

# Hodgemoor Riding Association



Love the Woods and want something a bit different?

## ***Guide to the hacks accessible from Hodgemoor Woods***

By Susie and Marcus Bicknell November 2013 updated Jan 2019

### Notes:

- The place-names used here are those on Google or on the Ordnance Survey Explorer sheet 172, so you can select map or satellite view on your computer or tablet to familiarise yourself with these routes before you leave.
- Neither the authors nor the Hodgemoor Riding Association can be responsible for any changes to routes or incidents en route. Horse-riding is dangerous and you should assess the risks of these routes in advance and during.
- Do not cross a main road on horse-back unless you are a responsible adult with relevant experience or accompanied by an expert horse-rider with knowledge of the crossing(s) concerned.
- Take relevant equipment including fluorescent tabard and horse marking, well-charged mobile phone, Ordnance Survey map and compass.



## 8. *The Widmer to Blue Close Wood Loop*

Distance 3km Time 40 minutes

A pleasant ride with the roadwork on almost traffic-free single track. The loop through Blue Close Wood is a joy and horses who enjoy cantering (on the flat and uphill) are in for a treat – but do wear a helmet and beware of overhanging branches and thorny hedges. The short length of time taken makes this loop an ideal addition to a hack round Hodgemoor.

(1) Starting at (1) **Widmer Corner** (the southwest exit of Hodgemoor Woods with a green metal barrier and space for two cars), go south along the single track road.

(2) Where a bridle path goes off to the right, continue straight on.

(3) After a kilometre there are **Seer Green** houses on the left. At the junction with a larger road (3), now just in a built-up area, go straight on right for 20 metres and turn right into an opening in the hedge, marked footpath and bridle path. In the field turn immediately left onto the bridle path which goes diagonally west toward the gentle brow, fields either side. You can have a trot or a quiet canter up this path if there are no walkers.

After 200 metres, at the white gates at the brow, slow down because the upcoming downhill path is quiet steep and there is a fence on your left.

(4) At the bottom, marked (4) on the map, turn right onto a nice bridle path suitable for a canter. Welcome to **Blue Close Wood**. You are now heading north. After 250m there's a slight zigzag under trees, leading to a gate which is left open. With a tall hedge on your left and a fence to a field on your right, there is another 250m of canter if it has been cut back, but often you might choose to walk or trot.



Now you're in **Bottom Wood** still heading north. The trail here looks inviting but there are flints embedded in the path; don't canter unless your horses is well shod and fit. The grass verge on the left is a bit softer. After 250m you're at point (5) on our map (first photo, right) and in **Starveacre Wood** and you meet the bridle path from the A355 crossing at White's Hill (see "The Coles Hill Loop" on our complete list of longer hacks).



(5) Turn right, eastwards, and prepare for a dash up the narrow flinty path (second photo, right) which many fit horses love to

canter up. The hedges in the open air at the top tend to get overgrown in the summer but remain passable, especially if you and some friends were to go there on foot with clippers and give the worst bits a trim. Bucks County Council are meant to clear this bridle path but to our knowledge do not do so. The farmer on either side reaches over when the hedges are being done, so the bridle path hedges get some attention (third photo, right).



(2) Now you're back at point (2) on the map. Turn left on the single track road and return to Widmer Corner (1)

**No liability is assumed by the Hodgemoor Riding Association, its management or members for any eventuality arising from the use of these riding route suggestions. Any risk taken is the rider's own.**

The support of other riders and members of the Hodgemoor Riding Association in prospecting, photographing and writing up these and other routes; thank you for any input you can give.