

# Around the Blofield Area

## 10 mile cycle tour

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

This tour of part of beautiful Broadland will take you through attractive villages and picturesque countryside. This tour is not suitable for cars as some of the railway crossings are closed to vehicles. There are many interesting churches and other attractions on the way which are well worth a visit. Please take great care when crossing the railway lines and cycling along the narrow lanes. Although the tour begins at the Church in Blofield it is designed so that it can be joined at any point.

Blofield has a long history and was mentioned in the Domesday Book as Blawefelda. Although there is much modern housing it retains its historical character with a few 18th and 19th century houses. It is the home of Norfolk's oldest Women's Institute which was formed in 1918. To commemorate its 50th anniversary a village sign was made for Blofield showing the maple leaf of Canada and the red rose of Britain in reference to the founding of the organisation in both countries.

The church of St Andrew and St Peter was built in the 14th century. It has a slender 110 foot, 15th century tower and owes its size to the prosperity of the wool trade and the residence of bishops as lords of the manor. Inside the church there is a medieval rood screen base with twelve painted saints and a 15th century octagonal font which has scenes from the life of Christ. There is an alabaster monument to Edward Paston of 1630 and other brasses to the Paston family in the chancel floor.

The parish of Lingwood and Burlingham consists of the small communities of North and South Burlingham and the other residential area of Lingwood between them.

The Lingwood Parish Church of St Peter is a 14th century church and has a wall

painting depicting St Christopher on the north nave wall. In the chancel are 15th century benches with poppy-head ends and figure carving on the arm rests.

Strumpshaw is a picturesque parish rising northwards from the River Yare. Its history dates back to the Domesday Book where it was mentioned as Stromessaga. The Parish Church of St Peter is mainly of the 14th and 15th century. The church has an octagonal carved font and a notable 15th century screen which retains its original colourings.

Strumpshaw Hall Steam Museum houses a large collection of steam engines, fair-ground organs and farm machinery including one of the largest working beam engines in the country. The museum is open during the summer each day, except Saturdays from 11am until 4pm.

In the distance to the left of the enormous silos, the Cantley sugar beet factory can be seen. Built in 1912 by Dutchman, Van Rossum, the factory processes 21,000 tonnes of beet every three days.

On the left is the church of St Nicholas which is in the care of the Redundant Churches Trust. It has an interesting 13th Century octagonal tower and retains some Norman doorways. From 1863 to 1871 William Haslam was Rector here. He was a noted evangelical preacher who drew such enormous crowds he had to preach from a pulpit in the rectory wall. His book 'yet not I' tells some of his experiences here.

The entrance to Strumpshaw Fen Nature Reserve is on the left. This is a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds nature reserve of fen, woodland and grazing marsh. Marsh harrier and bittern breed here and the beautiful swallowtail butterfly feeds and lays its eggs on the milk parsley plant that grows here. From December to February hundreds of bean geese come to graze on the marshland.

Brundall's history dates from Saxon times and remains have been found including a cremation urn with child's remains that it is now in the Norwich Castle Museum. Tradition has it that there was once a Roman boatyard here. In fact some traces of a Roman Villa and pottery fragments have been found in the Parish.

The Earl of Norfolk, Ralph de Guader, held the manor but was deprived of it because he was a known rebel. At the time of the Domesday Survey, the Parish was known as Brundala and was held by William Hewer



Strumpshaw Hall Steam Museum

who was a clerk and friend of Samuel Pepys. He had the church re-roofed in 1705 but the contractor used shoddy materials and it was not long until the whole job had to be re-done!

In 1883 Brundall was joined with the neighbouring Parish of Braydeston. Although Braydeston was larger in size, the new parish kept Brundall as its name.

The Braydeston Church of St Michael is a medieval church made of flint, it has a west tower built between 1440 and 1480. Inside the tower there is a 15th century rectangular stone fire place which was used to cook sacred wafers for communion. This is unusual in a church and only one of three in Norfolk. The church has a 14th century octagonal font bowl and a brass to Osbert Berney who was wounded by an arrow in the siege of Caister Castle in 1469 when he assisted the Pastons in the castle's defence.



Strumpshaw Fen Nature Reserve

### Useful telephone numbers

**Aylsham Tourist Information Centre**  
01263 733903

Easter – 30 September open daily  
10am-4.30pm.

October – Easter 10am-2pm (closed  
Wednesday & Saturday).

**Broadland District Council**  
01603 431133

**Local Police** (non-emergency number)  
0845 456 4567

### Useful websites

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)  
[www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)  
[www.nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk](http://www.nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk)  
[www.rospace.co.uk](http://www.rospace.co.uk)  
[www.heeron.nhs.uk](http://www.heeron.nhs.uk)



St Andrew and St Peter Church

## DIRECTIONS

This 10 mile circular tour around part of beautiful Broadland begins in Blofield, approximately 7 miles east of Norwich just off the A47 towards Great Yarmouth.

The tour starts at the church of St Andrew and St Peter which is to the south of the village in Church Road.

- 1 With the church behind you, turn right and continue along Church Road.
- 2 Take the second left into Shillito Road and at its end turn right.
- 3 At the crossroads continue straight ahead signed Lingwood then take the first left into Heater Lane.
- 4 At the end of this road turn right into Church Road signed Cantley. Take the next right turn on to Vicarage Road.
- 5 At the end of this road turn right on to Post Office Road passing the Lingwood Village sign on the right.
- 6 At the end of this road turn left into Chapel Road signed Strumpshaw. Continue over the railway line and past the Methodist Hall and reading room on the left.

- 11 Take the next turn right on to Station Road signed Buckenham. Continue to the railway line and cross with extreme caution.
- 12 Turn immediately right and follow the road eventually coming to another railway crossing and the keeper's cottage. (Decorated with gnomes and other ornaments.) Cross the line with caution and follow the road taking the next left turn. Continue along the lane between wooded area.
- 13 Follow the road to its end then turn left and left again signed Brundall.
- 14 Follow the road to the roundabout and turn right into Blofield Road signed Blofield and follow the road downhill. Continue uphill over the small stream.
- 15 Take the right turn (signed Blofield Church) on the left bend into Church Road and this will bring you back to the start of the tour.

# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK



Lingwood Parish Church

- 7 At the next crossroads turn right into Norwich Road towards Strumpshaw. Follow the road through the village.
- 8 Turn left just after the church into Buckenham Road and then turn right into Barn Hill.
- 9 At the crossroads turn left signed Hassingham. If you wish to visit the Strumpshaw Hall Steam Museum cross straight over and the entrance is signed. Follow the road, past the Recycling Centre on the left.
- 10 At the next crossroads turn right onto Stone Road signed Buckenham.

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