

Norwich Club Site sights of the city walk

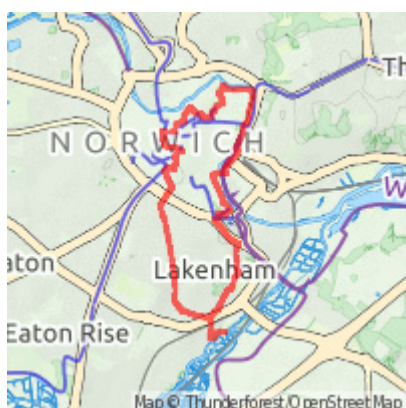
Camping and Caravanning



Route Summary

This circular walk of 9.1km/5.7 miles takes you through Norwich city centre to visit the Cathedral, Castle, historic sights and quaint lanes. Whilst also giving you the opportunity to enjoy the old and modern architecture, as well as to pop into the shops.

Route Overview



Category: Walking
 Rating: Unrated
 Surface: Smooth
 Date Published: 21st September 2018
 Difficulty: Easy
 Length: 9.090 km / 5.68 mi
 Last Modified: 21st September 2018

Description

On leaving the Camping and Caravanning Club Site, with a Neolithic Henge on the opposite bank of the River Yare, you will be able to enjoy some of the older buildings as well as modern architecture of Norwich. There will be opportunities to explore museums, art galleries, shops, cobbled streets and the city's glorious cathedral. The main route takes in a number of places of interest with small detours that will allow you to explore other locations that you may find interesting.

The city owes its origins to the Anglo-Saxons who settled near the confluence of the Rivers Wensum and Yare. This created an inland port that became an important trading centre and was used from those times until relatively recently. Unfortunately, the Danes came to Norwich and razed it to the ground, giving their own names to local streets and places such as Pottersgate and Tomblond. Norwich again began to thrive due to the port, market and local industries such as wool and leather. The tanneries and leather works continued on a large scale up until the end of the 20th Century.

Norwich Cathedral was constructed in 1096 after the Bishop moved his seat from Thetford to Norwich. The other dominant building from that time would have been the castle, originally built of wood soon after the Norman Conquest, it was replaced in the 12th Century by a stone one.

The street names give an insight into the influence the church had within the town and surrounding area. Blackfriars was named after the robes worn by Dominican Friars; Greyfriars for the same reason after the Franciscan Friars; and Whitefriars after the Carmelite Friars who all established themselves in that part of the town. There were also Priors and Abbeys across the town/city connected to the cathedral.

When you pass through the suburb of Lakenham you might not think its origins date back to the times of Edward The Confessor when it was a small hamlet belonging to the nearby manor at Thorpe. The area along the river, Old Lakenham, is within a conservation area managed by Norwich City Council. During the 18th and 19th Centuries the area was frequented by day trippers from the city, and the Club Site is actually where the lido was once enjoyed by many.

From the time of its initial build the cathedral would have had a significant impact on the growth and development of Norwich. With this Monastic centre and a market being held in Tombland just outside the gate, this soon became the centre of the city, with roads such as the quaint Elm Hill becoming home to the rich and famous during medieval times. There are still some buildings dating back to the mid 1300s and many from the 1600s.

The Norwich Market moved to its current central location during Norman times and soon became one of the largest and most prosperous in the country. Although in the same location the market was completely refurbished between 2003 and its reopening in 2006. At the side of the market is The Guildhall, said to be England's largest and most elaborate provincial medieval city hall and the centre of administration from early in the 15th Century until 1938. Also nearby is The Royal Arcade, with architecture influenced by Art Nouveau which was opened in 1891 and remains a thriving shopping location today.

George Skipper, who designed The Royal Arcade and many other buildings across East Anglia, was also responsible for Surrey House, which is better known as the home of Norwich Insurance, now Aviva. The styles are completely different, with Surrey House having a Palladian exterior and a very impressive Marble Hall within. Although it's a working office building, you're able to enter the reception to see this amazing sight.

Waypoints

Start at Camping and Caravanning Club Site Reception

(52.60896; 1.30373)



Leave the Camping and Caravanning Club Site via entrance driveway, heading through the conservation area, then into late 1900's suburbia. The route will take you along quiet suburban roads and cycle tracks through to Bracondale. Passing a Jaguar along the way!

2 Bracondale

(52.61813; 1.30599)



This busy road is part of the traditional route out of Norwich to the south, and has a number of hidden secrets. On the opposite side of the road and to the right is the site of a previous Benedictine Nunnery that was founded in 1146 on land gifted by King Stephen. The only building that survives is the Prioress's House. In 1850 JJ Coleman purchased land in this area to develop what was to become an international phenomenon – Coleman's Mustard. It had originally been milled at Stoke Holy Cross just south of Norwich.

There was a subsequent development of quality housing in the area, many of which remain. Bracondale, like Old Lakenham, is another conservation area due to its history. Although within the city limits there are open spaces that are now protected within plan managed by Norwich City Council.

Passing down the flint-lined slope that is Southgate Lane you are crossing the line of the Norwich City Walls, unfortunately not visible at this location. From Rouen Road fork right into King Street, and the Riverside cycle route is signed.

3 St Julian's Shrine and Dragon Hall

(52.62521; 1.30151)



Before turning under Dragon Hall to cross the river, take a quick detour along St Julian's Alley where you will find a shrine dedicated to her. In 1373 she wrote *The Revelations of Devine Love* having had visions of Christ. It's believed this is the oldest surviving book to be written in English by a woman.

Dragon Hall is a 14th Century Merchants Trading Hall that has medieval origins. Unfortunately, its history has been chequered with the building being divided and becoming derelict. Now owned and refurbished by Norwich City Council, make sure you take a look at the ornate brickwork as you cross the river.

The route crosses over the River Wensum on a pedestrian swing bridge named after Saint Julian, and the transformation from the old part of the city to the modern entertainment area is amazing.

4 Foundry Bridge Prince of Wales Road

(52.62799; 1.30553)



You'll cross the river again using Foundry Bridge, which was originally built in 1810 of wood, with the current metal structure being constructed in 1886. It was apparently built on the station yard and rolled to its current resting place, as the foundry from which it takes its name was on the opposite bank to the station. A little further along the river the

path comes to Pull's Ferry, a medieval flint building that is the 'Watergate' where stone from Caen in France was moved into a canal to the site where the Cathedral was built.

As you cross Bishopsgate consider that this is possibly a Roman Road that goes out to the west of Norwich along what is now Dereham Road. There has been a bridge at the river since 1275, and the current bridge is not much younger having been built in 1340. This bridge was the route taken in 1549 by Robert Kett and his army of 20,000 who rebelled against enclosure of common land and poverty. On the opposite side of the river is Lollard's Pit, where heretics against the Catholic Church were burnt at the stake – there's a blue plaque naming the victims.

Cow Tower

(52.63407; 1.30813)



Cow Tower was originally built in 1278 for collecting tolls but rebuilt in 1398-99 as part of the strategic defences for the city of Norwich. It is believed to be one of the earliest purpose-built artillery block-houses in England. Just before the next bridge look out for the last remaining Swan Pit in England on your left.

Leave the riverside at the impressive sweep of Jarrold Bridge towards the oldest pub in Norwich, then continue to the calm and tranquillity of the cathedral enclosure. Having enjoyed the history and splendour that the cathedral has to offer, leave via the main gate into Tombland, the original market place of Norwich, then take the cobbled slope of Elm

Street as you head towards the city centre. Hidden away at the rear of St Andrew's Church is The Bridewell, a fascinating museum offering a good history of Norwich. From here through to The Guildhall and market are some beautiful little lanes to explore with a wide range of shops and places for refreshments, a theme that continues through to and around Norwich Castle.

Norwich Castle Museum

(52.62774; 1.29634)



Work on this impressive castle was started in 1067 when the Normans cleared a large number of Saxon buildings from the area and began the ground works on which their fortifications would be constructed. The stone, as for the cathedral, came from Caen in France – apparently it cost more to transport than the stone's initial cost. The castle was finally finished by King Henry I in 1121, but he only visited once. The building was refaced with Bath stone in the 1830s and became a museum during the 1890s after it closed as a prison.

Leaving the bustling city centre behind one last building to see is Surrey House, the home of Norwich Insurance (Aviva), with its amazing Marble Hall that was designed by the same architect who created the Royal Arcade shopping area.

Crossing the busy Queens Road with its modern architecture you are actually crossing the line of the old city walls and entering what would once have been the farmland surrounding the younger city of Norwich. A remnant of the wall can be seen close to St Stephen's roundabout.

Much of the remainder of the journey back is along an old railway track through suburban Norwich until you return to the Old Lakenham Conservation Area as you get closer to the Camping and Caravanning Club Site.

