

# Explore route 51 the university way

A new stretch of the national cycle network



milton keynes  
bedford  
sandy



Pump up your tyres & go!

# What's on route 51?

**51 Milton Keynes** MK citizens know they live in the best modern city in the world. It has clean, light contemporary architecture. The streets are lined with trees. The unique redway system provides peaceful off road routes for cyclists and pedestrians, linking the whole city. The centre:mk is one of the best shopping centres in the country. Sport and leisure facilities include the National Hockey Stadium and Xscape with its Indoor Ski Slope. There are light, bright cinemas, clubs and bars. MK Theatre and Art Gallery provide a cultural high note. It's a kicking, vibrant city. More info: [www.mkweb.co.uk](http://www.mkweb.co.uk)

**51 Open University** The OU is now the largest university in the UK, ranked in the top five for its teaching quality, according to a new national table. More students than ever before are enrolling, as the appeal of distance learning and the university's high reputation spreads. More info: [www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk)

**51 Wavendon** Wavendon is the home of the Stables, Milton Keynes' premier live music venue, founded by John Dankworth and Cleo Laine. The Stables offers excellent live music for all tastes - jazz, blues, folk, rock, classical, pop and world music. More info: [www.stables.org](http://www.stables.org)

**The Route 51 Guide  
has been brought to you by ..**

**Bedfordshire  
county council**



**Cycling Campaign  
For North Bedfordshire**

**51 Salford** In Salford village there is a beautiful church with a distinctive belcote. The lych gate is a touching memorial to the men of Salford & Hulcote who lost their lives in the First World War. Iron age round houses were excavated in Salford in the 1990s, before the site they were on was used for gravel excavation. More info: [www.UKVillages.co.uk](http://www.UKVillages.co.uk)

**51 Hulcote Church** Travelling along the off-road stretch of the route toward Holcot Wood, you'll spot Hulcote church. It's another architectural gem. Take a look at the beautiful doors.

**51 Holcot Wood** This is ancient woodland, once part of a great forest that covered the whole area. A mine, complete with parachute, was found hanging from a tree here when the Luftwaffe bombed the region in 1940.

**51 Brogborough Landfill Site** This site was once used for clay excavation and is now being filled with waste. Restoration of the site will begin in 2008 when Shanks Waste Solutions in partnership with the Forest of Marston Vale will commence extensive tree planting, for the benefit of future generations. More info: [www.shanks.co.uk](http://www.shanks.co.uk) [www.marstonvale.org](http://www.marstonvale.org)

**51 Cranfield Village** There has been a village here since Saxon times. The Saxon word 'field' means a clearing in a forest so Cranfield means a clearing occupied by Cranes. There is an ancient well behind the village park, said to have properties to cure sore eyes. In the 1930s the RAF built a training centre at the village, which evolved into Cranfield University. More info: [www.cranfieldexpress.co.uk](http://www.cranfieldexpress.co.uk)

**51 Cranfield University** Cranfield is a post-graduate university with strong links with industry and commerce and a reputation for excellence. It is home to Europe's largest Technical Library. The Campus has an airfield, which explains why light aircraft fly overhead along this stretch of Route 51, like a part of the local wildlife. The Nissan Technical Centre for Europe is located at the neighbouring Technology Park. More info: [www.cranfield.ac.uk](http://www.cranfield.ac.uk)

**51 Marston Thrift** The ancient Marston Thrift was once part of the same great forest as Holcot Wood. The land between the Thrift and Cranfield village will become new community woodland delivered and managed by the Forest of Marston Vale. The Thrift is now carefully tended as a nature reserve - it's teeming with wildlife. By 2010, there will be continuous woodland from Brogborough to Holcot Wood, around the east side of the landfill site to the Thrift and continuing up to Cranfield making Bedfordshire's largest continuous woodland.

**51 Marston Moretaine** The Forest Centre and Millennium Park has excellent cycle routes and footpaths to explore. There is a stylish visitor centre with a lakeside cafe. The Forest of Marston Vale has an ambitious ongoing project, working to repair the damage of industrialization by planting millions of trees. The centre is actively involved with the local community, inspiring a closer relationship with the countryside. It's also popular with businesses as a venue for conferences and events. More info: [www.marstonvale.org](http://www.marstonvale.org)

■ **Kempston** Kempston was a thriving village community before Bedford ever came into the picture. There used to be an Anglo Saxon cemetery here which gave the Saxon Centre its name. You can see the archaeological finds from the cemetery in Bedford Museum. The site is now a big Sainsburys, with the usual handy facilities. Further on, you pass the imposing Kempston Barracks. In the 19th century, thousands of soldiers were trained here. It is now a territorial army base. Nearby, the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regimental Memorial, with its domed roof, is a tribute to soldiers who died in the two world wars. More info: [www.UKVillages.co.uk](http://www.UKVillages.co.uk)

■ **Bedford** From Kempston, route 51 leads you straight through one of England's finest river settings - the elegant Victorian Embankment Gardens of the River Great Ouse in Bedford. The Bedford Regatta and the colourful Dragon Boat Race take place here each year. Just as you'd expect from Bedfordshire's county town, Bedford has a rich variety of attractions to offer visitors. A bustling shopping centre, a great choice of places to eat and drink, and good entertainment venues. The Cecil Higgins Gallery has one of the finest art collections outside London. If you like a pint, the Corn Exchange hosts an annual beer festival. More info: Bedford Tourist Centre tel: 01234 215226 [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk)

■ **Priory Country Park** Priory Park is a popular place to come for a breath of fresh air. The site used to be a gravel pit before it was restored by planting and landscaping. The pit now forms a wide lake, a haven for wildlife. It has a lively visitor centre, packed with information about the countryside. More info: [www.priorycountrypark.co.uk](http://www.priorycountrypark.co.uk) tel: 01234 211182

■ **Willington Dovecote** A beautiful 16th century stable and stone dovecote. Inside there are nesting boxes for 1500 pigeons. The dovecote used to be in the grounds of a historic manor which was visited by Henry VIII. View by appointment with Mrs Endersby, tel. 01234 838278. More info: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

■ **The Danish Camp** The Danish Camp is an English Heritage scheduled monument - the site is believed to have been used by the Vikings as a place to repair their boats. The visitors centre - a log cabin - is beautifully located on the banks of the River Great Ouse. Refreshments are served all day. The Camp offers bicycle hire, day fishing tickets and boat rides on the river. Good facilities for people with a disability. Don't miss the chipmunks! More info: [www.danishcamp.20m.com](http://www.danishcamp.20m.com)

■ **Blunham** Blunham was originally a Saxon village. The font in the church is the one remaining saxon relic. In 9th century the Vikings came up the river in their longboats and the village was subjected to violent attacks. On a quieter note, the poet John Donne lived here. The story goes that in 1623 he lay on his sickbed, listening to the tolling of a funeral bell - probably at Blunham church, where one bell dates back to the 1500s. He went on to write a fine poem:

No man is an island, entire of itself  
Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main  
If a clod be washed away by the sea,  
Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were,  
As well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were.  
Any man's death diminishes me,  
because I am involved in mankind  
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls  
It tolls for thee.

More info: [www.blunham.demon.co.uk](http://www.blunham.demon.co.uk)

■ **Sandy** Thanks to the rich soil deposited by the River Ivel, the town developed as a market gardening centre from the early 17th century. Modern Sandy has a mix of homes & local industry in a rural setting. The town centre has shops to browse around and a good tourist information centre servicing the Mid Beds region. Sandy is home to the Lodge RSPB nature reserve. More info: Mid Beds Tourist Information Centre tel: 01767 682728 [www.midbeds.gov.uk](http://www.midbeds.gov.uk) [www.sandy-bedfordshire.co.uk](http://www.sandy-bedfordshire.co.uk)

■ **The Lodge RSPB** You can spot all 3 varieties of woodpecker, warblers and other woodland birds at the nature reserve, which is open daily from dawn till dusk. There are beautiful gardens with large specimen trees and an azalea walk. The visitors centre is open all year round. More info: Lodge Nature Reserve tel: 01767 680551 [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

 **Campbell Park**  
▼ starting here: 0 miles

 **to MK City Centre**



# Milton Keynes



NOTE: The off-road section between Rooktree Farm (Hulcote) and the ancient woodland of Marston Thrift (Cranfield) is currently unsuitable for cycles. An on-road diversion from Salford to Cranfield has been signposted and is shown by the red line on the map.


  
 traffic free open route  
 on road open route

  
up to here:  
5 miles

  
up to here:  
10 miles

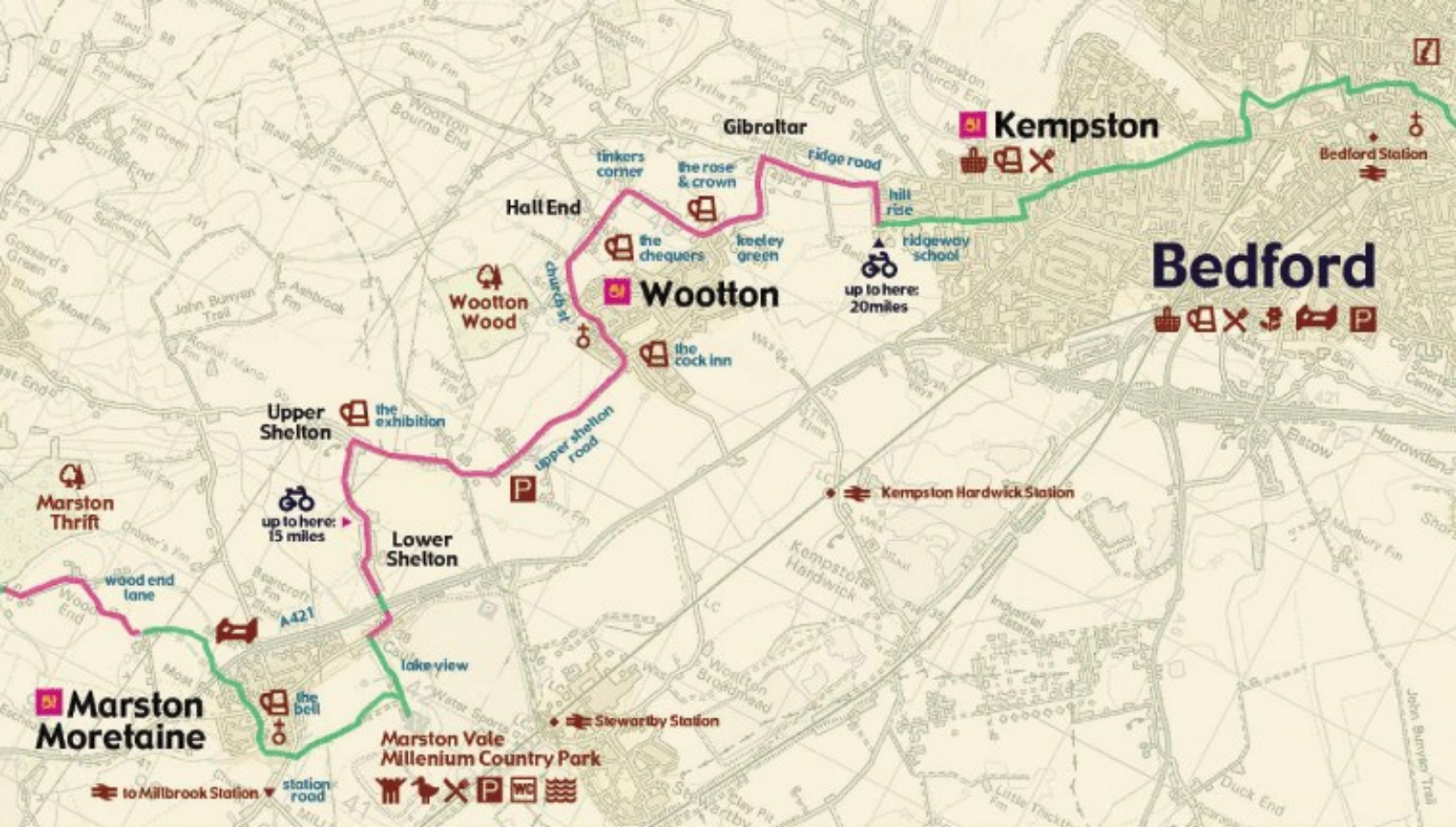
 **Wavendon**  
to Woburn Sands Station ▼ 

 **Hulcote**  
to Aspley Gulse Station ▼ 

 Following the redways & signage from Campbell Park in Central Milton Keynes, heading east towards Wavendon village, the busy city sounds will fade away to sounds of bird song and the pleasures of the countryside...

From Wavendon, take care to cross the busy old Newport Road (A5130) and follow the signs for Salford along Lower End Road. At the T junction, turn left along Aspley Road towards Salford, over the A421 & M1. Aspley Road becomes Wavendon Road through Salford passing the Red Lion and

then the Swan. At the T junction, turn right towards Hulcote. Pass Hulcote Church and turn left uphill towards Rooktree Farm, following the road round to join the bridleway. The route now takes you past new plantations, ancient Hulcote Wood and around the Brogborough landfill site...



You'll come to a point where the route splits west to Cranfield and the new community woodland, or east to Marston Moretaine. Going east, the bridleway joins Wood End Lane then leaves the road again, crossing the A421 bridge into Marston. Go through the village, past the church and across

Station Road, into the Millennium Country Park. The Forest Centre here has cycle hire, refreshments & toilets (including ones for disabled people). Leave the park into Lake View and follow the signs to go through the A421 underpass. Travel on to Upper Shelton. At the T junction, the route heads

north east along Upper Shelton Road towards Wootton. At Wootton, head west along Church Street to Hall End, passing the Chequers, to Tinkers Corner. Turn east again along Keeley Lane passing the Rose and Crown. At the T junction, turn north and cycle on to Gibraltar... (!)

# route 51

## university way



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Follow the signs to **Kempston** along Ridge Road. Turn south into **Hill Rise**. At the **Ridgeway School** join the cycle route through Kempston & Bedford. Cycle along the banks of the **River Great Ouse** to join the old railway line at **Priors Country Park**, which has cycle hire, refreshments and toilets for

disabled people. From here the route follows the old railway line, crossing the **A421** again. Cycle on to **Danish Camp** where there is cycle hire, refreshments and excellent facilities for disabled people. This stretch along the **dismantled railway** takes you all the way to **Blunham**. At Blunham,

follow **Station Court**, turn south on to **Station Road** and east again to rejoin the railway line. Then cycle over the **River Ivel** and into **Sandy**. The section from Bedford to Sandy is smooth and level and makes an excellent commute to work. Why not give it a go? ♦