

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cycling

**Cambridgeshire County** 

cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cycling information and online

maps: www.cambridgeshire.gov.

Council: Cycling

Transport.delivery@

uk/cycling

Rights of Way

To report a problem:

cambridgeshire.gov.uk/

Queries about public RoW:

cambridgeshire.gov.uk

**Fenland Policing Team** 

101 (non-urgent)

**Bus Services** 

www.cambs.police.uk

highwaysassetmanagement@

For the latest bus information

article/15121/Local-Transport-

A GUIDE TO WALKING & CYCLING **AROUND MARCH** 

## Useful information and numbers

### **Highway Maintenance**

To report potholes, faulty traffic signals, overhanging vegetation, winter gritting etc: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk, residents/travel-roads-andparking/roads-and-pathways/ roadworks-and-faults

# Cycling UK

To find out more about how Cycling UK champions the cause for cyclists, as well as finding out information about local routes and events, visit: www.cycling.org/about

### **Sustrans East of England** eastofengland@sustrans.org.uk

www.sustrans.org.uk **Fenland Tourism** 

### www.visitcambridgeshirefens.org **March Library and Learning**

City Road, March, PE15 9LT www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ directory/listings/march-library

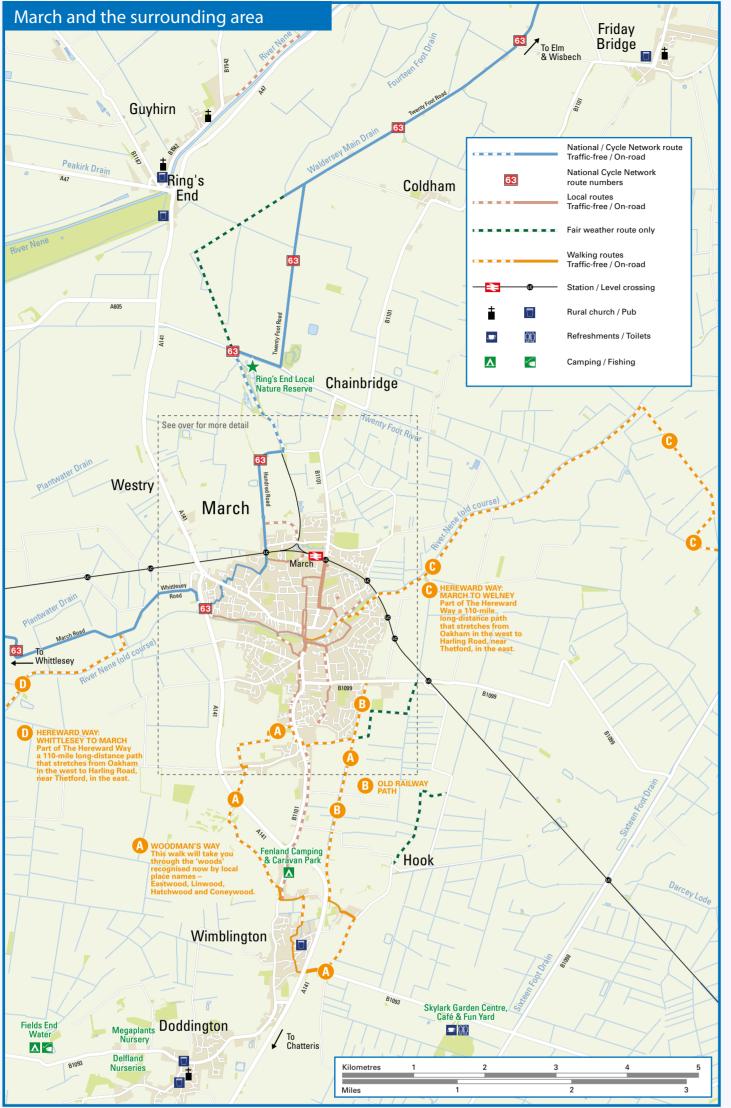
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### Produced by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with Fenland District Council and March Town Council March 2023

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# Why walk or cycle

- up whenever you feel like it!
- The Fens naturally lend themselves to walking and cycling much more easily and to the less-abled as they are relatively flat and provide easy terrain for all abilities.



West End in March – one of several quieter "off-route" cycle trails



- Campbell Leisure Centre pictured beyond the popular skate park
- Walking and cycling are both great for your health and can often be quicker than other modes of transport, especially around town.
- March is a great hub for starting and / or finishing a day trip, whether cycling or walking, with easy connections to the town by train and bus and easy and well-maintained links to
- The vast open Fenland landscapes and big skies are easily enjoyed when walking or cycling and, as well as the many formal routes which are set out, due to its easy navigation, March and the surrounding villages can also provide walkers and cyclists with easily enjoyable "off-route" trails.

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### Walking and cycling

## Tips / general rules

- Always give your bicycle the "once over" before going out check that tyre pressures are correct, the pedals turn easily, brakes and gears are in good working order and that the saddle is the right height.
- Wear a quality, well-fitted cycle helmet whilst this would not prevent an accident, it would certainly minimise injury.
- Ride confidently secure your spot on the road, well away from the kerb, and stay there; don't swerve to make room for vehicles to pass, as this can be a danger and is difficult for other road users to predict.
- Be aware of parked / stopped vehicle doors opening as you
- Check behind you regularly when planning to turn right or overtake and make sure you can do this confidently and without wobbling.
- Remember that large vehicles have blind spots on the inside, so don't try and overtake them on the left.
- During hours of darkness (including cloudy and less bright days), ensure you can be seen – hi visibility clothing and lights are essential for trips out at these times.
- Remember to be considerate to pedestrians, especially in areas of shared use; they have priority on shared paths. Use your bell if necessary.
- Road rules apply to cycles too do not ride on paths (unless blue signs indicate that it is allowed) and always ride the correct way up one-way streets etc.
- Remember that weather conditions can change quickly, and especially in the Fens.
- Please remember to check the forecast and allow sufficient time if walking any distance, to return in the event of changing weather.
- Also, due to the peaty nature of the ground in the Fens, ground conditions can often be heavy, even after only a little rain, and so appropriate footwear is essential.
- Please take care when using roads to walk on and be especially careful when crossing sections of the busy main roads around March.

# Know your signs



**No Entry** signs always apply to cyclists too ...



...unless there is an exception shown underneath, or ...



.. you can bypass No Entry signs if there is a gap alongside with this route for cyclists sign.



### Typically used on a footpath away from a road. You can still wheel your bike.

A cycle is not a motor vehicle. Cyclists are

allowed to pass these signs where motorists



# Shared route for cyclists and pedestrians

The only time cyclists are allowed to ride on a pavement alongside a road is where you see



... or this one indicating a **segregated route**, where you must keep to the side designated



**Direction sign** showing National Cycle Network route.

### March

March is a bustling market town in the centre of Fenland, situated on the banks of the River Nene. At one point, shipping along the River Nene was crucial for the town's survival, but this changed as the popularity of the railway grew during the 19th Century and to this day, March remains an important destination for both passenger services as well as goods.

During the 1920's and 30's, at their peak, the Whitemoor marshalling yards were the largest in Britain and second largest in Europe and parts of the yard remain in operation today after redevelopment by Network Rail in 2002.

March was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and it is thought that it takes it's name from the Ole English word "mearc", meaning boundary. This is perhaps because March lies on the course of the Fen Causeway, an old Roman road, and there is evidence of Roman settlements in and around the town.

The town may also owe its origin to the ford on the course of the River Nene (where the road runs between Ely and Wisbech) where the road crosses the river.



Autumn on the River Nene in the centre of March

In 1850, a single arch bridge was built over the river, slightly to the north of the town. High Street continues over the bridge to Broad Street, which lies on the north side of the Nene and The Causeway is now a tree-lined route in and out of the town.

A Market Cross hints at there being existence of a market in the town from as early as the 16th Century, and whilst the existence of the market has varied across the centuries, to this day, the town's market remains a steady fixture on the weekly calendar. Held each Wednesday and Saturday in the Market Square, the small local market sits under the watchful gaze of the historic Town Hall's bell tower

Within the centre of town there are an excellent selection of food and drink outlets, including cafés and tea rooms, takeaways, restaurants, and local pubs. There is also a good choice of options for local guest accommodation in the town, ranging from small guest houses to inns with rooms and hotels, so an ideal place to consider staying and using as a base to explore the local Fenland area from



In addition to a large leisure centre and swimming pool, March has an array of sports clubs and groups, including football and rugby clubs, athletics and cricket

Throughout the year, March plays host to several significant events, all of which attract large crowds both locally and from outside of the town.

St George's Fayre is held in April each year and forms one of the "Four Seasons" events held across the Fenland market towns. The Summer and warmer days play host to March's Summer Festival a lively musical event bringing together lots of local musicians, groups and acts to put on a weekend long of music for all to enjoy: www.marchsummerfestival.com.

In late Summer, the town hosts March's Armed Forces Festival – a day event attracting many serving and ex-serving personnel along with local dignitaries and those wishing to join in the event and "Remember, Connect and Inspire": https://maff2023.com.

As well as its much-loved Christmas Lights display, the festive season really comes to life at March's Christmas Market. The event attracts thousands of people who come along to enjoy the huge array of stalls, attractions and shows and soak up the festive atmosphere – the event now rivals any European market.

To the east of March lies The Ouse Washes Nature Reserve, the largest area of washland in the UK.

The Welney Wetland Trust occupies over 1000 acres at the northernmost part of the Ouse Washes and is a mecca for those wishing to enjoy a variety of wildlife species, including resident Skylark, Marsh Harrier, Godwit and Avocet, to name but a few. In Winter, many thousands more species join the residents and the area is home to thousands of migrating wintering birds including

Bewick and Whooper Swans – the night-time Swan Feeds are guite an experience; not to be missed. Details of the reserve, plus opening times, and events etc can be found on the website: rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/ouse-washes



Bird Watching at The Ouse Washes

**Friends of March Railway Station** 

# https://www.facebook.com/groups/338840846205436/

# March Railway Station (map square E5)

The town boasts a quite unique group who "adopted" the railway station as their base in 2009.

The Friends of March Railway Station are an active social group who were formed to preserve and use the buildings on the disused side of March Railway Station. They not only tend to and manage the railway station and its planters and public areas etc, keeping them looking pristine all year round, but also gather together socially and put on a range of events for train enthusiasts and station visitors, often displaying their model railway sets.

### St Wendreda's Church (map square E10)

St Wendreda's Church is the only known Church to be dedicated to the saint, an Anglo-Saxon princess who lived in March during the 7<sup>th</sup> century and who dedicated most of her life to ministry and healing. A papal indulgence enabled the Church to be rebuilt in 1343 when it became a shrine and place of pilgrimage, it was then that medieval carvers began work on making the Church spectacularly beautiful.

The building has a mix of 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture, though most of the Church dates from the 14th Century onwards with the famous roof being constructed during the early 16th century. Its tower is unusual in having a right of way running through its base and there is a sanctus bell turret, where the nave and chancel meet.

St Wendreda's Church has a fine steeple and the roof is famous and easily recognisable. It has a double hammer beam design featuring 118 beautifully carved angels, most of which are attached to the hammer beams and appear to be flying but others are in relief and it is believed to be one of the finest timber roofs in Britain. The entire roof is decorated with 2,700 fleur de lvs.

The interior is light and spacious. The 12th century font pre-dates the main building and originally square, it was later re-cut to become octagonal. Also inside the building, visitors will find an interesting brass dedicated to Sir Anthony Hansart – this brass dates from 1507 and shows two figures in period dress.

Under the tower the visitor will find a memorial to Jim Hocking, a young 21-year-old Trainee Royal Australian Air Force Pilot who saved the town of March from obliteration towards the end of WW2. Whilst on a training flight, he was sadly killed when his aircraft crashed, though he bravely navigated it away from the town, having commanded his crew to evacuate to safety. The pilot officer's uniform and copies of his medals, including Australia's Star of Courage, posthumously awarded to him, can be found on display in the town's museum, in the North Room.

# March & District Museum (map square E7)

A small museum in the centre of the town hosting an array of interesting collections including a Victorian kitchen, nursery and parlour set up, railway memorabilia, maps and formal documentation plus school memorabilia, details of the drainage of the Fens across the ages, as well as wartime memorabilia from The Boer, First and Second World Wars. The Jim Hocking display can also be seen in the museum.

The museum is free of charge to visit, but donations are welcome. Free car parking is available nearby and the museum is fully accessible. Check the website for opening times: www.marchmuseum.co.uk.

### Fox Narrowboats (map square B6)

A modern marina situated in the heart of The Middle Level Navigation System on the outskirts of the town and strategically centred between Peterborough, Ely and Cambridge. As well as narrowboat building, servicing and sales services, the

marina offers boats for day hire and holiday hire.



Narrowboats near the marina