

**Top to bottom:** Josh riding along Belfast's Maritime Mile. The Great Light. The Salmon of Knowledge. Outside the Titanic Museum



**Weekender**

# Belfast by bike

The new Maritime Heritage Trail is a journey through the rich history of Northern Ireland's capital city. **Josh Murray** is your guide



**JOSH MURRAY**

*Cycling UK engagement officer for Northern Ireland*

**T**he Maritime Heritage Trail was created as part of Cycling UK's Routes and Roots project, which was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund NI and the Department of Communities. The trail connects East Belfast and Sailortown through a journey across Belfast, taking in the city's maritime history and heritage along the way.

The trail is approximately four miles long, virtually pan flat, and all on safe cycling infrastructure. It provides the perfect opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to discover by bike the rich history that Belfast is famous for. Along the way there are plenty of opportunities to grab a coffee and a bun.

The start/end of the trail is St Joseph's in Sailortown or CS Lewis Square in East Belfast; you can start at whichever end suits you best. These two locations are easily accessed via the Lough Shore cycleway and the Connswater Community Greenway. Belfast Bikes has a number of docking stations on the trail, so you don't have to bring your own bike.



## Cycling UK in N Ireland

For information on groups, projects, and more, visit: [cyclinguk.org/northern-ireland](https://cyclinguk.org/northern-ireland)



## Weekend ride

## BELFAST BY BIKE

•Route name: Maritime Heritage Trail •Start/finish: St Joseph's (Sailortown) and CS Lewis Square (East Belfast) •Maps: print one from [cyclinguk.org/routes-and-roots](http://cyclinguk.org/routes-and-roots) •Ride length: 4.3 miles/6.9km •Climbing: 112 feet •Bike type: Any •Ride level: Beginner •GPX file: [cyclinguk.org/route/maritime-heritage-trail](http://cyclinguk.org/route/maritime-heritage-trail)

**1 CS LEWIS SQUARE**  
Named after the Belfast-born author, CS Lewis Square is a popular place in East Belfast for locals to come and meet. It's a location you can come to learn about the area and take in the sights, which include many amazing sculptures recreated from the book, 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe'.

**2 Samson and Goliath**  
The Harland and Wolff shipyard, founded in 1861 by Edward James Harland and Gustav Wilhelm Wolff, was once one of the biggest employers in the country. The most famous symbols of the shipyard are the yellow cranes, Samson and Goliath.

**3 Titanic Museum**  
The Titanic museum was opened in 2012. Park your bike and go inside to learn about the history of the Titanic and its sister ships, RMS Olympic and HMHS Britannic. In the same vicinity you can also visit the SS Nomadic and the HMS Caroline.

**4 THE GREAT LIGHT**  
The Great Light is approximately 130 years old and is one of the biggest optics of its kind in the world. It is an almighty specimen, weighing over ten tonnes and measuring over seven metres in height. It produced one of the strongest beams that a lighthouse has ever shone, hence the name.

**5 The Big Fish**  
Known to locals as 'the Big Fish', the mosaic sculpture's true name is the Salmon of Knowledge. Created by artist John Kindness, the sculpture is ten metres long and clad in tiles. Each one tells a story about the city using pictures, text, and newspaper cuttings.

**6 St Joseph's Church**  
In 2000 the church was closed to be deconsecrated but in 2006 campaigners secured a 150-year lease for it. Thanks to the Sailortown Regeneration Project, it's being restored to its former glory and has now been repurposed as a community hub.



**i More great routes**  
The Cycling UK website has details of more than 200 cycling routes, from short family-friendly ones on cycle tracks through to off-road epics such as the Great North Trail.  
[cyclinguk.org/routes](http://cyclinguk.org/routes)