

Over to you

Travellers'
tales



Marcher Castles in March

Who: Mike Raine & Sally Hancox

Where: Welsh borders

When: March 2026

Leaving Shrewsbury station, we took quiet streets to the riverside cycleway. This path along the Severn felt like a gift. We rolled along beside the swollen brown river, its presence loud.

Beyond town, spring gathered. Blackthorn blossomed, celandines carpeted the ground and robins declared territories. Sparrows squabbled, a buzzard mewed overhead, and the land opened gently towards Wroxeter, where the ghost of a Roman city lay quiet behind a fence.

Lanes carried us on, past hazel, hawthorn and widening fields. A feed lorry thundered past, enlarging potholes as it went. After Coalbrookdale, Ironbridge and lunch, the hills made us work – although only as far as an overnight stop in Much Wenlock.

Day two stretched us further. We rode beneath Wenlock Edge, up big climbs and into a headwind. By Ludlow we were ready for the welcoming bunkhouse.

By day three, the rhythm had settled: quiet lanes and bridleways and hot sun. Presteigne offered rest. Knighton slipped by. And in Knucklas, Ying's Thai cooking restored body and spirit on the eve of our third night.

On Offa's Dyke next morning, skylarks lifted upwards, bees drifted on the verge and then we heard curlew. That bubbling, ancient-sounding note carried across the hills and brought smiles to our faces.

We declined to descend to Clun and stayed up high as far as the Kerry Ridgeway. We saw cattle, sheep and a red kite floating above. Then we swooped down to Newtown, where we had a lovely stay and a Caribbean dinner.

Over the Stiperstones and Long Mynd, we were blessed with calm, dry weather, then had another drop down to Ludlow for our fifth night. Next morning we rolled back to Shrewsbury, where we boarded the train home with tired legs and the curlew's call still in our ears.

Share your story

We'd love to hear
your Travellers'
tales! Email:
[editor@
cyclinguk.org](mailto:editor@cyclinguk.org)

LNER alternative

Who: Victor Arotsky

Where: England

When: May 2025

When I told my daughter that I was going to come and visit her during her first year as a student in York, she probably assumed that I'd be taking the train from our home in London. Instead, I dug out my cycle-camping gear, refurbished my commuting bike to make it more suitable for touring and set off on two wheels.

This was my first cycle-camping trip for 27 years. For the first half of my four-day ride I stayed west of the A1, cycling along gently undulating country roads and through pretty, well-kept villages. The second half of the route was through flatter farmland, with little to break up the stiff northerly breeze.

I was lucky with the weather and arrived in York on a bright spring day. There I collected my daughter. We returned together, travelling first class on the train to London. This was my bribe to get her to stay in York a couple of days after lectures had finished for the term!

The journey was a great success and a reminder that, however long it's been since your last trip, you never know when you'll find an opportunity to get back in the saddle.

