

# CYCLING DISCOVERY MAP



**Starting point:** *Therfield (nr. Royston), Hertfordshire*

**Distance:** *28 miles/45 km (or with short cut 22 miles/35 km)*

**Type of route:** *Day ride - moderate, circular; on roads*

## ROISIA'S PATH

This cycle ride starts from the village of Therfield, situated at one of the highest points in Hertfordshire. Close by, the prehistoric Icknield Way leads to the town of Royston, which grew up around a wayside cross erected by Lady Roisia soon after 1066. From Therfield, the route heads south into rolling, well-wooded countryside, offering pretty timber-framed villages and panoramic views. Along this route you can discover the milestones of Barkway, visit the tomb of the dragon slayer and view the poignant memorials to the US personnel based at Nuthampstead.



Barkway

### Essential information

<b>Starting point:</b>	Therfield - The Fox and Duck public house. Located 3¼ miles south west of Royston. Take unclassified road off A10 or A505.
<b>Alternative starting point:</b>	Barkway - The Tally Ho public house (High Street). Located 4 miles south east of Royston. Take unclassified road off the A10. Join the route by turning L out of the car park onto the B1368. Start from 'direction no. 15'. Royston (add an extra 6½ miles) - Baldock Street, beside Roys Stone. Two options available to join route. Option 1 - turn L onto Baldock Street. After 1¼ miles, turn L, SP 'Therfield 2, Kelsall 2½'. The road climbs to Therfield. Option 2 (mountain bikes only) - turn L onto Baldock Street, then take the 2nd L onto Briary Lane. Follow this up the hill. As the road bears L around the corner, continue SA onto the track (The Icknield Way Path). After about 2¼ miles, at the offset X-roads, turn L, SP 'Reed 2, Buckland 3¼'. Both options now start from 'direction no. 2'.
<b>Car parking:</b>	Therfield - The Fox and Duck (free). Barkway - The Tally Ho (free). Royston - Civic Centre; The Warren (charge made).
<b>Nearest railway station:</b>	Royston (3¼ miles north east of Therfield).
<b>Type of route:</b>	Day ride - moderate, circular; on roads.
<b>Summary of route:</b>	Therfield - Kelshall - Sandon - Reed - Barkway - Anstey - Brent Pelham - Meesden - Nuthampstead - Barley - Therfield.
<b>Distance:</b>	28 miles/45 km.
<b>Short cut:</b>	From Barkway Park Golf Centre, east along unclassified road to Nuthampstead, 1 mile (2 km). Total route with short cut, 22 miles (35 km). Two smaller loops are also available, starting from either Therfield 7 miles (11 km) or Barkway 15 miles (24 km).
<b>Terrain:</b>	Gently rolling. Several easy climbs. Lowest point - 328 feet (100 metres) at Barley. Highest point - 551 feet (168 metres) at Therfield.
<b>Cycle repair:</b>	None available on this route. Nearest are 3¼ miles north east at Royston - Newdales, 16 High Street (01763) 247911.
<b>Ordnance Survey map area:</b>	Landrangers 153 - Bedford & Huntingdon; 154 - Cambridge & Newmarket; 166 - Luton & Hertford; and 167 - Chelmsford.

### Key to Symbols & Abbreviations

	Cycle Parking
	Places of Interest
	Refreshments
	Children Welcome
	Picnic Site
	Shop
	Toilets
	Tourist Information
	Caution/Take care
L	Left Turn
R	Right Turn
T-j	T-junction
SA	Straight Across/Ahead
X-roads	Cross roads
SP	Sign-posted
NS	Not Sign-posted

Therfield



# Points of Interest (listed as you would find them along the route)

Please note: within this map there is only room to list basic details regarding opening times. In this respect, if you are planning to visit any of the places of interest on this route, we advise you to telephone in advance to confirm exact opening days and times. Refreshment establishments listed on this map are just a small selection of those available. For further information, please contact the nearest Tourist Information Centre.

- A Therfield** - attractive village, with thatched and timber-framed houses centred around a triangular green. Grassy mound of former 12th C. castle.  
🍷 The Fox and Duck public house.  
🏰 **St. Mary's Church** - contains 14th C. stone depicting a tiny bearded man, and a cedarwood memorial showing the figures of Father Time and Death.  
**Therfield Heath** - extensive chalk grassland, with a rich flora and breathtaking views. The prehistoric highway, The Icknield Way crosses the heath and along its route are Stone and Bronze Age barrows (burial grounds).  
✂️ **The Fox and Duck** (01763) 287246. 🚰
- B Just off the route** - Royston (31/4 miles north east of Therfield). Busy market town, which grew up around a cross erected by Lady Roisia (around 1066). This marked the intersection of The Icknield Way and 'Roman' Ermine Street. Market - Wed, Sat. 🗺️  
🍷 Baldock Street (by 'Old Post Office' pub); Church Lane; Kneesworth Street (opposite railway station); Melbourne Street (next to health centre); Melbourne Street/Melbourne Road X-roads (opposite cross monument).  
🏰 **Church of St. John the Baptist** (Melbourn Street) - chancel from 12th C. priory church, dissolved in 1536. Original features include lancet windows and south aisle wooden roof.  
**Priory Memorial Gardens** (Priory Lane) - dedicated in 1953, including memorial to US 91st Bomb Group based at nearby Bassingbourn during 1942-45.  
**Royse Stone** (Baldock Street) - glacial stone pushed south during the Ice Age. It once formed the base of Lady Roisia's Cross, and stands adjacent to the crossroads.  
**Royston and District Museum** (Lower King Street) - local history including tapestry and 20th C. glass and ceramics. Open all year. Admission free. (01763) 242587.  
**Royston Cave** (Melbourn Street) - man-made cave, with medieval wall carvings. It may have been used by the Knights Templar. Open Apr-Sept. Admission charge. (01763) 245484.  
**The Old Palace** (Kneesworth Street) - remains of hunting lodge used by King James I (1566-1625) and his court, on their regular visits to hunt on the heath. *Not open to the public.*  
✂️ Wide selection throughout town.  
🗺️ Bus Station; Fish Hill; The Cross (Kneesworth Street).
- C Kelshall** - one of a group of villages established by the Saxons along the chalk ridge. Thatched houses and remains of two medieval crosses.  
🏰 **St. Faith's Church** - 14th C. with painted rood screen and fragments of medieval roof paintings.
- D Sandon** - scattered village with cottages and farmhouses set around a large area of common land. The 17th C. manor house 'Sandon Bury' has a gabled barn and dovecote.  
🏰 **St. Mary's Church** - 14th C. its tower propped up with brick buttresses. The foundations of England's oldest known windmill (14th C.) were found nearby.
- E Reed** - Hertfordshire's highest village at 518ft high. It has no real centre, just a series of winding lanes. There are traces of six medieval moats of former homesteads.  
🏰 **St. Mary's Church** - Saxon in origin, their work can be seen in the nave. The tower is 15th C.  
✂️ **The Cabinet** (01763) 848366. 🚰  
**Silver Ball Café** (01763) 848200. 🚰
- F Barkway** - large village, with an elegant High Street lined with attractive buildings reflecting its prosperity during the 17/18th C. coaching age.  
🏰 **Church of St. Mary Magdalene** - 13th C. chancel with unusual stone figures, and tomb of Admiral Sir John Jennings who helped to capture Gibraltar in 1704.  
**Milestone** - most southerly of a series of milestones set up along the road to Cambridge. It bears the arms of Trinity Hall, who provided the money for their erection in 1725.  
✂️ **The Tally Ho** (01763) 848389. 🚰
- G Anstey** - small hamlet. The old well sits under a wooden structure. Behind the church is the overgrown mound and moat of the former Norman castle.  
**Blind George** - in 1831, this local fiddler accepted a bet to explore a nearby cave called the 'Devil's Hole'. Accompanied by his dog, he entered the cave playing his fiddle so that people could follow his progress above ground. But later his playing stopped, there was a scream, then silence. The dog emerged with its coat singed off, but the fiddler was never seen again.  
🏰 **St. George's Church** - 13th C. cruciform church with Norman tower. Medieval graffiti. The 15th C. lychgate was adapted in 1831 to create the lock-up.  
✂️ **The Chequers** (01763) 848000. 🚰
- H Brent Pelham** - pretty hilltop village set amongst deeply sunken lanes. Medieval stocks and whipping post.  
🏰 **St. Mary's Church** - 11th C. tomb of the dragon slayer, Piers Shonks. It depicts a cross (driven like a spear) through the beast's jaws. But the dragon's death displeased the Devil who vowed to take Piers' soul, whether buried within the church or out. So Piers was interred neither inside nor outside the building, but in the wall itself.  
✂️ **The Black Horse** (01279) 777305. 🚰
- I Meesden** - this village of thatched houses and farmsteads has moved over the centuries (1/2 mile), from its original position beside the church.  
🏰 **St. Mary's Church** - hidden in a wood, with a 12th C. nave and mosaic tile pavement (14th C.).
- J Nuthampstead** - scattered hamlet set in woodland. Once the location for a major Second World War airfield. It closed in 1959. The Woodman Inn contains memorabilia.  
🏰 **USAAF Memorials** - to the US 55th Fighter Group who served at the airfield from Sept 1943 to Apr 1944, and the US 398th Bomb Group who served at the airfield from Apr 1944 to Jun 1945.  
✂️ **The Woodman Inn** (01763) 848328. 🚰
- K Barley** - large and attractive village, with a High Street lined with plaster and weather-boarded houses.  
Little 17th C. half-timbered lock-up. 🗺️  
🏰 **Fox and Hounds** - rare gallows-style sign spanning the road, with figures of the fox, hounds and huntsmen. The original 'Fox and Hounds' burnt down in 1950, so the sign was moved to outside the Waggon and Horses, which promptly changed its name.  
**St. Margaret's Church** - rebuilt in 1871, incorporating 12th C. tower with Norman arch. Two former rectors became Archbishops of Canterbury.  
**The Town House** - this 16th C. building has been a workhouse, school and now the village hall.  
✂️ **The Chequers** (01763) 848378. 🚰  
**Fox and Hounds** (01763) 848459. 🚰

# ROUTE DIRECTIONS

**STARTING POINT:** Therfield (The Fox and Duck public house).

**A** Therfield - attractive village. 🏡 🏠 ✖

**1** From the car park, turn R onto the side road. Then at the T-j with the main road, turn L (NS).

**B** Just off the route - Royston (turn R at this T-j).  
Busy market town. 🏡 🏠 ✖ 🚰 🚽

There are two options to reach the town. Option 1 - continue SA along the road for about 2 miles. Then at the T-j, turn R for 1 1/4 miles. △  
Option 2 - at the offset X-roads on the outskirts of Therfield, turn R onto Mill Lane. After 1/4 mile, continue SA along the track (The Icknield Way Path). After 2 miles you reach Briary Lane in Royston, remain on this to the bottom of the hill, then turn R. △

**2** Turn R, SP 'Kelshall, Sandon and Baldock'.

**3** Turn L, SP 'Kelshall 3/4, Sandon 2 1/4'.

**4** Turn L, SP 'Kelshall 1/2, Sandon 2 1/4'.

**C** Kelshall - set along chalk ridge with thatched houses. 🏡

**5** Turn L, SP 'Buckland 2 3/4, Buntingford 5'.

**D** Sandon - area of common land. 🏡

**6** Turn L, SP 'Buckland 2 1/2, Buntingford 4 3/4'.



*St. Mary's Church, Reed*

**7** Turn L, SP 'Buckland 2'.

**8** At the T-j, turn L (NS). The road crosses over the infant River Rib.

**9** Turn R onto Dane End, SP 'Reed and Barkway'.

**10** Turn R, SP 'Reed and Royston'. △

**11** At the T-j, cross the A10 to the cycle/pedestrian path on the opposite side. △  
Turn R along this path towards Hertford and Buntingford. Then take the next L onto Blacksmith's Lane, SP 'Reed'.

**E** Reed - Hertfordshire's highest village. 🏡 ✖

**12** Turn R onto Church Lane, then next L onto Driftway. Bear L around the corner into the High Street. At the T-j, turn R onto Crow Lane.

**13** Turn R (NS). There are extensive views from this road to Cambridge and beyond. △

**F** Barkway - elegant High Street. 🏡 ✖

**14** Turn R onto the B1368, SP 'Hare Street and Braughing'. △

**15** Turn L onto Nuthampstead Road, SP 'Barkway Park, Nuthampstead and Anstey'.

**16** Turn R, SP 'Anstey'.



**G** Anstey - small hamlet. 🏡 ✖

**17** Turn R, SP 'Hare Street 2 3/4, Buntingford 4 3/4'.

**18** Turn L, SP 'Brent Pelham 2 1/4'.

**19** Turn L, SP 'Meesden'. Alternatively, if you want to visit the village of Brent Pelham, turn R.

**H** Brent Pelham - medieval stocks and whipping post. 🏡 ✖

**20** Bear L around the corner, SP 'Meesden'.

**I** Meesden - thatched houses and farmsteads. 🏡

**21** As the road bears sharply L around the corner, turn R, SP 'Nuthampstead'.

**22** Turn R, SP 'Barley'.

**J** Nuthampstead - hamlet set in woodland. 🏡 ✖

**23** Turn L (NS). If you were to go SA you would go into a dead-end road.

**24** Turn R, SP 'Barley'.

**25** In the little hamlet of Shaftenhoe End, turn L, SP 'Barley'.

**K** Barley - plaster and weather-boarded houses. 🏡 ✖ 🚰

**26** Turn L (NS) into the village centre. The road passes under the famous Fox and Hounds pub sign. At the T-j with the B1368, turn L towards Barkway (NS). Then take the next L into Smith's End Lane (NS). △

**27** Turn R, SP 'Barkway'.

**28** Turn L onto the B1368, SP 'Barkway'. If you prefer you can walk this small stretch back to Barkway using the pavement on the L. Over to your R is Newsells Park. This parish was the home of Lady Roisia, wife of the Lord of Newsells. △

**29** Turn R, SP 'Reed'. △

**30** Turn L back into Crow Lane, SP 'Reed'.

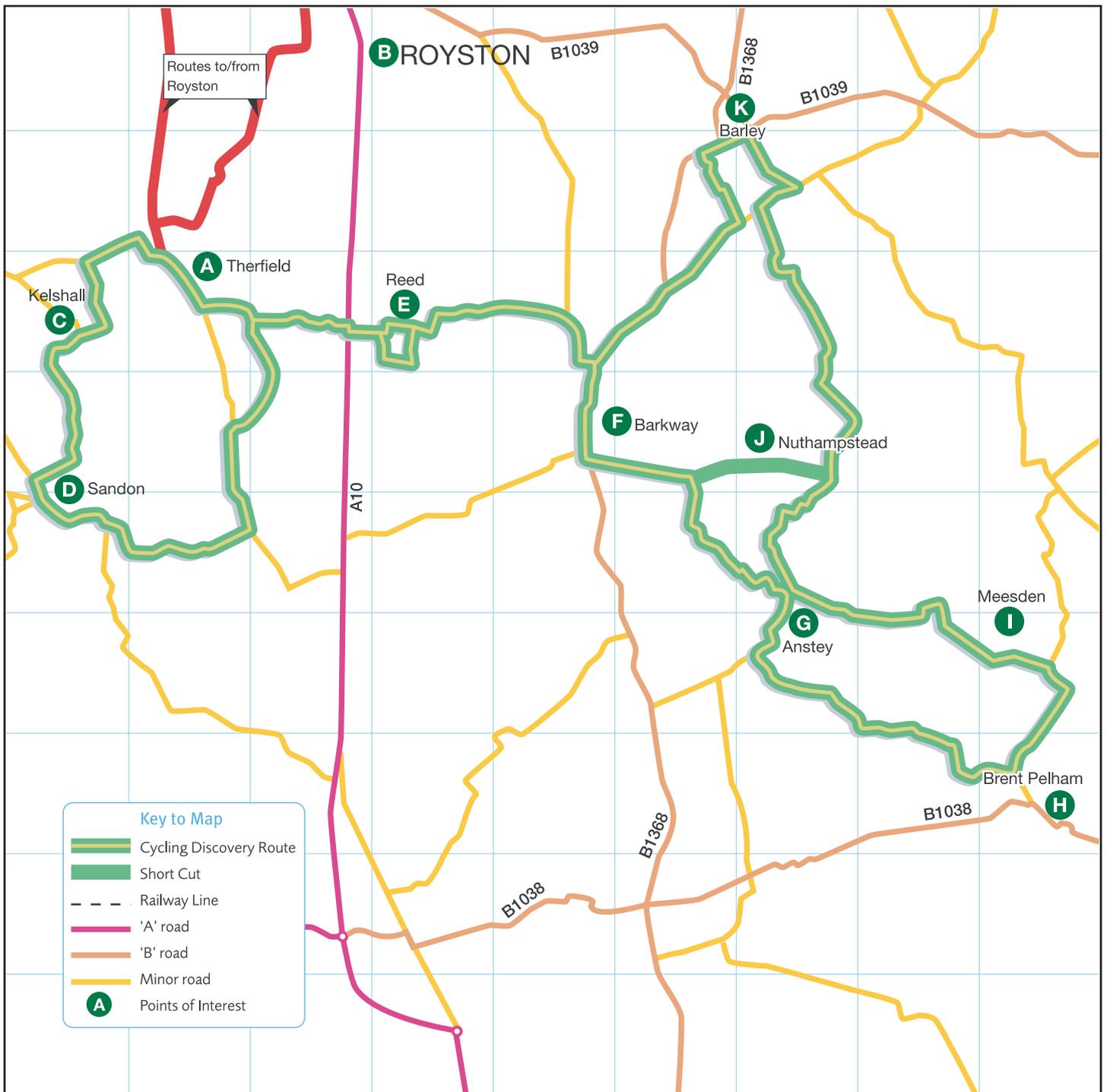
**31** Turn L onto Hobbs Hayes (NS).

**32** Just before reaching the T-j with the A10, bear R onto the cycle/pedestrian path. Then turn L over the A10, SP 'Therfield'. Follow the road back to the village (and the Fox and Duck public house). △

**Short cut** (1 mile). Total route with short cut - 22 miles.

Continue SA, SP 'Nuthampstead'.

**Please now continue from 'J Nuthampstead'**



The Map shown in this route provides just a general outline - In this respect, we recommend that you purchase the Ordnance Survey Landranger Map which covers the area. Ordnance Survey map area: Landrangers 153 - Bedford & Huntingdon; 154 - Cambridge & Newmarket; 166 - Luton & Hertford; and 167 - Chelmsford. 'Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO ©Crown copyright (2006). All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100017282'.

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