

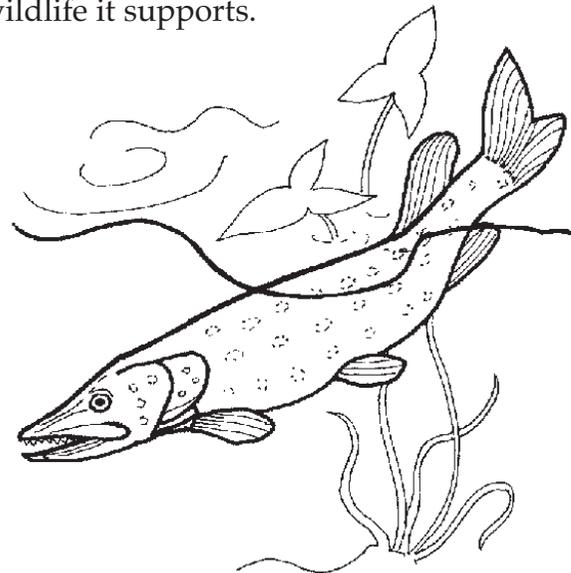


Yare Valley Walk – River and Ridge Section



The River Yare

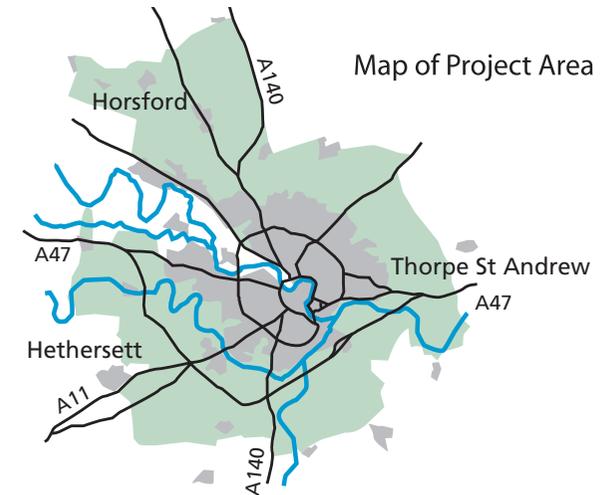
The River Yare is some 58 miles in length, rising at Garvestone in the Brecks to its mouth at Great Yarmouth. Just over half the river is within the Broads National Park. In the Norwich area the valley is very variable from the broad flood plain in the Easton area, to the relatively steep wooded slopes as the river reaches Thorpe and Trowse. Much of the river is considered to be of County importance for the wildlife it supports.



Norwich Fringe Project

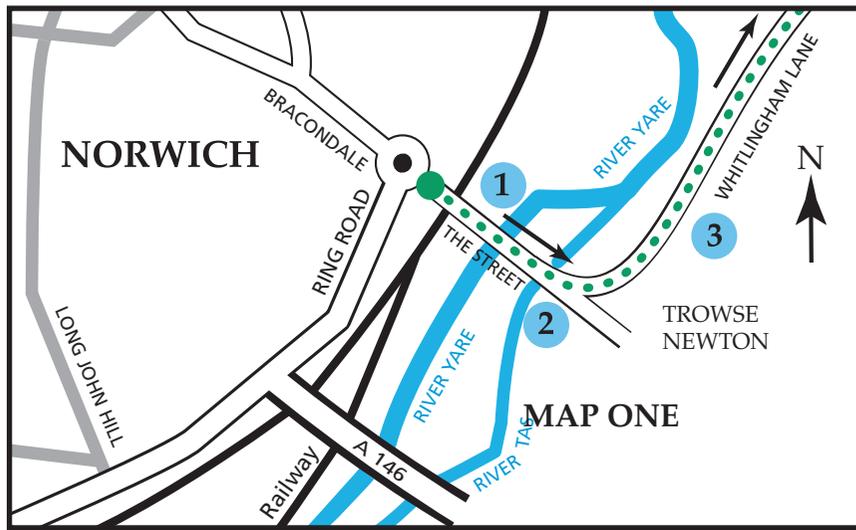
This leaflet is one of a series of self-guided trails that will help you enjoy the Norwich Fringe countryside.

Norwich Fringe Project aims to promote informal recreational facilities in the countryside surrounding Norwich.



Norwich Fringe Countryside Management Project
Mile Cross Central Depot Admin Building
Mile Cross Road, Norwich NR3 2DY
Telephone: 01603 423303

Email: fringe.ncc@gtnet.gov.uk
Website: www.norwichfringeproject.co.uk



Yare Valley Circular Walk – River and Ridge Section

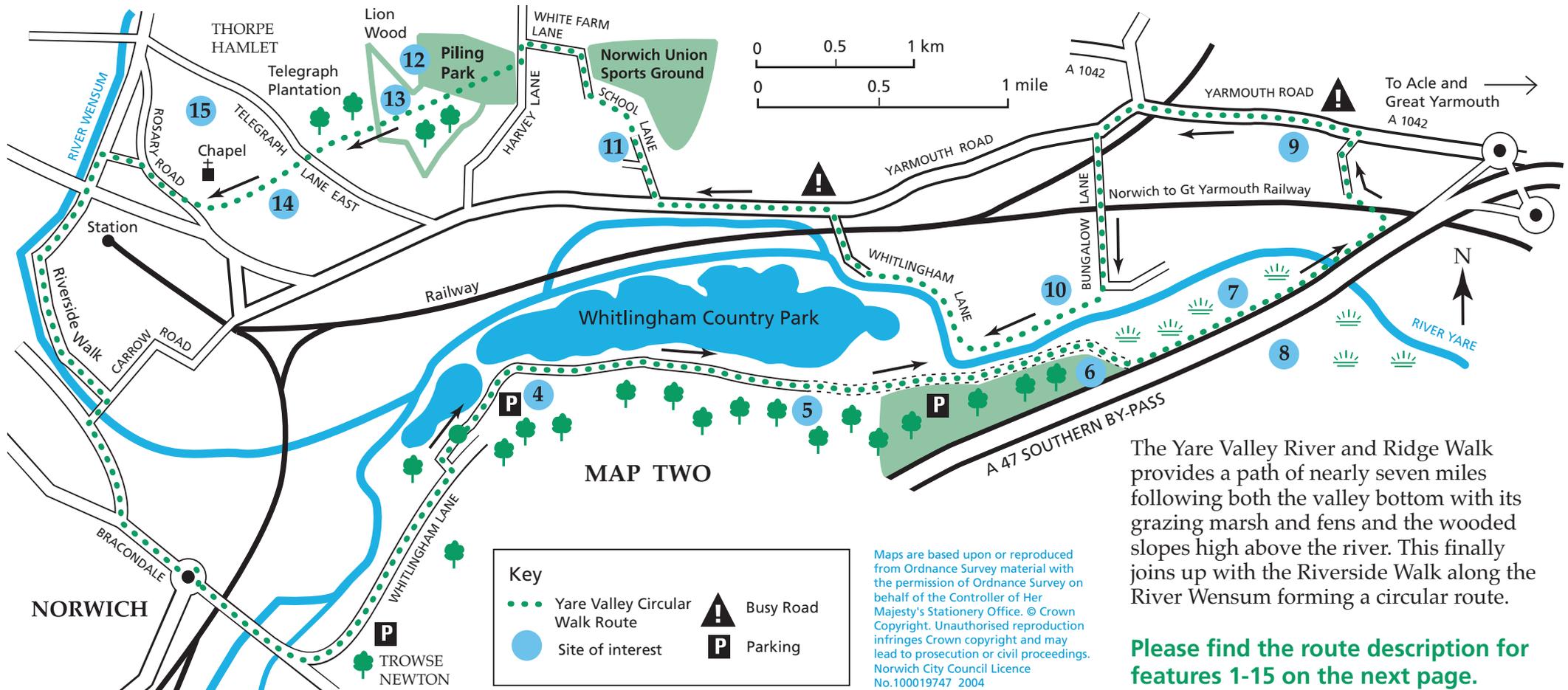
The walk is approximately 7 miles (11.2 km) from start to finish.

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Much of the river is considered to be of County importance for the wildlife it supports. The attractiveness of the Norfolk countryside owes much to its river valleys. These not only provide quite striking changes to its appearance with green slopes and rolling hills, but also areas of considerable wildlife interest.

The Yare Valley typifies this, but is perhaps all the more special because it is within easy reach of the population of Norwich.

Leaflet design by Ruth Murray



The Yare Valley River and Ridge Walk provides a path of nearly seven miles following both the valley bottom with its grazing marsh and fens and the wooded slopes high above the river. This finally joins up with the Riverside Walk along the River Wensum forming a circular route.

Please find the route description for features 1-15 on the next page.

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Yare Valley Circular Walk – River and Ridge Section

The walk is approximately 7 miles (11.2 km) from start to finish.

MAP ONE

1. A convenient place to start the walk is **Trowse Millgate**, which marks the upper navigable reaches of the River Yare.

2. The **Church of St Andrew** can be traced back to the 13th Century when it was first mentioned in the Charter of Trowse Newton.

It is situated opposite Whitlingham Lane whose name is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “the home of the sons of the family Wit” that settled there (ham=home, ling=sons of, Wit=family name).

3. At the edge of Trowse Newton Village on the right-hand side of the lane a squeeze stile marks the point of **Trowse Wood**. If you walk up onto the ridge of Trowse Wood you can get a fine view of the City and Old Crown Point Hall, (now Whitlingham Hospital), which was first erected in 1784 and rebuilt about 1865.

4. The Ruins of **Trowse Newton Hall**, some parts of which date back to 1350, once belonged to Norwich Cathedral Priory and was used as a country residence by the Priors until it was passed on to the Deans after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540. The Deans later leased the building out as a working farm until the 1860s when, after being sold, it was intentionally transformed into a ruin as part of the landscaped gardens of Crown Point Hall. Another feature of the gardens was the avenue of lime trees, which are still visible today. They were planted in the 1860s and lined the road leading from Trowse Newton Hall to Crown Point Hall.

MAP TWO

5. **Whitlingham Country Park** was created following sand and gravel extraction used for the building of local landmarks including Castle Mall and the Southern Bypass. The park now features walks, cycle paths, two beaches and a water sports base. A river bus brings visitors from the city centre.

6. **The River Yare** rejoins the road by the White House. In the 19th Century a tramway used to cross the lane here and carry chalk down to the river from a huge quarry behind the woodland. Here it was loaded onto wherries and taken down river to cement works at Berney Arms and Burgh Castle.

7. A few ivy clad ruins are all that remain of **St Andrew’s Church**, Whitlingham, which stands on the verge of a steep hill on your right. The church only becomes visible in winter. Before the tower became a ruin, it had upon its summit several heraldic monsters whose image, the local people of that time believed, were seen to walk at night.

8. Upon the bridge fine views of the valley are afforded. On the far side of the bypass is **Whitlingham Sewage Works**, which deals with the dirty water from a population of 250,000 in the greater Norwich area and outlying villages. The works today are a far cry from the original sewage farm that was opened after a cholera epidemic in 1830. Then, sewage was pumped to the Kirby Hills and allowed to percolate down through the land and into the river! Crossing the valley takes you into Postwick.

Take care to ensure that no trains are approaching as you cross the Norwich to Great Yarmouth railway line.

9. **St Andrews Hospital** dates from 1814 and was originally the county asylum. According to records, straight jackets, iron belts and handcuffs were the norm; during both world wars it was used as a casualty hospital.

10. Over the next few years **Thorpe Marsh** will be developed into a series of water related wildlife habitats to enhance the wildlife value of this area, as part of the site is dug for gravel.

11. You will now be walking up onto Thorpe wooded ridge. During the 19th Century, **Thorpe** was a very desirable place for businessmen to live. Most of the estates have gone, but some of the large houses still survive in the form of flats or nursing homes.

12. **Pilling Park**, along with Lion Wood and Telegraph Plantation were part of the estate belonging to Mousehold House which was first built in 1821.

13. The history of **Lion Wood** goes back at least to Domesday, when mention was made of “Thorpe Wood” which covered much of the northeastern part of Norwich and extended out as far as Woodbastwick. The woodland was considered a valuable resource and was used for fuel, building materials and even fattening pigs.

The woodland was over-exploited and today only a few fragments of the original woodland remain, allowing Lion Wood to be recognised as a very special place. As you walk through the wood you will notice that the tree cover changes from pine and birch on the higher plateaus to oak, beech and hornbeam on the valley sides and bottom. In spring, in the open areas you may be lucky to find bluebells, wood anemone and wood sorrel in flower.

14. **The Rosary** was the first private cemetery of its kind in England and was established “on the broad principle of Christian equality”.

The site was purchased in 1819 and developed on a commercial principle where families could buy their own grave plots. It came into use in 1821 and covered 5 acres that later extended to 13 acres. Parts of the cemetery form a conservation area, acting as a haven for birds and wildlife on an attractive sloping hill site in the inner suburb of Thorpe Hamlet.

15. Near here in Thorpe Hamlet, **chalk pits** existed which were notorious in the 16th Century as a place for burning heretics (religious agitators). The chalk workings and lime kilns were fully exploited by the early 19th Century and were the only industries to exist here until the gas works arrived in 1830.



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While every effort has been made to include accurate and up-to-date information, the Norwich Fringe Project does not accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. If you find any inaccuracies we would be very pleased to hear about them.