

Why cycle?

There are many benefits that can be realised by cycling regularly instead of making car-journeys.

People who cycle regularly suffer less from ill-health and illnesses such as heart disease, strokes, diabetes, obesity and stress. Mental Health and sense of well-being are improved in addition to the well-established benefits to physical health. A good cycle home after a stressful day at work, for example, can help you relax more easily than after sitting in your car during heavy traffic.

Cycling as part of your daily routine can also save you time and money, as you are naturally getting exercise without the need for taking up time going to the gym, etc. The number of calories that you burn depends on lots of factors, such as the speed you cycle, gradient, body weight, and even how windy it is, but a 30 minute journey at 10 miles per hour can burn as much as 300 calories. The Government recommends that everyone takes exercise for 30 minutes on five or more days a week. For many, cycling to work and back will be enough to achieve this, and more! For most local urban journeys, cycling is usually quicker door-to-door than car journeys during rush-hour. And, of course, it is the cheapest form of transport, aside from walking, so you can save even more money – no need to pay fuel or parking costs. What's more, the Government's Cycle to Work scheme can assist with the purchase of a bike through your employer, allowing you to pay for it over a number of months and also make a saving on the VAT that you pay. A quick search of the Internet will show that there are a number of providers of Cycle to Work deals; alternatively speak to your employer to see if they are already a member of a scheme.

Wider benefits can also be realised as more and more people choose cycling as their main mode of transport. The number of cars on the road decreases, thereby reducing congestion and helping those that do have to drive, including making public transport more efficient and reliable.

Cycling is an ideal way to interact with the environment whilst causing it no harm. CO₂ emissions from cycling are virtually zero, so if you cycle regularly, your carbon footprint will be much smaller than if you drive the same journeys.

To check how much carbon you are saving on a particular journey, visit the national journey planning website, Transport Direct, at www.transportdirect.info. If you click on the "Check CO₂ emissions" link and enter the distance of your journey, it will show you the amount of carbon that would be emitted from the equivalent car journey. For example a 3 mile journey in a small car emits 0.6kgs of CO₂, or 1.2kgs in a large car. If you can save this amount from just one cycle journey, just think how much you can save over a whole year!



Oundle Town Hall



Oundle School

Cycling Signs

- Cycle route for use by cyclists and pedestrians together
- Cycle route for use by cyclists and pedestrians on separate sides of path
- Cycle route for use by cyclists only
- Route reserved for use by cyclists only (road marking)
- Cycle route ahead
- Cyclists should walk at this point
- Recommended route for cyclists to use (usually on road with no provisions for cyclists)
- Direction signs showing recommended route for cyclists
- Cycle lane on the road ahead
- Shared cycle and bus lane on road ahead
- Cycle lane on the road for use by cyclists in the same direction as the other traffic
- Cycle lane on the road for use by cyclists in the opposite direction to other traffic (usually on one-way roads)
- Advisory contraflow sign
- Warning sign for pedestrians that there is a cycle lane ahead or that there is a cycleway crossing the road ahead
- No cycling
- No motor vehicles



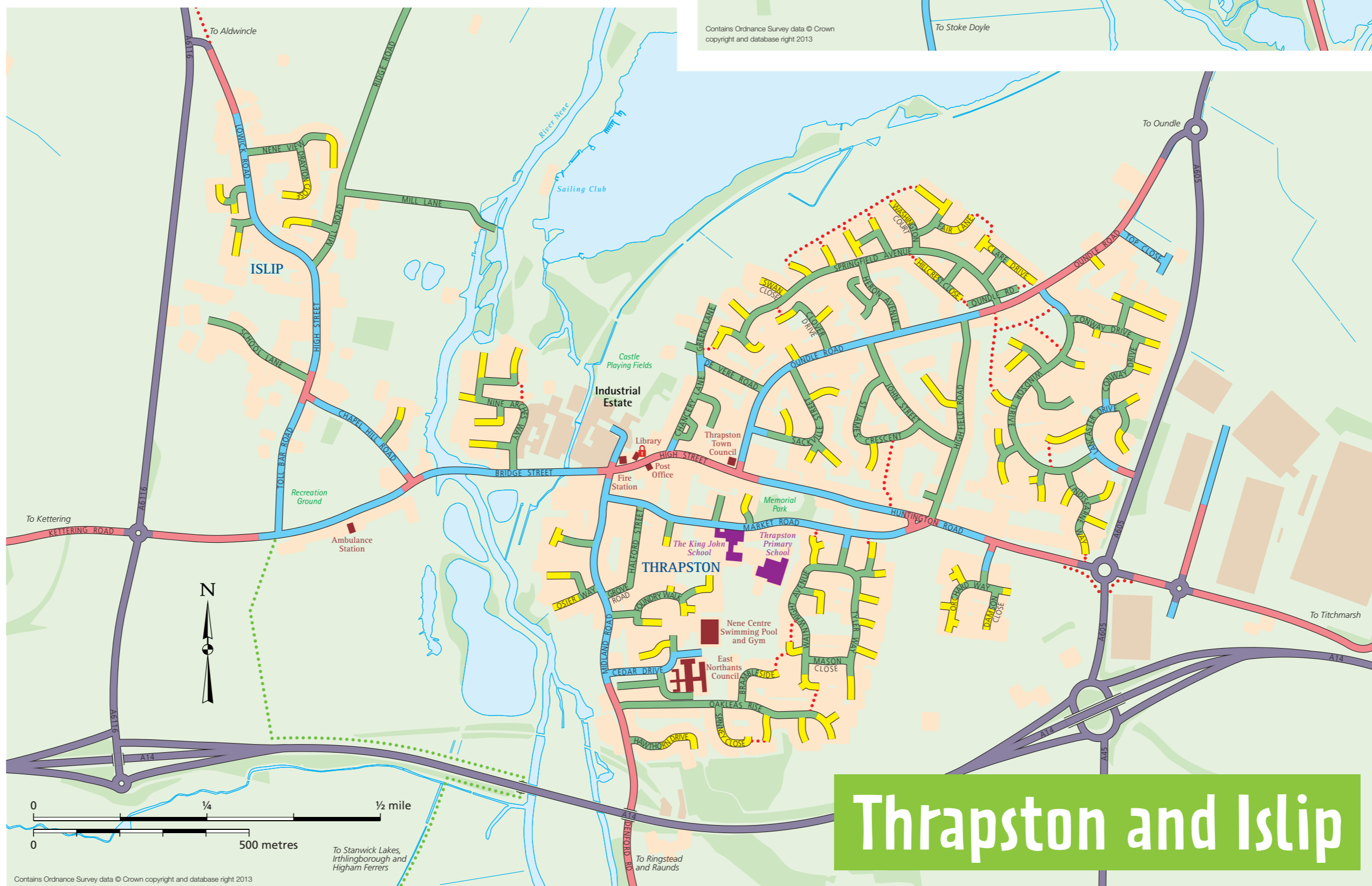
Nine Arches Bridge, Thrapston

Key

- Roads that are normally hazardous for cyclists, but experienced adult highway users may find them useful especially in quiet periods.
- Busy principal roads with high speeds, HGVs, and complex junctions. Suitable for highly skilled commuting cyclists.
- Busy roads mostly lower speeds, some complicated traffic movements. A medium to high level of skill is required for trouble-free cycling.
- Through routes with moderate traffic and usually low speeds, but often turning and parking movements. Well trained school children should cope.
- Quiet roads with low traffic speed and volume. Suitable for all cyclists behaving responsibly if they have some training.
- Private roads.

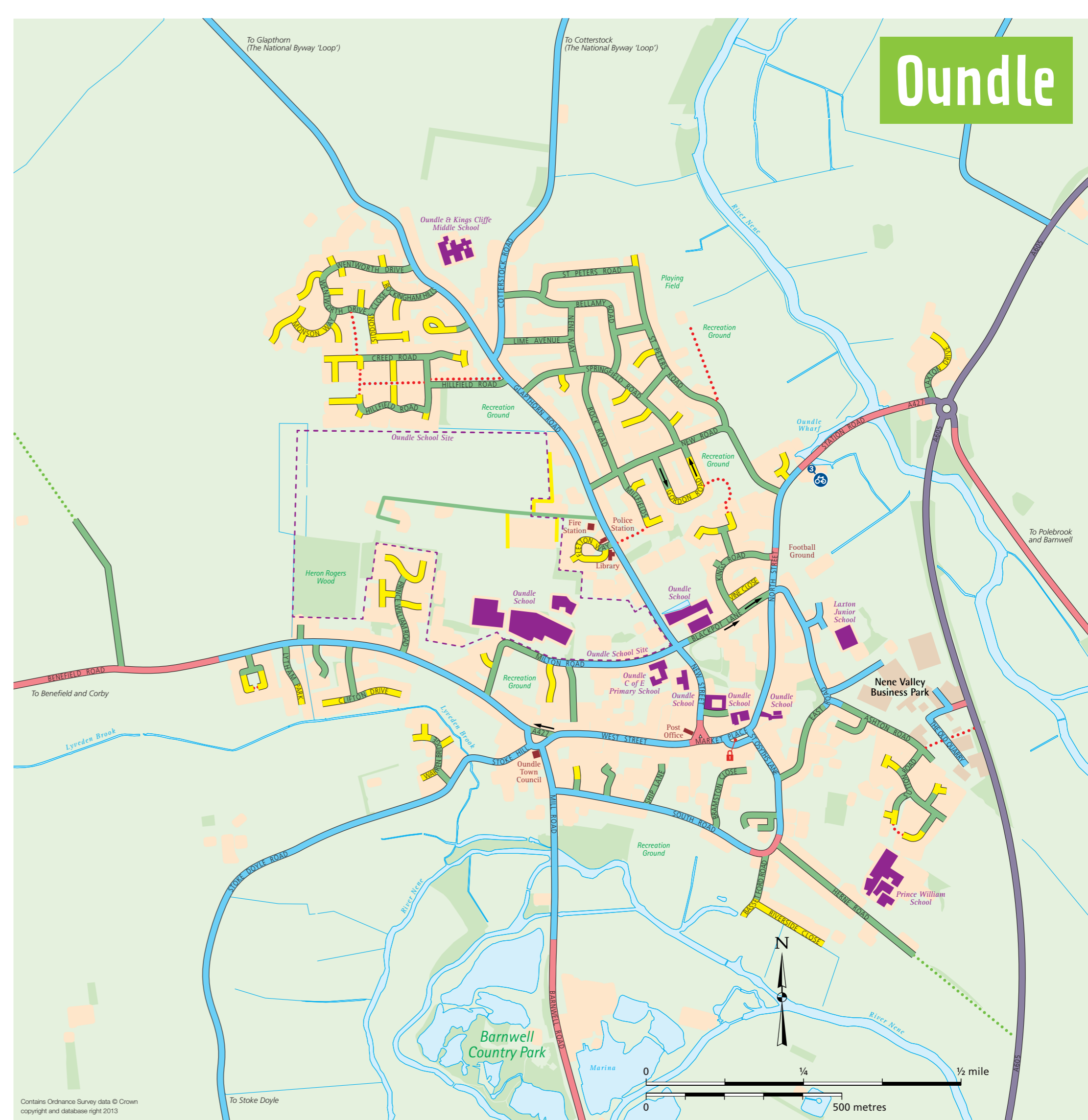
- Cycle track, path or bridleway with tarmac, stone all weather surface, or calmed advisory route.
- Bridleway or other path with soft surfaces. May be unsuitable for cycling, especially on a road bike, in wet weather.
- Cycle shop (see overleaf for contact details).
- Cycle parking.
- Toucan crossing.
- Residential area.
- Industrial area.

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Thrapston and Islip

Oundle



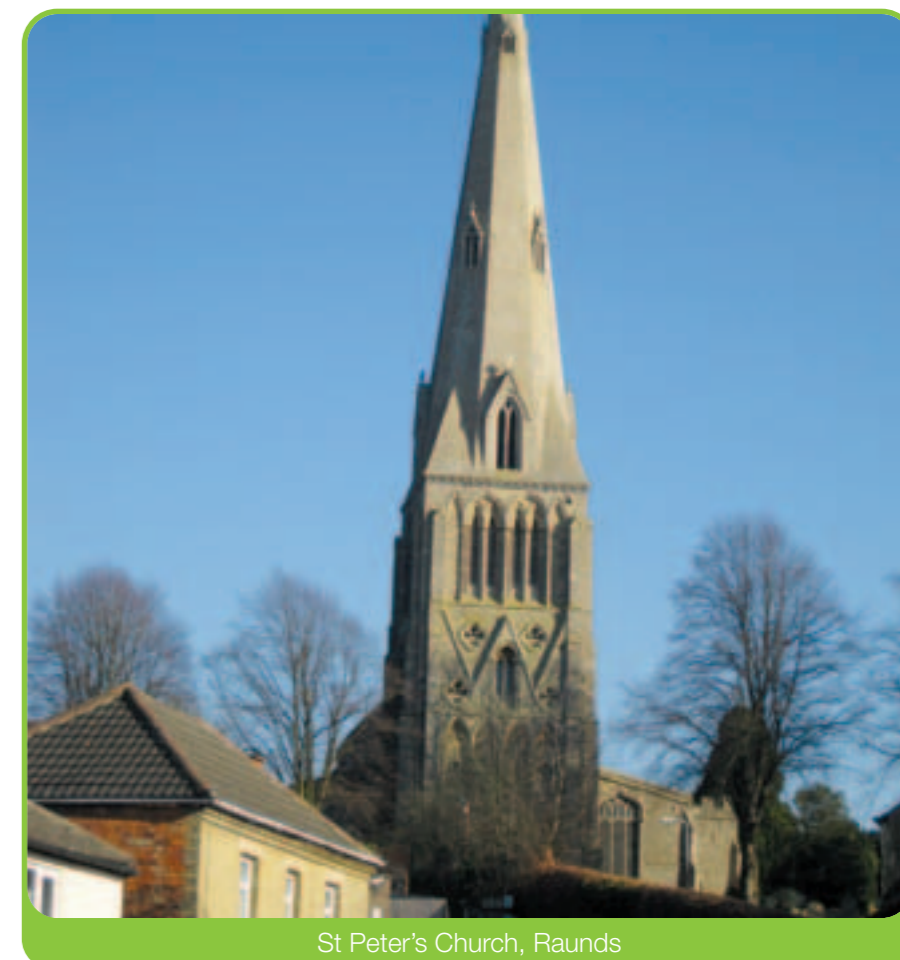
The National Byway

Founded in 1996, The National Byway is a distinct, signed national cycle route 3,300 miles in length running through England, Scotland and Wales utilising byways and quiet country lanes.

The ethos behind the route is to promote a nationwide leisure cycling route with rural regeneration, countryside and heritage as its focus. The route, therefore, passes at least 1,000 sites of historical interest all across Britain.

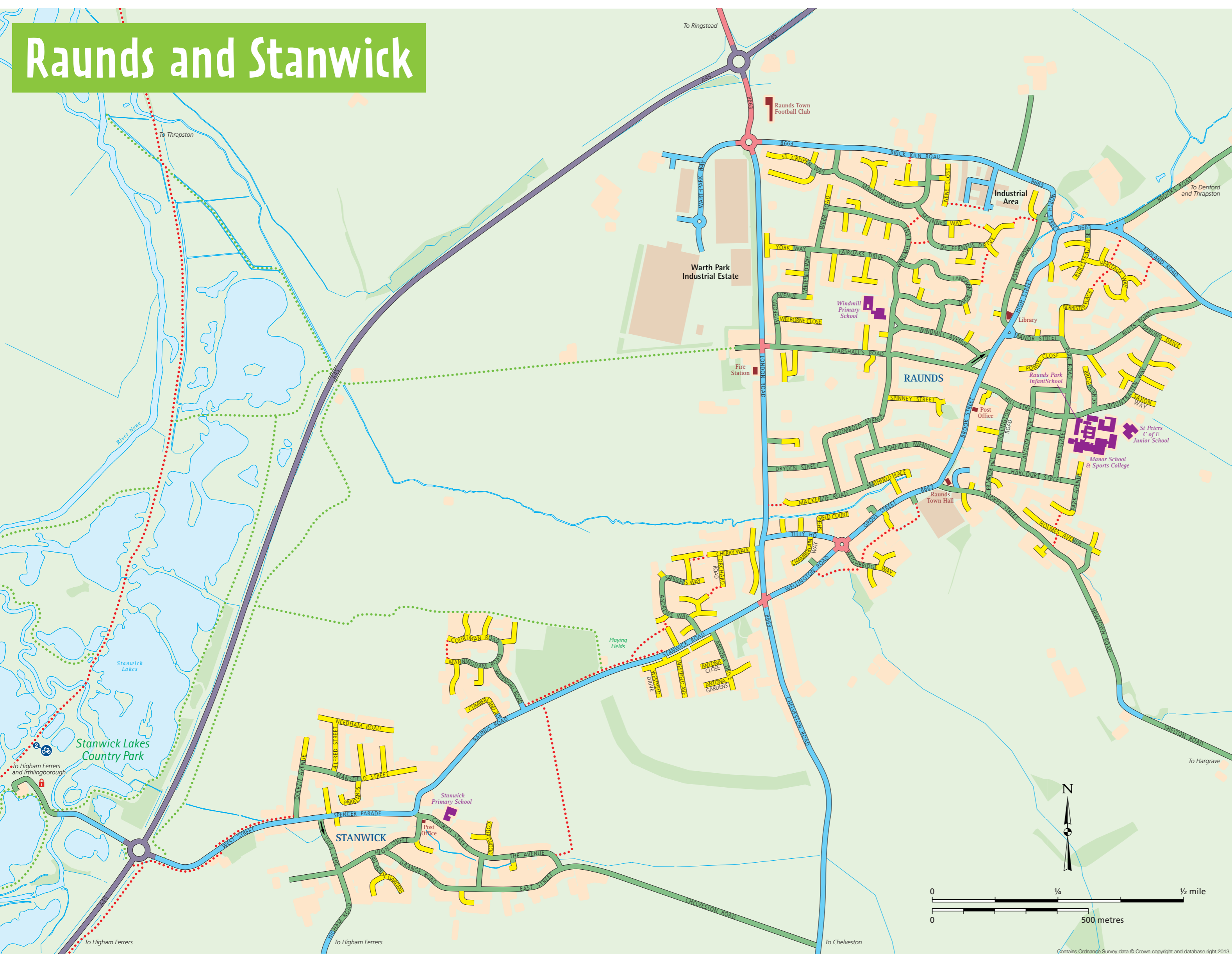
The Byway enters Northamptonshire in the north of the county and forms a 29 mile loop from the north of Oundle, taking in the beautiful countryside and villages in this part of East Northants.

Further information about the National Byway, including maps for purchase can be found here: www.thenationalbyway.org



St Peter's Church, Raunds

Raunds and Stanwick



Useful Contacts

You can contact Northamptonshire Highways regarding general cycling issues within Northamptonshire by e-mailing walkcycle@mgwsp.co.uk, or by calling the Customer Service Centre on 0300 126 1000. Further information can also be found on the Northamptonshire County Council website: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/cycling

Northamptonshire Highways also organises training for school children through the Government's Bikeability scheme; phone the above number or visit the County Council website.

CTC (Cyclist's Touring Club) is an organisation that can, amongst other aspects, provide advice on where you can receive cycle training for all ages. Visit their website www.ctc.org.uk, or call the general enquires line, 0844 736 8450, for further details.

The Bikeability (www.dft.gov.uk/bikeability/) and Sustrans (www.sustrans.org.uk) websites are also useful places to visit for a wealth of cycling information.

Cycle Shops in East Northants

If you need advice about maintaining your bicycle, or choosing a new one, contact your local bike shop. There are also many excellent websites for researching bikes, spare parts or "How to" guides.

- 1 AJ Cycles**
Unit N, Bury Close, Higham Ferrers, NN10 8HQ
tel: 01933 413400 web: www.ajcycles.co.uk
 - 2 AJ Cycle Hire, Stanwick Lakes**
Stanwick Lakes, Stanwick, Northamptonshire, NN9 6GY
tel: 07969 907 115 web: www.ajcycles.co.uk/stanwick-lakes-bike-hire
 - 3 Gorilla Firm Cycling**
The Gorilla Firm Ltd, Unit 2, Oundle Wharf, Station Road, Oundle, PE8 4DE
tel: 01832 273873 web: www.gorillafirmcycling.com
- Oundle Bike Fix**
Chapel Row Cottage, Luton, PE8 5NE
tel: 01832 273720 web: www.oundlebikefix.co.uk
- The Happy Bike Company**
Mobile Bike Servicing, Oundle and area
tel: 07976305310 web: www.thehappybikecompany.com

Stanwick Lakes

Stanwick Lakes is a unique 750 acre countryside attraction and nature reserve that is widely considered to be one of the region's most imaginative outdoor activity destinations. It offers acres of wide open spaces and paths, where blue skies are reflected in tranquil waters.

Stanwick Lakes has a network of over 7 miles of cycle paths. In addition to circular routes around the lakes there is a beautiful seven mile linear route running from Irlingham to Thrapston, providing a fantastic leisure ride along the former railway line, following the River Nene.

Cycle hire is available from AJ Cycles at Stanwick Lakes, see above for contact details.



Stanwick Lakes