

# Welcome

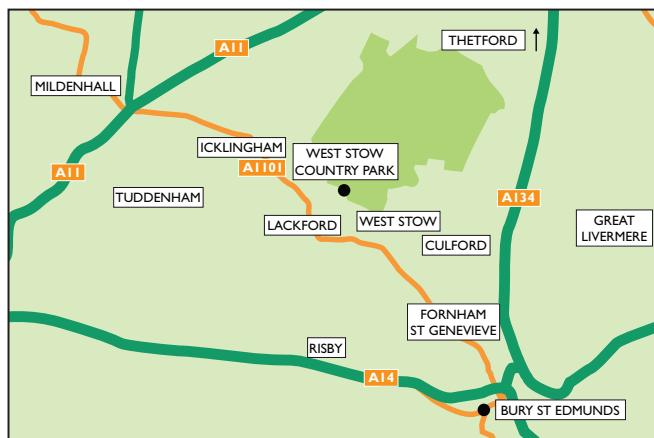
## to King's Forest Cycle Rides

King's Forest, named to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary, offers acres of trees, sweeping heathland, wide open skies and plenty of solitude. This is a very special area, filled with history, evocative names, undisturbed habitats and miles of walking, cycling and horse riding opportunities.

King's Forest Cycle Rides are two mostly off-road circular routes through and around forest, heathland and farmland. All of the off-road routes are on public bridleways or byways and all can be used by walkers, cyclists or horse riders. Routes have been described for cycling and some sections can be quite challenging. Be aware that some routes are also used by agricultural vehicles.

On or close to the Rides are West Stow Country Park, Rampart's Fields Picnic Site, Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Lackford Lakes and Cavenham Heath National Nature Reserve. There is also open access land at Deadman's Grave, Weather Heath and Berner's Heath, all of which offer a wealth of opportunities to roam to your heart's content and get really close to nature in the very heart of the countryside.

Both cycling circuits start at West Stow Country Park, where there are toilets, a café, an excellent play area, walks along the River Lark, a fishing lake and the famous Anglo-Saxon village.



King's Forest is located between Bury St Edmunds and Thetford. West Stow Country Park makes an ideal starting point, signed off the A1101 on the Icklingham Road.

You can cycle to the Country Park from Bury St Edmunds railway station (approx 6 miles). Follow Fornham Road onto the B1106 Thetford Road, through Fornham St Genevieve.  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles after the Fornham roundabout veer left onto a minor road which leads to West Stow, from where the Country Park is signed.

## Public Transport

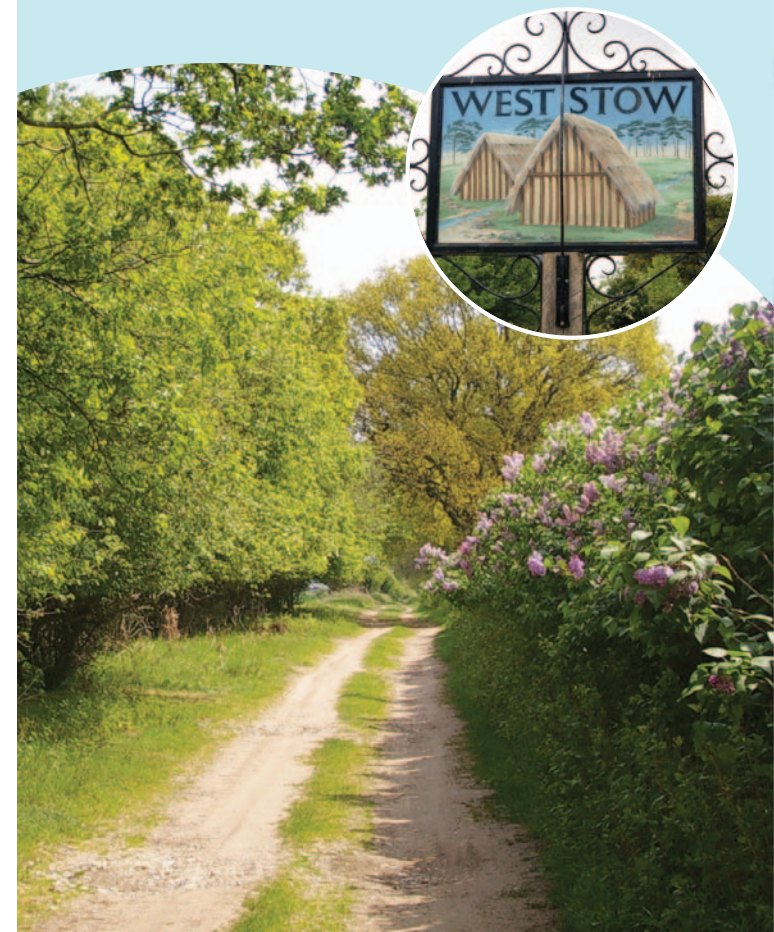
There are no buses to West Stow Country Park, but there are services to nearby Lackford and Icklingham, both about 2 miles from the park, connecting Bury St Edmunds and Mildenhall. Visit [www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) for timetables or [www.travelineeastanglia.org.uk](http://www.travelineeastanglia.org.uk) (08712 002 233) to plan your journey.

Discover more rides and many great days out in the countryside at [www.discoversuffolk.org.uk](http://www.discoversuffolk.org.uk)



# King's Forest Cycle Rides

Two circular cycle routes through forest, over heathland and around farmland





# KING'S FOREST CYCLE RIDES

## Horse Riding in the King's Forest

Both routes can be used by horse riders but please note, a section of the red trail follows the busy A1101, making it less appealing for riding. The blue route sticks to forest tracks and quieter roads.

You can debox anywhere on the fringes of the forest, wherever you can park sensibly off road, and the road outside West Stow Country Park is best for this. Please do not debox at the Country Park.





# Heaths Circular Ride – Oases of Calm

**Start: West Stow Country Park**

**Distance: 13 miles (18km)**

**Time: 2-3 hours**

**Surface:** On road to Icklingham and then mostly off road on sandy soils.

**Terrain:** Mostly level, but rises through Deadman's Grave and gentle rise and falls through King's Forest.

This is a ride through oases of calm. Along the route you go through, past and close to 6 different heaths, all designated as open access land. Be aware that although the public rights of way are always open for you to use, the rest of the heaths can be closed at times for conservation reasons. Signs at entrance gates will provide up to date information.

Turn left out of the country park **1** past Ramparts Field picnic site **2** to the A1101, turning right towards Mildenhall. Take care on this busy stretch of road. If walking, you can stay on footpaths by following the Icknield Way to Deadman's Grave.

Pass through Icklingham where place names evoke busier times; on the right are 'Shoemaker' and Telegraph Road; on the left are 'The Old Forge' and 'Dispensary Cottage'.

Between the two village pubs, opposite a large flint house, turn right **3** up a gravel drive along a byway; most of the remainder of this route is now off-road. Continue between fields, turning left at the junction to follow a grassy track behind houses. This is the Icknield Way long distance path.



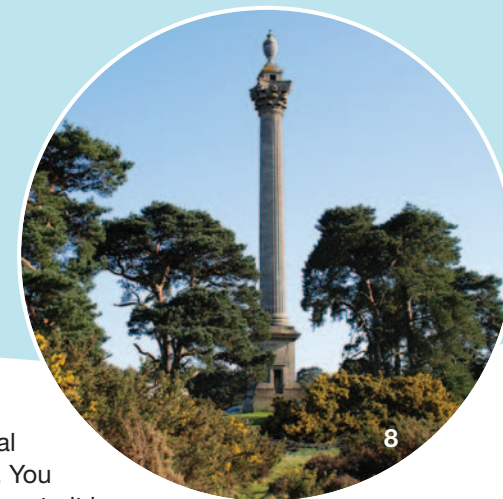
At a wide junction keep on the Icknield Way by taking the track to the right between a hedgerow and field. This byway is also known as Seven Trees Road and can be quite rutted – take care! You soon pass through a gate into Deadman's Grave **4**, one of a number of open access sites in the Brecks.

Deadman's Grave is a special place where sheep graze and Breckland Thyme grows. The gentle rise gives views of the surrounding landscape. Legend has it that this is the burial place of an executed highwayman who, in revenge at being denied a Christian burial, now haunts the mound on his horse scaring all who pass! Take care!

At some times of the year you can roam freely around Deadman's Grave. Check signs on the gate for seasonal restrictions which are in place to protect ground nesting birds.

Beyond here the track can be loose and sandy as it climbs up to the 'Seven Trees'. After passing through a gate the track passes two more open access areas – Berner's Heath **5** and Horn Heath **6**. Both will have seasonal restrictions for conservation reasons, but check the signs to see if you can enter on foot and enjoy these remarkable areas of heathland.

As the path levels out and changes to a chalk surface it passes concrete WWII ruins on the left until it meets a junction **7**. Here you can see the Elveden Monument **8** ½ mile (0.8 km) to your left, which commemorates the war



dead of four local villages. You can detour to it by following the byway towards the A11.

Turning right along a broad tarmac track the track soon splits. Leave the tarmac and keep to the left-hand fork, known as Dukes Track, alongside power lines to the B1106 **9**. The surface here can be very loose and sandy and at times is difficult to cycle along. Be prepared for some walking!

At the B1106 the route turns right although you could continue straight across to join the Kings Forest Circular Ride, making a grand circuit of about 22 miles.

By turning right you soon reach a large clearing on the right **10** with a small circular monument to King George V (after whom King's Forest is named). Take the byway to the right of the monument, known as Weststow Road, through deciduous planting and occasional clearings. The surface of this byway can be undulating at the start and splits and rejoins in places, but keep ahead until after 3 miles you reach the Icklingham Road where you turn left, **2** back to West Stow Country Park. **1**



# King's Forest Circular Ride – Plantations and Clearings

**Start: West Stow Country Park**

**Distance: 13 miles (18km)**

**Time: 2-3 hours**

**Surface:** Off road through forest on natural surface and some on road riding on return to country park.

**Terrain:** Gentle rise and falls through King's Forest and pleasant long downhill near the end.

This is a ride through and around King's Forest amongst trees, past open glades (where you can catch your breath) and down long straight tracks beside fields, paddocks and woodlands.

Turn left out of the country park **1** and after about ½ mile turn right onto a byway, known as the Weststow Road **2**. This is a 3 mile long, mainly straight route through King's Forest. It is a beautiful and slightly undulating route that is great fun to cycle although slightly challenging in places as it rises and falls as the path splits and reforms.

When you reach the B1106 turn left **10** and then right **9** along the wide gravel farm track, passing farm buildings, past a shallow 'ford' to a split at Barrow's Corner **3**. Take the right hand fork through a narrow belt of trees and across a field. This section

can be loose and sandy or even muddy, depending on the weather. You soon pass through another tree belt and the track crosses West Calthorpe Heath **4**. Head towards the edge of the forest and then bend gently left to follow the edge of the wood.

Continue along the edge of the wood, following an obvious track to the imposing thatched house of Wordwell Barn ('Happi Holme') **5**. After the house, just before their gateway, turn right onto a narrow track into the woods.

This byway continues south on an undulating surface of pine-needles through an area known as Traveller's Hill, continuing on almost level ground past the entrance to Balloon Barn Farm **6**, before it starts to descend. You pass a small wood on the right called Lime Kiln Plantation where chalk was once heated with charcoal to make lime, used on acidic farm soils and for making mortar for building. The descent is known locally as 'The Hill of Health' and leads to

the cottages at Brockley Corner **7**.

Turn right on to the B1106, keeping straight where the main road bends sharply right, and simply follow the signs back to West Stow Country Park **1**.

