



(REGIONAL ROUTE 18)

18 miles (29km), Circular Route on Hoo Peninsular using quiet lanes

RAILWAY

Higham
For train times call:
08457 484950

BIKE SHOPS

Strood – **Geoff Wiles**
tel: **01634 722586**

Gillingham – **Bikes Bikes Bikes**
tel: **01634 571093**

Rainham – **Victory Cycles**
tel: **01634 365892**

INFORMATION

Medway Visitor Information Centre
Rochester – tel: **01634 843666**
www.medway.gov.uk

Riverside Country Park
tel: **01634 378987**
riversidecp@medway.gov.uk

RSPB Nature Reserve – Northward Hill – tel: **01634 222480**

MAPS & GUIDES

Ordnance Survey Explorer 163 and Landranger 178 cover this area, please telephone KCC on **08458 247 600** or email: env.publications@kent.gov.uk to order.

Interactive cycle mapping and free downloadable leaflets at www.sustrans.org.uk

Additional information about cycling in Kent www.kent.gov.uk/cycling

www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent

*a guide to cycling
in the Kent countryside*

the heron trail

The Heron Trail is a lovely 18 mile (29km) circular route on the Hoo Peninsula, bounded by two great rivers, the Thames to the North and the Medway to the South.

Dickens wrote four of his novels including Great Expectations and Tale of two Cities close by and the area was a popular smugglers haunt.

The trail provides a combination of rural and Maritime interests, medieval houses hiding behind later facades and spectacular views along the route.

Cliffe Fort built in 1800, as part of the defence system guarding the Thames is now home to roosting birds and a variety of plants. Cooling Castle, now privately owned, was built in 1381 and once stood close to the sea until the draining of the marshes stranded it some distance inland. Upnor Castle, built in 1559 is set on the banks of the River Medway and was constructed as a gun fort on the orders of Queen Elisabeth I to defend her war ships at anchor.

Recommended detours include the RSPB Northward Hill Reserve, home to around 150 pairs of grey herons, which give their name to the trail.

The Riverside Country Park close by on National Route 1 offers fantastic traffic free cycling for the whole family plus stunning panorama over coastal marsh, fresh water habitats and grasslands alongside the Medway estuary. The parks trails and paths have excellent surfaces which are particularly suitable for wheel chair users and the less able. The Saxon Shore Way stretches from Gravesend to Hastings, some 160 miles from start to finish and is easily accessible from the Heron Trail for diversion on foot.

