

Route 1 Dunsop Bridge ~ Dunsop Valley

8km  1 hour

Located in the forest of Bowland, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A charming little village nestled in the Ribble Valley, Dunsop Bridge is the closest settlement to the geographic centre of the United Kingdom. This is a lovely out and back route taking you into the heart of the Forest of Bowland alongside the upper stretch of the river Dunsop with the fells on all sides of you. The upper end of the valley is a good spot for a picnic.

Arriving by Train/Bus: The nearest station, in Clitheroe, is too far away by road to make it practical to reach with children by bike. However there is a bus service – the Bowland Transit – which runs from the station to Dunsop Bridge and has a limited capacity to carry bikes for no extra charge (tel: 01200 429832 for more details). www.bowlandtransit.co.uk

Arriving by Car: The main route in is from Clitheroe over Waddington Fell and via Newton. An alternative approach from Lancaster and the west is over the Trough of Bowland. Dunsop Bridge is signposted from both these directions.

Toilets: There is a toilet block beside the car-park.

Refreshments: The general store and Post Office, Puddleducks, also contains a café open 9am-5pm including Sundays.

Start & Finish Point: Dunsop Bridge (village car park).

The Route (Tarmac bridleway, flat)

Turn right out of the car-park and right again immediately past the shop along a track, indicated by a bridleway sign. After 700m you come to a small row of houses. Follow the track behind them, pass through a gate and over a wooden bridge over the river. Turn right onto the tarmac road. You then simply continue along this as it weaves along the valley for a further 3.2km.

At this point the valley forks. The bridleway continues up the western (left) valley. You can follow this for some additional riding but it does involve some steep climbs and descents so you may decide to stop here, have a picnic and enjoy the wonderful view.

To return to Dunsop Bridge simply retrace your route down the valley. As an alternative to crossing the wooden bridge again you can continue along the drive to the village. You come out by the war memorial – turn left down the short hill over the bridge and back to the car-park.

What Else Can The Children Do

There is a well-equipped playground in the village – you will pass it as you ride out.

