

Three different species of deer can be seen in Essex: Fallow, Muntjac and Roe. Particularly large herds of Fallow Deer can be seen in woodland areas and herds as large as 100 are not unusual. Look out for Fallow deer around Bob's Barn Wood and Langford Bottom.

As you ride past Twenty Acre Wood, you will see that this woodland is very shady with few plants surviving on the ground floor. This is because deciduous trees such as Oak and Ash which shed their leaves in autumn have been replaced by coniferous

species. Conifers such as Scots Pine do not shed their leaves in winter and cast a heavy shade all year round depriving plants on the woodland floor of the light they need to grow. Many native woodlands in Britain were planted with Scots Pine in the 1940s and 1950s in an effort to produce a good cheap timber crop resulting in the loss of biodiversity. In recent times the Forestry Commission has made efforts to remove conifers from many of the woodlands in its care to help restore the woods to their original condition.

#### Terrain

Mostly flat, some hills, muddy in places

#### Ordnance Survey Map Ref

Explorer Map No. 175

Southend-on-Sea & Basildon

[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/mapshop/](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/mapshop/)

#### Parking Horseboxes

Parking available at High Tawney car park off Epping Road and with permission at the *Moletrap Inn*. Please phone the pub on 01992 522394 before setting off on the ride.

#### Refreshments

*Moletrap Inn*, Tawney Common, Theydon Mount, Stapleford Tawney, 01992 522394

#### Transport

*Theydon Bois Underground Station*

Approx. 7 miles away

#### Vets

*House & Jackson*, Chevers Pawn, Rookery Road, Blackmore, Essex Tel: 01277 823858

#### Places to visit

**Epping Forest** The forest is the largest public open space in the London area, measuring 19km x 4km, two-thirds of which is wooded with the same proportion designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

#### *Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge*

Open all year round. Entrance is free.

Tel: 020 8529 6681

**Epping Forest Information Centre at High Beach (12.6 miles)** Tel: 020 8508 0028

**Weald Country Park** is steeped in history. It was once a deer park and used for hunting by the Abbots of Waltham in around 1063. Opening times: 8am until dusk (check entrance boards for details). Parking £2 all day. Tel: 01277 261343.

#### *Kelvedon Hatch Secret Nuclear Bunker*

**(9.1 miles)** The biggest and deepest cold war bunker open to the public in southeast England! Admission fee. Tel: 01277 364 883.

## Country Rides



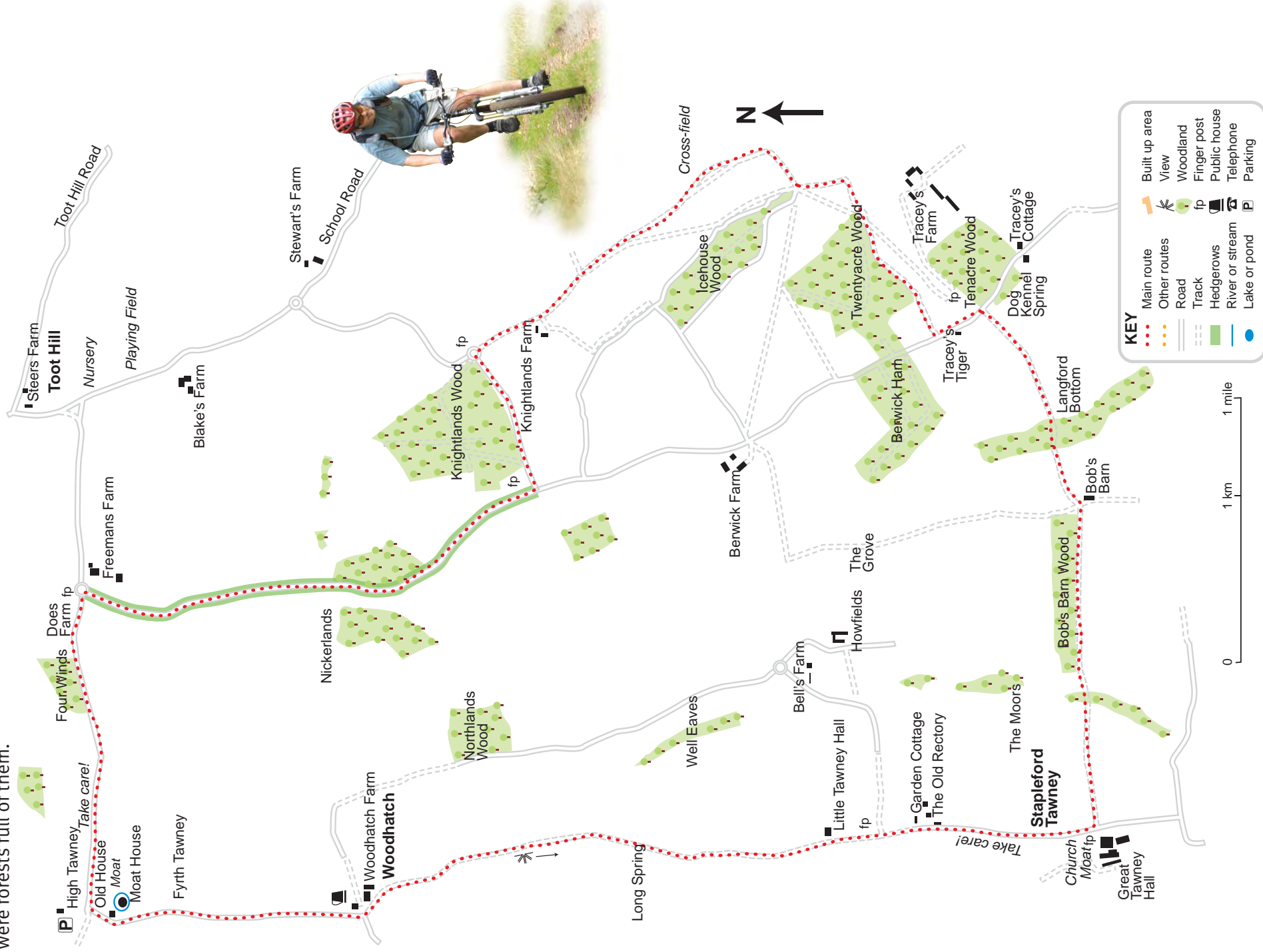
### STAPLEFORD TAWNEY

7 miles/11.5 km

Stapleford Tawney is a small parish (670 hectares) located 7 miles north of Romford and is very sparsely populated; approximately 100 people live in the parish making it the least populated parish in the Epping Forest district. In 1771 it was noted by a writer that Stapleford Tawney 'hath but few houses in it and, like the other Stapleford, seems to carry on no other business than that of husbandry'. In the modern era this small rural parish is still devoted almost exclusively to agricultural production with a mixture of livestock and arable farming.



The ditches along some of the bridleways are full of Horsetail, a plant that is a remnant of prehistoric times. Horsetails are primitive plants because they do not flower and in primeval times they grew to the size of a Fir tree and there were forests full of them.



The farmland on this country ride is scattered with small woodlands known as copses. These woods have survived being 'grubbed' out often because they are situated on land that is difficult to cultivate and not productive for growing crops. For example, Langford Bottom is situated alongside a stream and is prone to flooding in winter which would lead to waterlogging of crops.