ll spend our first night at the Rendezvous Hotel.

base route:

harder route:
Day 2, Skipton to York

[base route 145kms/1260m - hard route 189kms/2058m]

Day two is a challenging day whichever way you look at it, but a great opportunity to ride some of the best parts of last year's Grand Depart and some of the best riding in the UK. For those of you who cycled to Portsmouth last year, the base route on this day is 15kms shorter with about the same elevation. The scenery however bears no comparison. This is truly fabulous riding.

Both routes head north out of Skipton on the Tour De France route, up Wharfedale through Grassington, Kettlewell (of Calendar Girls fame) passing Kilnsey Crag to take on the first climb on the Tour de France – Kidstones Pass. The more challenging route then heads west through Wallace and Grommet territory and takes on the Buttertubs climb (as per the Tour de France) before looping back and joining the main route at Leyburn. After Leyburn most of the climbing is behind us and we head down through Ripon to Knaresborough and then a quiet and flat route to York.

That evening we will stay in single en suite rooms at York University where they have been briefed to lay on extra food and open the bar!

base route:

harder route:
Day 3, York to Robin Hood Bay

[base route 106kms/805m – hard route 131kms/1553m]

We all head north out of York on a fairly flat route, riding through Sheriff Hutton and on the roads surrounding Castle Howard. The base route then heads north east towards Pickering and up the eastern side of the North Riding Forest Park.

The harder route goes due north to the North Yorkshire moors - with some truly exposed moorland views – and a very steep descent at Rosedale Chimney Bank. After that we head back to Pickering and north east straight through the North Riding Forest Park to join the others before Harwood Dale. The final stretch is briefly on the A171 before a descent to Boggle Hole.

We have exclusive use of the Boggle Hole YHA, an old converted watermill and once notorious smugglers’ haunt.

The coach will leave for Oxford the following morning on Monday 13th July at 10.30 am.