

Introduction

Distance	21m/34km or as little as 8m/13km
Start Point	Stilton
OS Map	Landranger 142 Peterborough

This ride is set in gentle, peaceful countryside and overlaps a little way into Northamptonshire, whose wooded areas remind us we are on the edge of Rockingham Forest. In Luton church and at the former Polebrook airfield are monuments which remind us of World War II. In the placid surroundings of Little Gidding, we encounter an exhibition relating to a religious community, who established a peaceful way of life which was wrecked by the Roundheads in the Civil War. This ride is mostly on relatively high ground, and it affords some extensive views across the fens to the east.

■ Cover photo shows former windmill, Gt. Gidding.

Points of Interest

Stilton (A)

■ Famous for its connection with cheese, this village is on the Roman Ermine Street. In the 1730s the landlord of The Bell Inn brought the cheese from Leicestershire and sent it to London by coach. Note the 19th century village pump near the red telephone box.



Stilton Church

Norman Cross (B)

■ A monument near the Holiday Inn commemorates the French prisoners of war, who were held near here in the Napoleonic Wars between 1797 and 1814, 1770 of whom died. Some houses from that period still stand beside the A15 road a little way towards Yaxley, including the large white house which was the residence of the Governor.



Norman Cross

Luton(C)

■ The church, which is normally open, dates from the 12th century and is on the site of an earlier church. It includes material from the former church at nearby Washingley, used in a 15th century repair operation. Of special interest are memorials to the crews of two Flying Fortress bombers from the former airfield at Polebrook. At the end of a troubled mission over occupied Europe on 6th February, 1945 they collided nearby with the loss of all aboard.

American Air Force War Memorial (D)

■ Just south of the crossroads, on the right is a memorial to the United States Air Force personnel who served here. There is a separate memorial to James Stewart (1921 - 1990), the film star who served here with the American Air Force as a Lieutenant General, in charge of a bomber squadron.

Great Gidding (E)

■ Note the former windmill (without sails) which is now a private residence.



The Giddings

Little Gidding (F)

■ Only the church remains of what was a Protestant lay community founded by Nicholas Ferrar in 1625, in the reign of Charles I, who visited them three times. The community, some 30-40 strong, consisting of family and servants, led a life of work, prayer and teaching. There is an exhibition at Ferrar House, near the church, telling the story of the community. This is open to visitors daily.

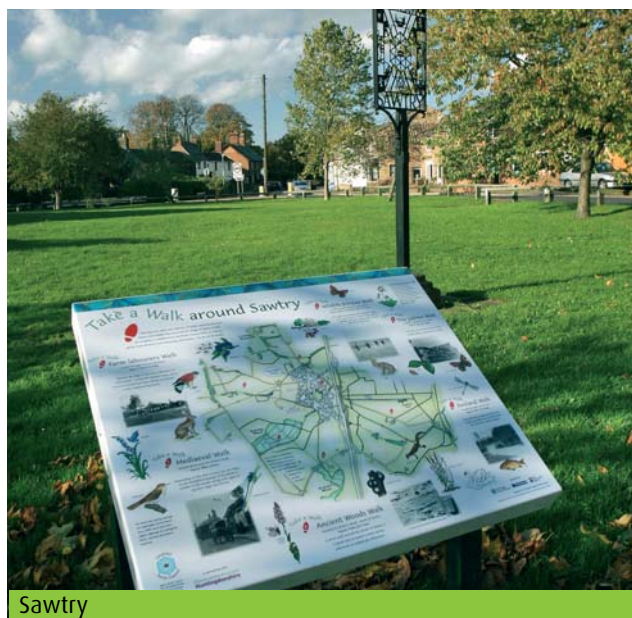
Steeple Gidding (G)

■ An off-road short cut to Steeple Gidding is via the bridleway from near the car park to Steeple Gidding church. This route was walked by Nicholas Ferrar. The Church is now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust. The village it once served has almost disappeared.

Sawtry (H)

■ This large village has plenty of places for refreshment. We do not know when the village of Sawtry was founded, but three churches were mentioned at Sawtry in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The three parishes were Sawtry All Saints, Sawtry St Andrews and Sawtry Judith.

■ The Cistercian Abbey of Sawtry was founded by Simon de St. Liz, Earl of Northampton in 1147 and was situated in the North East corner of the village. The three parishes were consolidated in the 19th century and in 1879 a new church was erected and dedicated to All Saints and St Andrew.



Sawtry

Denton (I)

■ This is a short detour from Caldecote on the main ride. Denton is a small parish stretching in a long narrow strip from west to east, and measures about a quarter of a mile across from north to south. These long, narrow parishes seem to represent the divisions of the marsh (or fen) by Turchil. He apparently added a narrow strip of marsh (fen) to Caldecote, Denton and Stilton, and so brought them into contact with the mere.

■ It is the birthplace of Sir Robert Cotton, famous historian and antiquarian, although there is no sign of where he lived. Sir Robert Cotton is commemorated because he assembled the largest single collection of 'original' Anglo-Saxon charters, now in the British Library. The 17th Century village church is a ruin.

Getting Here...



Rail Enquiries: 08457 484950



Bus & Coach Enquiries: 08705 808080



Traveline (bus/coach/rail): 0870 6082608

Huntingdon Tourist Information

Tel: 01480 388588 Fax: 01480 388591
Email: Hunts.TIC@huntsdc.gov.uk

St Neots Tourist Information Centre

The Old Court, 8 New Street
St Neots, Cambs PE19 1AE
Tel: 01480 388788 Fax: 01480 388791
Email: StNeots.TIC@huntsdc.gov.uk

Electronic Tourist Information Kiosks:

Huntingdon St Benedict's Court, Huntingdon
Ramsey Great Whyte, Ramsey
St Ives Market Hill, St Ives

For details of accommodation vacancies, contact Huntingdon or St Neots Tourist Information, or Huntingdonshire Association for Tourism's Vacancy Line Tel: 0870 2254858 (national rate call).

If you require a large print version of this information, please contact Huntingdon Tourist Information.

Huntingdonshire

DISTRICT COUNCIL

www.huntsleisure.org

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Huntingdonshire

Cycle Ride 4 - 21m/34km
Stilton & The Giddings



Drift Through Time...

www.huntsleisure.org

The Route

1 Stilton to Lutton Crossroads

Car parking in STILTON (A) is possible at the south end of the High Street, where the road is wide and straight and closed off to through traffic. Leave the village in a northerly direction (part of the National Cycle Network Route 12). At NORMAN CROSS (B) roundabout take the first exit, to FOLKSWORTH. The church is actually a little way out on the Morborne road, for those who want to visit it, but otherwise leave the village on Washingley Road, and after about ¼ mile turn right and go through WASHINGLEY to some crossroads.

2 Lutton Crossroads to Luddington

Go straight on through LUTTON (C) for one mile to another set of crossroads. Turn left (D) and continue through HEMINGTON. Turn left to pass the church and on to LUDDINGTON IN THE BROOK

3 Luddington to Sawtry

Go straight on to GREAT GIDDING. At a crossroads on the B660 cross into Chapel End and soon bear left to a crossroads (E) by the windmill. Turn right for one mile to the turning to LITTLE GIDDING (F). An interesting detour is to turn right to the church and the exhibition relating to Nicholas Ferrar and his community. Near the car park entrance is a bridleway (part of the National Cycle Network Route 12) (easily ridden) which leads to STEEPLE GIDDING (G). Alternatively return to the main road, turn right and soon right again to STEEPLE GIDDING where the grand church, which has lost most of its village, is maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust. Return to the main lane and turn right to the end. At a T-junction turn left to SAWTRY (H). On the way you can enjoy some extensive views. A prominent landmark is the distinctive pinnacled tower of Conington church, beyond Sawtry.

4 Sawtry to Stilton

Bear left in SAWTRY to GLATTON. At an offset crossroads on the B660, cross over into High Haden Road and continue for 1½ miles to a T-junction. Turn right towards Elton and after half a mile, turn right again to CALDECOTE (I) and to STILTON. Again there are extensive views of Yaxley church and the chimneys of the brickfields and the fens beyond. Entering Stilton turn right into St. Mary's Road to pass the church and reach the High Street opposite The Bell Inn.

Possible short cuts: 

Starting from Stilton:

From Lutton Crossroads to Caldecote - an 8 mile circuit

At the crossroads at the end of Section 1 turn left and continue for about 1 mile, then left again to CALDECOTE to rejoin the main ride in Section 4.

From Great Gidding to Glatton - a 17 mile circuit

At Great Gidding windmill in Section 3, go straight on for about 2 miles. Cross the B660 and follow the NCN (route 12) signs to CALDECOTE and STILTON

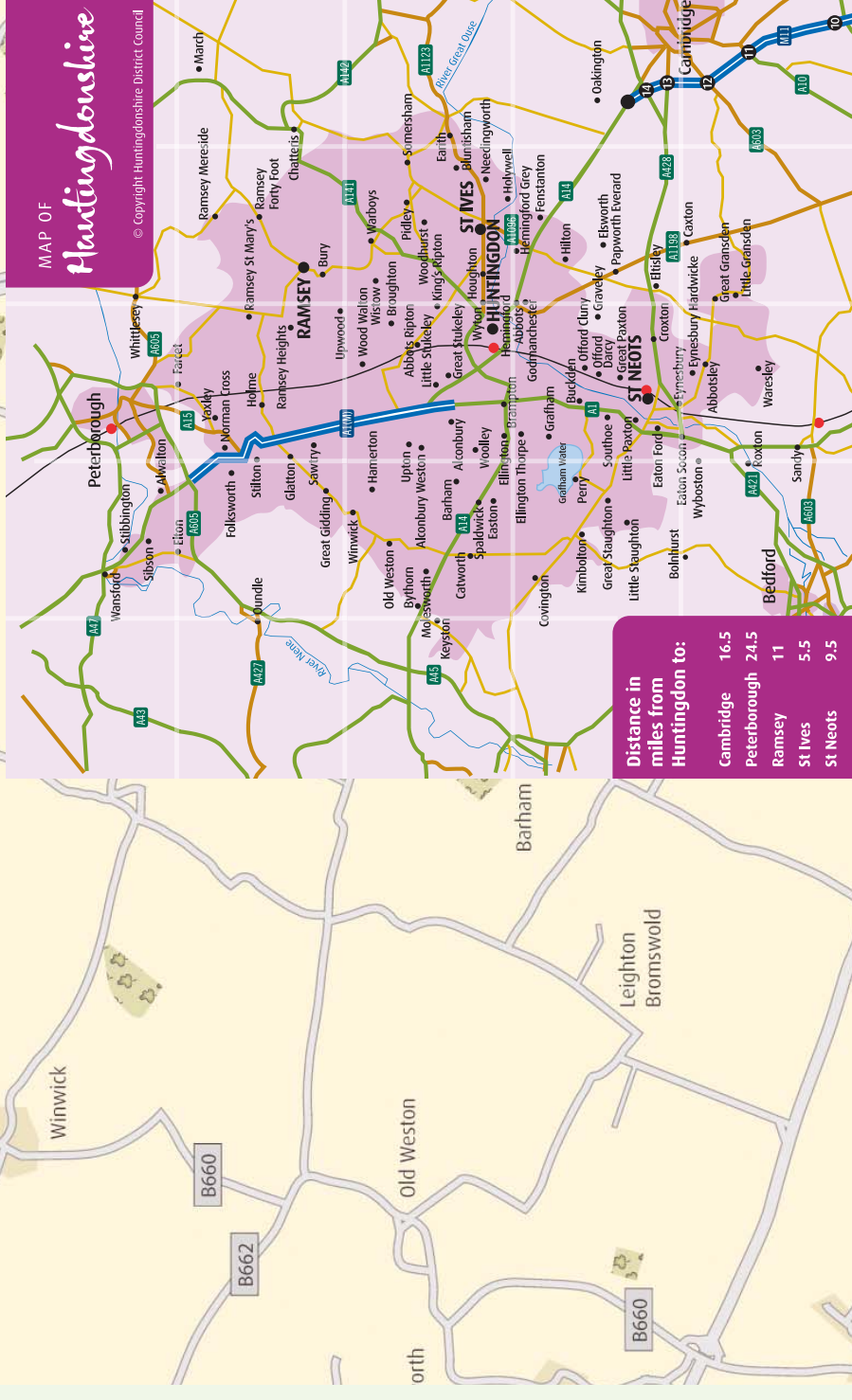
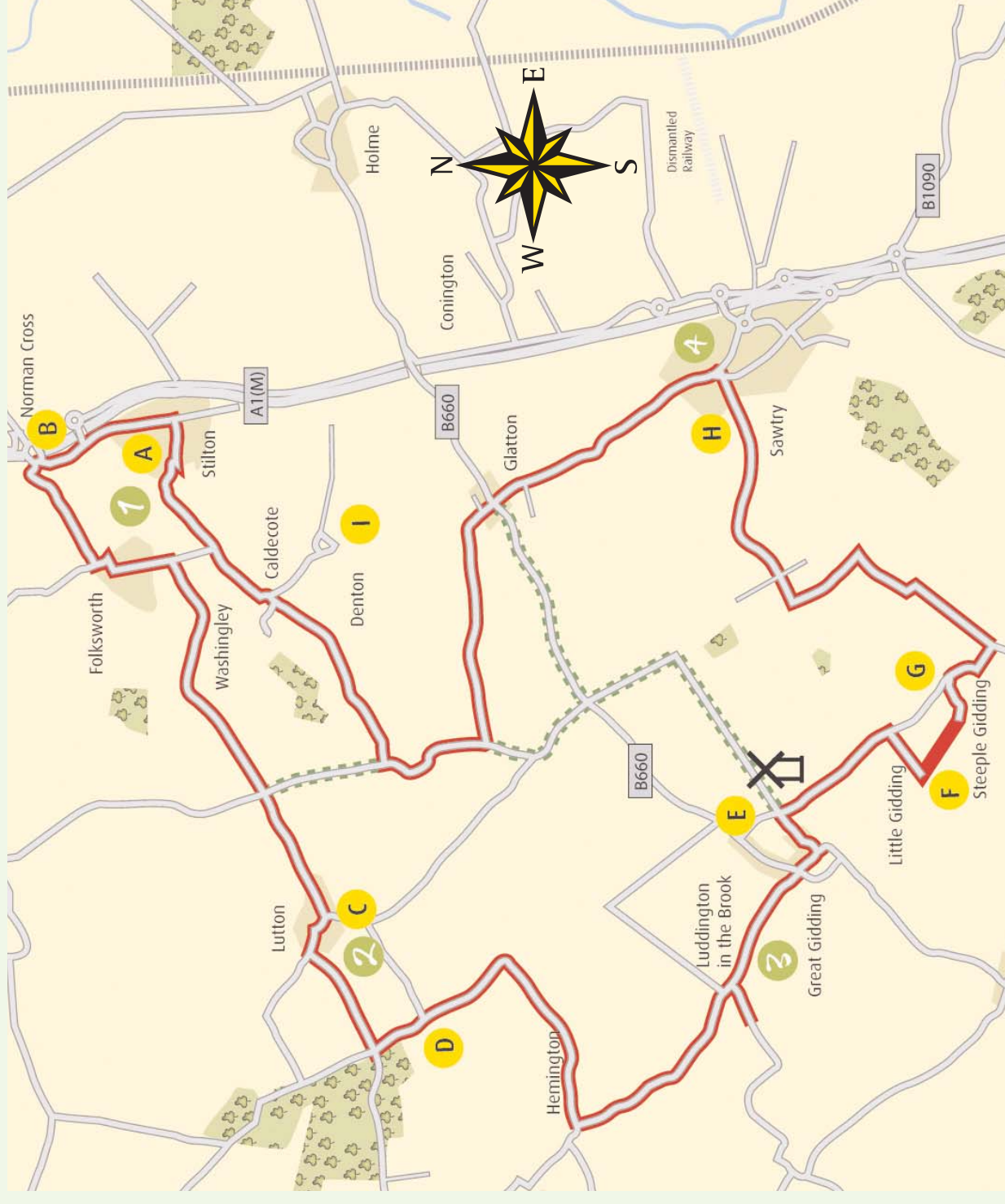
Starting from Sawtry:

From Glatton to Great Gidding - an 11 mile circuit

At GLATTON turn left on the B660 for 2 miles, then turn left to the crossroads by the windmill. Turn left to rejoin the main ride in Section 3.

Omitting Stilton - an 11 mile circuit

At the T-junction at the end of High Haden Road in Section 4 turn right and continue for 2 miles to the crossroads near Lutton. Turn left to rejoin the main ride in Section 2.



Stilton