

14 miles | 22 km

cycle route

5

Medieval Maze and Victorian Splendour

 **RIDE WELL**

Start - Burton upon Stather

Description

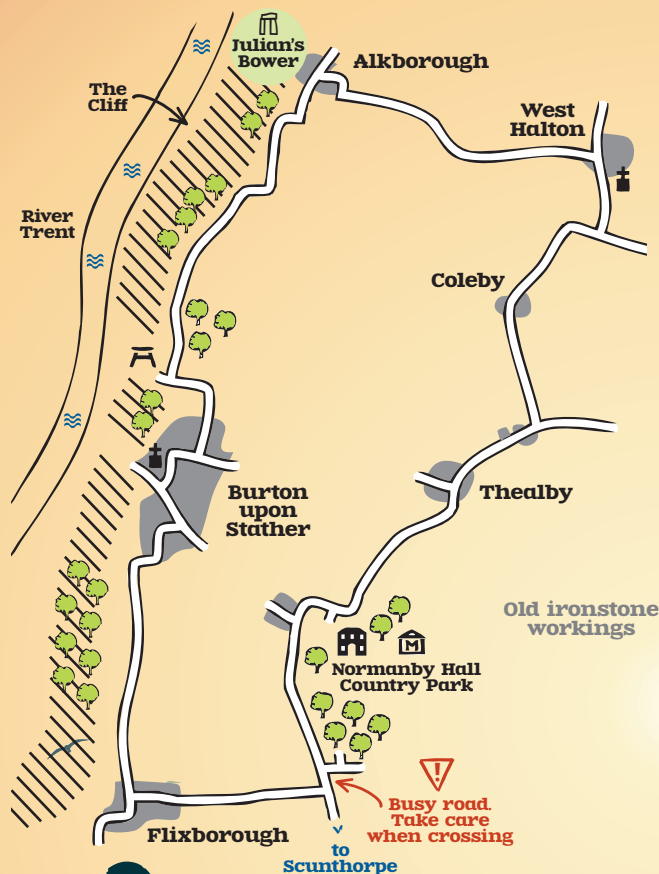
A circular route along mainly quiet country lanes. Spectacular views over the lower valley of the River Trent and its confluence with the Ouse and Humber.

Attractions

Normanby Hall Country Park and Julian's Bower turf maze

Traffic Levels

Low, except in the vicinity of Burton upon Stather and Normanby.



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The pleasant village of Burton Upon Stather was once a ferry crossing point on the Trent, with a pier in 1865. Local tradition has it that on a clear day you can see the towers of York Minster from the parish church of St. Andrew. Down on the riverside, the old reed fringed clay pits are a remnant of brick making during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The village is the start of the Nev Cole Way, a 91km footpath to Nettleton in Lincolnshire.

Leaving the village, cycle south along the top of Burton Wood, a profusion of wild garlic in spring.

Flixborough was the birth place of Sir Edmund Anderson (1530-1605), Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in the reign of Elizabeth I, who took part in the trials of Mary Queen of Scots and Sir Walter Raleigh. The village lies on the northern end of Atkinson's Warren, a relic of the heathland once covering large areas, where rabbits were trapped for their meat and skins.

Cycling east from Flixborough you pass the former Normanby Park steelworks, closed in the 1980s, and now being reclaimed and landscaped.

Turn left onto the B1430 (quite busy), to travel north through the Sheffield family's Normanby Estate. Normanby Hall Country Park, North Lincolnshire's most popular tourist attraction, is a 300-acre country park, surrounding the ancestral family home. The Hall, designed by Sir Robert Smirke and completed in 1830, has extensive costume displays and period rooms. Attractions include a Victorian walled garden, farming museum and deer park with extensive walks and trails.

From Thealby, a left turn will shorten the route, to return to Burton upon Stather.

Cycling north towards Coleby, the old ironstone mines are clearly visible. Rowland Winn, living at Appleby Hall in the 1850s, found ironstone worth working on his land. He persuaded iron makers to take an interest in the ore, leasing land for mining, mining his own ore and encouraging them to build works in the area. Scunthorpe soon developed as a centre for first iron and later steel making. The mining was once a very large operation leaving large areas of rough heath and wetland type habitats, of great value to wildlife. Now most of the ore is imported.

West Halton village church is dedicated to St. Ethelreda, who, according to local tradition, whilst fleeing from London, was sheltered by the villagers on her way to Coldingham. She built the church as a gesture of thanks.

Your route takes you north, along the valley of Winterton Beck to Alkborough.

At Alkborough, high above the river, is the turf maze known as Julian's Bower. An image of the maze, first mentioned in 1697, is set in the stone floor of the parish church porch and in a window above the altar. Close to the maze, are earthworks thought to be of Roman origin. There are excellent views across the confluence of the rivers Trent, Ouse and Humber, towards the Blacktoft Sands bird sanctuary. On a clear day you can see York Minster.

Passing the small hamlet of Walcot, look for the ivy covered Old Hall, in existence before 1649. On your return to Burton Upon Stather, call at the Burton Hills Picnic Site with views across the valley. Here the Ridge Walk follows the escarpment from the Trent Mouth through the parks and gardens of Scunthorpe to Yaddlethorpe.

The grades for cycle rides - **ride easy**, **ride steady**, **ride well** and **ride strong** have been developed by British Cycling to help cyclists to decide whether a particular route is appropriate for their ability and experience.

The routes shown on the N Lincs map have been designed and approved by North Lincolnshire Council and the colour grading system serves only as a guide as to the terrain, duration and nature of the ride.