

West Runton Cromer Pier walk

Camping and Caravanning



Route Summary

A circular route of approximately 7.5km/4.7 miles that will take you along quiet country paths and lanes into the centre of Cromer, then along clifftops to return. There is plenty of interest along the way, from Neolithic burial sites to the splendour of Cromer Pier and beaches.

Route Overview



Category: Walking
 Rating: Unrated
 Surface: Moderate
 Date Published: 9th July 2018
 Difficulty: Easy
 Length: 7.750 km / 4.84 mi
 Last Modified: 9th July 2018

Description

This route follows quiet paths and farm lanes. It passes a Neolithic Long Barrow on Stone Hill and Iron Age field systems on Roundabout Hill. More modern constructions will also be seen, notably Railway embankments and viaducts, some of which are still in use today. The route passes through the site of Old Cromer Zoo which was open for just 20 years, closing in 1981.

An iconic Norfolk landmark you will see both on approach to and especially behind you on leaving Cromer, is the town's Victorian Pier. There has been a pier at this site since 1391, the current building dating from the 1800s after at least two earlier buildings were destroyed by sea and storms. The pier is famous for promenading, crabbing and traditional seaside entertainment.

The end of the pier houses the current RNLI Lifeboat Station, which welcomes visitors, depending on the operational demands of the day. There is also the Henry Blogg museum, named after a long-serving member of the crew who helped to save 873 lives from the North Sea.

Cromer itself developed in the Victorian Era as seaside holidays became popular, and has retained its Victorian holiday charm. Particularly impressive is the 160-foot tall tower of St Peter and Paul's Church, built in the 14th

Century, but containing modern stained-glass windows depicting the history of the local RNLI crews.

This section of coast boasts the longest chalk bed reef – at 20 miles long, the Cromer Shoals Chalk Bed was created during the Mesozoic Era and is deservedly referred to as the ‘British Great Barrier Reef’. The Runton cliffs themselves have produced much evidence of dinosaurs – most recently the complete skeleton of a Steppe Mammoth exposed by storms in 1990.

The return leg of the route passes the 17th Century Old Hall on Top Common. Although older artefacts have been found in this area no early settlements are believed to have been here.

Incleborough Hill, a National Trust site, gives glorious panoramic coastal and inland views. This hill literally stands out, due to its geology – unlike the underlying rock, Incleborough was created by glacial deposits at the end of the last Ice Age, giving it a distinctly different look and ecology to the surrounding area. As you walk around this beautiful spot you will notice many earthworks, which were created for training and defensive operations during World War II.

It is important to check the tide times for the section between Cromer and East Runton if you want to walk along the beach.

Waypoints

1 Start at Camping and Caravanning Club site Reception

(52.92973; 1.25508)



From the Camping and Caravanning Club Site reception walk past the Visitors' Car Park and turn left onto a well-defined footpath. This 'green' lane will take you across Abb's Common, one of many commons in the area that take their name from families that have lived in Runton for generations. After crossing the road, pass under the railway bridge and continue along the next green lane. This section of the railway line is referred to as the 'Cromer Curve' where the railway line makes a wide arc after leaving Cromer. Despite its name, the 'Curve' is actually in the parish of Runton.

On this section you'll find Stone Hill Neolithic Barrow on your right and field systems of Roundabout Hill to your left, but unfortunately neither have public access.

2 Sandy Lane near Railway Line

(52.92943; 1.28311)



On approaching the relatively new housing development take care to take the small lane that goes left just before the first house. After passing over the railway line allow your imagination to run wild – you are now at the location of the old Cromer Zoo. At the far side take Shipden Avenue to reach the main north Norfolk coastal road. Turning right will take you to the town centre and Cromer Pier.

3 Cromer Pier

(52.93329; 1.30111)



Having enjoyed the delights of Cromer, it's time to head back, and there are two options. One is to take the path that goes along the top of the cliffs, heading west, remembering to keep looking back to capture the splendid views of the pier and resort. It is in the sea to your right that the chalk reef is hidden, while the coast here is enjoyed by many surfers.

The other option, depending on the tide, is to walk along the beach, though dog owners need to be aware of the restrictions regarding access. Choosing this option will give you the opportunity to check the cliff face for fossils. On reaching East Runton Gap, it will be necessary to leave the beach and head inland. The path marked on the map to the west of Runton Gap has disappeared due to coastal erosion.

East Ruston Gap

(52.93719; 1.27416)



Make your way through the village of East Runton. Not that many years ago the whole area would have been virtually uninhabited except for this small fishing village. Pass under two railway viaducts, the second of which is now disused. The flint cottages in this part of the village are characteristic of the north Norfolk building style. Turn right just before the village pond.

Top Common - Old Hall Farm

(52.93166; 1.26497)



Go along Top Common until passing the oldest building in the village, Old Hall, then take the green lane to the left. After a short distance the path splits into three, take the left-hand one for the direct route back to the Camping and Caravanning Club Site, while either of the other two will take you around Inceborough Hill, with access to the summit. It's worth the short detour to enjoy the views.

