

# Introduction

Distance	24m/39km or as little as 12m/19km
Start Point	Huntingdon
OS Map	Landranger 142 Peterborough and 153 Bedford and Huntingdon

This ride takes us through Houghton Mill, now owned by the National Trust, and a good place for a tea stop. It also takes us to a graveyard, where a member of the Royal Flying Corps was buried in 1917 - a real pioneer aviator; past a modern Royal Air Force airfield and through some of the prettiest villages in Huntingdonshire.

- Cover photo shows Abbots Ripton Church

## Points of Interest

### Huntingdon (A)

- The Old North Road used to pass through the High Street, entering near The Old Bridge Hotel (by the 14th century bridge), where the ring road now cuts through. This was the Roman Ermine Street which ran from London to Lincoln and beyond. There is much to see in the small town centre, although the ring road which surrounds it needs to be negotiated with care if used by cyclists.

- Behind The Old Bridge Hotel, is Castle Hills, just outside the ring road. Here, a Saxon castle used to stand on Castle Mound.

- Castle Hill House was built in 1786. During World War II it was the headquarters of the RAF Pathfinder Force.

- The Cromwell Museum was once a Grammar School, which Oliver Cromwell and (later) Samuel Pepys attended.

- Cowper House (No 29 High Street) built in the early 18th century, is where William Cowper, the poet, lived from 1765 to 1767.



Castle Hills

### Abbots Ripton (G)

- This charming village stands in fine countryside - an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Abbots Ripton Hall (not open to the public) was built in the 18th century.

### Monks Wood (H)

- The English Nature nature reserve to the right of the road is described as an important lowland wood area. Walkers are welcome, but cycling is not allowed in the wood.



Alconbury Weston

### Alconbury Weston (I)

- The best views of this village are off the main road. Turn right at the foot of the hill into Hamerton Road to see Alconbury Brook, a ford and some ducks.

### Alconbury (J)

- This name is probably best known because of the airfield, which is actually a little way from the village. This was constructed as a satellite for Wyton just before World War II.

- Beyond the 15th century bridge the Manor House (Hotel) is Elizabethan, and the church is 13th century. A brass in the church shows the building in 1877, with the 13th century spire suspended while the tower was dismantled beneath it and rebuilt for safety!



Alconbury

### Little Stukeley (K)

- Opposite Church Way is the quaintly named former Swan and Salmon Inn, dated 1676, now a private house.

### Great Stukeley (L)

- A detour to the right takes you past St Bartholomew's church.

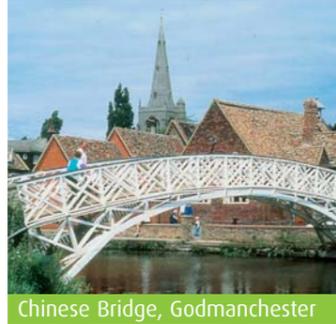
- The Falcon Inn and the George Hotel date from the 16th and 17th centuries respectively. The latter has an open gallery around the courtyard, which is used annually for staging the plays of William Shakespeare.

- Hinchingsbrooke House, the Tudor ancestral home of the Cromwell family is off the Brampton Road. Now a school, it is open to the public on summer Sunday afternoons.

- Near the railway station is a cannon - a replica of one which formed part of a Crimean War memorial. The original was taken in World War II and melted down for re-use as armaments.

### Godmanchester (B)

- Godmanchester lies across the River Great Ouse from Huntingdon and is linked by a medieval causeway and stone bridge. The town was founded as a Roman settlement on the crossroads of the Via Devana. The town is laid out in a pentagonal street pattern.

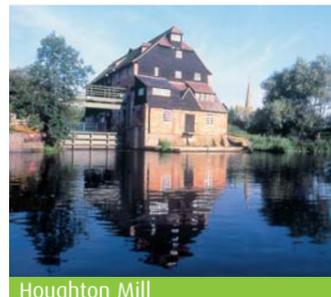


Chinese Bridge, Godmanchester

- The town received its charter from King John in 1212 AD and contains many ancient and interesting houses, including the Manor House in Earning Street, which dates back to 1603.

- Island Hall is an important mid 18th century mansion of great charm, owned and restored by an award-winning interior designer. This Georgian house enjoys a tranquil river setting with formal gardens and an ornamental island. The house is open to groups of visitors although booking is essential (Tel 01480 459676).

- The Chinese Bridge is a replica of the original which was built in 1827 and designed by the architect Gallier in the then fashionable Chinese Chippendale style. From here there are splendid views of the River Great Ouse.



Houghton Mill

### Houghton (C)

- The large 17th century water mill is National Trust property and was at one time a Youth Hostel. Milling days are held here most Sunday afternoons.

- The village contains many 16th and 17th century houses.

Note the bust facing the thatched clock tower and pump. This is of Potto Brown, a local miller and a Quaker philanthropist.

### Wyton (D)

- This little village is worth the short detour to the left on Huntingdon Road. The Three Jolly Butchers is a 17th century inn.



Wennington

- The churchyard is to the left, just beyond The Three Jolly Butchers, and the gates carry the crest of the Royal Air Force. It includes many graves of airmen from RAF Wyton who were killed in service.

### RAF Wyton (E)

- This airfield is one of the few which date from before World War II, and one of even fewer which are still in action today. In 1942 the RAF Pathfinder Force was established here, and there is now a Pathfinder Force museum. Visits are by appointment only. Apply in writing to The Station Commander, RAF Wyton, Huntingdon, PE28 2HL.

### Wennington (F)

- A small, pretty hamlet with many thatched cottages and a duck pond. Note the Victorian post-box set in the wall of a barn a short way along the road to Abbots Ripton.

## Getting Here...



Rail Enquiries: 08457 484950



Bus & Coach Enquiries: 08705 808080



Traveline (bus/coach/rail): 0870 6082608

### Huntingdon Tourist Information

Tel: 01480 388588 Fax: 01480 388591  
Email: Hunts.TIC@huntsdc.gov.uk

### St Neots Tourist Information Centre

The Old Court, 8 New Street  
St Neots, Cambs PE19 1AE  
Tel: 01480 388788 Fax: 01480 388791  
Email: StNeots.TIC@huntsdc.gov.uk

### Electronic Tourist Information Kiosks:

Huntingdon St Benedict's Court, Huntingdon  
Ramsey Great Whyte, Ramsey  
St Ives Market Hill, St Ives

For details of accommodation vacancies, contact Huntingdon or St Neots Tourist Information, or Huntingdonshire Association for Tourism's Vacancy Line Tel: 0870 2254858 (national rate call).

If you require a large print version of this information, please contact Huntingdon Tourist Information.

**Huntingdonshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

[www.huntsleisure.org](http://www.huntsleisure.org)

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# Huntingdonshire

Cycle Ride 2 - 24m/39km  
Huntingdon & Alconbury



## Drift Through Time...

[www.huntsleisure.org](http://www.huntsleisure.org)

# The Route

## 1 Huntingdon to Godmanchester

(part of National Cycle Network route 51)

From HUNTINGDON (A) railway station turn right towards the town centre to the traffic lights on the ring road. Use the shared cycleway/footpath to the right of the traffic lights, alongside the ring road, to the traffic lights at The Old Bridge Hotel. Note the Castle Mound behind the hotel.

Turn right on the shared track over the river bridge to GODMANCHESTER (B). When the NCN route turns right keep forward for about ¼ mile and then turn right (signposted "The Offords") into The Causeway.

## 2 Godmanchester to Hemingford Abbots

At the end of The Causeway go straight ahead into Old Court Hall which leads to London Street. Where London Street bends right (to become London Road) turn left into Earning Street. At the end turn right into Cambridge Road to rejoin NCN route 51, and just before a roundabout with the A14 turn left into Cow Lane. *Watch out - the name is not seen from this angle.* Keep forward for about ½ mile and just before a slight rise in the road (the former railway line), near the second lay-by on the right, take the cycleway to the right. This crosses the field to a gate at the end of Common Road, HEMINGFORD ABBOTS.

## 3 Hemingford Abbots to Kings Ripton Crossroads

Go straight on in Common Road, after about ½ mile take the first turning left Meadow Lane, (but the name is not visible from this side) which leads to a river bridge, then crosses a meadow, and leads to another bridge by the lock at HOUGHTON (C). Cross this bridge and pass through the mill to Mill Street and the village.

To the left (along Huntingdon Road) is the village of WYTON (D) which is worth a short detour. Leave Houghton by St Ives Road. At the end turn left and immediately right into Mere Way to its end. Turn left on the B1090 to pass RAF WYTON (E) and keep forward for about 1½ miles, crossing the busy A141 at a roundabout, to a crossroads, near Kings Ripton.

For a short cut back to Huntingdon - see (a).

## 4 Kings Ripton Crossroads to Alconbury Weston

Turn right through KINGS RIPTON to another crossroads. Turn left to LITTLE RAVELEY, and then left again by the former church (now a private residence) to WENNINGTON (F). Just beyond the pond turn left to ABBOTS RIPTON (G). At a T-junction our route goes to the right, but the church is to the left. For a short cut back to Huntingdon - see (b).

Leave the village on the B1090 to MONKS WOOD (H) and Alconbury Hill.

Beyond the bridge over the A1(M) continue down the hill to ALCONBURY WESTON (I). There is a picturesque detour to the right alongside Alconbury Brook.

## 5 Alconbury Weston to Huntingdon

(part of National Cycle Network Route 12)

Leave Alconbury Weston via Church Way, a bridleway next to the pub which is signed "NCN 12", this leads to Huntingdon. Follow this to the church at ALCONBURY (J) and The Manor House. A right turn gives us a fine view of the old bridge, where we turn left and soon left again into Rusts Lane.

Beyond the motorway underpass follow the road signs to The Stukeleys at four consecutive roundabouts. The airfield is to the left. This is the Roman Ermine Street. Continue through LITTLE STUKELEY (K) and GREAT STUKELEY (L). Beyond here the track on the left is a shared cycleway and footpath.

Our route goes straight on, beyond the A141 roundabout to reach HUNTINGDON. At traffic lights opposite "The Territorial" pub, cross the ring road into the High Street. At the George Inn turn right into George Street. Beyond the ring road the station is on the left at about ¼ mile.

## (a) Short cut from Kings Ripton to Huntingdon - to give a circuit of 12m/19km

From the crossroads near Kings Ripton return to Huntingdon by turning left (signposted Sapley) to the A141. Cross this busy road with care, and use the footpath to the right of a fence facing you. Turn left into Sapley Road, and at the foot of a descent turn right into Desborough Road to its end.

At traffic lights turn right into Hartford Road for about ¼ mile. From the car park on the right is a shared track leading to traffic lights at The Old Bridge Hotel. Cross at the lights and keep forward on the shared track by the ring road to the station.

## (b) Short cut from Abbots Ripton to Huntingdon - to give a circuit of 18m/29km

At the B1090 turn left and beyond the village turn right onto an unclassified road. Follow this to a roundabout with the A141. Cross this road with care and continue straight over the next roundabout. Take the second exit off a further roundabout into Kings Ripton Road which becomes Sapley Road. At the foot of a descent, turn right into Desborough Road to its end.

At traffic lights turn right into Hartford Road for about ¼ mile. From the car park on the right is a shared track leading to traffic lights at The Old Bridge Hotel. Cross at the lights and keep forward on the shared track by the ring road to the station.

