

# 13 Rowney Warren

A circular ride, the first four miles of which are on bridleways. Difficult in wet weather, but perfectly rideable when dry, and not just by mountain bikers. The ride starts from Elstow Green, crossing the flat clay vale to ascend the Greensand ridge to Haynes. From Haynes the route goes to Rowney Warren - a lovely wood for picnics and exploration. It returns on quiet roads via Warden Abbey and Cardington to Harrowden birthplace of John Bunyan. From Harrowden it follows well-surfaced tracks back to Elstow. The ride can be extended at various points where it connects with other rides, some of which are also off-road. It is easily reached from Bedford by Rides 3 or 18 (see Connections).

**15 Miles  
HARDER**

## PUBS

Swan and Red Lion, Elstow  
Greyhound, Haynes  
Kings Head, Cardington  
The Gate, Harrowden

## PICNIC SITES

Elstow Green  
Cardington Green  
Rowney Warren

*Our description starts from Elstow Green which was Vanity Fair in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress". There is parking available and the Abbey and Moot Hall museum are of particular interest.*

## A CIRCULAR RIDE STARTING ON BRIDLEWAYS FROM ELSTOW

# Leaving the Green, turn right past the Swan and, having crossed the brook, take the first left up Medbury Lane. Follow this round as far as you can.

*After the first cattle grid it becomes a bridleway.*

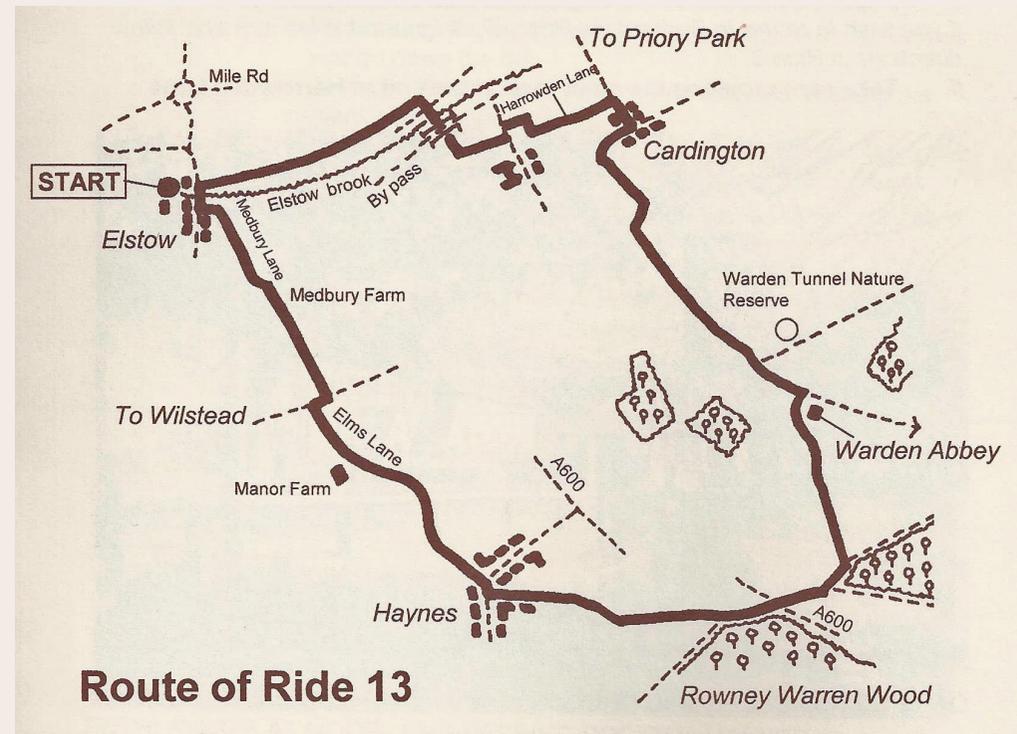
# Follow this for a couple of miles. At the road turn right and left into Elms Lane. Once past the farm go straight on along the public bridleway to eventually climb up the hill.

*It may be best to get off and walk, but whatever you do, do turn round and enjoy the views! The bridleway runs into North Lane and comes out on Silver End Road in Haynes (5 miles for the start). If it happens to be an open day at the Model Engineering Society's ground, you may wish to turn left and at the end turn left again to Summerfield's. You will find train rides, station buffet and sometimes traction engines there. Otherwise:-*

# At the junction of North Lane with Silver End Road turn right and then left into Northwood End Road.



ELSTOW VILLAGE STREET



*This will take you to Rowney Warren Wood just over 6 miles from Elstow, To connect with Ride 14 to Shefford and Ireland turn right at the junction, by the woods (see Connections below). To continue on this ride:-*

# Bear left with the wood on your right.

*The Warren is an interesting wood to explore on foot and you may picnic here.*

# Cross the A600 with care and bear left at the fork.

*The right hand fork will take you to the Black Horse at Ireland - about 1 mile.*

# Take the next left (signposted Cardington) into a narrow lane leading to Warden Abbey.

*Note the surviving building of the Abbey and its fine chimney on your right.*

# At the T-junction turn left.

*This road will take you up over the hill and down into Cardington. At the top of the hill we suggest you turn right onto the bridleway, part of the Greensand Ridge Walk, to visit the Warden Tunnel /Nature Reserve, just a couple of hundred yards along the track. Not only are there exceptionally good views from here, but the reserve (managed by the local Wildlife Trust) is worth exploring. But please do so on foot. If you want to extend your ride by joining Ride 18 continue on the track (see Connections below), otherwise return to the road.*

# As you enter Cardington take the left turn towards the church, and a little further on turn left again into Harrowden Lane.

*If you wish to return to Bedford via Priory Park, ignore this left turn and follow directions in Ride 3.*

# Take care crossing the main road at the end of Harrowden Lane into

Old Harrowden Lane. It is difficult to see what is coming from your right.

Continue along here until you come to Bunyan Farm where you turn right along what is a private road but public bridleway.

*This is known locally as Bumpy Lane and on your left, before the by-pass, is the site of John Bunyan's birthplace.*

# Go under the by-pass, up and over a new estate road and down again onto Bumpy Lane. Just a little further on, before the houses, turn left through an 'obstacle' gate onto a path.

# Follow this path right to the end and at the road turn right to Elstow Green.

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## CONNECTIONS

Ride 3 or 18 From Bedford. *This ride can be accessed from Priory Park and the rest of Bedford by Ride 3 (to which all other town rides connect and which brings you to the start in Elstow) or by Ride 18 which meets this Ride (13) at the turn into Harrowden Lane on the edge of Cardington.*

Rides 14 Ireland. *This provides an extension adding just under 5 miles, largely off-road, to Shefford and then back on a country road via Ireland. To join it take the first right after leaving Haynes and go down the hill. To rejoin Ride 13, take the second right after passing the Black Horse at Ireland.*

Ride 15 Old Warden. *Turn right at the junction at Warden Abbey for an extension on country roads of just over 5 miles (net) through Old Warden, Ickwell, Northill and Cople. You rejoin this Ride (13) by turning right on Cardington Green.*

Ride 18 *This provides a largely off-road ride along the Greensand Ridge, down to the river at Willington and from there back, via Priory Country Park to Cardington. It adds just over 6 miles net. You join it at Warden Tunnel by continuing on the bridleway past the nature reserve.*

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CARDINGTON GREEN AND CHURCH



ENTHUSIASTS AT MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY, HAYNES