

# Ashby Canal & Bosworth Trail – 24 miles

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## *The Good Cycling Code*

- *Be courteous! Give way to pedestrians*
- *Remember that some people are hard of hearing or visually impaired. Don't assume they can see or hear you.*
- *Carry a bell and use it.*
- *Where there are wheelchair users and horse-riders please give way.*
- *Follow the country code. Respect other land management activities, such as farming or forestry and take litter home.*
- *Keep erosion to a minimum if off road.*
- *Be self sufficient – in remote areas carry food, repair kit and waterproofs*
- *Be safe, wear a helmet and cycle within your capabilities*

*Happy Cycling!*

**Route: Ibstock – Heather, Shackerstone, Congerstone, Far Coton, Shenton, Stoke Golding, Dadlington, Sutton Cheney, Market Bosworth, Carlton, Barton in the Beans, Odstone, Ibstock**

**Distance: 24 miles with 22, 17 & 21 mile off road options.**

**Start/Finish: Car park next to Halls, High Street, Ibstock**

- 1 Turn left out of the car park into high Street and left at the mini-island up Chapel Street to another mini-island. Turn left by the supermarket into Ashby Road crossing the A447 with care towards Heather. On your right as you descent to the River Sence, used to be Heather mine, brickworks and clay pit. Between 1982 and 1996 this area was an opencast coalfield before being transformed into the Sence Valley Forest Park. It now contains many wetland birds including herons, kingfishers and tufted ducks and has been planted with Corsican pine, sycamore and popular trees.
- 2 Turn left at the mini-island at Heather into Main Street past the Queens Head which offers good value midday meals, St. John's Church and the Crown Inn and continue straight on down Newton Road towards Shackerstone. Stop at the top of the hill to view Tuckers Holt Lake to the left, a clay pit, which has been landscaped to form a fishing pool and bird sanctuary on the island. Straight on at the staggered cross roads with a small grass triangle, past the strangely named Help Out Mill and climb over the disused railway which is now the car entrance to the Battlefield steam railway. Stop before making your first crossing of the Ashby Canal to view this pretty village with a mound where fortifications once stood. Take care over the bridge and round the blind bends into the village. Light refreshments can be obtained after 10am from the station café by turning left down Station Road and right immediately after the canal bridge onto a rough track down to the station, returning down Church Lane to rejoin the trail.
- 3 The cycle trail passes straight through the village to Congerstone. Note the

- former entrance to Gopsall Hall where Edward VII once stayed in 1906, after arriving at Shackerstone station. Gopsall Hall was taken down brick by brick and transported to America. At the school follow the road to the left into Congerstone, crossing the narrow bridge over the River Sence. Follow the main road to the right at the triangle over the River Sence. Follow the main road to the right at the triangle with an old fashioned telephone box, and to the left at The Horse and Jockey Inn to cross the canal a second time as you leave the village towards Carlton.
- 4 At the grass triangle the 12 mile route turns left under the railway bridge and through the village to join the main route at The Gate Hangs Well Inn – go to paragraph 9. The main route turns right towards Market Bosworth crossing the Ashby Canal for the third time into an area called Friezeland. At another grass triangle turn right onto Wellsborough Road and left after 200 yards for Far Coton. The Bosworth Water Trust is on your right catering for many water sports, where refreshments can sometimes be obtained. Within a mile the route crosses the canal for the fourth time followed by a short climb into the farming hamlet of Far Coton.
  - 5 The 17 mile route turns left here followed by another left within a mile to rejoin the main route in Market Bosworth – go to para 8. The main route turns right towards Sibson and at the bottom of the hill before the canal bridge, turn left towards Shenton. Follow the narrow road along with the canal on your right at a T-junction and right again at a grass triangle into Shenton. Your fifth crossing of the canal is under the canal through one of the few aqueducts in Leicestershire. Take a glimpse of the hall grounds on your left and the old blacksmiths shop, now a house, on your right as you pass through the village. Turn left immediately after crossing a small tributary of the River Sence signposted White Moors passing Whitemoors Tea-room in 100 yards on the left where light refreshments can be obtained between 11am and 3.45pm and look round the antiques shops may be of interest.
  - 6 Continue along the road past Whitemoors car park to T junction. Here the 21 mile route turns left to rejoin the main route just before Sutton Wharf – go to paragraph 7. The 24 mile route turns right and left towards Stoke Golding. Left again at next T junction towards 'weak bridge'  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to cross first the disused railway and then the canal for the sixth time at the Ashby Boat Company, favours for making canal barges. Light refreshments are sometimes available there as well as seeing barges being made. Straight on to the top of the hill towards Dadlington to turn left at the George and Dragon into High Street, passing the White Swan and stopping to feed the ducks by the canal side. A short climb follows to turn left at the crossroads into Hinckley Road/Main Street and then right into Sutton Lane towards Sutton Cheney.
  - 7 After making the seventh crossing of the canal turn right towards Sutton Cheney being joined by the 21 mile route to make the eighth and final crossing of the canal at Sutton Wharf. Continue into Sutton Cheney and turn left towards Shenton. 100 yards past the Almshouse Restaurant fork right up a narrow lane (no signpost) to Market Bosworth. Close all gates on the unfenced section and look out for squirrels and pheasants as well as cattle.
  - 8 The 17 mile route turns left onto the main route which goes straight on up to Market Bosworth square where a number of cafes can be found. Historic Market Bosworth nestles around its small cobbled market place, where many of its picturesque buildings display heraldic crests. The town boats the

famous 15<sup>th</sup> century Dixie Grammar School where Dr Samuel Johnson taught as a young man. A beautiful Country Park is adjacent to the town and the nearby Bosworth Battlefield sites, make this town a worthwhile visit. Turn right out of the square onto Barton Road following signs for Carlton.

- 9 At the Gate Hangs Well at Carlton the 12 mile route turns left to join the main route and don't forget to read the saying on the gate. After the pub the road forks – the main route taking the left fork through the little known hamlet of Bufton to Barton in the Beans and continues at para 11.
- 10 An off-road section is available by taking the right fork. Straight on at the next cross roads and straight over the next T junction (Barton-Nailstone road) onto the bridle path called Green Lane. The bridle path is a mile off-road, at the end turn right back onto the main route.
- 11 Straight through Barton on the Odstone Road and turn right at Odstone towards Ibstock. The off-road section rejoins this road before reaching the A447 Ibstock-Hinckley road. Cross the main road with great care due to fast traffic. Continue down the narrow lane opposite taking care round the sharp left bend at the bottom of the hill go through a small ford to turn right onto High Street Ibstock against St. Deny's Church. Continue along High Street to the car park.

