

The Route

Where: Market Harborough to Northampton

National Route Number: 6

Distance: 14 miles traffic-free with on-road sections to the stations at either end.

Terrain: disused railway - gentle gradients. You will need good lights and strong nerves for the two long tunnels.

Public transport: railway stations at Market Harborough and Northampton.

Bike hire: Pitsford Cycle Hire at Brixworth Country Park - 01604 881777

Maps: National Cycle Network South Midlands Cycle Route map

OS maps: Explorer 223, Landranger 141 and 152

Tourist information: Market Harborough - 1858 821 270, Northampton - 01604 622 677

Towns to search for on Sustrans website mapping: Market Harborough, Kelmarsh, Brixworth, Northampton

Brampton Valley Way



Brampton Valley Way

From Market Harborough station, head westwards on Rockingham Road (the A4304) and left at the traffic lights into Springfield Street. Ride past Kettering Road junction, then left and directly right into Britannia Walk. The path starts at the southern end of Britannia Walk, runs alongside Oaklands Park and crosses Scotland Road (take care). You soon then reach rolling open countryside, climbing gently to the marvellously spooky Oxenden tunnel (please use your lights) before crossing the flat valley of the little River Ise.

Detour 1: take the byway just before the Ise bridge into Arthingworth, a pretty village with a good pub, then rejoin the railway path at the picnic site on Kelmarsh Road. Kelmarsh Hall is open to the public on summer Sundays.

Ride on past woodlands on either hand and beneath High Northamptonshire with the help of Kelmarsh tunnel (lights again needed). Please take care crossing

the A508 south of the tunnel.

Detour 2: Turn right at the Brixworth - Creaton road crossing for Cottesbrooke Hall, reputed to be Jane Austen's model for Mansfield Park. Alternatively, for Brixworth Country Park with its popular visitor centre and 7.5-mile ride around Pitsford Reservoir, turn left to Brixworth then southwards towards Northampton, crossing on the north side of the A508 roundabout.

Back on the railway path, heritage buffs will enjoy the parallel Northampton and Lamport Steam Railway where you can stop for tea and a train ride at Pitsford and Brampton Station.

To reach Northampton station, stay on the path, passing under the electric railway at a sometimes-muddy river bridge before joining a stony bridleway near Kings Heath. Here turn left and follow the National Route 6 signs (route shown as green dots on the most recent Landranger 152) to the station.