

The
British
Horse
Society

Aspley Ride

7 miles from near Woburn
(with option of 4 miles)



Explore Greensand Country on horseback



Greensand Country

An area of distinct, beautiful and loved countryside

Aspley Ride

Explore Bedford Estate plantations on former heaths, passing some ancient woodland and several points of interest. This route is predominately in woodland, a mix of broadleaf and conifers, on mainly sandy ground.

Most of the 1½ miles of roadwork is on quiet country lanes, but about ¼ mile is on a busy A road from Woburn Sands. This can be avoided if the northern loop is omitted.

Parking: Longslade Lane Car Park MK17 9HZ (w3w: /// alien.furniture.calm). This is a well-signed car park off the A5130 (signed to Woburn Golf Course) with picnic tables and a rustic mounting block. Car park opening and closing times change seasonally. Visit www.greensandtrust.org/local-site-aspley-woods to check opening hours. The largest parking area is to the left of the car park, about 100 yards from the entrance.

There are a number of permissive horse and cycle paths within the woods. Please do not ride on these without a valid permit (see www.greensandtrust.org/horse-riding). This route uses public bridleways.



Car park mounting block

Points of interest around the Aspley ride

As you leave the parking area and take the road heading south, you pass on your right Woburn Golf Club (opened in 1974 and host to some prestigious tournaments). To the left, part of the golf course lies within historic Little Brickhill Copse.

Bow Brickhill church, first recorded in 1185, was known as the Beacon Church - it used to be conspicuous, standing out like a castle on the hill, and was used as a watchtower during WWII. The hill is now wooded with the church less obviously visible from afar. The church can be visited by arrangement and the tower is occasionally opened to the public. See www.bowbrickhill.com/church.html where you can also download architectural information.



Bow Brickhill church

There are some excellent walks around Bow Brickhill – visit www.greensandcountry.com for more information.



Danesborough

The route passes close by the remains of Danesborough, an Iron Age hill fort dating from around 500 BC. Why not come back on foot to explore the earthworks? Find out more at www.tinyurl.com/danesborough

Woburn Sands was originally called Hogsty End, one of Wavendon's four 'ends' (along with Church End, Cross End and Lower End). The modern name is credited to a schoolmaster, unable to attract business to his "Hogsty End Academy".

The route takes you through the former Fuller's Earth quarry. Fuller's Earth is a sedimentary clay with excellent absorbent properties and is used in many beauty products and in cat litter! After crossing the A road you pass Fuller's Earth Lodge, a large picturesque style lodge building constructed in the 19th century by the Bedford Estate.



Fuller's Earth Lodge

After the Lodge, the route crosses Wavendon Heath, which was open heathland until enclosed and divided up in 1791, the majority then being obtained by the Duke of Bedford by 1840 and subsequently planted with coniferous trees.

Keep your eyes to the skies and look out for the telltale forked tail of the red kite... This magnificently graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail. It was saved from national extinction by one of the world's longest-running protection programmes.



Red Kite

There are probably around 1,800 breeding pairs in Britain (about 7 per cent of the world population). They are now so successful that the RSPB can't survey them on an annual basis.

Kites mainly eat carrion and worms, but are opportunistic and will occasionally take small mammals.

Read more at www.tinyurl.com/forkedtail

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 On leaving the car park, turn right onto road and ride to the crossroads at Kiln Ground.
- 2 Turn left at this crossroads.
- 3 About $\frac{1}{4}$ mile after the golf club entrance is a bridleway on right (signed). This bridleway crosses the heath but look out for golfers and buggies crossing. Note this bridleway is occasionally closed if a major event is taking place at the golf club. You can check events on the golf club website. If it is closed you should go straight on at point 2 and join the route at point 4.
- 4 Continue on the bridleway for about a mile. At the road, turn left and almost immediately left again onto a byway past the church on your right.
- 5 At the T junction, turn right uphill. Take path to left, initially uphill then down a steep hill. Turn left at the first crossroads, following path to the right and over a bridge to join a sandy track.
- 6 Turn right onto this bridleway and continue (ignore the bridleway forking to the right after about a third of a mile) to a crossing with a byway.
Options: you can return to the car park (and avoid the busy road on the northern loop) by either turning right at this byway crossing or by taking the earlier fork to the right. Your route will be about 4 miles.
- 7 Turn left onto byway, which becomes tarmacked, past Sandy Lane car park and to crossroads in about 200 yards.
- 8 Bear right here, onto narrower lane between houses and the woods. Then continue straight on for about two thirds of a mile.
- 9 Sandy Lane emerges onto Church Road. Turn right here and then take **great care** at the roundabout as you take the 3rd exit onto the A5130. Continue down this road for about quarter of a mile.
- 10 On your left you will see what appears to be a road turning (the now disused entrance to an old quarry), often used by walkers for parking. Take the bridleway on your left here. Follow this bridleway (named after a former BHS access officer, Pat Clarke) for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile until it rejoins the A road.
- 11 Cross the road with care, and continue on the bridleway ahead, past Fuller's Earth Lodge, back to the crossroads at 7 above.
- 12 Returning to the crossroads of byway and bridleway, turn left and return to the crossroads at 2 above, turning left to return to the car park.

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** (12 miles from start)

Chiltern Equine, Bury Farm, Slapton **01525 222099** (14 miles)

Meadowbrook Equine Clinic, Luton Hoo **0845 296 6675** (19 miles)

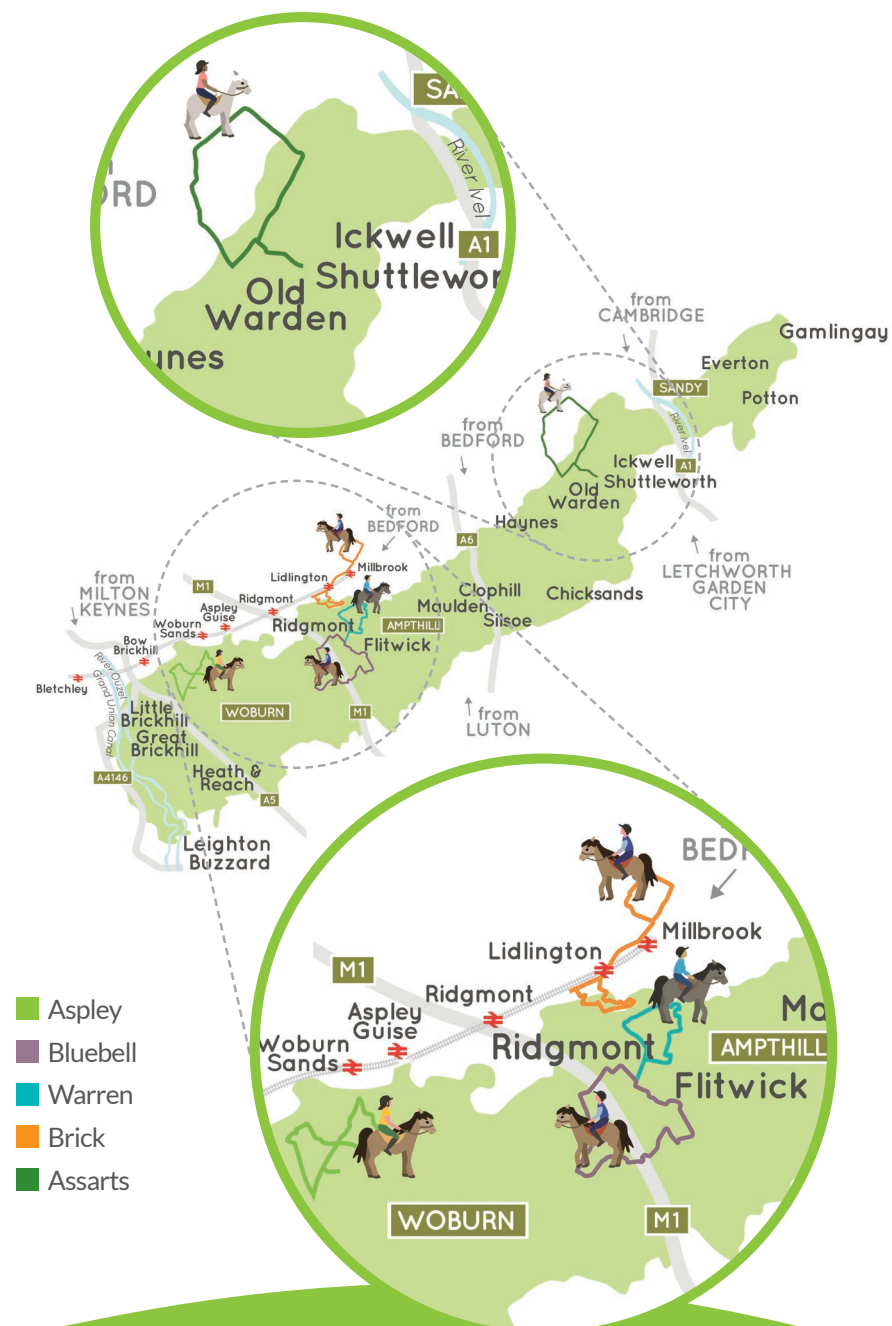


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All distances are approximate
Cover photo: PJB Photography

Version 1



Get involved: greensandcountry.com

