



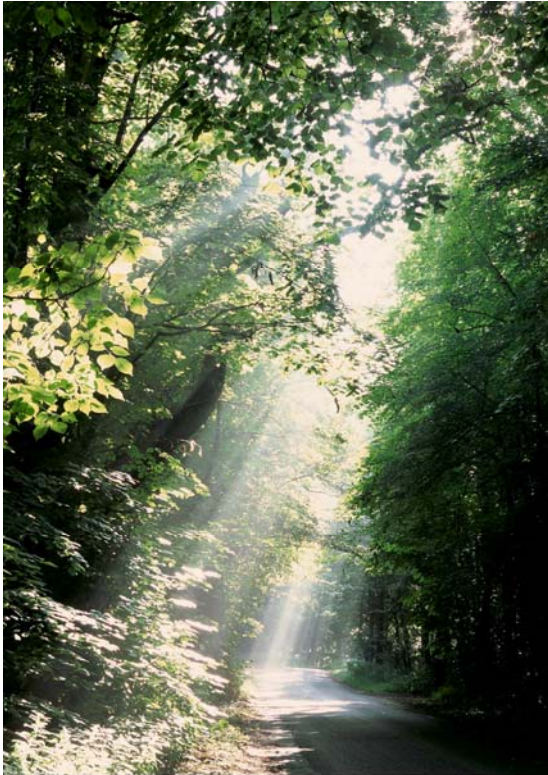
## Riding the Peddars Way

There are two routes associated with the Peddars Way. The one detailed in this information note is the guide created by Elizabeth Barrett and follows a route designed to give a good ride avoiding busy roads and footpath sections of the Peddars Way. The second route sticks to the National Trail, poor road crossings and all. The map on page 6 highlights footpath sections of the Peddars Way which you will have to avoid. The poor road crossings are the A11, a dual carriageway and the A47.

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## **Knettishall to S Pickenham 18 miles**

The route starts at Knettishall Heath at the Suffolk County Council car park (GR: TL952804), 1 mile south of the A1066 Diss-Thetford road. This is an attractive spot which has been established as a country park. Close to the packhorse bridge over the Little Ouse there was once a Roman ford but sadly it was removed in the early thirties. Follow the road eastwards towards Hopton and just beyond Hall Farm turn left at the bridleway sign to the River Ouse, go to the river and through the ford, remembering to close the gate behind you. Keep to the right and follow the edge of the wood through two fields to the next hard track close to the cottage. Turn left and follow the track round by the church and school and keep straight on to the A1066. Cross straight over and where the tarred road swings right enter the forest on a track marked as an FC ride but it happens that this is an unclassified county road. Cross straight over onto the wide forest track alongside the picnic site. Cross the bridge over the River Thet and turn right to the village of Bridgham, then take the second left and continue straight on to Roudham

Church and straight on over the railway line. Horse riders must obtain prior clearance to use the crossing by telephoning the signal man. Carry straight on over the A11 which is single carriageway at this point, onto the next bridleway. Leave the forest on the left: the bridleway at this point runs parallel to the Peddars Way. Continue across the next minor road and the small church of Illington is on the right: continue on the UCR and bridleway to the A1075.

Cross straight over and go through the gap in the fence and turn left and follow the minor road: this has a good riding verge and very little traffic. At Galley Hill turn right and follow the line of the Peddars Way.

The battle training area is close by and soldiers with blackened faces can suddenly erupt onto the scene or helicopters appear overhead. At Galley Hill, if you look carefully you will see that there are two parallel tracks and you can take either: the one to the right is the older and follows the line of the agger. Close by but not all readily accessible are Fowlmere, Mickle Mere and Ringmere. These meres were once an important source of water in this dry Breckland which was originally a vast sandy heath, virtually impossible to farm. The level of water in the meres is dependent on water retained in the chalk subsoil and not on the rainfall. They are now important nature reserves.

Continue straight on past Thompson Water, once a place for watering cattle in droving days. Take time to stop off in the village of Thompson - the church is worth a visit with its knapped flint finish and aisle-less construction - it dates from the 14th C. Accommodation for horses and humans is available at College Farm. The Way narrows to one horse width only for a short section between barbed wire fences, which one is warned not to cross because of the danger of unexploded bombs. The seclusion of the forest is now left behind and one is in Merton Park. All around is scrub and also hogweed of a fantastic height .

Follow the sandy track, bearing slightly right and then left and right again to Home Farm. Keep straight on to Wick Farm and the B1108, turn right along the road towards the centre of Watton and at GR: TL905008 turn left onto a short bridleway to the B1077 and follow this road to Saham Toney. Follow the same road round to the left and then keep straight on towards Great Cressingham; at the second crossroads turn right along the line of the Peddars Way. This road, the old Walsingham Way which was the pilgrims' route to the shrine at Walsingham, is tarred but it is a pleasant country lane between arable fields.



On reaching the B1077 again, turn left into the village of South Pickenham. Do pause and have a look at South Pickenham church and at the fine gatehouse to the Hall. Close by the Hall it is possible to water your horse in the River Wissey; access is beside the road bridge. Then go straight on to the end of the village and at a cross roads continue in a westerly direction to the A1065 Swaffham road.



### **South Pickenham to West Acre 15 miles**

Between South Pickenham and the next village of Cockley Cley (pronounced to rhyme with "sky" ) are several belts of Scots Pine, planted as long ago as the 17th century in an attempt to stop the sandy soil from being blown away in strong winds. The success has been partial as can be seen quite dramatically on a blowy summer's day.

Cross the A1065 and follow the tarred road to Cockley Cley which is well signposted and has wide grassy verges. You will probably have to pass large flocks of sheep grazing in fields on both sides of the road. Stopping in Cockley Cley is a must: the lovely Saxon church with its bare interior, the reconstruction of an Icenic village and the carriage museum are all well worth a visit. There is also a good pub in the village - The Twenty Churchwardens - which offers food and welcomes horseriders.

Leave Cockley Cley with the church and pub on your left and in about 300 yards, after the houses finish, take the forest road to the right. The bridleway has been diverted through the forest then turns back to the original track. Once again you are in an area of almost overpoweringly tall evergreens. In about two miles cross the next road at Drymere - a former mere - and continue through scrub land and arable and then enter Swaffham Forest, where there is a picnic site with car parking. (You need to change to the OS map 143 for about a mile and a half.) At this point the track is thought to be part of the prehistoric Ickield Way which runs from south Norfolk to Buckinghamshire and links up with the Ridgeway to the West Country. At the end of the forest cross the A1122, and in about 200 yards take the bridleway to your right to the A47. (You are now on OS map 132.) Cross the A47 - great care is essential - and you are now on the Fincham Drove. This is the remains of a Roman road which once ran from Smallburgh in Broadland to Denver on the edge of the Fens, from which point there are links to the Midlands and to Cambridge. The name Drove reminds us, of course, of its more recent use for moving animals and birds from country areas to urban markets, such as London, in medieval times and later.



The forest is now left behind and the scenery changes, with the route crossing large arable fields. The route is along a well defined track which is criss-crossed by others. Keep straight on over one road and at the second (GR: TF798118), at the edge of a wood, turn left onto the tarred road and continue to the top of the hill which is reached in about a mile and a half. Turn right (GR: TF789137) and keep straight on the RUPP (road used as a public path) until the third junction at GR: TF801133, here turn left to South Acre Hall. Turn right on the road and take the next left going through the ford at Castle Acre.

Castle Acre is a small town perched high up within the outer bailey of the castle. The earth works are dramatic—the inner bailey alone covers some 15 acres and the motte is over 100 feet high. The Bailey Gate still stands and separates the present village green from the castle. Have a look at the perpendicular architecture of the Church of St. James just along the road and then continue to the impressive ruins of the Cluniac Priory. The largely intact west front is one of the finest in the country and one can feel how large and important the whole establishment was in its time.

Back to the route in Castle Acre turn right and keep straight on towards Newton and take the Byway to Broadmeadow Common. Turn right and just before the Mill turn left and follow the track towards the A1065. Just before the road is reached, turn left in a northwest direction, leaving the gravel pit on the left. At the next crossways turn left and keep straight on for 2 1/2 miles.

At GR: TF801193 turn right up another UCR to Great Massingham, crossing the B1145 on the way. Turn left at the village centre and cross more or less straight over, keeping the large pond on your right. At the end of the green and pond turn left and left again at GR: TF793231 to the Peddars Way. Turn right on the Peddars Way and continue in a northerly direction, with the route running straight for several miles through undulating countryside.

At the A148 cross straight over and keep straight, crossing the B1153 and two minor roads and on to Fring.



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**Fring to Holme-next-the-Sea 10 miles**

Keep straight on to the little ford over the Heacham River and turn left to the village of Sedgeford. Follow the line of the Heacham River to Sedgeford and turn left and right as you enter the village, signposted to Ringstead. In half a mile turn right onto the broad track at GR: TF711379, after the disused railway crossing.

Keep straight on, crossing a minor road and leaving Courtyard Farm on the left. At the next T junction, turn right (you can ride in the field). Continue to the cross roads and turn left. Where the road turns right, take the grassy track which goes straight on, climbing steeply to the next road. The climb is worthwhile as, at Beacon Hill 160 feet above sea level, one can see the sea and journey's end in the distance. This is a really thrilling moment. Turn left and within a few yards leave the tarred road, keeping straight on along the old highway called Green Bank, the site of an Iron Age hoard found in the '50s. Keep straight on to the Ringstead Road. At the tarred road turn left and right and follow round to the right on the RUPP leading to Holme-Next-The-Sea, crossing the A148 on the way.



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Riding is allowed on the beach but not on the dunes.

If the tide permits, you can ride or walk along this wonderful stretch of beach in either direction. The Peddars Way terminates here, probably because at this point the Romans headed north by ferry across The Wash to Lincolnshire, although proof of this has never been established.

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**ROUTE INFORMATION**

**Maps** OS 132 NW Norfolk, OS 143 Ely & Wisbech, OS 144 Thetford & Breckland

<b>Mileages</b>	64 in total
Knettishall - S Pickenham	22
S Pickenham - West Acre	15
West Acre - Fring	15
Fring - Holme	10





## Parking for horseboxes

For parking for horseboxes at the southern end of the Peddars Way contact Forest Enterprise at Santon Downham.

Tel: 01842 810271

## Food and Drink

The Twenty Churchwardens, Cockley Cley  
The Olde Windmill Inn, Great Cressingham (lunchtime horse paddock available)

## Water for horses

The River Wissey, S Pickenham  
The River Nar, Castle Acre

## Veterinary Surgeons

### The Old Golfhouse Veterinary Group (Watton)

4 Goddards Court, High Street, WATTON, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6XT Tel: 01953 881415

### The Old Golfhouse Veterinary Group (Thetford)

Brandon Road, THETFORD, Norfolk, IP24 3ND Tel: 01842 764244

### Norfolk Equine Veterinary Services

Grosvener Cottage, Station Road, Hillington, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 6DE Tel: 01485 600260  
[info@norfolkequinevet.co.uk](mailto:info@norfolkequinevet.co.uk)

### E Curnow

Five Acre Farm, Lynn Road, West Rudham, KINGS LYNN, Norfolk, PE31 8RW Tel: 01485 528437

### Anchorage Barn

Equine Clinic, Fakenham Road, East Rudham, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 6TA Tel: 01485 528437

## Farriers

**K Green**, Anvil Farm, Anvil, Syderstone, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 8SQ Tel: 01485 578241

**Andy Mills**, The Limes, The Street, Fersfield, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 2BL Tel: 07774 229764

**JM Acton**, The Common, South Creake, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 9JA Tel: 01328 823561

## Riding stables

### Culford Riding and Livery Stables,

Hengrave Road, Culford, Bury St Edmunds, IP28 6DX Tel: 01284 728119

### Forest Park Riding & Livery Centre,

3 White Horse Street, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0LB Tel: 01842 815517

**Middle Farm Equestrian Centre**, West Harling Road, East Harling, NR16 2SQ Tel: 01953 718756

**Forest Edge Equestrian Centre**, Drymere, Swaffham, PE37 8AS Tel: 01760 725448.

[www.forestedge.co.uk](http://www.forestedge.co.uk)

**Woodlands Stables**, Holywell Row, Nr Mildenhall, Suffolk. IP28 8NB Tel: 01638 713825

Email: [boss@eque-train.co.uk](mailto:boss@eque-train.co.uk) [www.eque-train.co.uk](http://www.eque-train.co.uk).

## Horse B&B

**Great Hockham (2 miles from the trail)** - Manor Farm, Vicarage Road, Great Hockham, Thetford, IP24 1PE, E-mail: [manorfarm@ukf.net](mailto:manorfarm@ukf.net), [www.bedandbreakfastsinnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.bedandbreakfastsinnorfolk.co.uk) Tel: 01953 498204  
Stabling(3)/Grazing(3)/Horsebox storage/Stallions accepted/No evening meal but possibly a lift to the pub, in Summer - a Nightjar visit can be arranged! TL950927

**Thompson (1 mile from the trail)** - Lands End, Butters Hall Lane, Thompson, Thetford, IP24 1QQ  
E-mail: [jean@jmorton34.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:jean@jmorton34.freeserve.co.uk) TL932960 Tel: 01953 488070  
Stabling(2)/Grazing(3)/Horsebox storage/Evening meal available/Ungraded accommodation

**Beeston (7 miles from the trail)** - Holmdene Farm, Beeston, King's Lynn, PE32 2NJ  
E-mail: [holmdenefarm@farmersweekly.net](mailto:holmdenefarm@farmersweekly.net) [www.holmdenefarm.co.uk](http://www.holmdenefarm.co.uk) Tel: 01328 701284  
Stabling(2)/Grazing(4)/Horsebox storage/Stallions accepted/Evening meal available/3 VB stars  
Also offers self catering accommodation. TF913160

**Castle Acre (1.5 miles from the trail)** - Lodge Farm, Rougham Road, Castle Acre, King's Lynn, PE32 2BS E-mail: [enquiries@countryssportsonline.com](mailto:enquiries@countryssportsonline.com) Tel: 01760 755506  
Stabling(4)/Grazing(4+)/Horsebox storage/Stallions accepted/4 AA stars. TF824170

**Castle Acre (ON the trail)** - Tudor Lodgings, Pales Green, Castle Acre, King's Lynn, PE32 2AN  
E-mail: [staffordallen@btinternet.com](mailto:staffordallen@btinternet.com) [www.tudorlodgings.co.uk](http://www.tudorlodgings.co.uk) Tel: 01760 755334  
Grazing(2)/Stallions accepted/Ungraded/Also offers self catering accommodation. TF818149

**East Walton (5 miles from the trail)** - Abbey Farm Liveries, East Walton, King's Lynn, PE32 1PP  
E-mail: [bilandrachel@btconnect.com](mailto:bilandrachel@btconnect.com) [www.abbeyfarmliveries.co.uk](http://www.abbeyfarmliveries.co.uk) Tel: 01760 337268  
Stabling(4)/Grazing(10)/Horsebox storage/Stallions by arrangement/Evening meal available  
Ungraded B&B accommodation also offering Camping/Caravans and Self catering TF743161

**Holme next the Sea (ON the trail)** - Home Farm Stables, Westgate Street, Holme next the Sea, Hunstanton, PE36 6LF Tel: 01485 525350  
E-mail: [mary.ransome@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mary.ransome@hotmail.co.uk) [www.homefarmstables-norfolk.co.uk](http://www.homefarmstables-norfolk.co.uk) TF701435  
Stabling(8)/Grazing(10)/Horsebox storage/Ungraded B&B, No single night stays for horse & riders.

## Camping Barn

**Ringstead (1.3 miles from the trail)** - Courtyard Farm, Ringstead, Hunstanton, PE36 5LQ  
E-mail: [courtyardfarm.organic@virgin.net](mailto:courtyardfarm.organic@virgin.net) Tel: 01485 525251  
Stabling(8)/Grazing(20)/Horsebox storage/Ungraded bunkbarn on working organic farm/Booking is essential, bring bedding and cooking equipment. TF729400

## Campsites

**Ashill (1 mile from the trail)** - Spauls Caravan & Camping Park, Brick kiln Farm, Swaffham Road, Ashill, Thetford, IP25 7BT E-mail: [brickkiln@onetel.com](mailto:brickkiln@onetel.com) Tel: 01760 441300  
Stabling(2)/Grazing(2)/Ungraded camping & caravan site. TF875041

## Self Catering

**Narborough (5.5 miles from the trail)** - Church Farm Holiday Homes, Narborough, King's Lynn, PE32 1TE Tel: 01760 337696  
 E-mail: [nickystlawrence@yahoo.com](mailto:nickystlawrence@yahoo.com) [www.churchfarmholidayhomes.com](http://www.churchfarmholidayhomes.com) TF746130  
 Grazing(2)/Awarded 4 stars by Visit Britain

**Great Bircham (1 mile from the trail)** - Bircham Windmill, Snettisham Road, Gt. Bircham, King's Lynn, PE31 6SJ E-mail: [info@birchamwindmill.co.uk](mailto:info@birchamwindmill.co.uk) [www.birchamwindmill.co.uk](http://www.birchamwindmill.co.uk) Tel: 01485 578393  
 Stabling(1)/Grazing(4)/Awarded 4 stars by Visit Britain/Also a tearoom on premises/Camping also available with no minimum stay, however 3 night minimum stay in cottage. TF760326

**Great Bircham (1 mile from the trail)** - Forester's Lodge, Houghton, King's Lynn, PE31 6SU  
 E-mail: [info@getley.co.uk](mailto:info@getley.co.uk) [www.getley.co.uk](http://www.getley.co.uk) Tel: 01485 528609  
 Stabling(4)/Horsebox storage/Minimum of 3 nights stay/Ungraded accommodation TF804300

**Bircham Newton (2.5 miles from the trail)** - Norfolk Disabled Friendly Cottages, Church Farm, Docking Road, Bircham Newton, King's Lynn, PE31 6QZ Tel: 01485 578603/354  
 E-mail: [bennion@paston.co.uk](mailto:bennion@paston.co.uk) [www.norfolkdisabled-friendlycottages.co.uk](http://www.norfolkdisabled-friendlycottages.co.uk) TF768339  
 Stabling(3)/Grazing(3)/Horsebox storage/8 ungraded self-catering cottages.

We are always seeking to improve the information we provide, therefore if you are aware of any further service providers in the vicinity of the route which aren't listed here please contact us and let us know.

We would be very grateful to hear of your experiences of the route, you can contact us through a variety of means (details on the first page), or by completing a feedback form. Don't forget we are now on facebook and would value your input and any photos you would care to share with us.



**[www.nationaltrail.co.uk](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk)**

*This is the primary source of information*

**Peddars Way & Norfolk Coast Path by Bruce Robinson**

(The official Aurum Press guide to the route)

*Available to order from the National Trail website at a cost of £12.99 (+ p&p) or from any good bookshop quoting*

*ISBN reference: 978-1-84513-570-6.*

**The Pocket Companion**

(Accommodation Guide with distance calculator and Public transport routes)

*Available from the National Trail Office cost £4.00 (incl. p&p)*

*or download free of charge from the National Trail website.*

**Horse riding information**

*Available from website or National Trail Office*

**Cycling information**

*Available from website or National Trail Office*

**Vehicle use of the Peddars Way**

*Available from website or National Trail Office*

**Completion certificates**

*Available free of charge on return of a completed feedback form from National Trail Office*

**Feedback form**

*Available from website or National Trail office. All feedback is gratefully received and feeds directly into the management of the path.*

**Completion cloth badges**

*Available from National Trail Office cost £3.50 (incl. p&p)*

**Other guides and maps**

*Please refer to the bibliography section of our website which lists the relevant guides about the route and where to purchase them.*

**Is there any further information you would like but can't find on our website or in these information sheets?**

**If so, please contact us to let us know** (contact details on first page).

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The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path is a partnership between Natural England, Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council.



[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



[www.countrysideaccess.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.norfolk.gov.uk)



[www.suffolkcc.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcc.gov.uk)