

The Buckingham Loop Rideout March 2017

Not so much a loop, more a labyrinthine extravaganza. You remember those puzzles where you have to visit every square in a grid without entering any one twice; well the route was not dissimilar to that. Zigzagging, circumnavigating, and generally meandering without actually arriving anywhere, certainly not Buckingham.

We, and when I say we, I mean a sizeable group of 19, left Long Itch and headed for Stockton - along the back road of course. A stimulating half hour of exhilarating bends and invigorating curves until we ventured into the back of beyond along an



old gated road which had remained untouched since the days of the turnpike. I fully expected to hear the pounding of hooves and the sight of a coach and four thundering down on us as we picked a precarious route between the ruts and potholes. Better roads led us through Silverstone followed by views of Stowe to the left and I naively thought we were entering Buckingham via the back door but no. We veered off through Gawcott, Tingewick, Finmere and Evenley to pull in at the BP/M&S outside Brackley. Happily they operate a healthy eating regime, deterring the consumption of sugar by charging 89p for a Kit Kat, so I was saved from temptation and retained my svelte profile.



We left, can you believe it, along a dual carriageway but Steve was only lulling us into a false sense of security because within ½ mile we were dodging grass and gravel in the middle of the track as we staggered towards Radstone. Williamscot and Cropredy whizzed by then it was into Farnborough and up to Avon Dassett with fabulous views. Down into Northend, a quick zip along the A423 and half of us were back at the Long Itch in no time at all. The other half returning by the pretty route had taken in Chesterton Windmill and other delights but I didn't feel shortchanged - well not much.

Just short of 90 miles (for half of us), a really good rideout, the 160 odd CWAMs who didn't make it missed a real treat. I could do that route everyday for a month and not get bored although I'd probably need new suspension and tyres at the end of it. Thanks to Steve for devising such a tortuous route and leading, John in the middle and Ian at the rear. Must do it again sometime.