

### Fact file Cardinal spins

**Distance:** about 4,150 miles in total, with 66 days of cycling, so a daily average of 63 miles. Total ascent 239,635 feet.

**Route:** From my home in the Peak District to each of 16 coastal extremities, following straight lines towards each point of the compass, avoiding busy roads.

**Longest & shortest:** Longest leg was NW: 592 miles. Shortest was east: 127 miles.

**Conditions:** Quiet roads and country lanes. Some towpaths, rail trails and cycle paths. Occasional main roads.

**Bike used:** Mostly my Sonder Colibri AL but also a Rose Pro SL road bike and a Specialized Tricross.

**Maps/guides:** For route planning I used paper OS maps of various scales – including road atlases for drawing long, straight lines. I had OS Maps on my phone for navigation.

#### I'm glad I had...

Applied chamois butter every morning before I cycled! I also used a fair amount of sun cream.

#### Next time I would...

Start before June. I hadn't intended to end my adventure in the Outer Hebrides in early November.

#### Further information:

Mark's website is [ridealltheosmaps.co.uk](http://ridealltheosmaps.co.uk), and he's on Instagram at [@boringtodull](https://www.instagram.com/boringtodull). Pedants note: Mark actually rode the cardinal, ordinal and secondary intercardinal directions from his home. But that would have made an awkward title!



Above: West, day two: Conwy Castle on the North Wales coast  
Below: NE, day two: coastal extremity at Cloughton, near Scarborough  
Below right: WNW, day three: looking across to Liverpool from Birkenhead  
Bottom right: North, day three: Antony Gormley's Angel of the North in Gateshead



memorable, if you bother to look. It might be an exciting new bridge to cross, or a castle, or a church, or a café on a small airfield. The whole thing would take over 4,000 miles and five months of sporadically consistent cycling.

I decided I should find the best and most enjoyable cycling routes I could while remaining faithful to the direct spirit of my quest. The journeys that unfolded at ground level might be a bit wiggly but the bird's eye view would be unmistakably compass-like.

My final (and first) line, from SW to NE, ran from The Lizard in Cornwall to Cloughton, a point just above Scarborough on the Yorkshire Coast. And that gave me a problem: how to cross the broad expanse of the Bristol Channel. Luckily, once a year, PS Waverley – the world's only functioning ocean-going paddle steamer – makes the crossing from Porthcawl in South Wales to Ilfracombe in Devon. It was a chance not to miss and it fitted my route perfectly. I needed to leave home in



time to be on her polished decks on 9 June. Thus dictated by fate, I left home on a drizzly June morning heading to Ironbridge in Shropshire, my first stepping stone in this multi-legged adventure of diverse parts.

I had agreed one other special feature to make this adventure more inclusive and, in turn, more of a voyage of discovery. The trouble with journeys that follow lines for many miles is that you are constantly on the move, and rarely spend as much time as you would like in the places you pass through. This adventure would be different. My wife Jenni and I resolved to choose places

**“The whole thing would take over 4,000 miles and five months of sporadically consistent cycling”**