

**W**  
ENGLAND'S  
WATERWAYS



## DISCOVER THE HEART OF ENGLAND BY E-BIKE

*Situated in the heart of England, the National Forest area is rich in heritage, tradition, scenery, crafts and culinary delights to explore, all within a small geographical area.*

*Journey to the heart of England*  
[englandswaterways.com](http://englandswaterways.com)

# DISCOVER THE NATIONAL FOREST & ENGLISH WATERWAYS BY ELECTRIC BIKE

Crisscrossed with quiet lanes, the countryside is diverse and perfect for gentle cycling. In a short distance you will find a mix of gentle rolling countryside, traditional villages, peaceful waterways and bustling market towns.

Heritage lovers will enjoy the diversity of grand country houses, ruined castles and quaint country cottages. There are heritage steam railways to explore and the area is a beer lovers delight, with the National Brewery Museum. During Open Gardens weekend, some country homes will open their gardens to the public. It's a unique opportunity to explore the hidden corners and of course enjoy some home cooked cake along the way!



## What to expect:



### Travel and accommodation

Trains or taxi to and from the airport (Birmingham and East Midlands are conveniently located), then travel and stay in a selection of our independent B&Bs and hotels.



### Unique Experiences

- Craft beer & micro-brewery
- Steam railway lines
- National trust properties
- The peaceful Ashby Canal
- Richard III and the Battle of Bosworth story
- Ashby Castle



### Dining options

A range of traditional English pubs and contemporary dining options along the way.

## Arrival information:

Arrive into Birmingham International or East Midlands Airport. Our team can provide advice and details to help you to arrange your transfers.

## Additional nights:

If you fancy exploring a vibrant city at the very heart of England, or need an additional nights accommodation to fit with your travel plans, then a stop-over in Birmingham is the perfect complement to your waterways holiday.



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# WATERSIDE ITINERARY: THE HERITAGE TRAIL

## DURATION: 7 DAY BREAK

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**Overview** - Distance: Averaging 20 miles per day on e-bike

### Day 1

Your holiday begins with an overnight stay in the bustling village of Barton under Needwood. Alternatively, football or spa lovers will love the treat of starting their holiday at the nearby Hilton St George's Park, the training home of the English football team and set in wonderful English countryside.

We will meet you at your first hotel and ensure that the bikes are fitted to you and answer any questions. A short evening ride will take you to the lovely canal side marina, Barton Turn, where you will find a range of small shops and cafes or spend your evening in one of the lovely traditional pubs in the village. If you're a sports fan then why not take a unique behind the scenes tour of the FA's National Football Centre.



### Day 2

Start your day with a visit to the picturesque Barton Marina. Here you will find a wide range of small independent shops, restaurants, built around the canal marina. It's a bustling little place, just perfect for people watching and a coffee whilst admiring the narrow boats.

Your e-bike ride continues along quiet lanes following the River Trent and taking you past the grand Catton Hall. Coffee and cake lovers will enjoy a rest at the Honey Pot Cafe, a mecca for cyclists. Next stop is Sharpes Pottery Museum, set amidst old pottery kilns. Here you can learn more about the potteries of South Derbyshire and also visit their unique toilet exhibition!

Tracks and quiet lanes will take you to Ashby de la Zouch, in the heart of the National Forest. This bustling market town is home to a ruined castle, cared for by English Heritage and featured in Sir Walter Scott's novel, Ivanhoe. It's a lovely place to explore at the end of your day's cycling.

### Day 3

First stop this morning is the tiny Measham Museum, where you can learn about the unique Meashamware canal pottery. The painted pottery was coveted by barge people and often featured family mottos or references. An Alpaca farm in the neighbouring village of Snarestone is the perfect place to stop and enjoy a coffee.

The countryside is flat by the canal and the Battlefield Line Steam Railway, which is your next stop. This railway runs from tiny Shackerstone to Market Bosworth. Rail lovers will enjoy looking round the engines, which are in various states of restoration. You could even enjoy a trip on the railway to the Bosworth Battlefield Visitor Centre. The Centre tells the story of Richard III and the Battle of Bosworth. Learn how they found his remains under a car park in Leicester and how the exact site of the battlefield was identified. Tonight's hotel is located close by and borders the Ashby Canal. Take a peaceful walk along the towpath as you watch the sun go down.

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## Day 4

It's a lovely cycle ride through the tiny lanes to the 1620's House and Gardens in Donington le Heath. The building gives you a glimpse of life in 17th Century England and guides recount the history. Garden lovers will enjoy the gardens, which include a herb garden and a maze. The cafe is the perfect place for a drink, before the last part of your e-bike holiday. A cycle ride past Thornton Reservoir will bring you to the National Trust property of Stoneywell. This lovely Arts and Crafts cottage is tucked away and surrounded by woodland. The final leg of today's ride passes the Great Central Railway, where you will find a heritage centre and small railway museum.

## Day 5

First stop today is a visit to the Quorn and Woodhouse heritage station. The station is part of the Great Central Railway, which is the only double track heritage railway in the UK and the only place in the world where you can see steam locomotives pass each other.

The station has been restored to its 1940s heyday, giving a feel of life in wartime Britain. Much of today's cycling is along an old railway line, taking you to the peaceful market town of Melbourne, where you will stay tonight. We recommend a visit to Melbourne Hall Gardens, where you will find some magnificent examples of old yew hedges. The Hall is also home to a number of independent craftspeople. Melbourne Hall was home to the 2nd Viscount Melbourne, William Lamb, after whom the Australian city of Melbourne is named. You'll find a wonderful choice of places to eat, including several lovely gardens for warm summer evenings.



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## Day 6

Much of today will be spent exploring the magnificent grounds of National Trust property Calke Abbey. Set in acres of gentle English parkland the house is billed as the “unstately” home. When the National Trust inherited the house, they found it full of weird and wonderful treasures. Many were tucked away or crammed on top of each other. Rather than create order, the Trust has simply repaired the house and displays everything as found. It's a fascinating building to wander around. The gardens at Calke Abbey are equally spectacular. Again, the National Trust has left the potting sheds as they found them – full of old implements and tools. They have however restored the borders to their former glory and the garden is a riot of colour throughout the summer. Visitors can grab a deckchair and sit back to enjoy the sight. A short stroll through the grounds brings you to the particularly large ice house, close to the lakeside.

Having explored the house and gardens on foot, it's back to your bike to enjoy the parkland around the Abbey. The church crypt, which dates from the 8th Century is one of the oldest examples of Anglo-Saxon architecture and was the burial site for 2 Mercian Kings. Today, Repton is home to the famous Repton School. It's a charming village to wander around and home to a number of excellent pubs and restaurants. Your overnight stop is in a lovely microbrewery, which is also famous for it's delicious food.

## Day 7

First stop today is Burton upon Trent, the home of brewing. The town is home to the National Brewery Museum, where you can learn about the history of beer making and why Burton upon Trent was perfectly placed to become world known for its beers. After a tasting, you will follow the Trent and Mersey Canal, which will take you back to the picturesque Barton Marina – the perfect place for a well-earned drink at the end of your E-bike holiday. We will meet you here with your luggage and to collect the bikes.



This programme is provided by National Forest E-bike Holidays.

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