

# 14 Ireland

A short circular ride through attractively undulating and wooded countryside. Nearly half of the ride is off-road on an easy to ride surface. The ride begins and ends at Rowney Warren (where you can park). This is a large wood which is worth exploring on foot. See the Connections section below to find how this ride can be extended to visit Shefford, to follow other rides in the Greensand country and to reach the start.

**5 Miles  
EASY**

## PUBS

Black Horse, Ireland

## PICNIC SITES

Rowney Warren

*Our description starts at the corner of Rowney Warren by the junction of the A600 and the minor road to Haynes (Northwood End Road).*

## A SHORT CIRCULAR RIDE STARTING AT ROWNEY WARREN

- # With your back to the main road set off along Northwood End Road towards Haynes, with the wood on your left. Fork left after a short distance, down the hill.
- # Follow the road to where it swings right, with another wood facing you and turn sharp left onto a concrete private road.

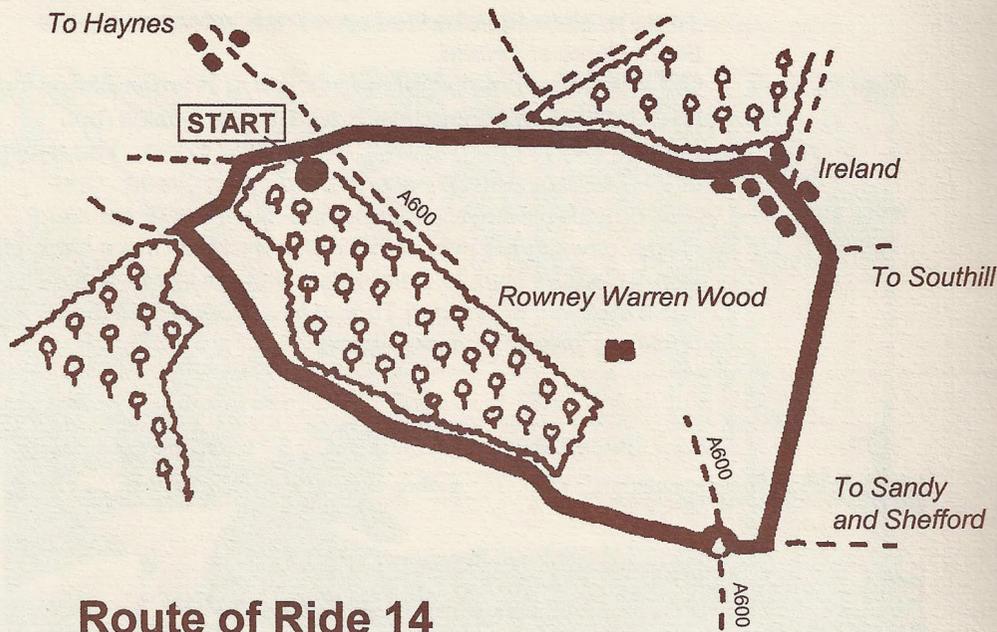
*This is a public bridleway which you follow for over two miles. It returns to the edge of Rowney Warren and then follows it for some distance. Take care passing the buildings, as the junction with a major access road is rather sudden.*

- # Cross over the access road and after a few yards, as you go along by a brick building on your right, leave the line of the bridleway and fork left up onto a parallel track running along the edge of the wood.

*Why this minor diversion? Its smoother! There are opportunities for exploration in the wood.*

- # At the corner of the wood rejoin the bridleway by going through the gap in the little fence. Follow the bridleway to the roundabout. You need to go straight across the roundabout on the road signposted to Sandy.

*We suggest inexperienced riders push their bikes across the main road if there is much traffic about, using the traffic island.*



Route of Ride 14



LOOKING BACK TOWARDS ROWNEY WARREN

# Take the first left immediately after the roundabout (signposted to Ireland and Southill). If you wish to visit Shefford ignore this left turn and carry straight on, on what is the old road to Shefford (see Connections below).

*Sorry about the little hill up to Ireland, but it's not compulsory to ride up.*

# At the next junction go left into Ireland (right if you wish to join Ride 15, see Connections).

*Why Ireland? This was the camp of Irish labourers who built the railway.*

*Whether the Black horse pub has any Irish connections we don't know!*

# Continue on this road, ignoring two turnings to the right and it will bring you back, past more woods, to the cross-roads where you started. Take the second right turn to return to Bedford and to join other rides (see Connections).

*Cross the main road with care.*

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## CONNECTIONS

From Bedford

*This ride can be reached either by using Ride 18 from Priory Park or by largely off-road Ride 13 from Elstow. It is 8 miles from Priory Park to the start at Rowney Warren and just over 6 miles from Elstow. To return to Priory Park take the second right after Ireland and then the first left (signposted to Cardington). Go next left (at Warden Abbey) to*



START OF THE 'CONCRETE PATH' LEADING BACK TO ROWNEY WARREN

*Cardington where you turn left. Follow the directions in Ride 3 from Cardington to Priory Park. You are joined by Ride 3 where it comes in from the next left (Harrowden Lane).*

*To return to Elstow simply reverse the directions from where Ride 13 reaches Rowney Warren, but take great care going down the hill on the bridleway from Haynes.*

Rides 13

*Cardington, Elstow, Haynes, Rowney Warren. This ride offers a challenge to off-road enthusiasts and gives access to further off-road riding on Ride 18. The second right turn after Ireland puts you on Ride 13 just after it has left Rowney Warren.*

*Shefford If you wish to visit this interesting little town, continue straight on after the roundabout. It is a mile to Shefford centre and back .*

Ride 15

*Old Warden Circular. Take the second on the right after the Black Horse in Ireland and the next left (signposted for Cardington). Turn right at the next T-junction (by Warden Abbey) to join Ride 15. This provides a figure of eight ride of 20 miles or so. Alternatively Ride 15 can be joined via Southill (see Connections to Ride 16 below).*

Ride 16

*Southill/Old Warden. Turn right at the junction just before Ireland onto the road to Southill and you are on Ride 16. Follow the directions for Ride 16 and it will bring you back to the other side of Ireland, where you turn right to rejoin this ride. Including the visit to Old Warden Church adds 6 miles. The adventurous, having cut their teeth on shorter rides, might in due course wish to continue from Old Warden Church on Ride 15 (Old Warden Circular). If so then to return follow the directions in Ride 15 to get back from Old Warden Tunnel to the start of this ride at Rowney Warren. This will provide a lovely circuit of the Greensand Country of some 20 miles.*

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