

Introduction

Distance	22m/35km or 14m/23km if Grafham Water is omitted
Start Point	Huntingdon
OS Map	Landranger 153, Bedford and Huntingdon

This ride is the first in a series which cover the historic district of Huntingdonshire. The district is centred around the beautiful River Great Ouse and has a wealth of stunning countryside, pretty villages and historic market towns. There are also a fantastic range of wildlife sites, many of which are National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The first part of the ride features Grafham Water and its cycling circuit. It then moves onto very quiet roads.

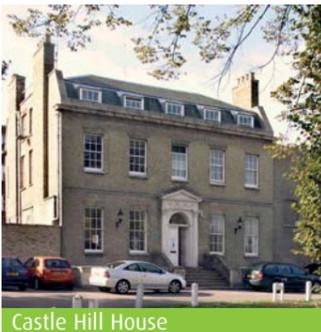
After Grafham the ride goes through the village of Buckden. This pretty village has many historical buildings in its main street. This ride is more than a pleasant circuit in its own right. It also offers a quiet route from the towns of Huntingdon, Godmanchester and St Ives to the tranquil open spaces around Grafham Water.

- Cover photo shows the Chinese Bridge at Godmanchester

Points of Interest

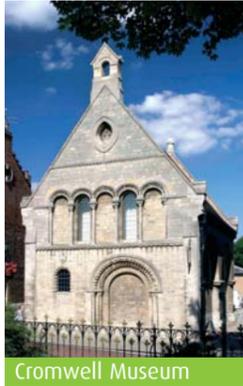
Huntingdon (A)

- 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.



Castle Hill House

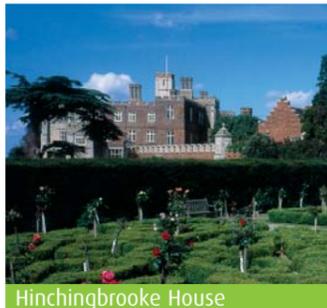
- Behind The Old Bridge Hotel, is Castle Hills, just outside the ring road. Here, a Saxon castle used to stand on Castle Mound.
- Castle Hill House was built in 1786. During World War II it was the headquarters of the RAF Pathfinder Force.
- The Cromwell Museum was once a Grammar School, which Oliver 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.
- 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.



Cromwell Museum

Brampton (B)

- On the south side of Brampton Road, near the speed limit sign, stands Pepys' House, a white gabled house where the famous diarist lived in his youth. It can be viewed only by appointment.
- St Mary Magdalene church, is where Samuel Pepys used to worship.



Hinchingsbrooke House

Former Railway Line (C)

- About 1½ miles beyond the A1 crossing, there is a bridge over the road - a relic of the former Huntingdon to Kettering rail line.



Grafham Water

Grafham (D)

- In the village is the 12th century All Saints church, which is usually unlocked. On the right of the road to Ellington you can see the former rail station.
- A worthwhile detour from here is Ellington, a pretty village with a fine church.

Buckden (E)

- The main street was once part of the Great North Road, and the village contains many fine old buildings, notably the 15th century gatehouse to Buckden Towers. Buckden Towers was once the palace of the Bishops of Lincoln and the 16th century Great Tower is where Katherine of Aragon, the first wife of Henry VIII, was imprisoned.



Buckden Towers

- The Lion Hotel dates from the 15th century, although much was rebuilt in the 18th century.
- The George Inn opposite is from the 17th century.

Offord Cluny (F)

- The mill, to your right as you approach Offord, is now converted to residential use. Fine views of the river can be seen here, but watch for the traffic on the narrow lane.
- All Saints church has connections with the RAF Pathfinder Force which operated from Graveley airfield. The church key is obtainable from The Rector at Offord d'Arcy.
- Both the Offords contain many old houses, most notably the grand Manor House across the road from Offord Cluny church.

Godmanchester (G)

- 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.



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.

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

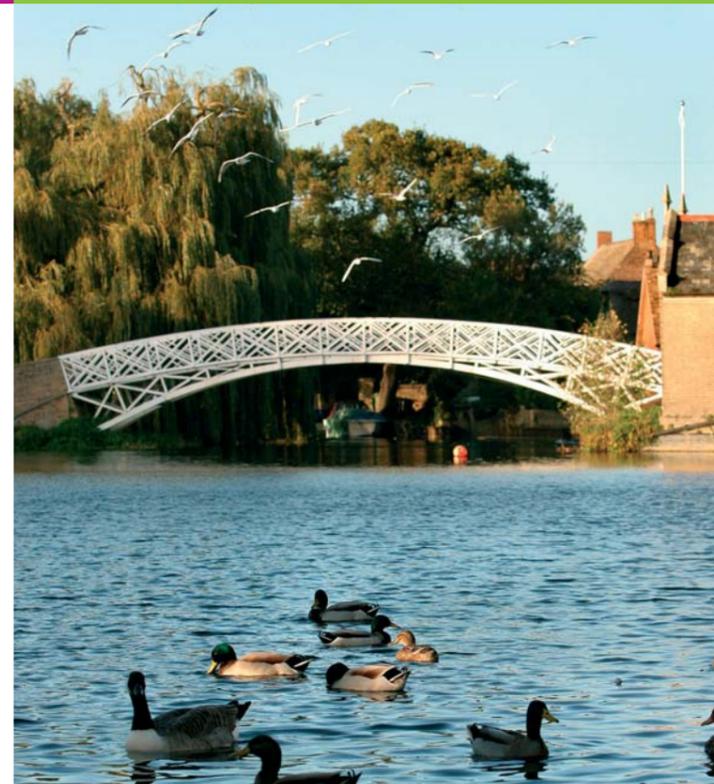
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Huntingdonshire

Cycle Ride 1 – 22m/35km
Huntingdon & Grafham



Drift Through Time...

www.huntsleisure.org

The Route

1 Huntingdon to Grafham Water

Leave HUNTINGDON (A) railway station (part of the National Cycle Network Route 51) and turn left on Brampton Road (B1514). Use the shared cycleway and footpath on the opposite side of the road which goes straight to Brampton (B), with Hinchbrooke House and Hinchbrooke Country Park on the right. Turn left at the roundabout into Church Road. After the church, turn right into the High Street, to pass the village green and continue straight on, past fields, to cross the bridge over the A1. Continue past (C) to GRAFHAM (D). On entering Grafham village, you now have the choice to

go to BUCKDEN via the roads, or GRAFHAM WATER via road and cycle route. The route to Buckden is a left turn at the T-junction, past Marlow car park on your right to another junction, where you turn left, signposted for the B661. The route to Grafham Water is a right turn at the T-junction and immediately turn left into Church Road and left again into Church Hill. At the bottom, go through the gate and follow the cycle track to the left as far as the Marlow car park, Visitor Centre and café. On leaving the car park, turn right to rejoin the Buckden road.

2

Detour Around Grafham Water 8 miles/13km

An alternative for those who want to explore the cycle track around the lake is as follows. Turn right at the T-junction on entry to Grafham village and then left into

Church Road, but then keep forward on Church Road to pass the church. The road (at first) and then the track encircle the lake, with a short stretch of road through PERRY village. The complete circuit leads you to Marlow car park.

The general advice for those riding around the lake is to ride anti-clockwise. This is because through Perry village the road needs to be used: in this direction you do not need to cross it. Also remember that cycling on the footpath in the village is illegal, can be dangerous and annoys the residents. Please do not do it.

3

Grafham Water to Godmanchester

From the Marlow car park exit, turn right and at the next T-junction, turn left on the B661 to enter BUCKDEN. At the

A1, the road is best crossed by using the footpath and underpass to the left, just before the roundabout to emerge in the High Street (E). Turn left and at The Lion Hotel, right to OFFORD CLUNY (F). At the T-junction beyond the level crossing, turn left to GODMANCHESTER (G), signposted the B1043 (*take care on this road as it can be busy at times*).

4

Godmanchester to Huntingdon

At the end of West Street, turn left into The Causeway and then left again at a roundabout and keep forward for ½ mile to the traffic lights near The Old Bridge Hotel. Here riders can turn left and use the shared cycleway/footpath which runs alongside the ring road (a busy one-way system) for about ½ mile and then turn left on the B1514 to the station.

