

cycling

The Great North Way



32 mile cycle route between
Potters Bar & Letchworth
via Welwyn, Stevenage and Hertfordshire countryside

**GREAT
NORTH
WAY**

The Great North Way

Hertfordshire has some great countryside to explore... and what's more you don't need your car to find it. Get in the saddle and ride the Great North Way! This cycle route takes you from town into countryside using quiet lanes and traffic free sections.

The Great North Way is the latest in a succession of transport routes linking London with northern England & Scotland. Riding the route, you will cross above and below these earlier constructed road and rail links: the medieval Great North Road, The A1 and the East Coast Mainline railway.

The Great North Way (Route 12) forms part of the National Cycle Network. Conceived by the charity Sustrans, it is one of many safe cycle routes making up part of an ambitious countrywide network. When completed Route 12 will link London with Grimsby via Peterborough.

In Hertfordshire it takes you from Potters Bar (Hadley Wood) to Letchworth and Baldock - a 32 mile ride. You may not want to cycle all of the route, but why not ride part of it? You could even cycle one way and take the train back. See the Bike / Rail section on the back cover for more information.

The map also contains information on interesting places to visit along the route, with an emphasis on free and less expensive attractions. Take a diversion down one of three old railway line cycle routes, expand your mind in Mill Green or Letchworth Heritage museums, explore woodlands or take a trip around Letchworth on their recently opened Greenway. Refreshments can be found in the pubs and cafes shown.

If you live and work along the route, why not use this map to plan a cycle ride to work? Nearby schools are also shown to help find a safe way of cycling in on school days.

The Great North Way is surfaced to a good standard throughout so is suitable for cyclists of all ages and abilities.



Local Cycling Contacts

For the North Herts area...

North Herts District Council - Tel: 01462 474000
www.north-herts.gov.uk

Letchworth Heritage Foundation for the Letchworth Greenway - Tel: 01462 476000, www.greenway.org.uk

For the Stevenage area...

Stevenage Borough Council for Stevenage Cycle Map
Tel: 01438 242242, www.stevenage.gov.uk

For the Welwyn Hatfield area...

Contact **Pedal Point** at **Welwyn Hatfield Council** for more maps in this series - Alban Way, The Ayots, Cole Green Way & Welwyn Hatfield.
Tel: 01707 357551, www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint

For the Hertsmer area...

Hertsmere Borough Council for **Watling Chase Greenways**
Tel: 020 8207 2277, www.hertsmere.gov.uk

Other Contacts

Hertfordshire County Council:
www.hertsdirect.org.uk/cycleweb

Sustrans: www.sustrans.org.uk

Transport for London for cycle routes in London
www.tfl.gov.uk/cycling

Bedfordshire County Council: www.bedfordshire.gov.uk

Cycle Safety

Consider wearing a helmet & bright or fluorescent clothing during the day. Wear reflective clothing and use lights at night and in poor visibility.

On traffic free sections be considerate to other users, and use a bell to warn them of your approach.

Check our website for more information & news:

www.greatnorthway.org.uk

For more copies of the map please phone 01707 357551 or email pedalpoint@welhat.gov.uk

Public Transport

The Great North Way is easily accessible by rail at several stations along the route.



Why not cycle one way and take the train back? The route passes near to several railway stations and these are clearly indicated on the map.

Regular trains serve the stations between Hadley Wood and Baldock from London, Cambridge & Peterborough.

There are no restrictions at weekends and bank holidays for taking your bike on the train (although tandems are not permitted). For further information, and train times: www.wagn.co.uk



National Rail Enquiries

Tel: 08457 48 49 50, www.nationalrail.co.uk

Here are some potential cycle rides that can be made between various railway stations:

Hadley Wood – Hatfield	
10 miles	1hr 10mins
Welwyn Garden – Stevenage	
10 miles	1hr 10mins
Stevenage – Baldock	
7.5 miles	50mins

(Estimated times are based on an av. speed of 9mph).

Bus timetable information

Traveline Tel: 0870 608 2 608,
www.traveline.org.uk

Intalink at www.intalink.org.uk



Hertfordshire Rural Transport Partnership



01707 357551
pedalpoint@welhat.gov.uk
www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint

- all cycling issues in the Welwyn Hatfield area
- route maps
- maintenance issues
- information



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Cartography, photography*, leaflet design and lots of cycling by Stephen Wragg - Wragg Art House: www.wah.co.uk

*all photos by Stephen Wragg except: Welwyn Roman Baths legionary & Baldock Market - with thanks to Hertfordshire County Council, Knebworth Park deer - with thanks to Knebworth House, Stanborough Park sailing - with thanks to Finesse Leisure Partnership.



Located on the banks of the River level, the town is infamous for the **Stotfold Riot** of 1830. Today, in quieter times, go up Queen St to visit St Mary's Church, or further on take a stroll in Stotfold Meadows adjacent to the mill.

The county boundary marks the end of the Hertfordshire section of the Great North Way.

Explore 170 acres of farmland with 70 bird specimens, mammals, creepy crawlies and a working beehive. Watch wildfowl in their natural habitat from specially constructed hides. See all the farm animals on the farm trail and check out the children's play area.

Built in 1903 Letchworth was the first garden city, based on Ebenezer Howard's ideals in his book *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Reform* published in 1898. Utilising 4000 acres of land, Letchworth now has a population of 33,000. The visual effect of Letchworth's planning is seen in the quite impressive approach to its centre along Broadway with its avenues of linden trees leading to the Town Square and its attractive rose beds.

Parts of the Great North Way follow the Letchworth Greenway, this 13.6 mile route circumvents Letchworth passing through many local attractions. Parts of the greenway can be cycled and these paths are shown on the map.

The market town of Baldock is one of the county's oldest settlements, at the intersection of two ancient roads - the Icknield Way and the Great North Road. Dating back at least to Roman times, the present town was established by the Knights Templar in the 12th century. Baldock was an important malling and brewing centre and thrived as a coaching town.

Picnic here or walk through Manor Wood to visit Willian Arboretum with over 30 different tree species. On the way you will see a sculpture of the famous Letchworthian Telford Morton.

120 acres of beautiful parkland and an 11 acre sailing lake are a mecca for wildfowl and anglers alike. There is also the opportunity for watersports and a paddling pool and play area for children.

Old Stevenage was the site of an original Saxon settlement and has been influenced by every great period of history since. Picturesque Middle Row was rebuilt after a major fire in 1807 including the White Lion pub where prisoners from the Napoleonic war were rested in the cellars on their way to northern camps. Along Rectory Lane can be found the quaint St Nicholas Church & Rooks Nest House - the childhood home of E.M. Forster & inspiration for his novel *Howards End*. Stevenage changed drastically after being designated the first new town in 1946 following which six neighbourhoods were constructed around the Old Town. The town also features an impressive cycle path network which is an inspiration. Remember to keep an eye out for those 12 signs as you admire the roundabout cycle underpasses!

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Knebworth House was purchased by Sir Robert Lytton in 1490 after he served King Henry VIII in London. This Tudor manor house has been in the family ever since. For more information log on to www.knebworthhouse.com. In Old Knebworth itself can be found the Lytton Arms pub where you can enjoy a drink and an outdoor game of chess!

Though mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 the present village probably dates from 1267. Today Codicote Village has a number of village shops and pubs all of which provide food.

Old Welwyn was of strategic importance because of its location in the Mimram Valley attracting settlers from as early as the Iron Age. Later the Romans settled and built villas and bath houses, an example of which can be seen at the Welwyn Roman Baths under the A1(M).

This is an exceptional example of an Arts and Crafts church built in 1875, the site of the earlier church can be seen a little way to the north where only the churchyard remains.

This 200 acre wood is recognised as one of the finest examples of natural sessile oak and hornbeam woodland in Britain, located on the outskirts of the town centre. The town itself was the second garden city built after Letchworth with the Howard Centre shopping plaza named after the town's founder Ebenezer Howard.

Visit the local history museum housed in a fully restored and operational watermill.

126 acres of parkland are ready for you to explore! Visit the two lakes or the River Lea Hire a boat, go coarse fishing or learn how to sail at the watersports centre.

The house was built in 1607 as the seat of the Cecil family and is still home to Lord & Lady Salisbury. A stunning Jacobean house, Hatfield House sits in its own Great Park and has magnificent gardens and nature trails.

Set in Howe Dell, an area of grassland and woodland, is a *swallow hole* where the stream disappears into a basin shaped hole. It was created naturally by acidic water dissolving the underlying chalk and causing the soil to collapse. Steps lead down to the swallow hole from the footpath on the east side, next to the railway line.

An unmistakable landmark as you cycle this section, is the collection of radio transmitter masts over to the east. Serving London & the South East, it was one of the BBC's original transmitting stations. This mast dates back to 1929, and is still in use.

Potters Bar developed from its medieval origins, along the Great North Road (the High Street) in the 18th century and expanded further after the opening of the railways in 1850. In 1916 a L31 Zeppelin crashed in the Oakmere estate within Potters Bar. Nearby Tempest Avenue is named after the RAF pilot who brought down the airship in his BE2C biplane. The town has several attractive parks and open spaces, and an active Arts Centre near the station.

Minutes after entering Hertfordshire you can start to imagine you're in the depths of the country, though you are still inside the M25!

Don't assume motorway services are just for drivers! - cyclists have their own entrance directly off the route, and weather permitting you can back in the sun on the terrace!

Rural Rides Minutes after entering Hertfordshire you can start to imagine you're in the depths of the country, though you are still inside the M25!

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