

Introduction

Distance	24m/38km or as little as 19m/30km
Start Point	St Neots
OS Map	Landranger 153 Bedford and Huntingdon

This ride takes a pleasant route out of St Neots and follows a little known tributary of the Ouse - the river Kym - for some way before taking us to Grafham Water and then visiting the Staughtons. It then returns over some higher ground offering some fine panoramic views. Look out for the World War II airfield at Little Staughton from which two pilots won Victoria Crosses - and the nearby churchyard which has links with other aviators. Some alternative short cuts are offered, which are as pleasant as the main ride.

■ Cover photo shows Little Staughton church.

Points of Interest

St Neots (A)

■ The river and Riverside Park are features of the town, which also has an impressive Market Square and river bridge. The Tourist Information Centre and the local museum are in New Street. They share the same premises - the old courthouse. The museum tells the history of the town and has 100-year-old prison cells.



Market Square, St Neots

Little Staughton Airfield (H)

■ A memorial in a layby near the entrance to this wartime airfield reminds us that it was used from 1944 to 1945 by the Pathfinder Force. Today it is used for civil flying. The wartime control tower and other buildings can be seen from the lane to Staughton Moor, as can some modern aircraft.



Little Staughton, Church

Bushmead Priory (I)

■ These are the remains of a small Augustinian Priory built in 1195. The Priory is a rare surviving example of crown-post architecture, and the timber frame roof is worth noting. This is now an English Heritage property, and is open in summer at very limited times.

Great North Road (J)

■ The road name reminds us that the Great North Road used to pass along this line before the by-pass was built.

Eaton Socon (K)

■ This village once had many coaching inns, serving the Great North Road, some of which still survive.

Little Paxton (B)

■ Paxton Pits Nature Reserve is at the end of the High Street, and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It has large colonies of cormorants, kingfishers and herons and an interesting visitor centre.

■ Paxton Hall at the southern end of the village is a mid-18th century house, but has the remains of earlier work both in its walls and in its fittings.



Hail Weston Church

Hail Weston (C)

■ The village lies on the north side of the road from St. Neots to Kimbolton. The church is at the south-east end of the village and has a timber tower and a spire of oak shingles. There are several half-timbered houses and cottages of the 17th century. A few Neolithic implements have been found, but greater importance is given to the bronze statuette of the Romano-British period which was found in 1824.

Great Staughton (D)

■ Near The White Horse is a 17th century brick cross with a sundial.

■ Place House, opposite the church, dates from the 16th century.

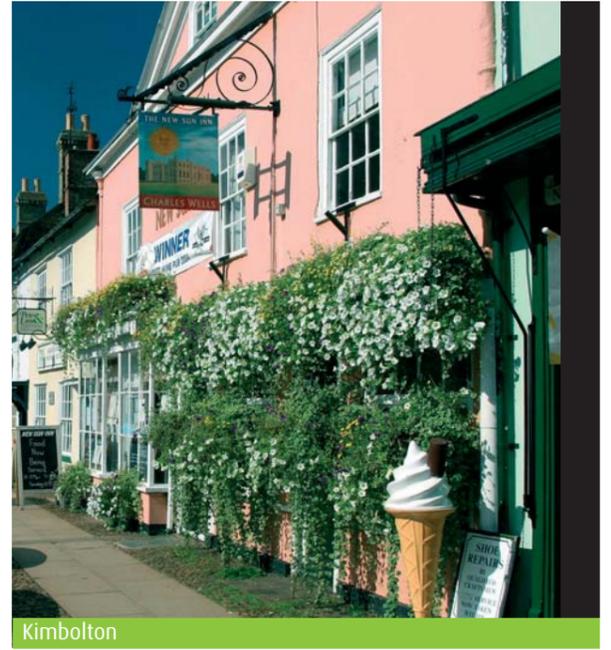
Stonely (E)

■ On the corner of Old Ford Lane is Stonely Cottage, a thatched house with a tree trunk verandah, built by Captain Welstead, one of Lord Nelson's sea captains.

Kimbolton (F)

■ This village is designated an "Outstanding Conservation Area". It has a fascinating, wide main street, on which the buildings mostly date from the 17th and 18th centuries, although some are older.

■ At one end is the rebuilt Castle where Katherine of Aragon, first wife of Henry VIII was imprisoned for 2 years after spending time at Buckden, and where she died in 1536. The former castle was extensively rebuilt in the 18th century by Vanbrugh, who built Castle Howard and Blenheim Palace. It is now a school and is occasionally open to the public. The north gate and gatehouse were designed by Robert Adam. The church which dates from the 13th century is usually open. A view of the castle is obtained from a little way along the Bedford Road.



Kimbolton

Little Staughton (G)

■ From behind the church there is a panoramic view over the valley to the north.

■ In the church are a Book of Remembrance and a tablet to commemorate those killed in service at the former RAF station nearby.

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

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Huntingdonshire

Cycle Ride 7 – 24m/38km
St Neots & Kimbolton



Drift Through Time...

www.huntsleisure.org

The Route

Part of this route involves gravelled and uneven surfaces, which may not be suitable for some bikes.

1 St Neots to Great Staughton

The ride can start from either of two points in ST NEOTS (A) the railway station for those who arrive by rail, (there is also ample car parking) or the Market Place in the centre of town. Visitors arriving from the south and west by car, may park at the Riverside car park on the west side of the Ouse. The Market Place is just over the bridge.

1a) From the station: Turn right into Hawksden Road and follow it round into Priory Hill Road to a double roundabout. Go straight across into Mill Lane to the traffic lights at its end, and then turn right into LITTLE PAXTON.

1b) From the Market Place: Leave by the north east corner, soon to reach some traffic lights. Turn left into New Street and cross Island Common to reach the traffic lights just before LITTLE PAXTON.

BOTH ROUTES: Continue into the village. Turn right into Gordon Road (signposted "Village Hall") to its end (B). Turn left into High Street. On reaching the T-junction, turn right to cross the A1 by the road bridge, and then turn left to HAIL WESTON (C).

A visit to Hail Weston (C) should be included if only because there is a pub there.

Just before reaching the ford, turn right on National Cycle Route 12, signposted 'Public Footpath' (gravelled and uneven surface), to the B661 at Highfield Farm. Turn left through Perry and past Mander car park at Grafham Water and go straight on to a crossroads.

Turn left through DILLINGTON to a T-junction with the B645. Turn right (signposted Kimbolton), into GREAT STAUGHTON.

2 Great Staughton to Kimbolton

If the B645 is busy, two alternatives are offered:

- 1) Take short cut 1 suggested below.
- 2) Take short cut 2 suggested below.

The main ride leaves Great Staughton turning right on the B661 towards Grafham Water. After ½ mile turn left and after a sharp descent rejoin the B645, turning right for ½ mile to STONELY (E) and KIMBOLTON (F)

3 Kimbolton to Little Staughton

Head out of Kimbolton to take the B660 towards Bedford. Ignore the left turn before PERTENHALL and enjoy the downhill run, and at the first crossroads

beyond the village turn left signposted Little Staughton. At the next crossroads turn right, and at the next T-junction turn right to climb to LITTLE STAUGHTON (G) and (H). The church is on the left at the top of the hill.

4 Little Staughton to St Neots

Continue for about 2 miles, and at BUSHMEAD (I) crossroads turn left towards St Neots signposted Eaton Socon. After about 2 miles turn left and go through the pleasant villages of STAPLOE and DULOE to ST NEOTS. Cross the old Great North Road (J) and then go straight on to Eaton Ford Green.

At the roundabout at Eaton Ford Green take the second exit, and at the next roundabout take the second exit to cross the River Ouse into the Market Square.

For the station there are two options. The first is to continue towards Cambridge for nearly 1 mile and then turn left to the station. This is the shorter but busier route. The other, slightly longer, but avoiding most of the town traffic, involves turning left at the traffic lights just beyond the Market Place into New Street and going about 1 mile, almost to Little Paxton. At the traffic lights turn right into Mill Lane to a double roundabout, then go straight on into Priory Hill Road to the station.

During 2006/07 a new town centre to rail station cycle route will be created. When on New Street, look for the signs which will provide a quieter, more direct route to the rail station.

Possible short cuts

1 From Great Staughton to Little Staughton via Staughton Moor which omits nearly 5 miles:
At the junction with the B645, just before Great Staughton, turn left, then turn right (signposted Staughton Moor).

Avoid the left turn at about 1½ miles (signed "No through road") to ride alongside the airfield to a T-junction. Turn left to join the main ride to Bushmead in Section 4, just north of the airfield entrance.

2 From Great Staughton to Little Staughton, which omits 4 miles:

In Great Staughton, where the road bends right, turn left to pass the church. After about 2 miles turn left to rejoin the main ride just before the climb to Little Staughton at the end of Section 3.

