

River Bure, Horstead Mill – downstream towards Wroxham

Moderate Trail: Please be aware that the grading of this trail was set according to normal water levels and conditions. Weather and water level/conditions can change the nature of trail within a short space of time so please ensure you check both of these before heading out.

Route Summary

Journey along part of a rural waterway, which has been navigable for some 31 miles since 1685, when cargoes of coal, corn and timber were carried.

For many years the broads were regarded as natural features of the landscape. It was only in the 1960s that it was proved that they were in fact flooded medieval peat excavations. Despite the construction of wind pumps and dykes, the flooding continued and resulted in the typical Broads landscape of today, with its reed beds, grazing marshes and wet woodland.

The broads are connected by a number of navigable rivers and the whole area is managed as a national park by the Broads Authority who levy a licence on ALL craft using the waterways

Distance: 10 Miles (Horstead Mill to Wroxham and back)

Approximate Time: 2-4 Hours

The time has been estimated based on you travelling 3 – 5mph (a leisurely pace using a recreational type of boat).

Type of Trail: Out and Back

Waterways Travelled: River Bure

Type of Water: Rural River

Portages and Locks: The disused lock at Horstead is portaged via two gentle slipways and a boardwalk which offer very easy access and the potential to use a trolley.

Nearest Town: Norwich

Start and finish: Horstead Mill, Mill Rd., Horstead NR12 7AT (268194)

O.S. Sheets: 1:25000 Explorer OL40 covers the whole Broads area.

Licence Information: A licence is required to paddle on this waterway. See full details in Useful Information below.

Local Facilities: - Public house at start/finish and various hostelrys on route.

Start Directions

Horstead Mill, Mill Rd., Horstead NR12 7AT (268194)
<http://goo.gl/maps/DXMDM> Free car park with approx 12 spaces. Please park prettily! From Norwich on the B1150 turn right at the cross roads in Horstead (The Recruiting Sergeant pub in on the left). Horstead Mill is a small unmarked turn on the left about ¼ mile along Mill Road)

The Recruiting Sergeant is a thriving pub with food.

Description

Launch into the Mill pool from the Canoe Launch platform. Keep close to the edge to avoid the strong flow from the old millrace. If you are paddling downstream towards Wroxham then go right and follow the river.

After a rural and pretty mile you will reach Coltishall. Coltishall Staithe has a large grassy bank which runs down to the river; ideal for a picnic on the way back, and convenient for a visit to the Kings Head, which serves food all day. In another mile or so you will reach Belaugh with a pretty staithe beside St Peter's Church. From Coltishall you will need to be aware of cruisers on the river. The 'rule of the road' is river right, but don't expect them to know or respect that. Keep to the side and keep out of the way!

After Belaugh the river takes a rural 3½ mile loop before the haphazard sprawling development of riverside properties that characterizes Broadland urbanization leads into Wroxham and Hoveton. The public Staithe on the left before the bridge and is convenient for the town. The Kings Head offers food all day and is dog friendly, and the very pleasant Old Mill Restaurant and Café just before the bridge also has a landing stage. Wroxham/Hoveton is not very pretty – it is as if a little of Great Yarmouth has escaped!

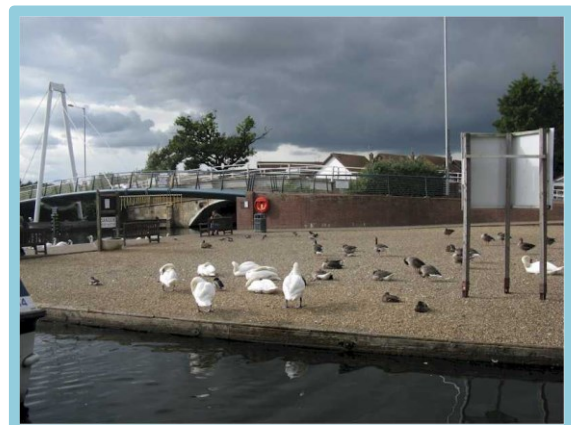
Wroxham Bridge is very low and narrow; if you must venture through in a canoe, be very watchful of cruisers. Many will employ a pilot to take them through. If they ask you to wait: then wait! However there is little to be gained by going on; you have seen the very best of the upper reaches of the Bure and the section below Wroxham is very crowded and busy. To return to the start simply turn around and retrace your paddle strokes.



Horstead Mill Canoe Launch



Belaugh Staithe



The Staithe at Wroxham

Useful Information

License Information: The waterways in this trail are managed by Broads Authority and require paddlers to hold a licence. If you are an existing British Canoeing member the good news is that your membership includes an annual licence for the waterways covered within this trail – please ensure you take your membership card with you on the water as this acts as your licence, if stopped with no licence, you will be at risk of being fined.

You can buy a licence directly from the Tolls Office, [Broads Authority](#) Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1RY, from Broads Authority Information Centres (open April - October) and some yacht stations and boatyards (from April – October) Or by becoming a British Canoeing member you'll have a licence to cover you for a whole year. A British Canoeing membership gives you a whole range of benefits including licenses to paddle on 4500km of Britain's waterways and Civil Liability Insurance, worth up to £10 Million. If you are planning to paddle regularly this will save you great deal of money and hassle alongside having peace of mind. For more information on British Canoeing membership please [click here](#)

Horstead Mill is the head of navigation for the Broads Authority and it is possible for small cruisers to make their way up to Horstead. However few proceed beyond Wroxham where there is a very low bridge and even fewer go beyond Coltishall so you should have the river to yourself – quite unusual on the Broads!

Places to eat

Horstead: The Recruiting Sergeant

Coltishall: The Kings Head. (Landing stage)

Wroxham: Kings Head (Landing Stage on left before the bridge)

The River Bure has been navigable for some 31 miles (50 km) as far as Horstead Mill, near Coltishall, since at least 1685, when cargoes of coal, corn and timber were carried to within 1 mile (1.6 km) of Meyton manor house. It was stated at the time that the river could be improved to enable boats to reach the house. Vessels could not travel beyond Coltishall, and so Aylsham was served by carts, either loaded from wherries at Coltishall and carried north, or loaded from boats at Cromer and carried south.

On the broads the main navigation areas are often marked by stakes. If you keep outside of these areas (in the shallower water) you will not be troubled by larger craft. The larger broads and rivers are heavily used by motor cruisers and sailing yachts. On the rivers it is not only important to keep to the right hand side of the river but also to keep out of the way of larger craft whose helmsmen may not know or may choose to ignore the conventions! Also, remember that boats under sail may need to tack. Always pass behind them. Some of the broads are very exposed and windy and you can encounter sizeable waves. Keep to the edges and avoid crossing open water whenever possible.

It is advised that buoyancy aids are worn and swimming is actively discouraged. The bottom is mostly very deep soft mud and the water, whilst often clear, is not the cleanest and can contain very high levels of bacteria and algae which may be harmful if ingested.

The invasive non-native shrimp (*Dikerogrammerus villosus*) has been found in the Broads. This shrimp has become widespread in Europe and threatens our native species. There is no risk to public health or pets. Water users must be vigilant and Check, Clean and Dry equipment and clothing to help stop the spread of all invasive aquatic species.



CANOEING SAFETY ADVICE

Spending an afternoon or day canoeing on a Canoe Trail can be a fun way to experience nature, help you to stay fit and healthy and enjoy spending time with friends and family. It can also be a dangerous journey, if appropriate safety guidelines are overlooked. To help make sure you remain safe at all times, read on to see our canoeing safety advice guidelines.

Wear appropriate clothing

Always wear shoes. Rocks, rough terrain and river beds present serious hazards to boaters without the proper attire. Nearly 90% of all boating injuries are attributed to lack of proper footwear. Other canoe safe clothing includes hats, gloves, additional dry clothing, and layered items which can easily be removed. Take or wear a windproof top and course always wear a buoyancy aid - for children make sure the crotch straps are used.

Be sure to:

- Know the weather forecast and check the water conditions before you set out canoeing. There is an [Environment Agency](#) website where information concerning river levels can be found. We recommend checking this before heading out as the river levels can rise and fall quite quickly in wet or dry conditions.
- Observe navigation rules for this waterway.
- Check to see if there are any events on the waterways when you wish to travel.
- Check that your equipment is well maintained and ready for the water.
- Check that your boat has the required buoyancy to keep it afloat in the event of a capsize

ALWAYS be certain to let others know where you're going and when you're expected to return.

MAKE SURE that the journey you plan is within your capabilities.

MAKE SURE you never paddle alone.

Equipment Checklist

Use the canoeing safety advice checklist below to make sure you have everything you need:

- Boat
- Paddle
- Buoyancy Aid
- Bailer/sponge
- Small First Aid Kit
- Phone (in a waterproof bag)
- Drinking water and snacks
- Suitable clothing for the weather



Photo by James Carnegie

Environmental Good Practice

One of the great things about paddling a canoe trail is enjoying the journey and different environments that you paddle through. So when you are out on the water please consider the following things to help keep the wonderful waterways and environment as you found them and to avoid accidentally disturbing wildlife and their habitats.

- Take your **litter** home with you
- Keep **noise** to a minimum
- Where possible keep to any **designated paths or launching points**.
- **Do not "seal" launch** or drag boats to avoid wearing away natural banks. Float your canoe for launching, lift out when landing and carry it to and from the water.
- Canoe a **safe distance away from wildlife**. If you see signs of disturbance move away quietly.
- Familiarise yourself with the local area, its **sensitive places and protected areas**
- On rivers, **avoid paddling over gravel banks** in low water conditions – they may contain fish spawn.
- Ensure you **don't remove or damage any plants or animals** from the waterway as they may be protected or harmful if transferred to other catchments
- When clearing litter left by others, **handle it with care**.
- **Be the eyes and ears on the water**. Report pollution, wildlife problems, damage, incidents etc to the relevant authorities: **Canal & River Trust**, Emergencies: 0800 47 999 47
RSPCA for wildlife and animals in distress: 0300 1234 999 (24 hours)
Environment Agency: 0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)



CHECK, CLEAN, DRY

Help minimise the spread of invasive aquatic species and disease by following the campaign advice before putting your canoe and equipment in and out of the water (some invasive species can survive in damp or wet conditions for five or six days on water recreation clothing and equipment).

- **CHECK** all your equipment and clothing for living organisms and plants fragments. Pay particular attention to areas that are damp and hard to inspect.
- **CLEAN** and wash all equipment, clothing and footwear thoroughly away from water source. If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them. When practical, completely dry out all equipment and clothing before going to a new site.
- **DRY** all equipment and clothing - some species can live for many days in moist conditions. Dry your kit with towels. Make sure you don't transfer water elsewhere.

Canoeists and kayakers take environmental concerns very seriously and already follow existing voluntary environmental codes of conduct. You can find more information about canoeing and the environment in British Canoeing's two publications covering inland and coastal paddling '**You and Your Canoe**'. Both are available on the [British Canoeing website](#).

*We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable. **This trail was last reviewed in September 2013***

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