

## Keswick to Camberley 11-14 April 2025

On 11 April 2025 a Penguin Peloton Breakaway duo roused themselves for an early start heading south from Keswick, in sunshine. An early cheeky climb got the cardiorespiratory system working, and all was well until shortly before Grasmere when low cloud suddenly appeared and engulfed us. The temperature dropped like a stone, as did the visibility. This lasted until just before Windermere where the Pier Café offered some respite and an excellent cup of hot chocolate. Shortly afterwards another stiff hill (it is the Lake District after all) gave access to Kendal and the delightful village of Natland where we were joined by Simon. A pilgrimage to the Arnside pie shop may then have precipitated Simon's tyre rupture. Temporary repairs were effected, and following an unsuccessful exchange with a somewhat disgruntled bike shop manager in Carnforth, a permanent solution was provided by a delightful bike shop manager in Lancaster. We eventually reached the Barton Manor Hotel and enjoyed an excellent meal at the nearby Pickled Goose.



**Outside the Barton Manor Hotel in bright sunshine**

Day 2 dawned too early (it always seems to do that) and we set off to enjoy the unrivalled delights of Preston, Chorley and Bolton before partaking of a superb canalside lunch east of Warrington (of Barm Cake fame). In the afternoon we cruised past our old haunt the Crewe Hall Hotel before gaining Madeley Heath. The Crewe Arms provided a fusion of Italian and Spanish dishes which worked rather well, and as it served both Courage Directors and Timothy Taylor's Landlord it was elevated into the Exceptional category. A pool tournament ensued post dinner (roughly a 3 way tie) before the karaoke started. Our Spanish host Miguel providing a fantastic rendition of Bella Ciao. We were then all invited back to a local house for a midnight party but, pleading advancing years and infirmity, we politely declined.



**The 3 Amigos at the Crewe Arms**



**Miguel on fire singing Bella Ciao**

Day 3 dawned far too early and we meandered through Stowe, Abbots Bromley, Barton Marina (old haunt), and had a sumptuous lunch at the Crown Inn in Snarestone. The roads were of variable quality but little traffic plus an abundance of wildlife (and some roadkill) kept things interesting: Heron, Buzzard, Kite, Kestrel, Grey Wagtail, Pheasant, Badger, Fox and Roe Deer. The weather was kind and we were fortunate enough to stop at the Acorns Coffee shop in Barwell (old haunt) and renew our acquaintances there. Journeys end was at the Travelodge in Lutterworth. Unfortunately the excellent Fox Inn and associated Sawsdee Thai restaurant were closed for refurbishment. We therefore contented ourselves with some food and beer at the Elms pub before an early night.



**The Lutterworth Travelodge – excellent hospitality**



Up for a 0630 start the following day. Weather was cold to start with but improved over the first 2 hours. A series of 7 hills marked what was a long and interesting day. Hill no 6 (Chilterns) in particular smarted a little. We visited Silverstone racetrack and crossed several motorways and rivers passing through Buckingham, Chinnor, Thame, Hambleden Lock and Wargrave, before regaining familiar ground with our finish point at the White Swan, Sandhurst. We then undertook some Carbloafing.



**Hambleden Lock near Henley**

A great 4 days

**Keswick to Camberley: 526km, 4704m of ascent, av. speeds 21.6-24.5 km/h..**