

# Norwich to The Broads Cycle Tour

Approx 25 miles/40 kms



Freewheel through the Fringe

## Safety

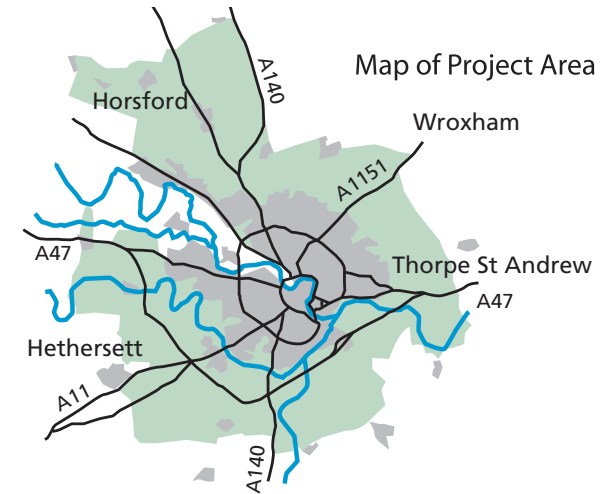
- Before starting your journey, check your bike is safe to ride.
- Although the route follows quiet lanes, you will meet other vehicles; ride in single file on narrow or busy lanes and never more than two abreast.
- Take care crossing main roads.
- Wear a safety helmet and brightly coloured clothing.
- Cyclists give way to horses and pedestrians and horses give way to pedestrians. Warn horses and pedestrians of your approach, slow down and give them room.
- **BE SEEN** – after dark wear reflective clothing and use lights.
- Signal before manoeuvre, motorists need to know what you are doing.
- Routes in and out of Norwich are busy during rush hour periods – take care at all times.



## Norwich Fringe Project

This leaflet is one of a series of self-guided trails that will help you enjoy the Norwich Fringe countryside.

Norwich Fringe Project aims to promote informal recreational facilities in the countryside surrounding Norwich.

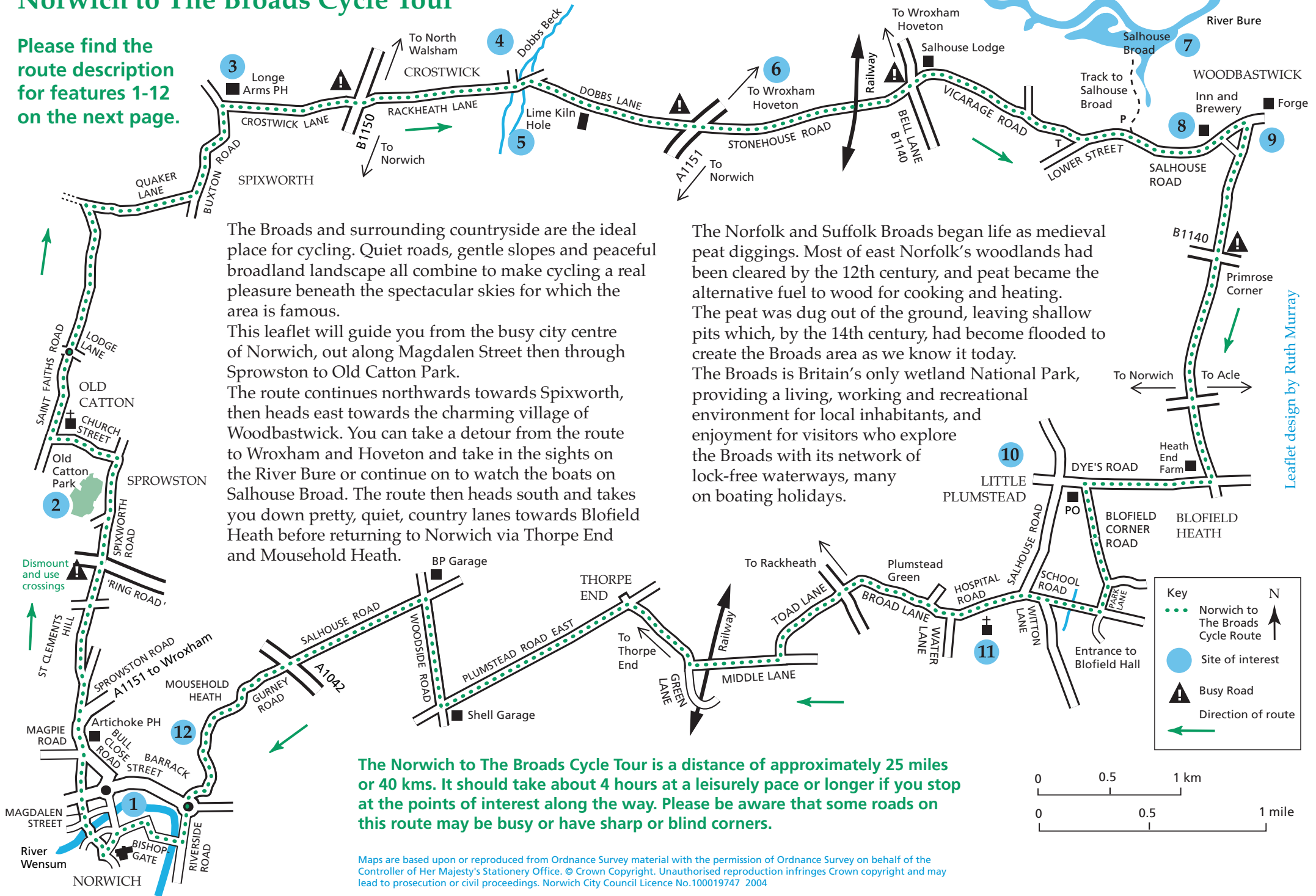


**Norwich Fringe Countryside Management Project**  
Mile Cross Central Depot Admin Building  
Mile Cross Road, Norwich NR3 2DY  
Telephone: 01603 423303

Email: [fringe.ncc@gtnet.gov.uk](mailto:fringe.ncc@gtnet.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.norwichfringeproject.co.uk](http://www.norwichfringeproject.co.uk)

# Norwich to The Broads Cycle Tour

Please find the route description for features 1-12 on the next page.



The Broads and surrounding countryside are the ideal place for cycling. Quiet roads, gentle slopes and peaceful broadland landscape all combine to make cycling a real pleasure beneath the spectacular skies for which the area is famous.

This leaflet will guide you from the busy city centre of Norwich, out along Magdalen Street then through Sprowston to Old Catton Park.

The route continues northwards towards Spixworth, then heads east towards the charming village of Woodbastwick. You can take a detour from the route to Wroxham and Hoveton and take in the sights on the River Bure or continue on to watch the boats on Salhouse Broad. The route then heads south and takes you down pretty, quiet, country lanes towards Blofield Heath before returning to Norwich via Thorpe End and Mousehold Heath.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads began life as medieval peat diggings. Most of east Norfolk's woodlands had been cleared by the 12th century, and peat became the alternative fuel to wood for cooking and heating. The peat was dug out of the ground, leaving shallow pits which, by the 14th century, had become flooded to create the Broads area as we know it today.

The Broads is Britain's only wetland National Park, providing a living, working and recreational environment for local inhabitants, and enjoyment for visitors who explore the Broads with its network of lock-free waterways, many on boating holidays.

The Norwich to The Broads Cycle Tour is a distance of approximately 25 miles or 40 kms. It should take about 4 hours at a leisurely pace or longer if you stop at the points of interest along the way. Please be aware that some roads on this route may be busy or have sharp or blind corners.

Maps are based upon or reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Norwich City Council Licence No.100019747 2004

Leaflet design by Ruth Murray

## Norwich to The Broads Cycle Tour The tour is approximately 25 miles or 40 kms.

1. The route starts in Tombland, by the Anglican Cathedral.

2. **Old Catton Park.** The landscaping in the park is believed to be the first commissioned piece of work by Humphry Repton - a famous landscape designer of the second half of the 18th Century, whose landscape designs can be seen in the Castle Museum. Arable production increased after World War II when much of the original park was turned into farmland, although the Deer Park survives on the east side of the Spixworth Road. There are plans to restore Old Catton Park to its former glory and open the Park to visitors.

3. The **Longe Arms** public house is named after the Longe family who once owned Spixworth Hall.

4. **Dobbs Beck.** There has been evidence of otters in the stream, although this highly-secretive animal is rarely seen as it is mainly active at night. Hunting activities, pesticide poisoning and habitat loss took the Norfolk otter population to the brink of extinction. Fortunately, the release of captive-bred otters into the wild is now helping the population to recover.

5. **Lime Kiln Hole.** Nowadays, a name on a map may be the only indication of the site of a traditional rural industry. There were once many lime kilns in operation in this area which burnt the local chalk to produce lime powder, which was then used in farming to

neutralise acid soil, in mortar for building and various other products. Local kilns closed as cheaper, better-quality Derbyshire lime became available. The kiln at Sprowston closed in 1966.

6. You may detour here and go to Wroxham and Hoveton. **Caution:** the main road (A1151) is very busy.

7. **Salhouse Broad.** A popular place to watch boats - if you are lucky you might even catch the Ice Cream boat!. Wheel your bicycles from Vicarage Road down to the broad along the hard-surfaced track which is lined on both sides by pollarded oak trees. In the spring you will see bluebells in the wood, flag irises fringing the shore and an abundance of geese and ducks on the broad. The grassy bank which rises from the broad has sandy areas and fallen trees making it a natural play area for children.

8. Woodforde's 'Broadland Brewery' is housed in partly thatched farm buildings and the nearby Fur and Feather Inn sells many of the beers brewed there. Public tours of the brewery are available.

9. **Woodbastwick.** The name 'Woodbastwick' means 'farm or village in a lime tree grove' in Old English, and the village sign shows two sturdy woodcutters at work outside a thatched house under a lime tree. The village is surrounded by large areas of marshland, being part of

the 1019 acre Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve, and many varieties of birds and plants can be seen. The village has many delightful thatched cottages and a village green with its own well and nearby forge.

10. **Little Plumstead.** The name 'Plumstead' is thought to mean "dwelling site near plums" and was listed as 'Plumestede' in the Domesday Book.

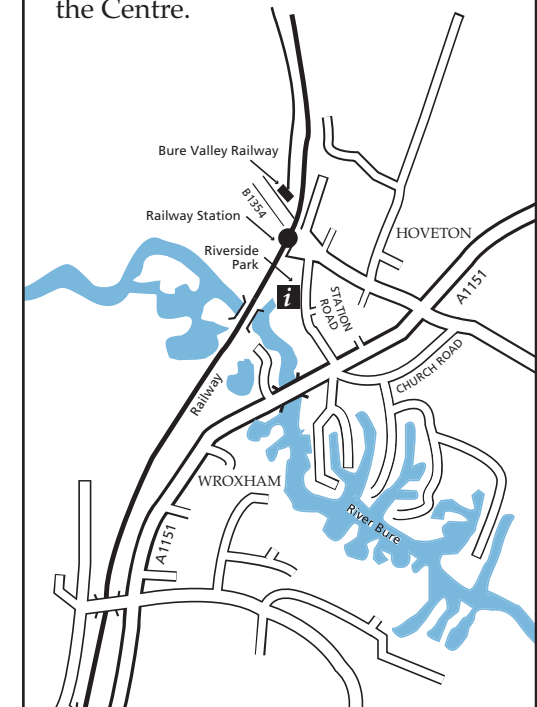
11. The Church of St Gervase and St Protase is an interesting building on the edge of the grounds of the former Little Plumstead Hospital.

12. **Mousehold Heath.** This is the largest local nature reserve in Norwich (92.2 hectares). As the name suggests, this area used to be heathland but today is mainly woodland. There is an abundance of wildlife on Mousehold Heath, including reptiles, butterflies, dragonflies and grey squirrels. In early spring mating frogs gather around the 'Vinegar Pond' and on warm summer days lizards can sometimes be seen. You might see green and spotted woodpeckers and jays as well as the more common woodland birds. Trees and plants include oak, birch, beech, lime, gorse, bracken and heather.

### Wroxham and Hoveton

A bustling place, especially in the summer, where you can hire a day-boat, take a trip on the Bure Valley Railway or refresh yourself at one of the numerous waterside cafes. Details of things to do in the area are available from the Broads Information Centre on Station Road (01603 782281).

You can pick up information on other cycle routes around the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads from the Centre.



**Norwich  
Fringe  
Project**

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