

Towers and Spires

30 MILE LONG ROUTE OR **19 MILE SHORT ROUTE**

Key

- Towers and Spires cycle route (30 miles) on-road / traffic-free
- Shorter route (19 miles) on-road / traffic-free
- Suggested direction of travel
- National Cycle Network on-road / traffic-free
- National Cycle Network route number
- Notable gradient (arrow points downhill)
- Church of interest
- Railway with station

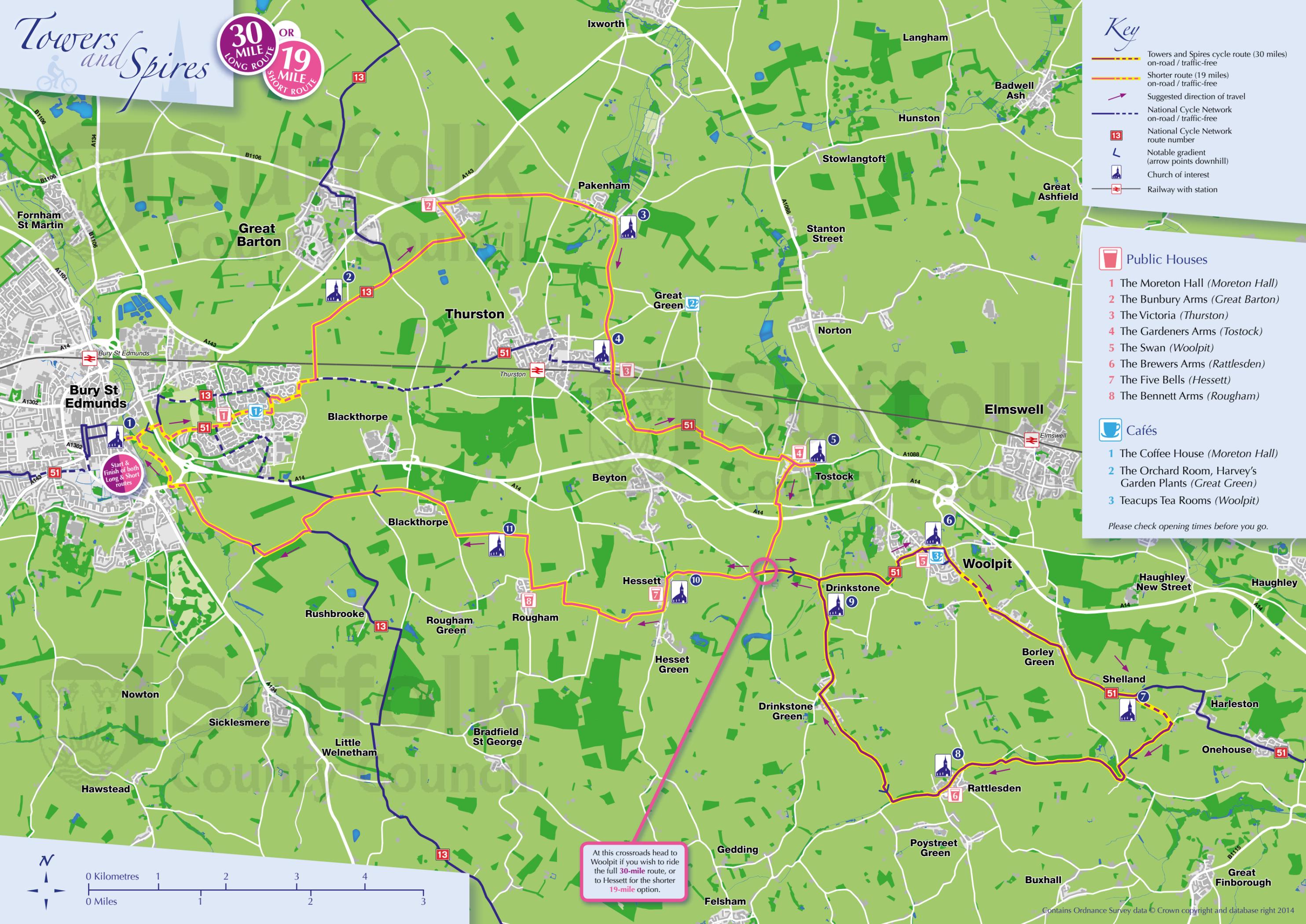
Public Houses

- The Moreton Hall (*Moreton Hall*)
- The Bunbury Arms (*Great Barton*)
- The Victoria (*Thurston*)
- The Gardeners Arms (*Tostock*)
- The Swan (*Woolpit*)
- The Brewers Arms (*Rattlesden*)
- The Five Bells (*Hessett*)
- The Bennett Arms (*Rougham*)

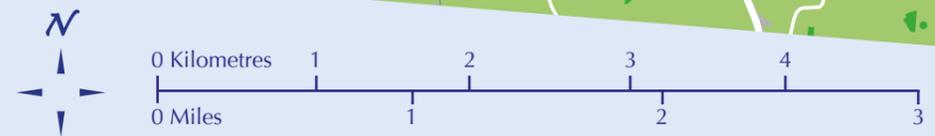
Cafés

- The Coffee House (*Moreton Hall*)
- The Orchard Room, Harvey's Garden Plants (*Great Green*)
- Teacups Tea Rooms (*Woolpit*)

Please check opening times before you go.



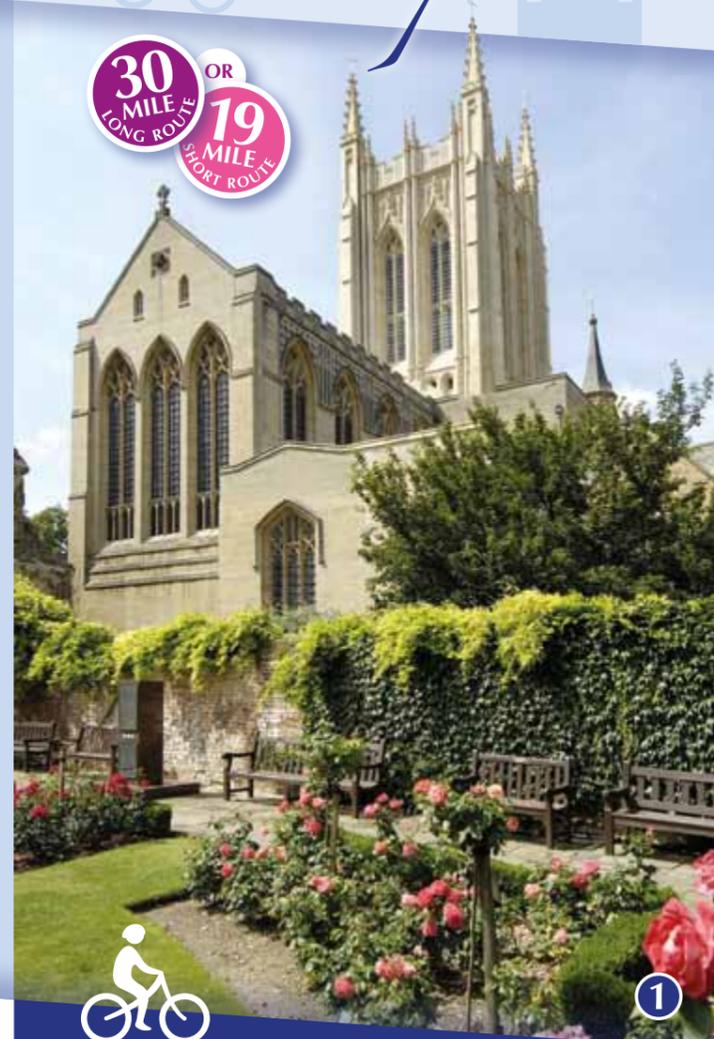
At this crossroads head to Woolpit if you wish to ride the full 30-mile route, or to Hessett for the shorter 19-mile option.



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30 MILE LONG ROUTE OR 19 MILE SHORT ROUTE



A cycling tour of churches east of Bury St Edmunds

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The representation of a track or a path is no evidence of a public right of way. Users of all routes shown on this map do so entirely at their own risk. ChurchCare and FourPoint Mapping accept no responsibility for omissions or errors.

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16,000 buildings. One resource.

sustrans JOIN THE MOVEMENT

A 30-mile cycling tour of churches east of Bury St Edmunds.

Towers and Spires

The shorter 19-mile route is ideal for families.

This is the first of a country-wide series of cycle tours linking our magnificent cathedrals with some of the remarkable parish churches surrounding them. Each tour will use the cathedral as a start and finish point and take in a number of our most outstanding churches en route.

Cycling through unspoilt Suffolk countryside, you will never travel far without seeing the soaring tower or spire of an ancient church.

'Of all the great English counties, Suffolk is the most truly medieval,' wrote author Simon Jenkins, and this is certainly true of its churches.

This tour, in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, will take you from the impressive St Edmundsbury Cathedral, at the heart of historic Bury St Edmunds, out into open country where you will ride along winding lanes, pedal up hills and freewheel down into wooded valleys. The lofty towers, built with the flint so characteristic of East Anglia – some with spires atop them – will spur you on.

Taking time to step inside the churches en route, you will be rewarded by spectacular angel roofs, exquisite carving and dazzling stained glass.

If you don't want to tackle the entire route, there's a shorter option for a more relaxed ride. Go at your own pace and make it a truly memorable day.

1 St Edmundsbury Cathedral

Situated in the market town of Bury St Edmunds, alongside the award-winning Abbey Gardens, St Edmundsbury Cathedral offers a warm welcome to all. Explore the architecture, which blends old and new, enjoy refreshments in the Refectory and take home a souvenir from the Shop. Open daily for prayer, worship and visits.

www.stedscathedral.co.uk

Churches along the route

2 Great Barton - Holy Innocents

This handsome church has an ancient chancel with a 13th-century piscina, used to drain the water used at Mass, and sedilia, the stone seats for the priest and his assistants.

Look out for the dog on a bench end, marking the time when shepherds brought their sheepdogs into the church as they were too valuable to leave outside.

3 Pakenham - St Mary

High above the village, this is one of a handful of cruciform churches in Suffolk, its tower rising from the central crossing. Note the west and south Norman doorways before entering. There is much of interest inside, not least the font with its meditating monks sitting round the shaft.

4 Thurston - St Peter

St. Peter's Church dates back to at least the 14th-century, but much of what you see today is the result of a Victorian restoration. This turned out to be more comprehensive than first planned when the tower dramatically collapsed on to the nave in 1860. Plenty to see including some fine carving, interesting glass and fascinating tombstones.

5 Tostock - St Andrew

This Grade I listed church is full of interest, including an early-14th-century font featuring a green man. Other delights are the creatures carved into the bench ends and a gorgeous double hammerbeam roof in the chancel. An exquisite painting to commemorate WW1 in an alcove south of the chancel arch has recently been conserved.

6 Woolpit - St Mary

The spectacular Victorian spire of this important church can be seen for miles. Look up to admire the decorative flint flushwork before entering through one of the most lavish porches in Suffolk. Inside, wonder at the famous hammerbeam roof with its profusion of saints and angels, the colourful medieval screen and the curious carvings on the bench ends.

7 Shellingham - King Charles the Martyr

This little treasure of a church, up a tiny country lane lined with wild hedgerows, is a pleasure to discover by cycle. Stepping inside, the Gothick wall colours and Georgian box pews might take you by surprise. Another remarkable survival is the 19th-century barrel organ that's still in use.

8 Rattlesden - St Nicholas

Set in a steep valley, this church sits at the heart of the village. The exquisitely-carved angel roof dates from the 1880s but the real wonder of the church is the complete 20th-century replica of a medieval rood (cross) and screen. Take time to admire the 1920s glass in the nave.

9 Drinkstone - All Saints

In a beautiful country setting, this church has a 17th-century brick tower built for ringing. This lovely building was restored in the mid-19th century and has spacious aisles and an impressive tower arch. The superbly carved rood screen of 1390 and medieval glass remain.

10 Hessett - St Ethelbert

A beautiful little church named for a Saxon king of East Anglia, murdered in 794. The tower is embellished with angels and pinnacles and inside are 15th-century wall paintings, among them a fine depiction of the Seven Deadly Sins. Learn about the medieval treasure discovered in the church and now in the British Museum.

11 Rougham - St Mary

This grand and lofty church with a soaring 15th-century tower stands some half a mile from the village. You can clearly see the names of the benefactors below the battlements, asking for prayers for their souls.

A superb hammerbeam roof in the nave and graceful 14th-century arcades add to its beauty.

