

## Cycle Trail 2: Great Wishford to Wylve

**Length of Cycle**  
16 miles (26km)

**Ordnance Survey map:** Explorer 130  
**Cycle Start:** SU 078 356

### Key

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

**Distance:** 16 miles (26km)  
**Time:** Allow 5 hrs  
**Terrain:** Mostly tracks, quiet lanes, moderate gradients  
**Difficulty:** Moderate  
**Suitable for:** Mountain Bikes  
**Start:** Car-park of The Royal Oak pub in Great Wishford  
Cycling Groups, please notify pub well in advance

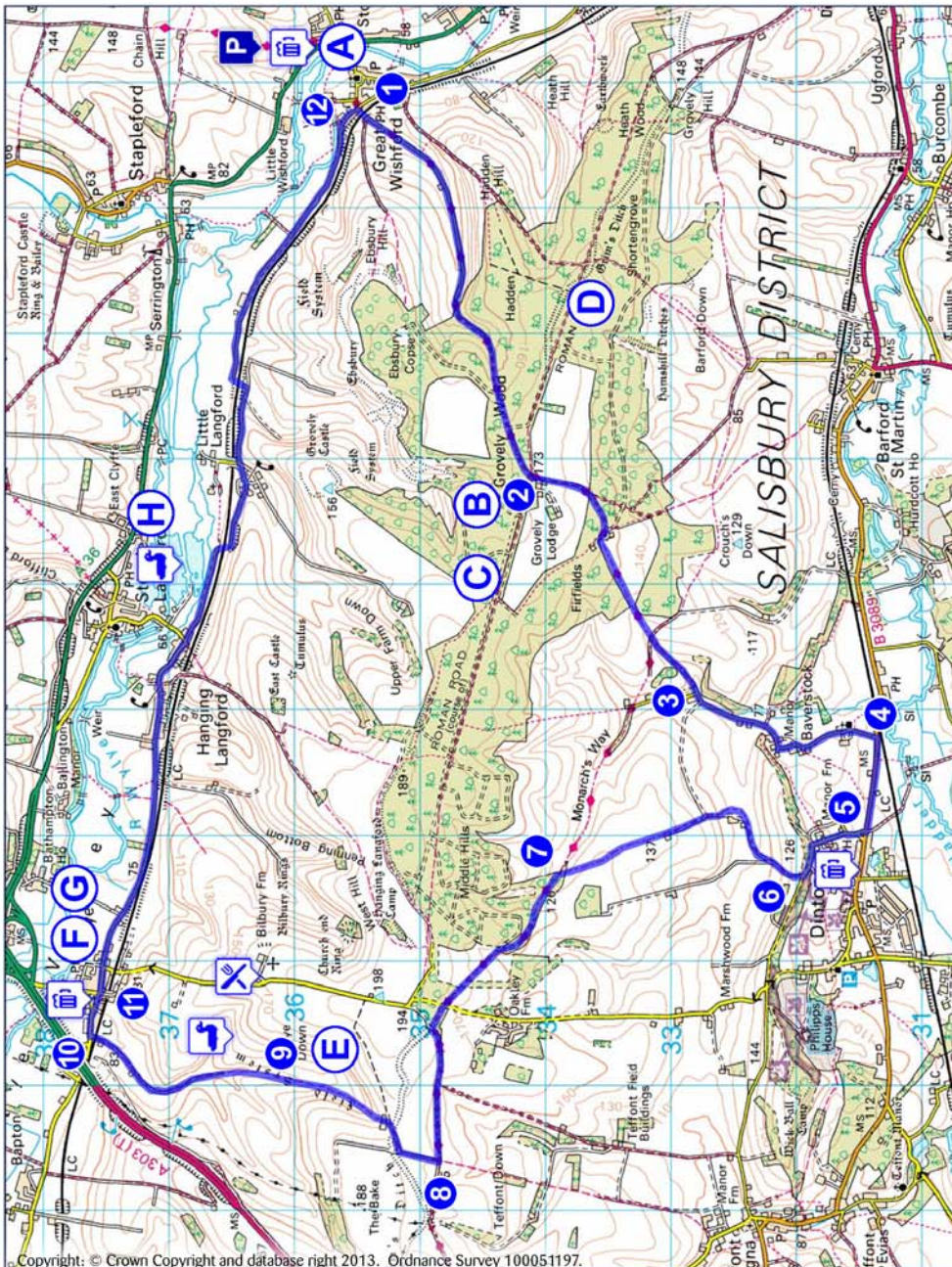
**Start Grid Reference:**  
**X :** 407800  
**Y :** 135600  
**Latitude :** 51.1189  
**Longitude :** -1.8899

**OS Explorer Map (1:25 000)**  
Salisbury & Stonehenge No. 130

**Notes & Refreshments:**  
At the Royal Oak Pub in Great Wishford, Great Wishford SP2 0PD, The Wyndham Arms and Village Shop in Dinton, and The Bell Inn in Wylve

A moderate circular route which starts from Great Wishford and passes through a number of picturesque villages including Baverstock, Dinton, Wylve and Hanging Langford, as well as, the ancient Grovely Woods, part of the Pembrokeshire Estate. Enjoy stunning views across open countryside as well as Wylve Down National Nature Reserve

1. From the Royal Oak in Great Wishford, turn R under the railway bridge and continue along the concrete Grovely Road into Grovely Wood. Continue uphill through the dense plantation until you reach a junction in the road and see some buildings (Grovely Lodge) in a clearing. The area of woodland to your R is known as Four Sisters which has a sinister past.
2. Continue at the junction, with open fields on your L and R. At the end of these fields, the track forks but stick with the Monarch's Way (a long distance footpath) to the R heading towards Grovely Farm. After passing Grovely Farm and its driveway bear left and take the next sharp left on the track through the trees.
3. A long downhill section brings you past a large barn (and off the Monarch's Way) and then into the tiny village of Baverstock. Through the houses and then on past St. Edith's church on your L with its wargraves of Australian Soldiers from WWI, and to the junction with the B3089 (Hindon Road).
4. Turn R onto Hindon Road (take care as this road can be busy) and then take the first R by the bus stop into Sandhills Road. If you wish, you can take a short detour and continue along Hindon Road into the village of Dinton which has a pub (the Wyndham Arms and Village Shop) and plenty of historic buildings.
5. Follow Sandhills Road northwards, following the road around to the L into the tree belt on the escarpment.
6. At the wide junction, turn R into Field Barn Lane, take the next R fork, eventually passing Field Barns (houses) on your L. From here the track climbs to the top of the down and then descends. At the bottom join a path through trees in the far left hand corner of the field. Turn L on the main track (Monarch's Way). Bear R at a junction. Continue to a road, continue straight ahead to join a track opposites through the woods.
7. At the T junction take a L following the concreted track until you bear right a a gated and signed track. At the private road sign turn R in front of two agricultural tanks.
8. Continue through trees, and straight on at a junction. Pass through the next gateway into a large field and head down following the fence to your left to the gated entrance to Wylve Down Nature Reserve





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9. Enter this lovely chalk grassland reserve managed by Natural England. Follow the path until you exit the reserve and continue downhill on a rough track past some stables and up to the railway. Cross over the railway line with care

10. Turn R and travel through the pretty village of Wylve. Fork off to the L and travel a short distance up the High Street to visit The Church of St. Marys, and The Bell Inn for refreshments. This is the only pub remaining in the village out of three which once existed. Alternatively, rather than fork off to the L, bear R into Teapot Street and across the junction into Fore Street to continue on your journey. You are now on the Wiltshire Cycleway Number 24, one of a series of long distance routes around the County

11. Fore Street becomes Wilton Road for a short while, then Wylve Road, and you meander next to the railway line all the way back to Great Wishford, passing through the tiny village of Hanging Langford, with Langford Lakes Nature Reserve managed by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on your L where the road becomes Langford Road.

12. Enter the village of Great Wishford and back to the Royal Oak pub on your R after Bonham Close for some refreshments.

### 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 Great Wishford.** This village has a long and ancient history and predates the Norman conquest of 1066. A thousand years ago, it was in the hands of the Abbess of Wilton and no more than a small hamlet called Wichford (meaning ford where the wych-elms grow). Knights would have passed through on their way to hunt in nearby forests. It still celebrates its ancient pagan traditions in the annual May celebration of Oak Apple Day which represents the ancient rights of villagers to continue to collect wood from Grovely Wood and other local woods.

**B Grovely Wood.** Grovely was the only Wiltshire forest to be mentioned by name in the Domesday Book. It is one of the largest woodlands remaining in Southern Wiltshire. It is a County Wildlife Site and home to the rare purple emperor butterfly. There is also much Iron Age and Roman archaeology in the vicinity of the wood including the Iron Age settlements of Hanging Langford Camp and Church End Ring to the western end and Iron Age Hill Forts of Ebsbury and Grovely Castle to the north. East Castle also to the north is an Iron Age farm enclosure.

**C Four Sisters.** Area of woodland named after the four Hansel sisters of Danish origin who moved into the Wilton area and were accused of witchcraft in 1737 after villagers died from an outbreak of smallpox. They were taken to Grovely Wood, murdered and buried. It is said that four gnarled beech trees still mark their graves located about 10mins walk from the Wilton end of the wood, approximately 50m from the Roman Road.

**D Dinton Village.** There are several interesting historic buildings. Located in beautiful parkland behind the 13th Century church of St Mary's is Philipps House, an early 19th Century Georgian mansion. The properties of Little Clarendon and Lawes Cottage are next to each other near the Village Shop. Little Clarendon is a delightful 15th Century Tudor stone farmhouse once owned by George Engleheart, a famous horticulturist in the early 1900s who grew daffodils, and Lawes Cottage is believed to have been the home of Henry Lawes, an outstanding 17th Century composer.

**E Wylve Down.** Wylve Down is designated as a National Nature Reserve. It is an area of chalk grassland rich in wildflowers with over 100 different species recorded. It is at its most impressive during the spring and summer months. Wylve Down is also important for its ancient field systems dating back to the Bronze Age. You can still make out the remains of banks and lynchets used to level these small arable fields. Just behind the nature reserve is Bilbury Rings, an Iron Age Hill Fort possibly occupied during the Roman times.

**F Wylve Village.** Many of the buildings are historic with some dating back to the 17th Century. There have also been some impressive archaeological finds around the village; the earliest was a mammoth's tooth dating back to at least 8000BC!

**G The Church of St. Marys.** The church was extensively rebuilt in 1846 but fragments of an earlier building remain suggesting a church had been built at the site by 1300.

**H Langford Lakes Nature Reserve.** This is a stunning nature reserve managed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust combining a lake and half mile stretch of River Wylve with 5 bird hides; a great place to learn about birds and other wildlife.