

The
British
Horse
Society

Bluebell Ride

7½ miles from Eversholt
(with option to extend to 12 miles)



Explore Greensand Country on horseback



Greensand Country

An area of distinct, beautiful and loved countryside

Bluebell Ride

Explore ancient woodlands (with spring bluebells) and farmland developed from former medieval deer parks. Approximately 7 ½ miles but can be extended to 12 miles by also riding the Warren ride at the byway in Steppingley (point 15 on map).

This route is mainly on public bridle paths, some through lovely woods and several field headlands, but there is some roadwork on country and village roads and you cross the M1 twice, on bridleway bridges with high parapets.

Parking is by arrangement at Wakes End Farm, Eversholt, MK17 9FB. (w3w:///season.honeybees.sooner) £5 per lorry. Call 07834 526459

Alternatively there is a small parking area at the bottom of the byway in Steppingley (just north of point 15) (w3w:///plantings.demoted.intruders). Please park well to the side and do not obstruct farm access. This is not suitable for lorries.

If you plan to ride the Warren route as well, you can park by arrangement for a small fee at Woburn Forest Park & Ride in Fordfield Road MK45 2HZ (w3w:///flattery.reclaimed.starlight) Call Steph on 07775 663399 or book via Facebook.



Points of interest around the Bluebell ride

This ride begins in the parish of Eversholt, mentioned in the Domesday book, and named after the wild boar which used to live in the woodland in this part of the country. Indeed the Boar's head is still used as the emblem of the parish.



To the west of the M1 the route takes you through fragments of ancient woodland but once over the M1, the plantations are more recent, part of the development of the land under the Bedford Estate's ownership.



The route takes you around Park Farm, which has been used by the Open University as an example of a "model farm" – a planned farm from the industrial age, architect designed to incorporate and demonstrate improvements in agricultural techniques, efficiency, and building layout. This route passes close to several other such model farms all built by the Bedford Estate in the mid 19th century.

Much of Steppingley village is comprised of Duke of Bedford estate buildings – cottages, both former schools (one now the village hall) and the church, rebuilt in 1860 by the Duke.

Both Steppingley Park and Beckerings Park were formerly large medieval deer parks, Steppingley having been Crown property in the reign of Henry VIII.

At point 18 you are close to the remains of All Saints Church, Segenhoe, which dates to the 12th century but has been unused since 1927. This is fully accessible (on foot!) so why not come back and explore?



All Saints Church, Segenhoe

More information can be found in a fascinating video at www.tinyurl.com/segenhoe

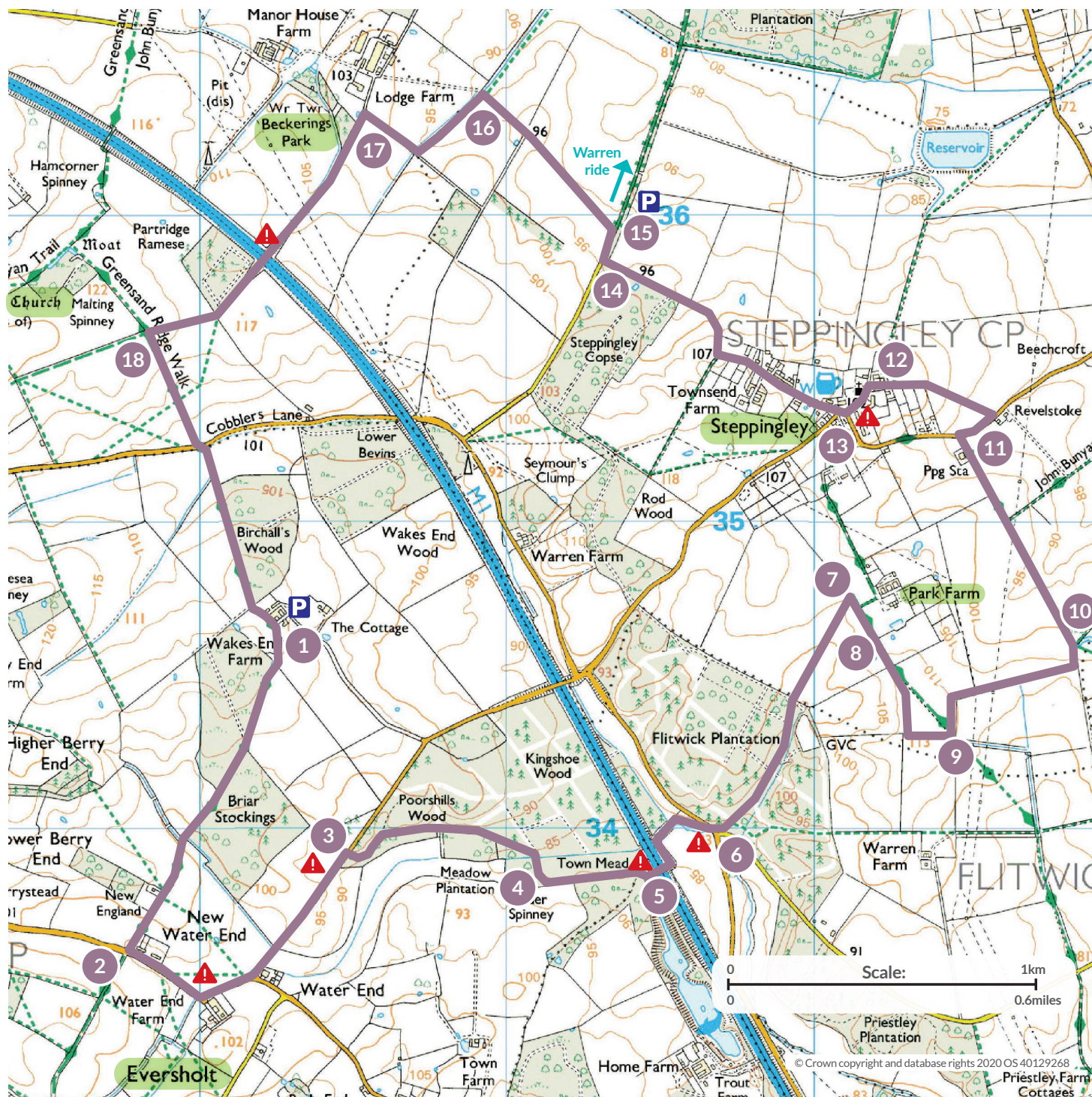


Muntjac were introduced to Woburn Park from China in the late 19th Century. Since then many escapees (and deliberate releases) have reproduced and expanded their populations, such that spotting a muntjac on a ride in Bedfordshire is now pretty commonplace. They are small (about the size of a Labrador), stocky and russet brown in colour in the summer and grey/brown in the winter.

You can find out more in this leaflet from the British Deer Society
www.bds.org.uk/images/PDF/Muntjac_Leaflet.pdf

Off-road cyclists

This route is also suitable for off-road cyclists but please remember that cyclists should give way to walkers and horses. Please pass other users slowly and with consideration. Be nice, say hi!



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- 1 From the parking at Wakes End Farm, join the bridleway alongside the fields (please ask at the farm as your exact parking location may vary), heading south – ie riding the route in an anti-clockwise direction.
- 2 Follow the bridleway downhill for approximately ¾ mile to the road at Water End in Eversholt. Turn left with care.
- 3 Continue on this road for just over ½ mile. As you start to go uphill again, take the bridleway on your right into the woods (there is a parking area with bin opposite). Take care crossing this fast road.
- 4 Follow the bridleway through the wood, bearing right at junction.
- 5 Cross the M1 on bridleway bridge with parapets.
- 6 Follow the bridleway to a gate at a 3-way road junction. Cross this junction (with care) and take the bridleway opposite, into Flitwick Plantation.
- 7 The bridleway emerges from the wood onto a field headland, uphill towards Park Farm. At the top, follow headland round to the right, through field entrance onto bridleway on track to the right.
- 8 Follow this track and then field headland, keeping the hedge on your right, turning left at the top of the second field to a metal gate at the start of a permissive bridleway.
- 9 Go through the gate and follow this permissive bridleway around field and out of gate straight ahead of you.
- 10 Follow the bridleway straight ahead past the junction with Bunyan Way footpath and down to the road by a pumping station.
- 11 Turn right on the road and after about 150 yards, turn left up bridleway.
- 12 At the top of the bridleway, bear slightly left along lane into Steppingley, past the church to a complex junction in front of the French Horn pub (horse friendly).
- 13 Cross this junction with great care and take the right hand road – Rectory Road.
- 14 Follow the road for about ¾ mile out of the village and past a wood on your left to a point where the road takes a sharp left turn. Turn right here on to a byway.

There is a small alternative parking place here to the right hand side of the byway but please ensure that you do not obstruct farm machinery access. This is one of the parking places for the Warren ride

www.greensandcountry.com/explore/horse-riding and you can extend this Bluebell ride by 4 ½ miles by taking the Warren ride from here.
- 15 Take the bridleway on the left towards Lodge Farm and Beckerings Park.
- 16 After about a third of a mile, at the end of the second field, take the bridleway on the left, with hedge on right. Then turn right at the end of the field, hedge now on the left.
- 17 At the top of this field, turn left and follow the bridleway to the bridge over the M1 which also has parapets. Continue on the bridleway, past a wood on your right and up to a junction with the Greensand Ridge Walk. Watch out for the junction and don't overshoot – it is about 400 yards after the bridge. Turn left on to the cross field bridleway leading downhill to the road.
- 18 Follow the bridleway down to Cobblers Lane. Turn left and then quickly right up the hill back to Wakes End Farm.

Horse Riding Routes in Greensand Country

The dry, sandy soil of Greensand Country is ideal for horses and hacking and the landscape is covered with grassy paddocks and riding stables. There's a good network of bridleways many of which, especially on the top of the ridge, are dry and mud-free even in the middle of winter.

More Information

We have also prepared an overview leaflet about the Horse riding routes in Greensand Country which includes

- Information about the other routes
- Tips to help you keep yourself and your horse safe and to make the most of your ride
- Places for you and your horse to stay in Greensand Country

This information, together with the other route leaflets and .gpx files of the routes, can be downloaded from the website www.greensandcountry.com/explore/horse-riding



Look out for these signs as you ride the route – the route is marked only in the direction described and not in the reverse direction.

What3words: Download this app to your smartphone to help you find locations and to tell others (vets, emergency services, friends) where you are. Each 3m square in the world has been assigned a unique 3 word address that will never change.

Emergency Vet contacts:

Please note that out of hours you may be directed to call another number

Buckingham Equine Vets, Maulden **01525 861995** (7 miles from start)

Chiltern Equine, Bury Farm, Slapton **01525 222099** (13 miles)

Meadowbrook Equine Clinic, Luton Hoo **0845 296 6675** (15 miles)

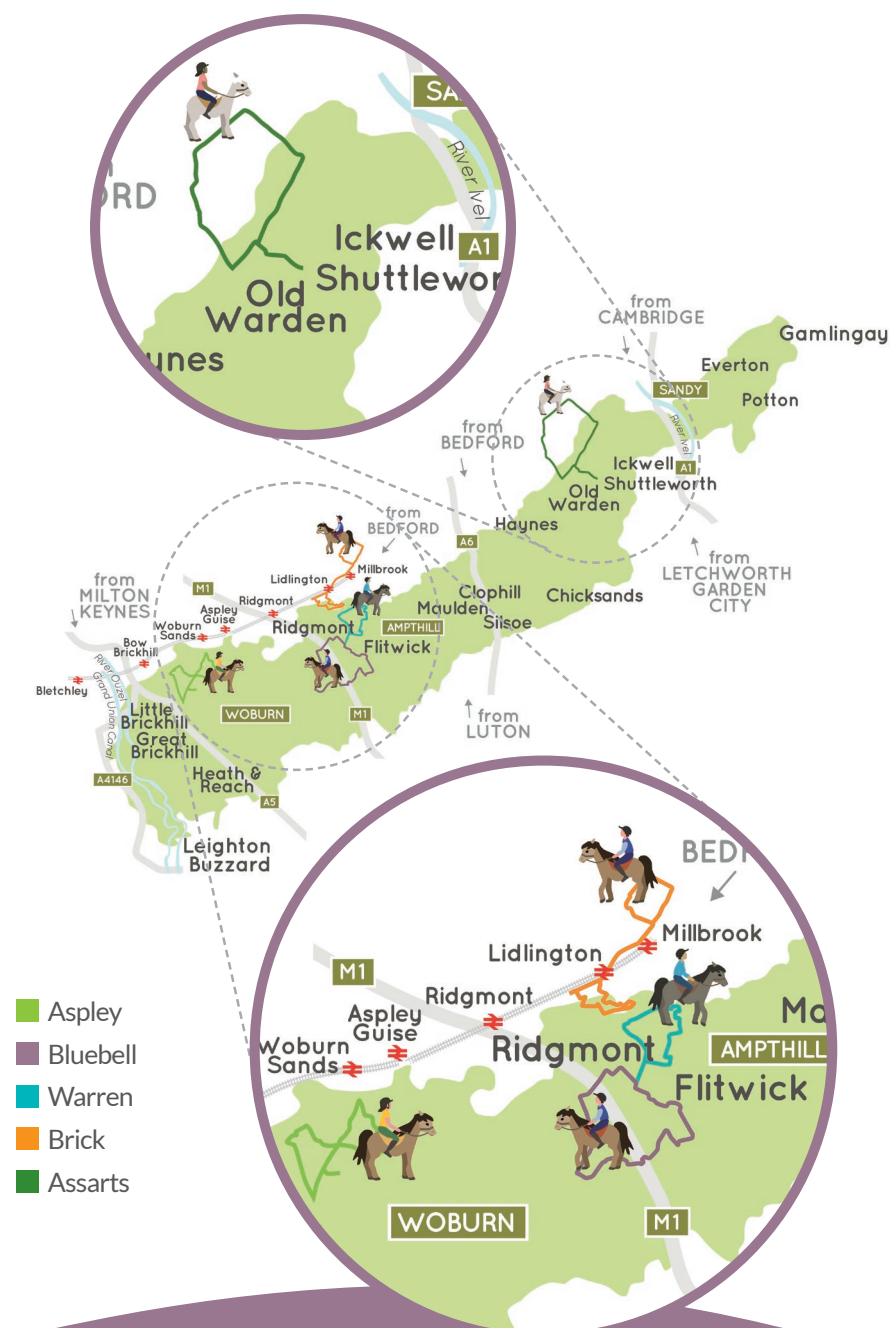


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All distances are approximate
Cover photo: PJB Photography

Version 1



Get involved: greensandcountry.com

