Approximate distance 14 miles with options to shorten to 8 miles or to 10 miles.

This lovely ride is on a mixture of hard tracks, sand tracks and grass paths, with much of the ride in a woodland environment. There are some short steep hills and a couple of busy A-road crossings.

This route includes approx 1 mile of road work on village roads with one fast/busy road crossing at point 6 and one Pegasus crossing between points 8 & 9 - both over the A507. Riders of nervous horses are advised to avoid these by riding the shorter 8 mile option.

A short part of the ride follows a railway line which has infrequent services (you can check the timetable at **www.marstonvalecommunityrail.org.uk** if you wish). The route crosses a level crossing (twice).

A couple of the hills on the path between point 9 and Lidlington are extremely steep. The route has been designed so that you ride up the steepest hills rather than down. Please take care and adjust your speed appropriately, especially in slippery conditions.

All of these paths permit horse riding. If you have any problems using these paths please contact the Central Bedfordshire Rights of Way Department on 0300 300 8085 and The British Horse Society on bhs.beds@gmail.com

Forest Centre Facilities
The Forest Centre has ample parking, toilets and a café bar and the Green Man in Lidlington is horse friendly.

Gates to the park are locked overnight - please check hours on the website.

LetsGo for details of other walks or rides throughout Bedfordshire please visit **www.letsgo.org.uk**

Let us keep you informed

Promoted Route
8

For further information on all parts of the Forest of Marston Vale, our activities, and the facilities of the Forest Centre please visit:

www.marstonvale.org

Receive news about the Forest including what's on (either by post or email) by signing up via our website or by calling the Forest Centre.

The Forest Centre
Station Road
Marston Moreteyne
Bedfordshire, MK43 0PR

T. 01234 767037
E. info@marstonvale.org

This leaflet was delivered by the Forest of Marston Vale Volunteers with assistance from The Marston Vale Trust working in partnership with Central Bedfordshire District Council, Bedford Borough Council & The British Horse Society and was funded by Natural England through the Paths for Communities Project.

Image Credit: David Stubbs

Partners:
Forest Volunteers, Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council, The British Horse Society and Marston P3 Group

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

NATURAL ENGLAND

This project has been funded under the Rural Development Programme for England

Forest Centre to Centre Parcs

The British Horse Society

the Forest of Marston Vale

Forest Centre to Centre Parcs via Lidlington and Millbrook

1 Park in the grassed overflow car park adjacent to the roundabout. Follow the circular horse trail clockwise to Millbrook Station. If you wish to avoid riding past the wind turbine then turn left at the node and follow the horse trail in an anti-clockwise direction.

2 Leave the horse trail and country park via the horse stile and cross Station Road but **please note the level crossing to your left and the possibility of queuing traffic.** Cross the road and access the permissive bridleway via the post and rail horse corral. Follow the waymarked path adjacent to the Bletchley railway line and exit onto Marston Road. Cross the level crossing and towards another permissive bridleway (BW) that will lead you to Lidlington. **Watch out for rabbit holes in the sand track next to the harder surface.**

3 Turn left (signed as a cycle route) up Lombard Street to the junction with the High Street, turning right (straight ahead is the Greensand Ridge (GSR) BW that you will return on). Head up the High Street past houses and the Green Man pub (horse-friendly but close to the road) and up the steep hill called Bury Ware. **Please note this is quite a fast road with little or no verge.**

4 Near the top of the hill, take the BW track on your left towards South View Farm. When you reach a four way signpost, turn left following signs for the Greensand Ridge BW and head up the driveway in front of Jackdaw Hill House. **Note: do not go straight ahead at the four way post.** Past Jackdaw Hill House access the BW via the field gate and continue along the woodland track that negotiates the Greensand Ridge.

Bury Ware Hill

5 After approx ¼ mile you will come to a BW junction. **If you continue ahead following the GSR signs you can shorten the route to about 8 miles thus avoiding the fast A507 Woburn Road crossing at point 6. If you take the shorter route then please go to Point 11.**
To ride the whole route leave the GSR BW by turning right along the newly opened BW (if you get to a pond you have gone too far) heading straight ahead at first track crossing and turn left at the second. Do not take any tracks on your right except where the wood meets the golf course and you have no other option.

6 When you reach the crossing at the A507 please wait in the horse corral until safe to cross. This is an extremely busy & fast road.
Once across the road, take the BW on your right to follow the Center Parcs perimeter BW in an anti-clockwise direction, turning left after 1/2 mile on to sandy byway known as Gypsy Lane.
Alternatively, if you prefer a shorter ride turn left and then follow the perimeter BW to the Pegasus crossing at the roundabout – this will reduce your ride to about 10 miles.

Maps
This promoted route is not waymarked and the leaflet map is basic so purchasing an ordnance survey map is strongly recommended whenever venturing into the countryside. Explorer Maps 193 & 208 cover this ride.

Forest Centre to Centre Parcs via Lidlington and Millbrook

7 After 3/4 mile, leave Gypsy Lane and follow the Center Parcs perimeter BW by turning left along a wide straight path over a metal dropped horse 'hop' gate.

Hop gate at point 7

8 Continue along the woodland edge BW, turning left at the next BW junction. At the garden centre, ride three sides of its perimeter by turning left and then right twice to the A507 Pegasus crossing by the roundabout. Cross the busy road & turn left for approx 70 yards and take the BW on your right through the woodland that leads out onto Sandhill Close.

9 B9 At the end of the BW, turn left along Sandhill Close through Millbrook village. **The road has a series of road humps which slows traffic along this section of road.** At the end of this road and at the junction turn left along Station Lane. After 150 yards at the bottom of the hill, turn left at the Greensand Ridge BW and small car park adjacent to Millbrook Proving Ground.

10 This BW follows the edge of Millbrook Proving Ground and some sections of the golf course. There are some steep sections along this part of the ride. There is a mounting block at the top and bottom of the steepest hill. At the top of the hill you will pass several benches on one side and a golf 'T' on the other. Take the right fork at the junction just past this. 200 yards along this track take the next 'sharp' right turn (almost doubling back on yourself) to a BW junction.

11 **If you have taken the short cut from point 5, turn left when you get to the T junction of tracks.**
Continue following signs for the GSR BW back to The High Street in Lidlington. Cross the High Street and down Lombard Street and retrace your outward route back to the Forest Centre.

Notes

Make sure someone knows where you are going and when you expect to be back. In the case of an accident a group of three is safest – allowing one to stay with the injured party while the other goes for help (mobile coverage is not certain!)

Remember your hi-viz gear whatever the season or weather as these routes include stretches of road, some of which are busy with blind bends.

Wind Turbine: please see the Marston Vale website for advice about introducing your horse to our wind turbine!

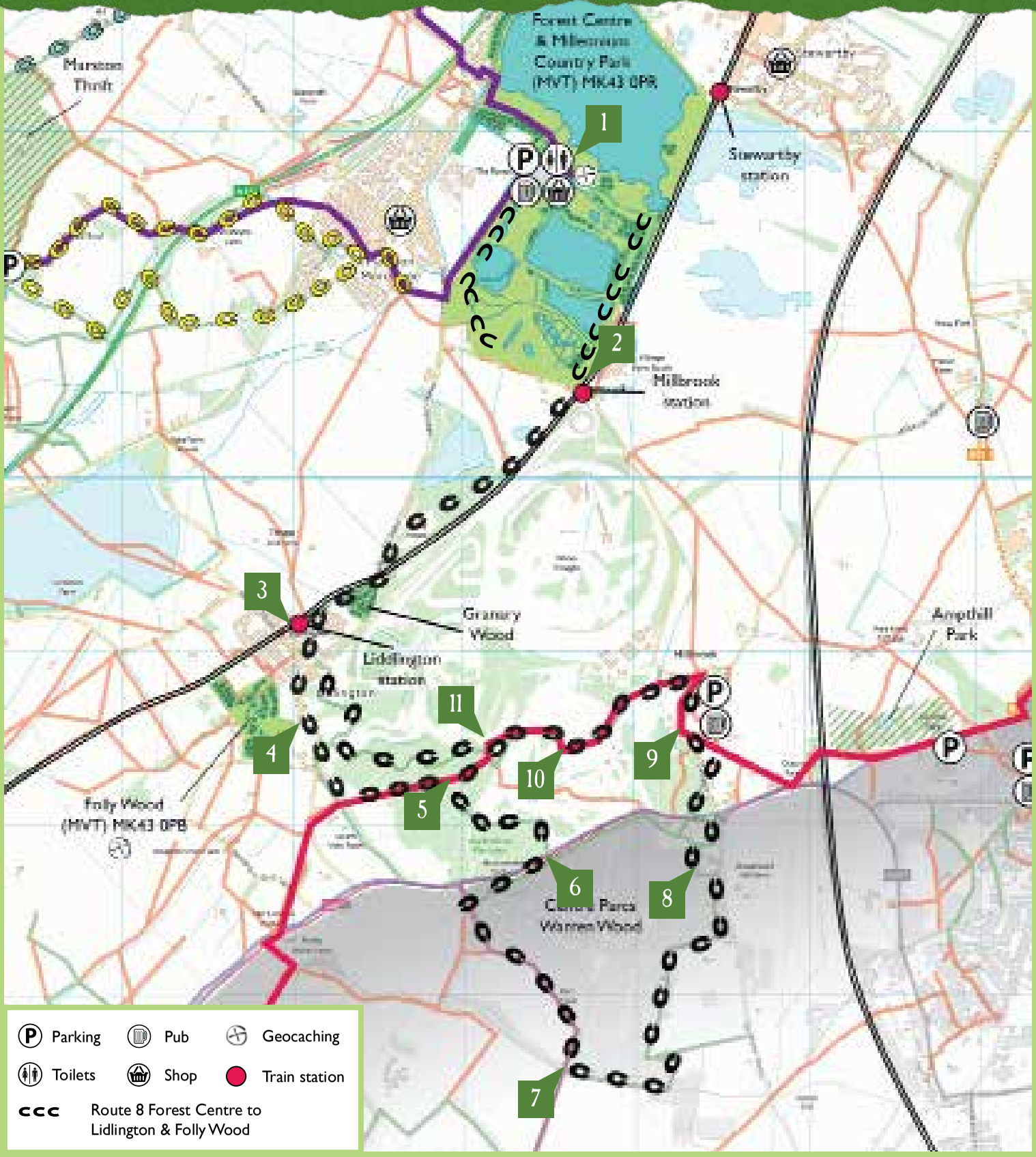
Keep to the marked rights of way and do not trespass onto private land. In Bedfordshire, bridleways are generally marked with a blue arrow and byways with a red one. Please avoid damaging crops and leave any gates as you find them.

Ride with courtesy: slow down to pass other users of the bridleways, especially walkers. Do not canter unless you can see that the route ahead is clear. On roads, please acknowledge and thank drivers who slow down for you.

Ride with attention: Be prepared for the normal hazards that may be expected when hacking such as traffic, farm machinery, dogs, bicycles, rabbit holes etc. Please look ahead and adjust your speed accordingly.

Take your litter home: litter and left over food spoils the countryside and can be dangerous to wildlife.

Forest Centre to Centre Parcs



OS OpenData Crown Copyright

Maps

This promoted route is not waymarked and the leaflet map is basic so purchasing an ordnance survey map is strongly recommended whenever venturing into the countryside. Explorer Maps 193 & 208 cover this ride.