

Pilgrims Hospices Cycle Challenge

Pre-event information

Sunday 3rd May 2026



Your support
helps us be there
for the next
family that
needs us



Thank you so much for entering the Cycle Challenge and we can't wait to welcome you to the start line on Sunday 3 May.

The essential information is listed below to ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable ride and raise money for a worthwhile cause. Participant safety is our highest priority and we hope you will understand that these measures have been instated to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

Important numbers for event day

Rider hotline (event day only): 07710 854029

Medical emergencies: 07537 152310

Advance event enquiries: 01227 782062 or fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org

Series 2 Cycle Jersey!

Be part of the team and purchase our newest Series 2 Cycle Jersey, designed to keep you comfortable and stylish as you ride with pride for Pilgrims. This high-quality jersey is packed with practical features, including:

A zipped valuables pocket for secure storage, a full-length zip for adjustable comfort and a silicone waist gripper for a secure fit.

Prefer the classic look? No problem! Our Series 1 Cycle Jersey is still available, so you can choose the style that suits you best.

Order online today or buy yours at the Cycle Challenge event village or the 3rd May.

Cycle Jersey Series 1: £45 (S, M, L, XL, XXL)

Cycle Jersey Series 2: £50 (S, M, L, XL, XXL)

Neck Buff: £5



At the event, we will also have our Pilgrims Hospices technical T-shirts available for purchase at £7 and other merchandise.

Did you know?

Since 2010, the Cycle Challenge has raised over £1.6 million for Pilgrims Hospices, funding 64,000 hours of specialist nursing care.

Getting ready



Essential items to bring

It is recommended that you should carry some **emergency money, form of ID, first aid kit, basic tools, inner tubes, tyre levers** and a **pump** to fix punctures or mechanical problems you may experience. Spare inner tubes and basic spares will be available for sale on the day from the onsite bike mechanics.

We recommend that you bring with you a full **water bottle** (or two) and any **preferred snacks**. A full list of the catering available at each rest stop can be found in the 'Refreshments' section later in this document.

It is mandatory that all riders wear a safety approved **cycling helmet** complying with latest ANSI Z90/4 or SNELL standards. Any riders not wearing a helmet will be withdrawn from the event.

Participant packs

A participant pack will be posted to every registered participant from the 16 April 2026. Included within the pack is a **unique rider number** to attach to your bike's handlebar using the **cable ties** provided, **sponsorship form**, and **arrival information**. This means that you can arrive at the start venue ready to go.

Please complete the back of your rider number and attach it to the front of your handlebars so it can be seen clearly. Do not wrap it around your frame. Your rider number contains the Rider Hotline (07710 854029) for any non-medical issues during the ride and the medical hotline number (07537 152310).

Training for the Cycle Challenge

It is recommended that you are able to ride at least 75% of the course distance comfortably beforehand. This will ensure you have an enjoyable experience at the Cycle Challenge without feeling overwhelmed by your chosen distance.

Is your bike ready for the road?

It is important that your bike is as ready for the Cycle Challenge as you are. We recommend that you give your bicycle a careful check over and test ride, with enough time to make any repairs needed ahead of the big day. If your bike requires a little TLC, there's plenty of great cycle shops across east Kent that can service it, many of whom will be supporting the event on the day including:

- **Biketart** Headline sponsor

Barham Business Park, Canterbury CT4 6DQ
Telephone: 01227 832582

- **The Cycle Hub**

University of Kent, The Pavillion, Canterbury, CT2 7SR. Telephone: 01227 827223

- **Herberts Cycles**

103-105 High St, Whitstable CT5 1AY
Telephone: 01227 272072

- **Locks Cycles**

28 King St, Sandwich CT13 9BT
Telephone: 01304 617161



Code of behaviour



All participants in the Pilgrims Cycle Challenge agree to following all safety advice issued by the organisers and adhere to the code of behaviour outlined below.

- Riders must follow the instructions provided by the Pilgrims Hospices Cycle Challenge organisers and marshals at all times.
- As previously stated, all cyclists must wear a properly fitted British Standard helmet - you are personally responsible for your own safety. You will not be allowed to take part without a helmet.
- All cyclists should carry a form of ID on their person at all times during the event, in case needed in a medical emergency.
- All cyclists must obey the Country Code and Highway Codes. It's important to remember other road users while riding. With marshals positioned at various locations, any riders seen not adhering to the Highway Code may be banned from future events.
- **Do ride considerately. Do let cars pass. Cycle no more than two abreast. Please don't drop litter.**
- Riders must ensure that their bicycle is in a roadworthy condition and we recommend that it has a full safety check, especially for brakes and steering.
- The roads **will not** be closed to other traffic.
- Please bring your own basic cycle repair kits (inc. spare inner tube and hand pump) as **support will not be available** on the route itself.
- Organisers are not responsible for the general health of participants. If you have any concerns about health or fitness to complete this challenge, please consult your GP before taking part.
- You must carry a **charged mobile phone** at all times and provide the number to the organisers in advance of the event. This is in addition to the emergency contact number that you have already provided us with when registering.
- **All cyclists must understand that this bike ride is not a race or trial of speed.** It is a personal challenge for each individual and no record of times will be kept on the day. Should you become tired, please stop and take a rest before continuing with the event.
- Should you wish to track your times, we encourage you to do so with the free Pilgrims Hospices Event App or other fitness app on mobiles phones, or regular cyclists may have Garmin or other GPX devices.

Passing horses

It is likely that you will encounter horses along some sections of the route. If you do, it is of paramount importance to the safety of the horse, the horse rider and yourself that you follow this advice:

- 1) Call out when approaching from behind so that the rider and horse are aware of you.
- 2) Slow your pace to a maximum of 15mph passing speed.
- 3) Pass with at least 2m clearance on road side only.



Travelling to the event



All routes will start from, and finish at, our event HQ at **The Pavilion, University of Kent, Park Wood Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7SR.**

Please note that the car park directly outside the Sports Pavilion on Park Wood Road will be not available (as that is the location of the event village).

Ample free parking is available across the University campus as shown. When arriving at the campus, look for the directional signage to the **Giles Lane Car Park (CT2 7NB)**. This main Car Park is just a short walk or pedal away from the event village.

If you are being dropped off at the event, please use the **Sibson Car Park (CT2 7FS)**. All Car Parks will be clearly signed.


Security

When arriving at the event village, please be vigilant. Do not leave your bike unattended and please leave it in the secure area designated for this event. Pilgrims Hospices and the University of Kent are not liable for the theft of your bike. This also applies if you stop at any location on the route.

Weather

The event will take place regardless of weather conditions, so please prepare by bringing sunscreen or waterproof clothing, as appropriate. The event will only be cancelled in extreme adverse weather conditions and the weather forecast will be monitored in the lead up to the event.

Recommended apps

 Pilgrims Hospices Events

To ensure you have a safe and enjoyable ride, it is recommended that you download the following free apps to your smartphone:

The **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** (available for **iOS** and **Android** devices). It's free to download from the **App Store** and **Google Play** and allows you to view a detailed map of your chosen route, including your current location, to keep you on track all the way to the finish. **Please note:** You do not need a MapMyTracks account, or to sign into the Pilgrims Event App in order to see your location on route maps. **However, you do need to give the Pilgrims Event App permission to use your location within your phone settings.**

 what3words

The **What3words** app (**iOS** and **Android**) is an easy way to identify precise locations. Every 3m square has been given a unique combination of three words: a what3words address. Essential for telling our event medics or recovery vehicles your location if you need their assistance.



Upon arrival



Event HQ and start waves

All routes will start from, and finish from the Event HQ at:
Sports Pavilion, Park Wood Road, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7SR

In order to avoid congestion at the venue and early parts of the course, you will be allocated a specific 30-minute **start wave** based on your intended route distance and team. Your starting wave will be communicated to you within your participant pack and via email in the weeks prior to the Cycle Challenge. Please plan your arrival within your allocated starting wave as this allows us to run a safe and enjoyable event.

The event area will open at 7:30am for registration. **Please do not arrive before this time or before your allocated start wave.** Please have your unique rider number affixed to your bike's handlebar before arriving at the event.

The majority of 125 and 100 mile route riders are in:

Start wave A: check in between **07:30 - 08:00hrs**

Start wave B: check in between **08:00 - 08:30hrs**

The majority of 75 and 50 mile route riders are in:

Start wave B: check in between **08:00 - 08:30hrs**

Start wave C: check in between **08:00 - 08:30hrs**

The majority of 30 & 50 mile route riders are in:

Start wave C: check in between **08:00 - 08:30hrs**

Start wave D: check in between **09:00 - 09:30hrs**

Check-in and check-out process

Only registered participants will be permitted into the site during the morning starting period (no spectators or non-participants please). You should follow the stewarded one-way system and queue using the designated area until a registration desk is available.

Once checked in, proceed directly to join the designated start line queuing area, where you will be released in small groups of up to 10 riders at 30-second intervals after a short safety briefing. Once you have been released, please keep left and continue out onto Park Wood Road. Please do not be tempted to simply wait for other participants on this road as this will cause congestion and delay other riders being started. Those starting in groups will be required to queue up in group order.

Please remember to **bring your helmet to registration with you.** It is mandatory that all riders wear a safety approved cycling helmet complying with latest ANSI Z90/4 or SNELL standards. Any riders not wearing a helmet will be withdrawn from the event.

Ride completion and latest finish time: Spectators may attend the event village to greet returning cyclists. All riders must have completed the ride and checked out at the de-registration area by 1930hrs. You will need to check-out in order to collect your finisher's medal. If you do not think you can complete your chosen distance within the specified time, you should inform event organisers immediately on the participant hotline 07710 854029. Please call or message with your name and rider number.

Routes



Once your Event place has been purchased, we are unable to refund the price difference if you decide to reduce your ride distance. However, if you would like to increase your chosen distance, you will be required to pay the difference of the route change. From the closing date (14 April) there will be a standard fee for anyone wishing to increase their distance of £15. Payable in advance or on the day. Please let the Events Team know ASAP of any route changes at: fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org

THE CIRCUIT – 30 miles (view map): A flatter, circular route taking in the beautiful countryside and charming villages around the Stour Valley and beyond, with a rest stop at Preston.

THE CLASSIC – 50 miles (view map): A scenic, circular route through the beautiful and undulating Kent Downs AONB towards Ashford before a second half riding among meandering lanes and ancient woodland. Due to a road closure in Fordwich this route now enters Canterbury via and follows the end of the 15 mile route.

THE CHALLENGE – 75 miles (view map): A spectacular, circular route incorporating the picturesque Elham Valley and onward to the picturesque town of Sandwich. From there, you'll head through flatter countryside towards Herne Bay and the final push through the beautiful Thornden Wood.

THE CENTURY – 100 miles (view map): A circular route connecting all three hospice service areas incorporating an undulating approach to Dover for the ultimate 100-mile challenge.

THE EPIC – 125 miles (view map): A circular route connecting all three Pilgrims hospice service areas that visits the fast and flat Romney Marsh before re-joining the 100 mile route.

Route information

- **All riders must sign back in at the registration desks once they have completed the route.** We need to account for all participants at the end of the event and will call you if you have not checked back in or haven't called to let us know that you have finished early or elsewhere.
 - If you are unable to complete your route, you **MUST** inform the organisers so that you are accounted for – please call or message the rider hotline **07710 854029 stating your name and rider number.**
 - If there is a **medical emergency, you must call 999** and seek the help of the emergency services who are aware that the event is taking place. You should also call the **Event Medical Emergency Number (07537 152310)** so that event medics can be mobilised, as often they can arrive on scene faster than an ambulance.
 - The routes will be clearly signed with orange fluorescent signs with black arrows marked with the Pilgrims Hospices logo.
 - There will be a limited number of recovery vehicles, which can carry up to two participants and their bikes at any one time. Therefore, we ask for your patience with being recovered during busy periods of the day.
 - Maps of the ride can be downloaded directly from our website (www.pilgrimscyclechallenge.org) but are always subject to change depending on local Kent Highways information and road conditions.
- We strongly recommend downloading the free **Pilgrims Hospices Event App** for iOS and Android devices as you can view detailed route maps that show your current position so you can see if you deviate from the correct route.

Rest stops

Rest stops for each route are as follows:

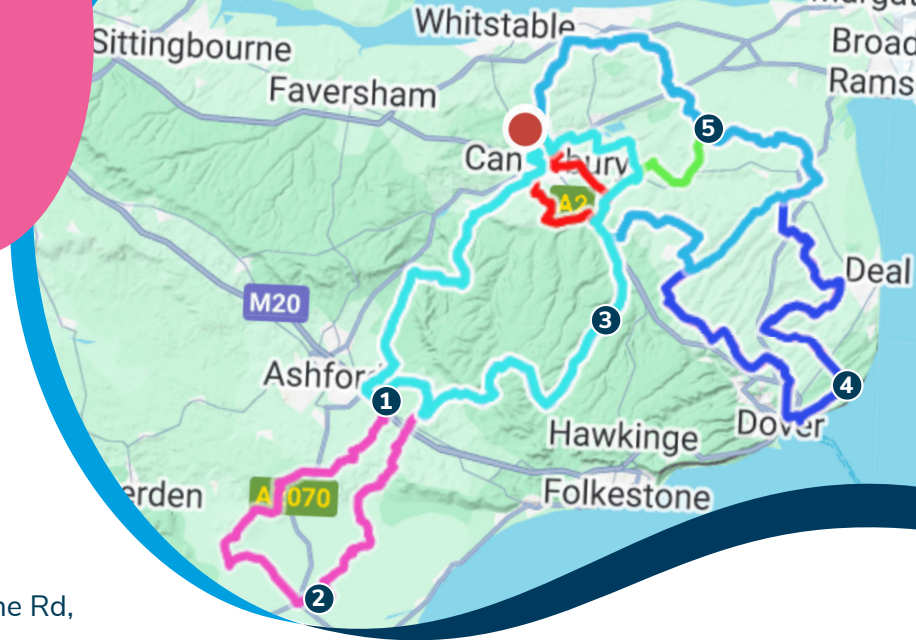
125-mile route visits rest stops **1, 2, 3, 4, 5.**

100-mile route visits rest stops **1, 3, 4, 5.**

75-mile route visits rest stops **1, 3, 5.**

50-mile route visits rest stops **1 and 3.**

30-mile route visits rest stop **5.**



• **Rest stop 1:** Pilgrims Hospice Ashford, Hythe Rd, Willesborough, Ashford TN24 0NE.

Refreshments available: Orange & blackcurrant squash, tea, water, flapjacks, bananas, crisps, a selection of sweets & cakes, vegan cake and gluten free cake.

• **Rest stop 2:** St Georges church, Ivychurch, TN29 0AN. **Refreshments available:** Orange & blackcurrant squash, tea, coffee, flapjacks, bananas, crisps, a selection of cakes, vegan cake and gluten free cake.

• **Rest stop 3:** Barham Village Hall, Valley Rd, Barham, Canterbury CT4 6NX. **Refreshments available:** Orange & blackcurrant squash, tea, coffee, water, flapjacks, bananas, crisps, savoury rolls (cheese, ham, egg mayo), a selection of cakes, vegan cake and gluten free cake.

• **Rest stop 4:** St Margaret's at Cliffe Village Hall, Reach Road, CT15 6AP. **Refreshments available:** Orange & blackcurrant squash, tea, coffee, water, flapjacks, bananas, crisps, a selection of sweets & cakes, vegan cake and gluten free cake.

• **Rest stop 5:** Preston Village Hall, Mill Lane, CT3 1HB. **Refreshments available:** Orange & blackcurrant squash, tea, coffee, water, flapjacks, bananas, crisps, savoury rolls (cheese, ham, egg mayo), a selection of cakes, vegan cake and gluten free cake.

Rest stop information

• Participants are advised to **bring any preferred snacks** to supplement the catering at rest stops along the route. A detailed breakdown of what is available at each rest stop is shown above to aid with planning.

• Participants are responsible for making sure that they remain hydrated throughout the day. It is recommended to **bring a full water bottle** (or two if your bike can carry it). Water stations will be available to refill at rest stops.

• Portable toilets will be available at each rest stop. Please join the queuing area and use the next available toilet, ensuring to use the hand sanitiser provided before entering, and after leaving, the toilets.

• Participants are encouraged to spend as little time as necessary at each rest stop and ideally 15 minutes maximum to avoid congestion. Please ensure you are well rested before carrying on and speak to staff if you need support.

• The University of Kent will be hosting their usual finish line BBQ for hungry cyclists, so remember to bring your card if you'd like a burger, etc at the end of your ride (accepts card only).



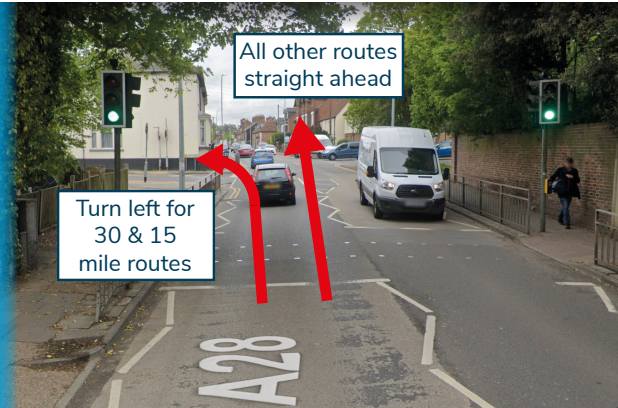
Junctions of note

Please take note of the following sections of the route to avoid becoming lost or injured.

Routes affected: All routes

Location: Cycling west out of Canterbury, A28 Wincheap

Be aware as you are leaving Canterbury along Wincheap Road that cyclists on the 30-mile route should turn left onto Hollow Lane after the pedestrian crossing pictured. Cyclists on all other routes should continue straight on along Wincheap Road towards Thanington Without.



Routes affected: 50 mile, 75 mile, 100 mile and 125 mile
Location: The Five Bells Inn, Brabourne

We have had some issues in previous years with signs being taken down around the Brabourne village area of the route. Please be extra vigilant while navigating this section and it is advised that riders look at the course map regarding this area before the day.

Routes affected: 30 mile, 75 mile, 100 mile and 125 mile
Location: Entrance to Rest Stop 5, Mill Lane, Preston

The rest stop at Preston Village Hall comes just after a series of tight bends and uneven road surface. Care should be taken regarding oncoming traffic and riders should slow and ride in single file. The refreshment stop will be marked on the left hand side just after the primary school as shown.



Routes affected: 30 mile, 75 mile, 100 mile and 125 mile
Location: Herne Street roundabout, Herne

Be aware that you will be turning right at the mini roundabout in the centre of Herne village. Though cars from your right will be approaching slowly, we advise extra care taken when moving out onto the roundabout so that you are not surprised by an unseen vehicle.

After the event

Keep the sun off your neck with the official Pilgrims Hospices neck buff. Available for just £5.



The finish line

To celebrate your success when you cross the finish line, you'll receive a brand new commemorative medal to mark your fantastic achievement. Please ensure that you visit the de-registration desks to claim yours.

The University of Kent will also be running their welcome back BBQ so remember to bring your card to enjoy a finish-line feast before your onward journey home (card only, not cash).

When you are home

If you've taken pictures or video footage to remember the day, why not add them to the **Pilgrims Hospices Cycling Facebook Group**, on **Instagram** or tweet us at **@pilgrimshospice**.

Please do take a few minutes to complete the **online survey** afterwards that we will email to you. We really value your feedback and will use your comments to improve the event, and others, for future years.

Photos

Please note that we have a limited number of volunteer photographers at various locations throughout the routes. They will aim to capture as many participants as possible but photos cannot be guaranteed.

Event sponsors

The Cycle Challenge couldn't raise the fantastic amount it does for Pilgrims Hospices without the kind sponsorship of our supporting businesses, many of whom have been 'along for the ride' since the early days of the Cycle Challenge.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the following organisations:

Kent Sport – University of Kent, Barretts and Biketart.



Cycling for hospice care

Raising sponsorship

We need every Pilgrims cyclist to show their support by pledging to raise as much sponsorship as they can through their challenge. After all, it's no mean feat to pedal all that way!

Every mile you ride and every pound you raise will help Pilgrims Hospices continue to provide our expert and compassionate care to patients and their families. By taking part, you're directly supporting local people in our community when they need it most. **If every person could raise just £150 in sponsorship, together we could raise £150,000 for local hospice care!**

You can start an **online sponsorship page** which is a great way to share your fundraising efforts by social media and email. Your supporters can donate easily and the money comes directly to Pilgrims Hospices, meaning it's hassle-free for you too!



Alternatively, if using a traditional **paper sponsorship form**, please send a cheque for your final sponsorship total, along with your sponsorship form to: **Supporter Relations, Pilgrims Hospice, 56 London Road, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8JA** or **donate your collected sponsorship online** via the Pilgrims Hospices website if it's easier for you. If sending a cheque, please make them payable to Pilgrims Hospices in East Kent.

Please encourage your friends and family to tick the Gift Aid checkbox when they sponsor you. This makes their donation worth 25% more to us at no extra cost to them. Please try to have your sponsorship money to us by 1st July 2026.

Hiking for hospice care

Are you looking for your next challenge? Why not swap your bike for a hike, and join us on the 20th June to take on the Pilgrims Way Challenge!

The Pilgrims Way Challenge offers an unparalleled opportunity to immerse yourself in the beauty of one of England's oldest and least-trodden national trails. Along the way, you'll pass through ancient woodland, orchards, and fields, as well as a few challenging climbs encompassing the undulating geography of the Garden of England.

By taking on a 25km, 35km, or 55km hike for local hospice care, you'll be helping us to raise vital funds and awareness for Pilgrims Hospices and the patients under our care.

Find out more and sign up today!



We hope you have a great ride and thank you so much for supporting Pilgrims Hospices!

