

Start: River Park, Park Avenue exit.

Distance: Main route 10 miles (16km). Optional detour adds another 7 miles (11km) and two more hills.

Terrain: A few hills. The route is mostly on quiet roads and tarmac cycle routes, with one offroad section on old railway line (can be avoided). Busier roads on the first bit out of town and on the B3047 returning.

See page 2 for more details.

Use at your own risk. Always follow the Highway Code, ensure your bike is roadworthy, wear appropriate clothing for the weather and take a snack and a drink with you.

Lockdown Rides #1: Avington and beyond

Country lanes and an old railway line east of Winchester

At end of railway path, go under bridge then immediately LEFT up very steep path to road (may need to walk up). Beware of traffic as you come out onto the road. Turn right onto road, going downhill.

At top of hill, turn right off B3047 onto a footpath between houses (shortly after passing Old Station Rd). Walk to end of footpath (very short), through a gate and left onto old railway. Start cycling again.

LEFT at T-junction at top of climb

LEFT at T-junction at bottom of descent

Kings Worthy

LEFT onto A33 then immediately RIGHT into Kings Worthy (beware traffic)

RIGHT at crossroads (opposite war memorial)

LEFT into Pudding Lane. Follow to a T-junction where you turn LEFT to rejoin Worthy Road (or the cyclepath).

LEFT into Dyson Drive

RIGHT at T-junction 'City Centre 1'

START IN RIVER PARK
River Park

For route out of Winchester, see detailed map on page 2.

LEFT at T-junction then immediately RIGHT opposite Cricketers pub

LEFT at T-junction 'Avington'

Main route: Follow round to left

Detour: RIGHT on left bend (looks like straight ahead) past entrance to golf club. Beware oncoming traffic on bend.

LEFT at T-j '23' then follow road round sharp right bend at bottom of descent. (Could stop on the right bend, near the Bush pub, and walk a short way onto the footbridge for nice views along the river.)

RIGHT by church 'Abbotstone 1/2'

LEFT at T-junction at top of short climb

Ride through ford. (Careful! Can be slippery. Straight ahead, don't brake or turn. Can walk over footbridge instead.)

LEFT 'Weight limit 3 tons'

Key:

- Main route
- Detour
- Hill climb
- Pub (Closed for now)
- LEFT 'Avington' Route directions (Words in italics are signs to look out for)

Lockdown Rides #1: Avington and beyond Page 2

It's a great ride because...

The Itchen Valley between Alresford and Winchester is a beautiful peaceful countryside route along quiet lanes.

This ride uses the little-known cycle route through subways and paths over Junction 9 of the M3 - not as scary as it sounds, but there's one bit where Highways England ask you to dismount and walk your bike along the pavement across the motorway bridge.

Avington Park is a scenic spot to stop for a snack.

On your way back, the old railway line is a disused section of the old "Watercress Line" railway which used to connect Alton to Winchester. It's now part of the Watercress Way: see thewatercressway.org.uk for details.

The detour route takes you up some hills where you'll get panoramic views across the valley.

But it could be better...

The cyclepath across the M3 could be a LOT better. Highways England has plans to redesign this junction completely, and these plans include a much improved, wider, easier cycle path.

The B3047 is busier than it needs to be - there's a dual carriageway from Winchester to Alresford but a lot of traffic still uses this B-road instead. Traffic reduction and safer speed limits along this road would make it better for cyclists and locals.

The cyclepath alongside Worthy Road from Kings Worthy to Winchester is too narrow for two cyclists or walkers to pass safely even in normal times. It goes round a blind bend and it's normally covered in debris, twigs, glass etc. This should be a major cycle-commuting route from Kings Worthy but it's totally inadequate.

Please write to your local councillors (especially county councillors) and express your support for measures to make these routes safer and easier.

Beware of...

The right turn off Easton Lane as you come out of town. Traffic is slow here but can be busy.

The cattle grids in Avington Park. Cattle grids are fine so long as you keep up a steady speed (say 5-10mph) and travel in a straight line, at right angles to the bars of the cattle grid. Don't try to turn or brake while you're crossing the grid. It can be difficult to get up enough speed when going uphill; if you're worried, just dismount and walk through the gate next to the grid.

The ford at Ovington. If you follow the detour (marked in orange) you'll find yourself riding through a stream just after Ovington! At this time of year it's very shallow and the road surface under the water is smooth but can a little slippery. Same as you did with the cattle grids, line up carefully and go through in a straight line at a steady speed - don't try to turn or brake. Or you could dismount and walk over the footbridge alongside.

The old railway line from Itchen Abbas. Not surfaced, so a bit bumpy and can be muddy after rain. If you're on a skinny-tyres road bike you might want to stay on the B3047.

Worthy Road (B3047) coming from Kings Worthy into Winchester. There's a cycle path alongside the road here, but it's very narrow and has poor visibility round corners, so be careful if you use it. many local cyclists choose to stay on the road.

