



BYFORDS

CAFÉ · STORE · POSH B&B

Your complimentary

TOP FIVE
GUIDE TO NORFOLK



Brought to you by Norfolk Passport norfolkpassport.com

NORFOLK
PASSPORT

WELCOME TO THE KING'S HEAD

A warm welcome to The King's Head, a traditional pub located on Georgian Holt's High Street. A big thank you from all of us here for deciding to spend some time with us, we hope to make your stay enjoyable.

YOUR ROOM

WiFi details

Network name: King's Head Bar

Password: fireside

Check out time is 11am and must be completed at Byfords across the high street

Following your stay, we will email you a few short questions. Your honest feedback allows us to continue delivering the very best service, food and experiences

For any assistance, please contact reception by dialling '0'

THE FOOD

Breakfast at Byfords, from 7.30am

Food served all day, 12pm - 9pm

New menu for 2017! We think you're going to love our extended KH burger and dogs menu, our taste bud-pleasing tapas ticklers, and our sweet new sundae flavours. For the vegetarians, our menu also features plenty of dishes to set your taste buds alight.

Breakfast is served from 7.30am in the oak-framed conservatory of our sister business Byfords, just across the high street.

THE BAR

Open daily, 12pm - 11pm

To the right, the Public Bar showing Sky Sports, pool table and music.

To the left, George's Bar with cosy booths, roaring log fires and our tap-bar hosting up to 14 real ales

Beer Garden, sit outside in the heart of Holt - great for people watching and sunny afternoons!

WELCOME TO NORFOLK'S TOP 5 THINGS TO DO

Whether a short break, or a relaxing week away on the coast, this Top 5 guide gives you an unbiased look at all things Norfolk. There's something for all the family, from beautiful beaches to charming afternoon teas; all this and more can be found online at norfolkpassport.com.

Norfolk Passport is also your gateway to exclusive perks across other leading Norfolk experiences. Sign up online now and instantly save 10% across a range of leading Norfolk experiences.

norfolkpassport.com

We hope you enjoy your time here in beautiful Norfolk, remember to share your stories, pictures and videos online. Find us on Facebook and Twitter, just search 'Norfolk Passport'.



Lesley van Dijk

Editor, Norfolk Passport

events@norfolkpassport.com



CONTENTS

Beaches 4-5 • Afternoon Tea 6-7 • Norfolk Broads 8-9
Iconic Norwich 10-11 • Woods 12-13 • Blickling Hall 14-15
Norfolk ancient sites 16-17

TOP 5 HOLT

Georgian Holt, situated just four miles inland from our stunning coastline, has a unique blend of refreshingly independent stylish shops and small country town charm.

ONE | PINEAPPLE-TOPPED OBELISK

On the High Street, you'll find this unusual obelisk, which is one of a pair of gateposts moved from the nearby estate of Melton Park (that's why the road distances are wrong!).

The other was given to Dereham, and to avoid assisting the enemy during an invasion, they flung theirs down a deep well! Holt whitewashed theirs, thus its good condition has been preserved. It is the iconic emblem of The Holt Society. The pretty neighbouring lamp post was given to the town during Queen Victoria's Jubilee year of 1887.

TWO | WESLEYAN CHAPEL GARDENS

The Methodist chapel is opposite the entrance to Albert Street Car Park and a perfect place to enjoy a picnic lunch. Compile your own with bakery bits from Bull Street's The Crusty Loaf, fruit from Crowe's greengrocers (next door) and of course, deli delights and treats from Byfords..

DID YOU KNOW?

The Byfords building is believed to be the town's oldest building.



THREE | SPOUT HILLS

A nature reserve for a relaxing stroll...

Just yards off the High Street, discover a special place of streams, ponds, marsh orchids and wild mint. Walk past Obelisk Plain and continue right leaving the High Street. Immediately opposite, you'll see a wide entrance with houses and cars parked. Cross the road, walk straight ahead, and Spout Hills will open before you.

The area across the stream is known locally as 'The Common', rising steadily to an arch of sloe bushes and a set of steps which take you down onto the old Midland and Great Northern railway line.

FOUR | NORTH NORFOLK RAILWAY

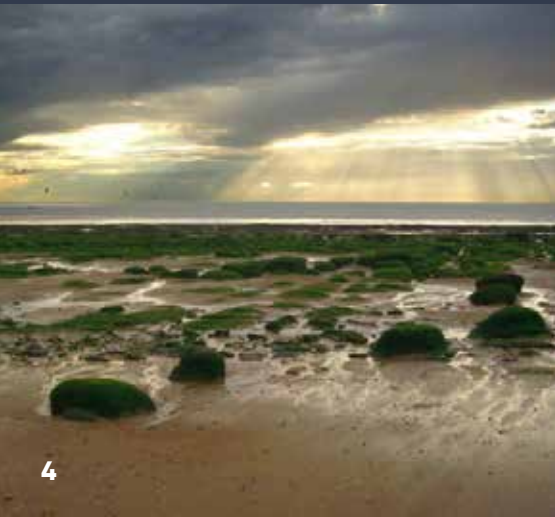
The station setting and watching the train arrive are as fun as the ride to Sheringham itself!

The journey takes you on a 10.5-mile round-trip by steam train (occasionally vintage diesel trains) through North Norfolk's beautiful landscape with sea views.

It's a 15-minute walk from town so easy to do. Follow the High Street left around the war memorial and the post office on the left. Keep walking, past Gresham's School and a wooded area. The station will be found on your left. Enjoy a trip back in time!

FIVE | INDEPENDENT SHOPS AND GALLERIES

Holt is well-known for its lovely boutiques and independent shops, and proud of it too. There are too many to name them all but do have a look around these: Richard Scott Antiques on the High Street (an 'institution' of china), The Holt Bookshop in Appleyard and Tess Ainley Gallery in the pretty Hoppers Yard. When you're done shopping, pop in to Kings Head Holt on the high street for a local ale or bite to eat in the garden..



TOP 5 BEACHES

ONE | HUNSTANTON

Traditional seaside attractions are in town but head for the Lighthouse and the ruined 1272 St Edmund's Chapel area and explore the beach; stripy fossil-rich cliffs, the wreck of The Sheraton, and those algae-covered rocks in weird regimented formations with mussels to pick from their beds at low tide.

DID YOU KNOW?

Norfolk has one of the longest coast lines of any county in the UK, nearly 100 miles!

TWO | HOLKHAM

Plenty of children and their pack-mule parents decamp here for a day's swimming, sandcastle-making, snoozing and general dune exploration. Four miles of white-gold sand, a basin of samphire and sea lavender that fills up on high tide.

There's much to look out for in winter too; the tideline post storm, exhausted migrant birds, dawn and dusk sights and sounds; overwintering pink-footed geese, sharp winter light. Beat a less trodden path to the beach by walking left, parallel to shore, through pines and behind first the bird-hide by way of boardwalk and out onto the vast, empty, sandy expanse.



THREE | CLEY

Sometimes sandy, mainly shingly, Cley offers an unmissable vista back to land, taking in coastal community landmarks such as Cley Mill and Salthouse Church. Dispel a gloomy mid-winter's day with appropriate clothing and pockets of treats and plod parallel to the sea. Summer sun induces picnics, papers, bathing, snoozing and mackerel fishing.

FOUR | CROMER

Walk into town for a good leg stretch! Happy Valley Lighthouse affords sweeping views over countryside, town and its church spire and sea before descending to the beach by way of steep wooden steps. Cliff-top prom views, East and West beaches, the Pier, Mary Jane' fish & chips, the Rocket House Café for coffee and a twizzle biscuit, the Boxing Day Dip and the magical New Year's Day firework display.

THE REST...

This is for all those expanses of beach out there in Norfolk whose common traits include sand and solitude but whose individual vistas mark them as unique: Wells, Holme, Titchwell, Brancaster, Burnham Overy, Overstrand, Sidestrand, Sea Palling, Winterton. Find them on the map, share your stories with us and we'll share them online!



TOP 5 AFTERNOON TEA

A perfect pastime if rain stops outdoor play! Here's our top-5 pick of where to enjoy afternoon tea in Norfolk, take a worthy companion and say thank you.

ONE | THE TEA HOUSE

Situated on Norwich's oldest street, stroll the length of cobbled Elm Hill with its independent shops and glorious architecture before heading into Wrights Court and The Tea House. Guide your nose through 30 different loose leaf teas which you can try alongside a traditional fruit scone cream tea or other bakes such as white chocolate and raspberry muffins.

TWO | SANDYHILLS AMUSEMENTS & CAFÉ

Don't let the 'bucket and spade café' put you off! Enjoy a stroll on the stunning beach then pop in for a proper cup of tea, some freshly baked doughnuts and take some time to look round the walls of the café. Out of season you may find their one-lane bowling alley free... Loser buys lunch?

DID YOU KNOW?

Afternoon tea was introduced by Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford, in 1840. She'd have a tray of tea, bread and butter in the afternoon. Soon it became a habit and she would invite friends to join her.



THREE | BYFORDS

Believed to be the town's oldest building, Byfords houses a store, posh B&B rooms and an all-day café. Rummage through the independent shops of Georgian Holt then sit down to tea, served between 3pm and 5pm. THE CLASSIC consists of finger sandwiches, scones, preserves, clotted cream, Byfords cakes, tea and coffee. Booking only!

FOUR | HEYDON TEA ROOMS

The picturesque cul-de-sac village of Heydon provides perhaps the loveliest Norfolk village setting, complete with an idyllic village green, church, bakery, Heydon Hall and The Earle Arms pub. The traditional Heydon Tea Rooms serves afternoon tea from a front room that overlooks the village green. The cake selection is beautifully displayed under glass domes. Mars bar shortbread and sticky gingerbread with Guinness are two I recall.

FIVE | THE ASSEMBLY HOUSE

When in Norfolk, the Assembly House in Norwich is picture-perfect in its Georgian building with an award-winning food and drink badge! I'm rather picky about my coffee and here it's smooth and strong – just the way I like it. Also, worth knowing is that you can request a gluten-free, dairy-free and vegan afternoon tea when you book. An experience not to be missed – booking recommended!



TOP 5 NORFOLK BROADS

The Broads National Park has a beautiful landscape that everyone associates with Norfolk.

Here are top things to do for walkers, nature lovers, keen boaters – well, for the whole family!

ONE | HICKLING BROAD NATURE RESERVE

Hickling Broad is home to an impressive range of wildlife and best of all, it's open all year round! Located on the River Thurne, it is the largest expanse of open water in the Broads and much of it can be enjoyed first-hand thanks to easily accessible (wheelchair friendly!) boardwalks that take you around the reserve.

TWO | WALK THE WHERRYMAN'S WAY

Explore this stunning landscape on foot via this popular route that stretches for approximately 35 miles from Whitlingham Country Park. Here on the edge of the city of Norwich, you can walk along the bank of the River Yare and finish in the Norfolk coastal town of Great Yarmouth. The riverside views are almost second to none and there are plenty of detours to take, leading to villages and towns such as Loddon and Surlingham and fantastic local pubs!

DID YOU KNOW?

The Norfolk Broads area is the largest wetland in Britain.



THREE | HOVETON GREAT BROAD NATURE TRAIL

One of the largest and most secluded broads in Norfolk is Hoveton Great Broad. The broad is closed to all boating traffic and there is no access to it on foot or by car, so to reach this tranquil spot you will need to travel by boat to the river bank and walk to it through the trees...

If hiring a boat then you won't have any trouble reaching the bank, but if you would rather drive, you can still enjoy Hoveton Great Broad thanks to the ferry at Salhouse Broad. For a small fee, you will be able to easily access the entrance of the Hoveton Great Broad Nature Trail. This scenic trail will lead you through the woodland and eventually onto the edge of the broad itself, where you will be able to enjoy beautiful views of the still and undisturbed water.

FOUR | THE NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL

Discover the truly undisturbed beauty of the Broads by exploring where motorboats aren't allowed to go. This is the only canal on the Norfolk Broads and is located towards the northern end of the Broads' river network. The only way to explore this almost untouched area is to bring or hire a canoe.

At Wayford Bridge you can hire a canoe and the route through the canal is recommended for a peaceful afternoon paddle. Once you've found the entrance to the canal, you can enjoy an incredibly peaceful few hours gliding silently through the water, with reeds and other plant life hanging over you. Due to the incredibly quiet atmosphere and lack of a noisy motor on your canoe, chances are that you will see some of the most elusive wildlife on the broads, which include otters and kingfishers.

FIVE | MUSEUM OF THE BROADS

Just a short distance from Stalham, the Museum of the Broads boasts many fascinating exhibits outlining the history of the largest wetland in the UK from the Roman era up to the 20th century. The exhibits showcase what life was like on the Broads, how many were formed and why. At the museum, there is also a café, a shop and plenty of activities for children to take part in.



TOP 5 ICONIC NORWICH

For centuries Norwich was one of the largest and wealthiest cities in England and it has a rich heritage with many architectural gems because of this fortunate past. Spend a day in this fine city and marvel at the iconic sights.

ONE | NORWICH CASTLE 1067 – 1075

Built as a royal palace for William the Conqueror at a time when most buildings were small wooden structures. The castle mound is the largest in the country. From the 14th – 19th C, the keep was used as the County gaol ('jail'). Alongside impressive fortified architecture, be sure not to miss this museum's fascinating contents, such as the Boudica Gallery, telling the story of the queen of the Iceni who led a revolt against the Romans in AD60. Marvel at the magnificent Snettisham treasure, the largest collection of Iron Age neck rings in Europe.

TWO | NORWICH CATHEDRAL 1096 – 1145

The Cathedral was built over 900 years ago in the centre of Norwich and is still standing robustly. You can see it from afar on many spots in Norwich because it has the highest Norman tower (40 metres) and largest monastic cloisters in England! Do visit the east part of the Cathedral which has four chapels with paintings and ornaments from 14th to 16th century.

THREE | NORWICH MARKET 1066

Founded in the late 11th century, Norwich Market continues to flourish today with over 200 stalls in the centre of the city. The brightly coloured rooftops were a relatively recent addition in 2006 and continue to be a popular shopping destination for locals and tourists alike. Whilst there, check out the beautiful Guildhall building on the hill, complete with external flint work that Norfolk is well-known for.

FOUR | THE ASSEMBLY HOUSE 1754 – 1755

Designed by architect Thomas Ivory to be a 'house of assemblies' for the gentry of Norwich, the building has also been the Norwich High School for girls and a school for camouflage during the second world war. It is now a registered arts charity supporting a wide programme of visual and performing arts. If events allow, take a peek in The Grand Hall, The Noverre Suite ballroom and the Music Room with its chandeliers, Steinway piano and minstrels gallery.

FIVE | THE FORUM 1999 – 2001

A range of businesses are housed in The Forum including regional BBC, our county library complete with comprehensive local history section, and the Tourist Information Centre. Take time to enjoy a coffee in its mezzanine café while gazing at the gothic church tower of St Peter Mancroft and the spectacular glazed cityscape view.

DID YOU KNOW?

Norwich Cathedral has the highest Norman tower in England.



TOP 5 WOODS

What Norfolk lacks in quantity, we surpass in quality; tucked away off main roads and down tracks, there are several hidden gems of ancient woodland, all with their own qualities and highlights.

ONE | BACTON WOODS

Having moved to Norfolk five years ago, I discovered this wonderful wood by accident! It was late spring and the beech trees had that amazing bright fresh green on their leaves which is always indicative of a new season after the long darkness of winter. In fact, that was the lasting impression I have of Bacton wood, the long avenues of beeches which look stunning from spring into autumn.

Bacton Woods (also known as Witton Woods) also has an ancient oak, a bronze age burial mound and an old pot-boiling site where it is still possible to find pottery shards. Three marked paths make it an excellent spot for dog walkers, cyclists and horse riding.

TWO | THETFORD FOREST

Thetford is by far Norfolk's largest forest. Created after the Second World War, it is now the largest man-made lowland forest in Britain, stretching over 19,000 acres. Made for family adventure, High Lodge is at the centre of all activities, whether it be an adventure playground, horse riding, cycling trails, outdoor gigs and theatre, walking trails, it can all be found here and is open pretty much all year round.

If you're after a more relaxing experience, Thetford Forest boasts a range of wildlife, fauna and flora. It is home to several species of deer (muntjac, roe and red) as well as birds including nightjars, crossbills, siskins and a population of golden pheasants.

DID YOU KNOW?

Norfolk's ancient woods are the best places to see bluebells and snowdrops.



THREE | FOXLEY WOODS

Foxley is the largest ancient woodland in Norfolk; recorded in the Domesday book, parts of it are reported to be over 6,000 years old! Due to the management of the woodland, the paths are straight and wide, almost grid-like at times, and although this takes away a little character of the place, it is very accessible and allows good views between the trees.

Bluebell time (April/ May) is when Foxley Woods comes into its own, swathes of indigo cover the ancient parts of the woods where other plant species can be found including herb paris, early purple orchid, lily of the valley and meadowsweet to name but a few.

FOUR | THURSFORD WOODS

By far the smallest woodland in this list, Thursford earns the trite title of 'hidden gem'. A tiny pocket of ancient woodland situated three miles north-east of Fakenham, boasts some of the county's oldest oaks. It will be no surprise that bluebells are plentiful here in springtime as well as carpets of snowdrops and daffodils.

Thursford Woods is a great place to take children; it's a short walk around and there is plenty to point out and explore, including a pond and all the fascinating creatures that inhabit it. There is a small piece of consecrated ground within the wood, marked by iron railings and a wooden cross. Rhododendrons grow in abundance and are another reason to visit later in the summer.

FIVE | MOSSYMERE WOODS

Mossymere features a beautiful array of catkins from the hazel trees, bringing some much-needed spots of colour against the dark outline of the trees. The large depression in the middle of the wood is known as the devil's dish, and according to legend, 'human remains and relics were said to have been found here.' A story indeed!

It is situated on the road between Saxthorpe and Little Barningham, and you can park at Mannington Hall (just over one mile from the woods) or find a lay-by on this road.

Article contributed by author and 'The Village Gardener' Fritha Waters. She often ventures out with her children who also love the outdoors.



TOP 5 BLICKLING

Just as you arrive from Aylsham, seeing Blickling Hall will take your breath away. It truly is one of a kind and draws you in. The beautifully preserved 16th century house is the main entry to the Estate's captivating historic buildings, gardens and woodland. With 950 acres of woodland and parks, and 3,500 acres of farmland, if you visit Norfolk, this is a must see.

ONE | HALL

The National Trust owns Blickling Hall and describes it perfectly: 'It epitomises the great Jacobean country house, a sumptuous confection of local red brick and Ketton limestone, Dutch gables and turrets.'

The Hall's extensive library has one of the most significant collections of manuscripts and books in England and of all the National Trust's libraries the one at Blickling Hall is the biggest and most important of them all. This year (2017) the Blickling team is highlighting the connection between Blickling and the role Philip Kerr played in India's vibrant cultural history.

TWO | KITCHEN AND COSTUMED EVENTS

This is a wonderful experience for everyone. The old copper pans, crockery and appliances take you back in time and you can sense that the kitchen was a hive of activity.

Every Wednesday, (April-October), a costumed interpretation group brings Blickling's history to life and on certain days the kitchen's expert cooks make a meal and let you taste some of the 'morsels'.

THREE | FRONT GARDEN

You may already know that those iconic yew hedges, already recorded as tall by the 1740s, are trimmed once a year in an annual trimming spree lasting three months (culminating in a mile long 'haha' hedge around the edge of the garden). But did you know that their clippings are collected (by Friendship Estates) and used as a vital raw ingredient to produce anti-cancer drugs?

FOUR | 'BACK' GARDEN

The large garden has a fascinating history all its own! The present-day grounds were initially laid out as a formal Jacobean garden. Early garden plans dating from 1729 also show that Blickling's graceful lake was formed by the damming of a stream which runs down into the River Bure from Pond Meadow.

Activities are well underway to further open-up and renovate the Walled Kitchen Garden complete with its Mulberry tree. After wandering the beautiful grounds, a great adventure with little ones is finding the 'secret gardens'. One is beyond the steps on the left and the pretty hideaway... search hard!

FIVE | GREAT WOOD

This is one of Norfolk's oldest woods and once going uphill, you're at one with nature. The Great Wood has a large variety of trees; from oak, to beech to chestnut. Throughout the year, it is a beautiful sight to see the seasonal changes.

In May (and a must-see) are the millions of bluebells! Research tells us that bluebells thrive well with long periods of shade in late winter and early spring due to the trees' wide canopies. The first shoots emerge in January so they can grow for several months before they carpet the grounds with their vibrant blue flowers.

Blickling Estate is magical and everyone who visits will have the best time.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII, was born on the Blickling Estate in 1507.



TOP 5 NORFOLK ANCIENT SITES

The countryside of Norfolk abounds with remnants of rock dotted in fields and on the edge of towns. Ruins of castles, priories, towers and churches, intact or crumbled into the earth; there is a wealth of historic remains from past centuries.

ONE | SEAHENGE AT HOLME-NEXT-THE-SEA

A ring of **55 small split oak trunks, thought to be 4,000 years old**, within their centre a large inverted oak stump was revealed only recently. Seahenge was originally built on a salt marsh, circa 2049BCE, protected from the sea and ever-changing around it; where alders and rushes produced a dark peat that preserved the timbers and kept them from decay.

TWO | WARHAM CAMP

Very much worth a visit, not least for the spectacular earthworks of **a three-metre-high double bank** that gives the landscape a dramatic feel. Inland from Wells-Next-The-Sea and just south of Warham village you will discover the circular banks that are the remains of **an Iron Age fort** that dates to the centuries before the Roman invasion of Britain.

THREE | GRIMES GRAVES

From the smaller sites to the huge, Grimes Graves is a large **Neolithic Flint mining complex**, 8km North East of Brandon near **Thetford**. It is the only Neolithic flint mine that is open to the public in Britain. Visitors can **descend 9 metres** into an excavated shaft to see the galleries and marks left by the picks of minors, many thousands of years ago - a fascinating and unforgettable experience.

FOUR | BRANODUNUM - BRANCASTER

Branodunum was the name of a **Roman fort** built to the east of Brancaster on Norfolk's North coast. Thought to be **built around 230ad** to protect against the Wash approaches, but then to control shipping and trade around the coast. The modern village of Brancaster, which is well worth visiting for a picnic or a walk, surrounds it - **National Trust** signs provide lots of information about the fort and its history.

FIVE | VENTA ICENORUM AT CAISTOR ST EDMUND

This list would not have been complete without a mention of the Iceni tribe, and the name **'Venta Icenorum'** literally means **'market place of the Iceni'**. Caistor had an important role, as it was the Roman base for the area of Norfolk, northern Suffolk and east Cambridgeshire.

Even when Venta was first founded, the surrounding area was already rich in prehistoric sites and today, you can still find evidence of the ramparts, ditch and defensive walls; the forum, baths and two temples have all been unearthed since the 1930s. **Caistor St Edmund is four miles south of Norwich.**

Article contributed by author and 'The Village Gardener' Fritha Waters



