

## Circular tour from Neath Abbey

Starting and finishing at the ruins of Neath Abbey, this 10 mile route takes in some beautiful country lanes, and has the distinction of being the only place where I have been hit by a bat.

Climbing up from Skewen it is amazing how soon you leave the estates behind and plunge into a patchwork of fields, but in reality you are never far from built up areas. Nevertheless, the illusion of being deep in the country is maintained for a surprising distance, before you emerge blinking at the bottom of Glais. Along the way you will have enjoyed some secluded views, and hopefully with very little traffic to ruin the peace and quiet. My favourite time to travel here is at dusk when the senses are heightened, and the sights and sounds all the more absorbing.

Returning through Glais there is a steep climb up to the top of Birchgrove, then a quick dash across Park Avenue before taking the cycle path and a network of back roads back to Neath Abbey. Hopefully you will arrive just before the light fails completely, but with just enough see the old stone walls silhouetted against the sky.

For a map and details of the route visit: [www.ctc-maps.org.uk/routes/route/1812/](http://www.ctc-maps.org.uk/routes/route/1812/). The instructions below are taken from this site. The relevant OS 1:50,000 map is Sheet 170.

Bill Gannon

	Distance (miles)		Instruction
	Cumulative	After	
1	0.0		Start at Neath Abbey. There is some limited parking here.
2	0.1	0.1	Dismount and use footpath here to go under bridge
3	0.1	0.0	Remount here.
4	0.2	0.1	Proceed straight on across double mini-roundabout
5	1.7	1.5	Proceed up through housing estate, then on into the country
6	4.4	2.7	A quiet country lane, descending to the southern end of Alltwen
7	6.0	1.6	Proceed to bottom of Glais hill
8	8.4	2.4	Ride up and over Birchgrove
9	8.6	0.2	Cross over road and take to the cycle path
10	8.6	0.0	Cycle path
11	8.8	0.2	Cycle path
12	9.0	0.2	Cycle path
13	9.1	0.1	Turn left onto Heol Crymlyn
14	9.5	0.4	Take next right, then over the short hill
15	10.2	0.7	Turn left, then along Burrows Road and Old Road
16	10.3	0.1	Turn right into Jenkins Road
17	10.7	0.4	Turn left into Neath Abbey Industrial Estate, then back to Neath Abbey

See below for a photo.



A *Wheelrights* member sets out to check the ride. Neath Abbey behind.