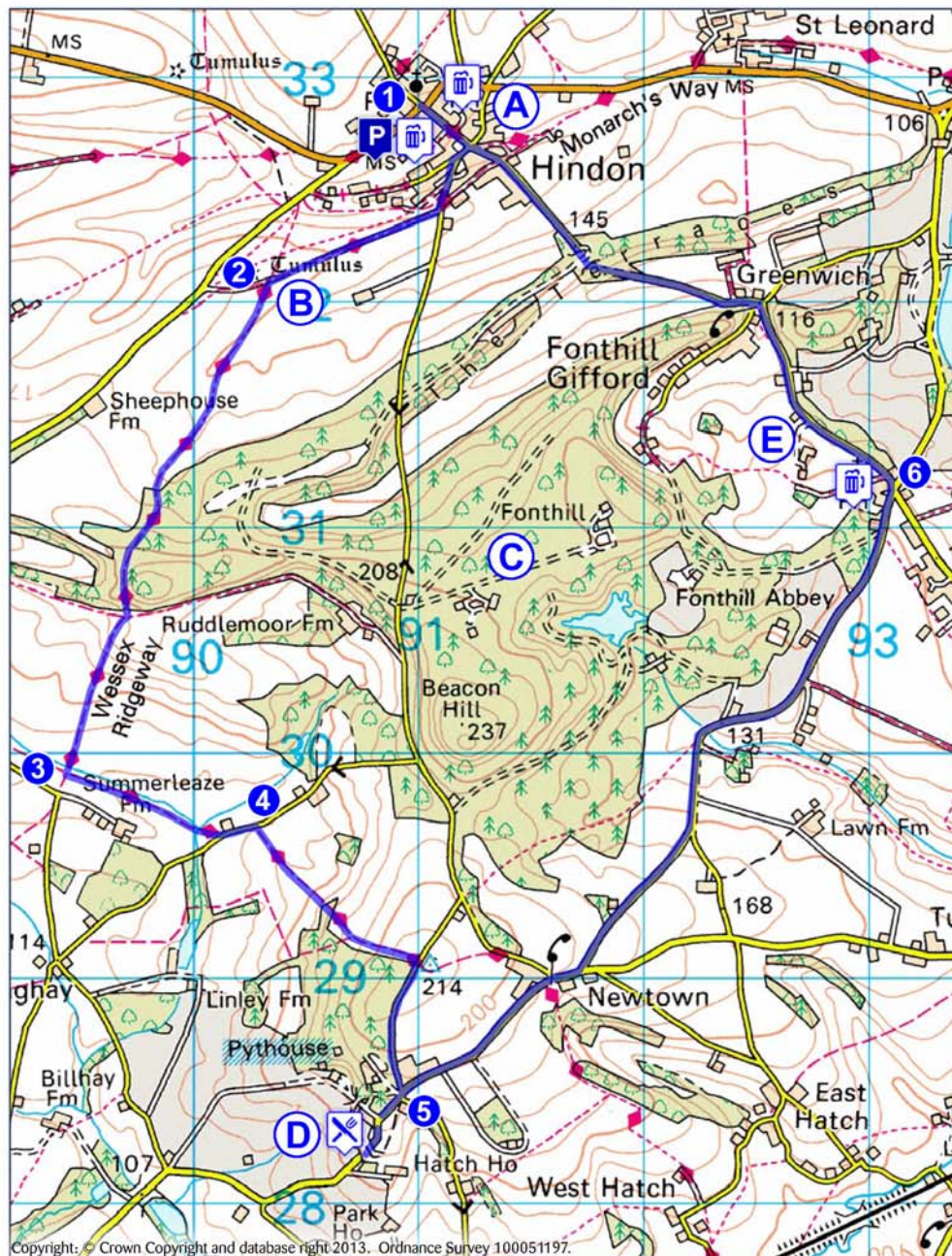


Cycle Trail 5: Hindon to the Great Estates of Fonthill and Pythouse

Length of Cycle
8 miles (13km)

Ordnance Survey map: Explorer 143 and 118
Cycle Start: ST 910328



Key

- Cycle route with waypoint
- Parking
- Pub
- Place to eat
- Historic Site
- Nature Reserve
- Point of Interest

Distance: 8 miles (13km)
Time: Allow 2 hrs
Terrain: Mostly tracks or quiet lanes, moderate gradients, one long descent. Stages 2 to 3 can be very muddy
Difficulty: Strenuous
Suitable for: Mountain Bike Only
Start: Car-park of The Lamb at Hindon, High Street, SP3 6DP. Cycling groups- please notify pub well in advance

Start Grid Reference:

X : 391021
Y : 132868
Latitude : 51.0950
Longitude : -2.1296
 ST 910 328

OS Explorer Map (1:25 000)

Warminster & Trowbridge No. 143 & Shaftesbury and Cranborne Chase 118

Notes & Refreshments:

At The Lamb at Hindon or across the road at The Angel Inn, Beckford Arms Fonthill Gifford, or Pythouse Kitchen Garden, Shop and Cafe

From the historic market town of Hindon, journey through two great country estates; The Fonthill Estate and Pythouse Estate. Learn about magnificent country houses and past owners of these beautiful estates. The route takes you along the Wessex Ridgeway, a magnificent ridge-top route with stunning views.

1. From the car-park of The Lamb in the centre of Hindon, cross over the road (with care as this is a busy road) and continue along the High Street downhill past this handsome tree-lined avenue to the bottom of the hill. After the children's play-area on your R, turn R and go along The Dene and then take the uphill, L fork. Carry on uphill until you leave the houses and then turn R onto The Wessex Ridgeway.
2. Keeping to The Wessex Ridgeway, turn L onto the bridleway heading downhill towards a track, merging into woodland ahead of you (Terrace Wood which adjoins Fonthill Abbey Wood, part of the Fonthill Estate). Climb this wooded hill, then travel down the other side into open fields (This section can be wet so take care).
3. After passing through a hedge, turn hard L and follow the bridleway through another hedge and alongside a stream along the bottom of fields. Climbing uphill, exit the fields through two gates onto Tokes Lane.
4. After approximately 200 metres on Tokes Lane, turn R through a gate onto a cross field bridleway that goes uphill past Abbots Pond. Enter the trees at the top of the slope and then carry on around the field edge along bridleway until you exit onto a lane opposite a pig farm.
5. Turn R and go down the lane to the road junction. For refreshments at Pythouse Kitchen Garden, Shop and Cafe turn R here, or L to carry on towards Newtown. Follow this lane and take the L fork. There is an interesting rural gift shop you will pass along this road called Clementines. Enjoy the long descent back to The Beckford Arms on the corner.
6. Turn L along Hindon Lane and head back towards Hindon. Passing through the village of Fonthill Gifford, climb up Stops Hill into the wooded escarpment where a tunnel passes through the hill (this is a single lane so be wary and watch out for oncoming traffic). From the tunnel, head downhill into Hindon village, crossing the Dene, with the playground now on your L. Proceed up the High Street back to the car-park and refreshments at The Lamb Inn.

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Length of Cycle
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Countryside Code

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



Points of Interest

A Hindon. A gem of 18th Century architecture of pretty Chilmark stone and thatched cottages. However, the origins of the village date as far back as the early 1200s. By the 1700s, there were some 150 houses crammed onto either side of the busy High Street with a weekly market and annual fairs, however, most of the buildings were destroyed in a fire in 1754. The village was rebuilt and later became an important trading route between London and the South-West for horse-drawn coaches with The Lamb and The Angel important coaching inns, however, the building of the railway at Tisbury, less than 3 miles away, put an end to coaching.

B The Wessex Ridgeway. A magnificent ridge-top route for walking, cycling and horse-riding crossing Wiltshire and Dorset's rural heartland offering lovely vistas and breathtaking views across rolling countryside.

C The Fonthill Estate and Fonthill Abbey Woods. Comprising over 9,000 acres of outstanding beauty in the heart of Wiltshire with the Estate Office based in Fonthill Bishop. The Estate has a fascinating architectural history as a series of grand country mansions have been built near Fonthill Bishop over the centuries in fine Chilmark stone. The latest, Fonthill House, was built in 1972 in a classical style. Perhaps the most famous and extravagant of buildings was Fonthill Abbey built at the turn of the 19th Century. This was an immense Gothic revival house with the grandeur of the finest cathedrals, built on Hinkley Hill in the heart of Fonthill Abbey Wood by super rich author William Beckford Junior. It later collapsed due to faulty workmanship destroying most of the building. A small fragment remains today but this is hidden from public view.

D The Pythouse Estate. Pronounced Pit-House, at its centre is a large fine classical house. Its design was probably inspired by nearby Philipps House in Dinton. Owned by the Benett family for generations until the 1950s when death duties forced its sale. John Benett, MP for Wiltshire was a reformer and brought in new machinery like threshing machines which replaced rural jobs. In 1830, rural despair and starvation broke into rebellion and John Benett and the Pythouse Estate was subject to one of the most violent riots in the country involving over 400 angry rioters. One labourer was shot dead and others imprisoned or transported, mostly to Tasmania. Part of the Estate (Pythouse Kitchen Garden, Shop and Café) is open to the public.

E Fonthill Gifford. Shrouded in woodland like an alpine estate, it was previously, a small hamlet known as Stop in the 13th Century and almost certainly included Stop Farm, a farmhouse of stone and thatch built in the 17th Century. It was still called Stop in the 18th Century, but from about 1773 or earlier, it became known as Fonthill Gifford.

