Summer finally arrived!

Yesterday, after procrastinating for a few hours, I decided it would be a good idea to go for an e-bike ride….. But where?

The fantastic Wiltshire green lanes are so muddy at the moment, and I don’t like riding on the tarmac roads unless I have to.

Finally, I downloaded a ‘SUSTRANS’ GPX file to my Garmin Montana GPS. The route I chose was the ‘Colliers Way’ which starts at Dundas aqueduct on the Kennet and Avon canal and ends at Frome. I finally left BoA on the Orange Gyro at 11.30, six and a half hours later than I would normally leave for a ride at this time of the year! This ride is mainly on disused railway lines with some minor roads linking a few parts.

I followed the old ‘Somerset and Dorset’ line as far as Radstock and decided to make a detour to Midsomer Norton along the former ‘Bristol and North Somerset Railway’ which is now called the Norton/Radstock Greenway. The old railway line is a stunning asset to the area with plenty of space for all permitted users. Families were having picnics, kids riding their bikes and scooters, red faced joggers puffed and panted along with miserable looking lycra clad cyclists who charged along at high speed, and older people were sitting on the many seats available along the way taking in the spectacle.

Leaving the Greenway, I made a short visit to my ex work mates at Forticrete, Clapton before giving in to a fantastic bacon, sausage and egg sandwich and a cup of tea at the shack at Wicks in Midsomer Norton. Maybe this was the real motive for my deviation from the original route?!!

Feeling full, content and rejuvenated, I pedalled back along the Greenway towards Radstock. Once again, I made another detour. This time it was to investigate the cycle route from ‘Five Arches’ at Welton to the ‘Railway Centre’ at Norton Hill which is part of the old ‘Somerset and Dorset’ line. Curiosity satisfied, I turned round and made my way back to the Greenway.

Crossing the road in Radstock I finally got back onto the ‘Colliers Way’ and made good time along the excellent surface of the track heading towards Frome. For quite a long distance, one of the old railway lines is still intact and could easily be put back into light use.

When I got to Kilmersdon, I noticed on the GPS map that the railway crossed an old road, now a Bridleway, that I had wanted to ride for years, but had never got round to it. Detour number three saw me riding a stunning green lane for the first time.

Back on the Colliers Way heading towards Frome I realised that time was ‘marching on’ and it would be a good idea to start making my way home. So, instead of completing the route to Frome, I left at Buckland Dinham taking in a nice Bridleway called Clareham Lane before heading to Faulkland via Hardington. Not wanting to use the tarmac roads, I plucked up courage and made my way along a Bridleway that headed North East from Faulkland. Like many of the local Bridleways it appears to be little used and was very overgrown, the stinging nettles and brambles exacted a punishing revenge for my foolishness!...... The ‘glow’ of the nettle stings would remain with me until the morning and can still be felt as I type this a day later!

Still heading home, I visited a number of other Bridleways and Byways which were quite muddy and wet in places. One Byway had a nice ford at the bottom of a hill but the water looked way too deep for a bike, so I chickened out and took the narrow pedestrian bridge instead!

By the time I got home, battered, bruised and stung, I had covered over 50 miles and still had plenty of battery left for another day!

Pardon me for blathering on, here is a link to more photos and a few GoPro videos I took whilst on my adventure: