

CIRCULAR CYCLE RIDES

Central
Bedfordshire

Old Warden – Mix of On/Off Road

A 24km (15 mile) ride that includes some of the most beautiful countryside and villages in Bedfordshire. The estate villages of Old Warden, Southill and Broom contain many fine examples of architecture and the village of Ickwell Green, with its classic English scene of cottages around the village green, cricket pitch, maypole and large oak tree is one of the finest in the UK. The landscape around the hamlets of Thorncote and Budna is particularly attractive with quiet lanes, small rolling fields and passes close to Moggerhanger House – a Sir John Soane's designed country house. Part of the route also follows the Greensand Cycle ride – a cycle ride along the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge.

Start from St Leonard's Church car park in Old Warden. From here cycle down the short, steep hill to the metalled road and turn left.

Head along the road out of Old Warden and bear left towards Ickwell Green.

Go past the cricket pitch and maypole and then head through Northill on the Thorncote Road. Turn left just past 'Kilchoan' and head up Budna Road, through the tiny hamlet of Budna and then turn left at the T junction.

Head along the lane which runs alongside Sheerhatch Wood (on the right). At the T junction with the Northill – Cople road head (carefully) straight across the road and along BW10, an off-road section using an old trackway, and now part of the Greensand Ridge Walk.

Continue to follow BW10 along the field edges to Bedford Road, turn left onto the road and , just past the cottages on the right, turn right down the small lane past Warden Manor Farm on the left. Follow the lane all the way to the T junction and turn right then turn left at the fork around the point of Keeper's Warren Wood. Follow the road to Ireland, past the Black Horse PH then bear left along the straight section of road.

Continue along this road and turn left towards the village of Southill. Continue around the right hand bend and through the village.

At the Broom crossroads cross straight ahead (very carefully) over the B658 and along the Southill Road to Broom village.

In the village centre bear left around the small triangular village green and cycle along the High Street then bear right along High Road. At the T junction turn left along Gypsy Lane.

After a few minutes riding you will see a bridleway (BW3) on the left. Turn along here, over the bridge and past the flooded sand quarries. Stop at the B658 and very carefully cross straight ahead and down the track past Kings Hill Cottages and Kings Hill Farm.

Just past the farm turn right, through the bridlegate, and along BW14 across the grassy field. Go through another bridlegate and over the bridge and follow the stream.

At the road you can either turn left along the road and back to Old Warden church or cross straight over the road and along the bridleway track of Sheep Walk to Ickwell Green.



At the end of the track bear left keeping the Green and cricket pavilion to your right. At the road turn left and head up the hill out of the village. Bear right at the fork on to the Old Warden road and into Old Warden, and turn right back to St Leonards church car park.

Shortcuts/additions

There are three shortcuts along this route:

From the start, at St Leonard's church, cycle down the short, steep hill to the metalled road and turn left. Cycle approx 150m then turn right along the farm track (BW13), follow this track bearing left onto BW12 and go through Mount Pleasant Farm. Stay on the track through Palmers Wood then across fields. Approx 180m past Sweet Briar Farm (on the left) turn left onto BW10 and then follow BW10 (Greensand Ridge Walk) as described above.

As you enter Southill village from the west turn left 80m after the right hand bend and follow the road past the Old Vicarage. Ignore the right hand bend and carry straight on past Southill Church (on the left) and the Tree Nursery (on the right). Approx., 190m after the left hand bend turn right onto BW3 and ride along the field edge. Continue following the track (which becomes BW14) to the metalled track through the Shuttleworth Estate. Turn right here then left onto BW14 following the route description above. This cuts out the eastern section of the route. Another option is to stay on the road out of Southill, through Warden Warren then turn right at the T junction and back through Old Warden village to the church.

At the end of BW14, instead of going across the road and down Sheep Walk (BW6) to Ickwell Green turn left onto then road and cycle past the Old Warden Aerodrome and Swiss Garden (on the left) and back to Old Warden village and the church.

OS Map: Explorer 208

Remember when cycling:

Please DO NOT cycle on footpaths.

Always keep to the waymarked routes and do not enter private land.

Always ride in single file when roads are narrow and never ride more than two abreast.

Make sure you are visible to others.

Always use lights after dark or in poor visibility.

Plan your route according to the weather and daylight hours.

Be aware of animals, other cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders and car drivers when cycling.

Keep your speed down and give way to walkers and other path users.

Be polite and considerate towards landowners and farmers.

Keep away from farm machinery or farm/forestry operations.

Contact us...

by telephone: 0300 300 8085

by email: recreational.routes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/travelling/your-travel-choices/cycling

Write to Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

