

# A Broadland Church Trail



**Hoveton**  
**Wroxham**  
**Ranworth**  
**South Walsham**  
**Acle**  
**Horning**

## places to visit

please check opening hours

- 16 Broadland Churches
- Ranworth Visitor Centre
- Woodbastwick Brewery
- Fairhaven Gardens



## Broads by bike

The Broads and surrounding countryside are the ideal place for cycling. Quiet roads, gentle slopes, beautiful countryside and fresh air, all combine to make cycling a real pleasure.

There are plenty of pretty villages within easy reach, with ancient churches, wind pumps, pubs, cafes and other attractions to enjoy. You can even make it to the nearby coast, with its rolling waves, dunes and beautiful sandy beaches.

Above all, there are stunning views of the Broads, with sails on distant rivers seeming to glide across marshland fields, all beneath the spectacular skies for which the area is famous.

### Further information

Leaflets for other Broads bike trails in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads are available from bike hire centres and Broads Information Centres.

### Broads information

Easter to October t: 01603 782281  
or at other times t: 01603 610734  
[www.broads-authority.gov.uk](http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk)

### Norfolk Open Churches

The Broads and Rivers Open Churches Project is dedicated to helping churches to be open and welcoming to all visitors. The Broads has some of the most interesting and beautiful churches in the county, and by opening them we hope to help people to understand and appreciate our historic and Christian heritage.

[www.norfolkopenchurches.com](http://www.norfolkopenchurches.com)

This leaflet is funded by the Broads Authority Sustainable Development Fund and the Open Churches Project.

While every effort has been made to include accurate, up-to-date information, the Broads Bike Hire Association does not accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. If you find any inaccuracies we would be pleased to hear about them.

## Safe cycling

- \* This is not an off-road route, you will meet cars and other vehicles on these roads during your trip.
- \* Take care crossing and using main roads.
- \* Please ride in single file on busy roads, and never more than two abreast on others.
- \* Remember to signal before manoeuvring - other road users need to know.
- \* Please keep to roads, bridleways and byways - footpaths are for pedestrians.
- \* Give pedestrians and horses plenty of room and slow down as you pass - horses can be easily startled, and may not hear you coming.
- \* Wear a safety helmet, and bright reflective clothing even in daylight.
- \* You must use lights after dusk - it's important to be seen. Check whether you have time to complete your route in daylight before you start.



### hire centre

Broadland Cycle Hire  
at Bewilderwood  
t: 07887 480331



## Introduction

Along the waterways of Norfolk and north-east Suffolk there are many round-towered churches which are said to date from before the Norman Conquest. In a few cases this is so – perhaps twenty of them are of Saxon origin, but most date from after 1066, the period of ‘Norman’ architecture that had gradually changed to a more ‘English’ style by 1200.

Thatch, rare on churches in the rest of England, is common here. A good Norfolk reed thatch should last at least 60 years, often 80, although the sedge on the ridge will have to be renewed more often. This is also an area of superb woodwork: screens, often painted, benches and roofs.

Norfolk’s churches are almost always of flint, either knapped or used as coursed or random rubble. Expensive dressed limestone was used for the arches of arcades and the sides of doorways and windows. Norfolk was a rich county and the patrons of these churches could afford to be lavish, hoping to gain salvation by their generosity.

## Hemblington All Saints

The church attached to the Norman round tower is substantially 14th century with a later porch. In 1937 the large St Christopher wall painting was discovered and is a fine example.

The folk of Hemblington in the Middle Ages would glance into the church in the morning and consider that, having gazed on the image of the saint, they would be kept safe from untimely death that day. Some of the pews have poppy head ends, and fine figures on their ends and traceried backs.



## Hoveton St Peter

A charming chapel of 1624 – a rare date for a church being erected in England. The church is thatched, like so many churches in the Broads. A feature is the series of hatchments which depict the coats of arms of local families. Painted on board in the 17th/18th century, they were hung outside the house of the deceased for a year before being taken to the church.



A gallery of these and other Norfolk Churches can be found [online on the Norfolk Open Churches website](http://www.norfolkopenchurches.com)



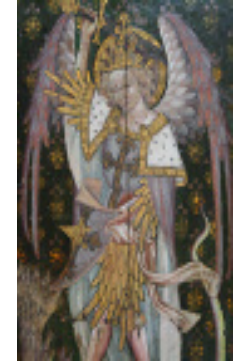
## Ranworth St Helens

A very famous Broads church with a wonderful view from the top of the 93ft tower. The Chancel appears to date from the 14th century with a 15th century nave. There is a fabulous rood screen, probably from the 15th century, painted by itinerant Spanish painters.



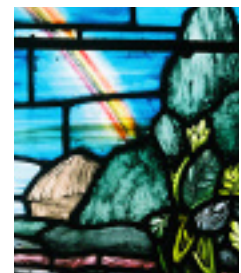
The Cantor’s desk, an early lectern, is double-sided, beautifully painted and unique. It was probably used for the Sarum Antiphoner which can be seen in the glass case by the South Door.

The Antiphoner is a real treasure and was probably produced at Langley Abbey (near Loddon) on the River Yare.



## South Walsham St Mary and St Lawrence

Two churches on one site – unusual but not unique in Norfolk. They originally belonged to adjoining manors and each served their own community. St Mary’s is now the parish church and St Lawrence’s has been well restored as an arts centre, though it is still consecrated for worship. St Mary’s has a two storey porch which, like the church, is 14th century. The screen has the name of its donor, John Galt, inscribed on it. He was a serf who, when freed in 1437, paid for the building in gratitude. There are some interesting stained glass windows in the chancel.



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**1 Hoveton St Peter**  
A charming, thatched chapel of 1624 – a time when not many churches were being built.



Broads Information Centre, Station Road

**4 Wroxham St Mary**  
CHURCH LANE  
WROXHAM

**2 St Helen's Roman Catholic Church**  
The church was built in 1959 and contains the Victorian altar and fittings from the original 1880 chapel at Wroxham Hall. It is the only RC church close to the Northern Broads. The church is locked but keys are available from 'Tryddyn' opposite.

**3 Hoveton St John**  
St John's has a post-Reformation tower, a rarity in Norfolk, but the church is mostly 14th/15th century, with earlier beginnings.

**4 Wroxham St Mary**  
Not in the centre of the town but located high above the River Bure. A 15th century tower, a fabulous Norman South Door and an interesting font.

**5 Salhouse All Saints**  
This church was intended to have a higher tower but it was never finished, although money was donated.

**6 Salhouse Baptist Chapel**  
Early 19th century. A typical non-conformist chapel with sash windows and an interior gallery around three sides.

**7 Woodbastwick Brewery**  
Woodford's microbrewery and visitors' centre. The brewery produces a range of cask and bottled beers and has a visitors' centre which is open all year.

**7 Woodbastwick Sts Fabian and Sebastian**  
A unique dedication. A member of the Cator family, local landowners, paid for restoration costing £5000 in 1878. Little of the earlier fabric can now be identified.

**Bewilderwood Treehouse Adventure**  
A huge forest of wild family fun and outdoor adventure. Treehouses, zip wires, jungle bridges, Crocklebogs, boat trips, marsh walks and great organic food. Cafe and toilets.

**15 Ranworth St Helen's**  
A very famous Broads church with a wonderful view from the top of the 93 ft tower. Visitor Centre. Open daily April - October and at weekends November - March. Refreshments.

**16 Horning St Benedict**  
The doorway into the chancel, formerly used by the priest, shows its 13th century origins by its 'dogtooth' decoration, but most of the building is later – 14th and 15th centuries. Older still is the 12th century chest, hewn from a single log.

**Water Taxi service**  
Passenger and cycle service available to cross the river to Woodbastwick staithe. Phone Freedom Cruisers 01692 630562 or Broads Information Centre 01603 782281.

**Cockshott Broad**  
The site of a pioneering project to restore clear water and wildlife. There is a boarded walkway to a bird hide overlooking the broad.

**Ranworth Norfolk Wildlife Trust conservation centre**

Broads Information Centre Ranworth Staithe

**8 Panxworth All Saints**  
A ruined church, built in 1847 and demolished in 1976. The tower remains but is in a dangerous condition as a result of a lightning strike.

**9 Hemblington All Saints**  
The church attached to the Norman round tower is substantially 14th century with a later porch.

**10 Upton St Margaret**  
This church is heavily restored, especially the tower which was rebuilt in 1928-31.

**11 Acle St Edmund**  
A classic church of the Broads area, with round tower and thatched roof. The chancel window has lovely window tracery – look out for the 'butterfly' motif.

**12 Acle Methodist church**  
Methodists worship in a modern church on the Upton Road.

**13 Fishley St Mary**  
A little 13th century church which overlooked a wide Broadland estuary when it was built.

**14 South Walsham St Mary and St Lawrence**  
Two churches on one site – unusual but not unique in Norfolk. St Mary's is the parish church and St Lawrence's has been restored as an arts centre.

**Fairhaven Gardens**  
The Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden is set in 53 hectares of beautiful ancient woodland. The garden is renowned for its fabulous collection of candelabra primulas, the best naturalised collection in the UK. Refreshments. Open all year.

**KEY**

bike trail	footpath/bridleway	public house	parking	CAUTION busy road	0 1 mile
option/detour	church or chapel	cafe	toilets		0 1 kilometre

