

Country Ways (Moderate Ride)

This is a pleasant rural ride along parts of Chartham Downs. It explores several Downland villages and hamlets tucked away in valleys. This route is beautiful for riders looking for picturesque scenery and a pleasant route for a picnic. It passes Higham House and Garden near bridge, which is open on Sundays to Thursdays from 11am to 6pm.

1. From Canterbury West Railway Station turn left and pass through new housing estate and keep bearing right until you meet North Lane. Cross North Lane and go straight ahead along the Causeway. At T junction turn left into St. Radigunds Street and follow cycle route initially to Northgate and then towards Christ Church College but before you reach the college turn right into Havelock Street and left into Monastery Street. Turn left into Longport and at roundabout turn right into Lower Chantry Lane. Straight across at the traffic lights into Oaten Hill and straight on at next traffic lights into Nunnery Fields.
2. Climb up Nunnery Fields road where you pass Two Doves Public House. Near the brow of the next hill you will pass Nunnery Fields Hospital on your right, take the next turning on your right called Stuppington Lane which passes through hop fields and orchards. Cross over bypass by a bridge and at next T junction turn right into Merton Lane (unsigned) At next T junction turn left into Iffen Lane.
3. Follow Iffen Lane leaving the built up area and enter an area of open farmland and woodland. In a while lane descends onto Chartham Down. Descend with care and at main crossroads turn left signposted Bridge and Canterbury. Admire beautiful views across this valley and the Downs themselves. Continue along this road until you come to a main T junction with B2068 at Street End, and turn left signposted Bridge and Canterbury and almost immediately turn right into lane signposted Upper Hardres, Lower Hardres and Bossingham past the side of the Granville Public House.

(4 miles/ 6.6 kilometers)

4. At the bottom of a sort hill turn left into Church Lane signposted Petts Bottom. By the church fork right. In a while you will come to an area of coppiced woodland. Coppicing is a very old art of cropping a woodland without destroying it. The felled timber is used for fencing and charcoal for barbequees.
5. Church Lane is very narrow and cyclists should take care. As you descend the hill, at the first T junction unsigned turn left, and at the next T junction turn right and pass the Duck Public House at Petts Bottom. This Public House has connections to Ian Flemming the author of the James Bond books.
6. If you wish to shorten this ride return back to the last junction and follow Cycle Route 16/17 back to Canterbury via bridge and Patribourne.

7. Otherwise continue along this lane following the valley floor and Cycle Route 17 signs towards Folkestone. Shortly you will pass Hode Pottery on your right who specialise in garden pots. Visitors are welcome in the pottery. Continue until you reach Burstead Manor. At crossroad by the Manor turn left and climb a long steady hill out of the valley signposted Bishopsbourne and Barham.

(6miles/ 10 kilometers)

8. At the brow of hill, the lane descends and at a T junction turn left signposted Bishopsbourne and Barham. Enter village of Bishopsbourne, passing over derelict railway bridge. Just after passing village church continue along the main lane and you can see the village blacksmith at work in his Forge on your left and the Mermaid Inn further on, on your right. To continue the ride, **return** to the church and take the turning immediately before it, signposted Bridge and Canterbury. Continue to the top of the hill, turn left and left again following the signs to Bridge. In a short while you will pass Higham House and Gardens on your right. Continue down into the village of Bridge. At the Red Lion Public House turn right signposted Cycle Route 17.

(9.9 miles/ 16.5 kilometers)

9. Enter village of Patribourne noting the diversity of styles of architecture in this most attractive village. At mini roundabout at the end of the village veer left and almost immediately fork right into Hode land and up the hill to Hode Farm.

(11.7 miles/ 19.5 kilometers)

10. On left hand bend go straight ahead into private road through orchards. Enter Canterbury through a housing estate, Pilgrims Way. Bear right over railway bridge where road becomes Pilgrims Road. By Chaucer School turn left into Spring Lane. At T junction turn left into St. Martins Hill and almost immediately right into special Cycle lane in North Homes Road.

11. Follow special track along North Homes Road and continue straight ahead into Cycle path. At junction with busy Military Road cross road to central island, turn left and cross again. Enter alleyway and follow to Northgate.

12. At junction with road turn left and take the second turning on the right into St. Radigunds Street. Pass Millers Arms, pass over river bridge and turn right into the Causeway. At next junction go straight ahead into Station Road West and follow track through new housing estate veering left all the time until you come to Canterbury West Railway Station.

(15.2 miles/ 25.3 kilometers)