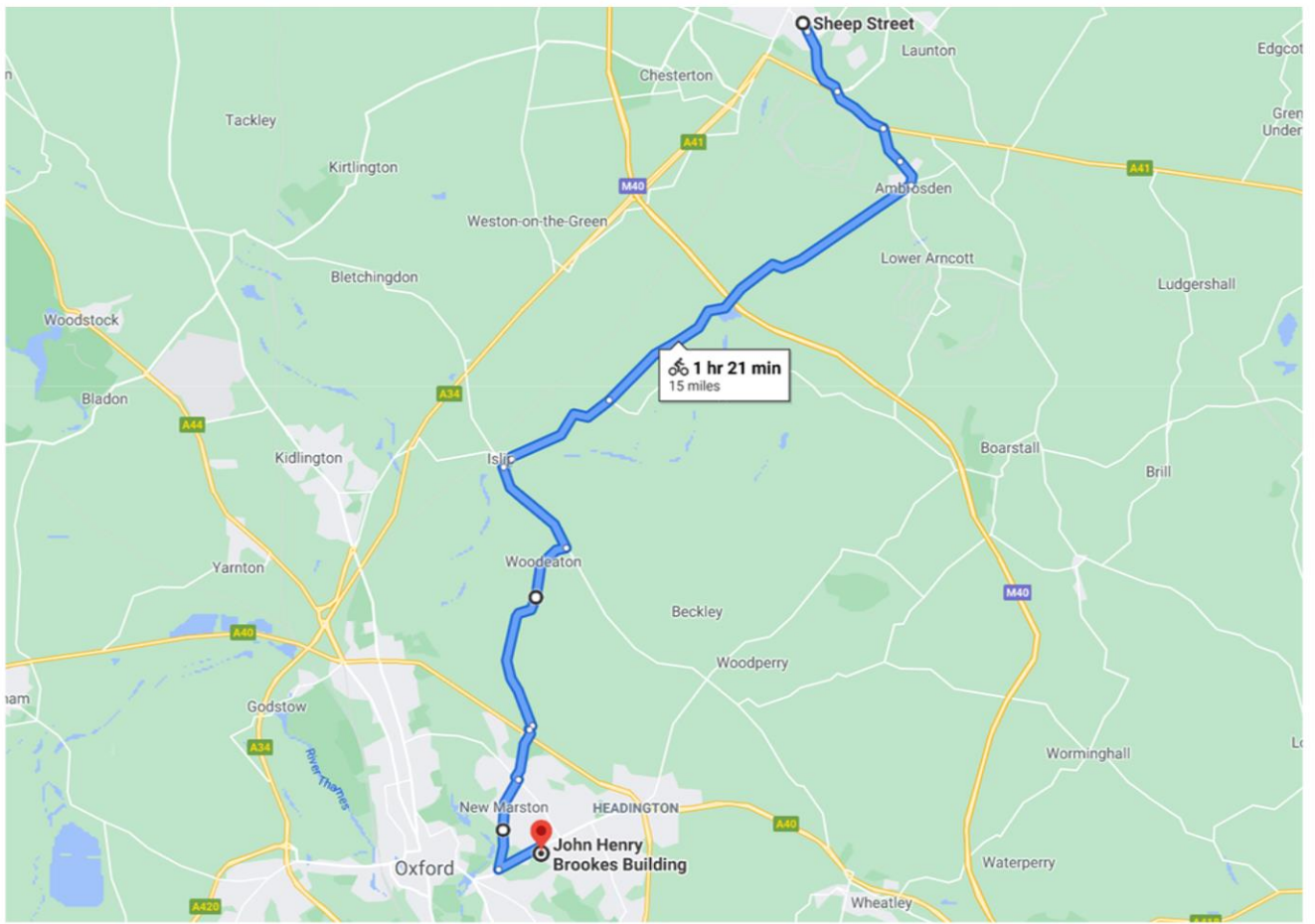


Bicester to Headington



Cycling route

Mark Mackintosh

**BROOKES
ACTIVE**

This cycle route should take anywhere between 50 and 90 minutes, depending on your pace/experience on the bike and which way the wind is blowing. There are a few different routes from Bicester to Oxford – this one goes passes through the villages of Ambroseden, Merton, Islip, and Woodeaton.

Leaving Sheep Street, ride out towards the Graven Hill roundabout – this isn't the best designed piece of infrastructure you'll ever come across, so please take care until you get used to the layout (alternatively there are pedestrian crossings around the roundabout that can be used). Exit the roundabout onto the A41 towards Aylesbury (here you can use a path on either side of the road, or the road itself. Continue until the turning for Ambroseden on the right-hand side, and leave the busier road behind as you head towards Oxford.

You'll find yourself going slightly uphill as you approach Ambroseden before the road levels off and you turn right onto the long, very straight (and frankly, a bit boring) Merton Road – it can be a bit of a slog if this wind is in your face, but don't forget that it'll be helping you along for the return journey! Keep following this road and eventually you'll come across some bends as you pass through Merton itself.

Keep going along this road and eventually you'll get to the village of Islip – past the halfway point, and ready for the first hill to get up.

As you get to Islip, take the first left turn onto Lower Street towards The Swan Inn. Turn left over the bridge and you'll see the road rise up on the other side as you head along the Wheatley Road (B4027). Keep your pedals turning to the top of the hill and eventually the road will level off, leaving a drop down towards the Woodeaton turning on your right.

The road you are now on will take you through the pretty village and is mostly downhill, which provides a welcome rest after the climb out of Islip. Finally, you'll reach the end of this road before a right, then left turn will bring you out onto the flyover at the start of Marsh Lane. From this point, there are a number of options to finish off the journey onto campus.

You can make your way through Northway and up Ambleside Drive, continue to Cherwell Drive and head up the hill past the JR, or find more options along the Marston Road. This route uses the latter.

At the traffic lights, turn left before turning right past the petrol station and onto Marston Road. Again, there are more options – you can turn left at any of Jack Straws Lane, Harberton Mead or up through Clive Booth, although the best choice is to continue to the end and head up the final climb of Headington Hill.

Take the hairpin left turn at the traffic lights and head up Headington Hill. If you're not a fan of going uphill you can take the option of using the pavement on the left to walk, or push on up on the increasingly steep road until it flattens off at the entrance to Headington Hill Hall, and it's only a short roll until you end up in front of the Plaza.