



Atherstone to the Centre of England Ride

A suggested 30-35 mile tour of churches in the north Warwickshire countryside for those taking part in the annual sponsored cycle ride organised by the Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust.

The money you collect from your sponsors is divided equally between the church nominated by yourself and the County Trust, who are then able to make grants to needy churches. Where we can recover Gift Aid, we will retain the full amount of this, enabling us to increase our grant giving further. This is a national event.

This suggested 30-35 mile circular ride takes in twelve churches in **Atherstone, Mancetter, Hartshill, Ansley, Arley, Fillongley, Meriden** (traditionally the centre of England), **Maxstoke, Shustoke, Over Whitacre, Hurley and Baxterley**. Short detours will bring you to the churches of **Great Packington** and **Baddesley Ensor**.

The access to **Great Packington** is along a private drive but permission to use it has been given for the day.

The recommended route, shown on the map below, avoids 'A' roads, although A5, near Atherstone, has to be crossed. One section, between Mancetter and Hartshill (shown with a dotted line) follows the canal towpath. A suggested link between Arley and Over Whitacre is shown as an alternative to undertaking the whole circuit.

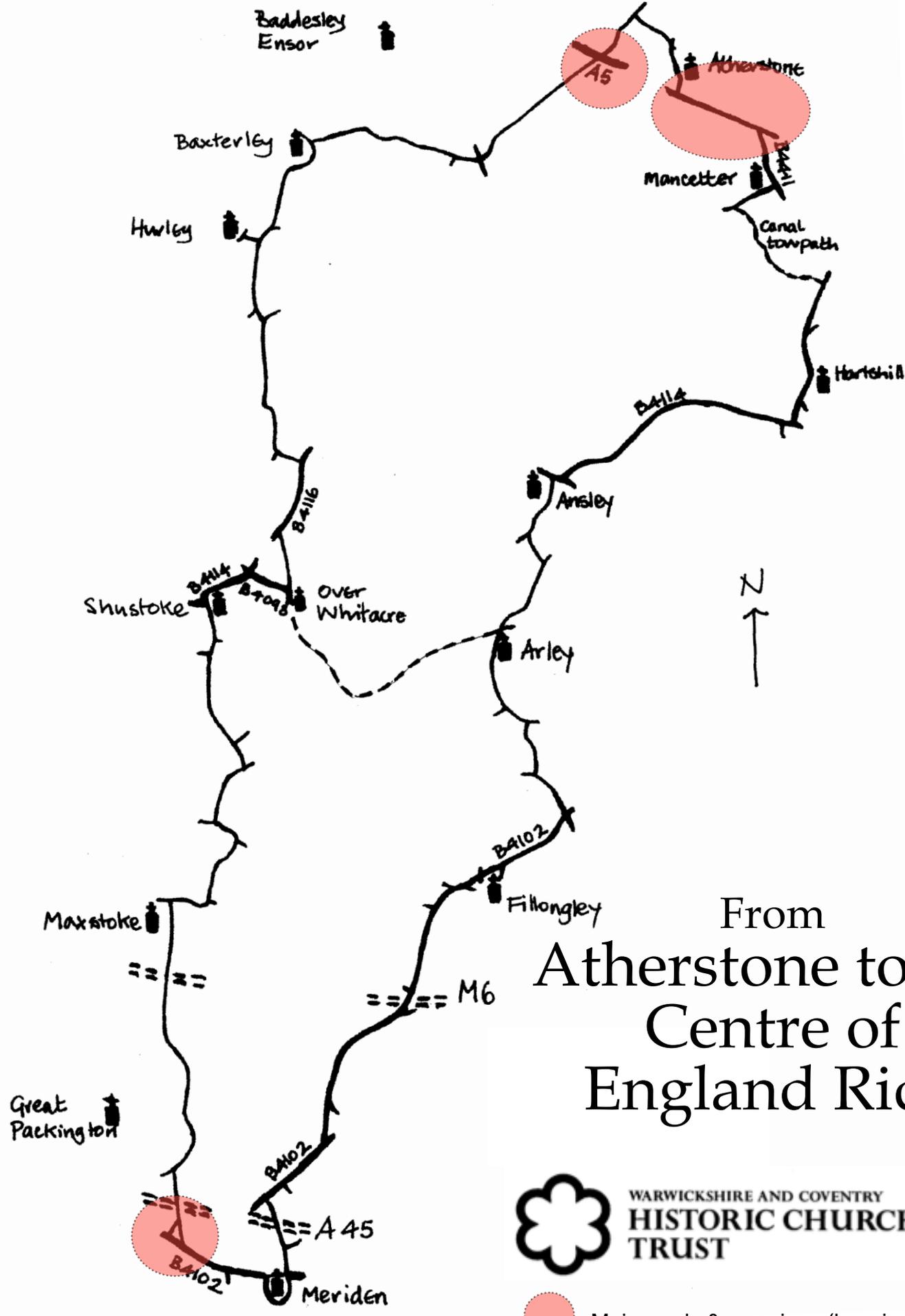
As well as this map, you are strongly advised to bring with you copies of the relevant 1:50,000 OS maps (Landranger 139, 140), especially to help you navigate some of the tiny lanes between Maxstoke and Shustoke.

Pubs serving refreshments will be found at many of the villages along the route.

Safety is vitally important on the Ride. This year we have included a Risk Assessment on the website, and we would ask you to read carefully this document and the text of the blue Sponsorship form before you set out and to follow the advice given. This is of particular importance if you are travelling in a group or have younger children in your party. Whilst the suggested route follows minor roads where possible, we have marked main road crossings on the attached map and particular care should be taken there.

The majority of the churches on this route are usually open for the Ride & Stride event. However, a list of open churches will be available on our website www.warwickshirechurches.org.uk, where you will also find the necessary Sponsorship Forms and other information about the Ride.

Contact: Claire Ragg, Ride coordinator – Claire@everythingbutthetea.com



From Atherstone to the Centre of England Ride



 Main roads & crossings (heavier traffic)

Atherstone, St Mary

A former late 14th-century friars' church, of which the tower and chancel survive. The nave and aisles were rebuilt in 1849.

Mancetter, St Peter

Mostly a 14th-century church, with some fine original stained glass in the east window.

Hartshill, Holy Trinity

Built in 1843-48, to the designs of T.L. Walker. Its most striking feature is the massive west doorway and portal, in '12th-century' style

Ansley, St Lawrence

Basically a Norman church, with tower and clerestorey added in the 15th century and the chancel extended in the 18th.

Arley, St Wilfrid

This has one or two 12th-century features but now dates largely from the 14th century

Fillongley, St Mary and All Saints

Surviving evidence here of a succession of rebuilding episodes from the 12th to the 15th centuries.

Meriden, St Lawrence

Perched on a hill outside the village, another church in a mixture of architectural styles spanning four hundred years.

Maxstoke, St Michael

A 14th-century church built by William de Clinton near the priory he founded. Inside there is evidence of 18th-century refurbishment.

Shustoke, St Cuthbert

A 14th-century church famous for its monument to Sir William Dugdale, Warwickshire's first historian, who died in 1585

Over Whitacre, St Leonard

High on a hill, said to have been built in 1766 but it could be earlier.

Hurley, Church of the Resurrection

A wooden church built in 1861.

Baxterley, the church

Largely rebuilt in 1875 but with a chancel of c. 1200. Inside is a memorial to those killed in a fire in the Baxterley coalmine in 1882.

If you have time for minor diversions:

Great Packington, St James

The famous chapel, built in 1789-90 to the designs of Joseph Bonomi for the Earl of Aylesford.

Baddesley Ensor, St Nicholas

Built in 1848 to the designs of Henry Clutton. Like nearby Baxterley, this also has plaque to those killed in the 1882 coalmine disaster.