

Welcome

The parish of Hopton cum Knettishall lies within Suffolk on the Norfolk border. The rural village of Hopton boasts a host of local amenities including a pub, a large convenience shop with post office, a fish and chip shop, three churches and a bowling green. Knettishall, with its beautiful nature reserve and heath is about 2½ miles away.

All walks start at All Saints Parish Church, Hopton and follow footpaths, tracks, quiet lanes and pavements, varying from a gentle 2¾ mile stroll to 8½ miles for a fuller day out. All the routes are signed with coloured waymarker discs.

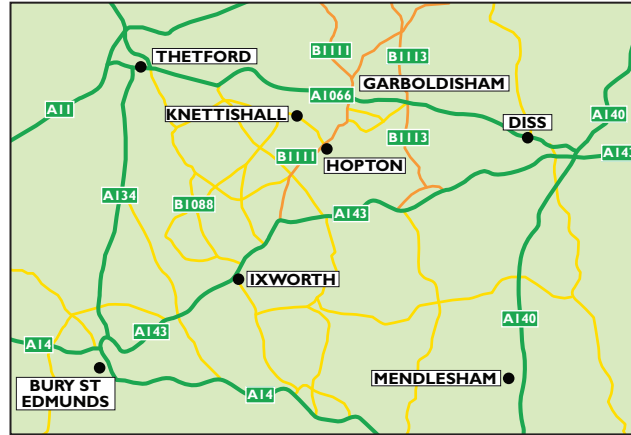
There is only one stile, which is along “A Grand Day Out”.

These walks also include three sites managed by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust: Knettishall Heath, Hopton Fen and Market Weston Fen. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has three easy to follow waymarked routes around Knettishall Heath to help you explore and enjoy this wonderful landscape; details can be found on the information boards in the main car park or via www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/nature-reserves.

Knettishall Heath is at the junction of three long distance routes: the 92 mile Angles Way footpath from Great Yarmouth, the 110 mile Icknield Way from Bedfordshire (the oldest road in Britain) and the 46 mile Peddars Way to North Norfolk.



Location



Hopton cum Knettishall lies on the B1111, about 8 miles south-east of Thetford, 9 miles south-west of Diss and 15 miles north-east of Bury St Edmunds.

Public Transport

Public transport is available to Hopton cum Knettishall. Visit www.suffolkonboard.com for timetables or www.travelineeastanglia.org.uk (08712 002 233) to plan your journey.

Use O.S. Explorer Map 230 Diss & Harleston and the Barningham & Market Weston leaflet to enjoy these walks and the wider area.

Discover Suffolk

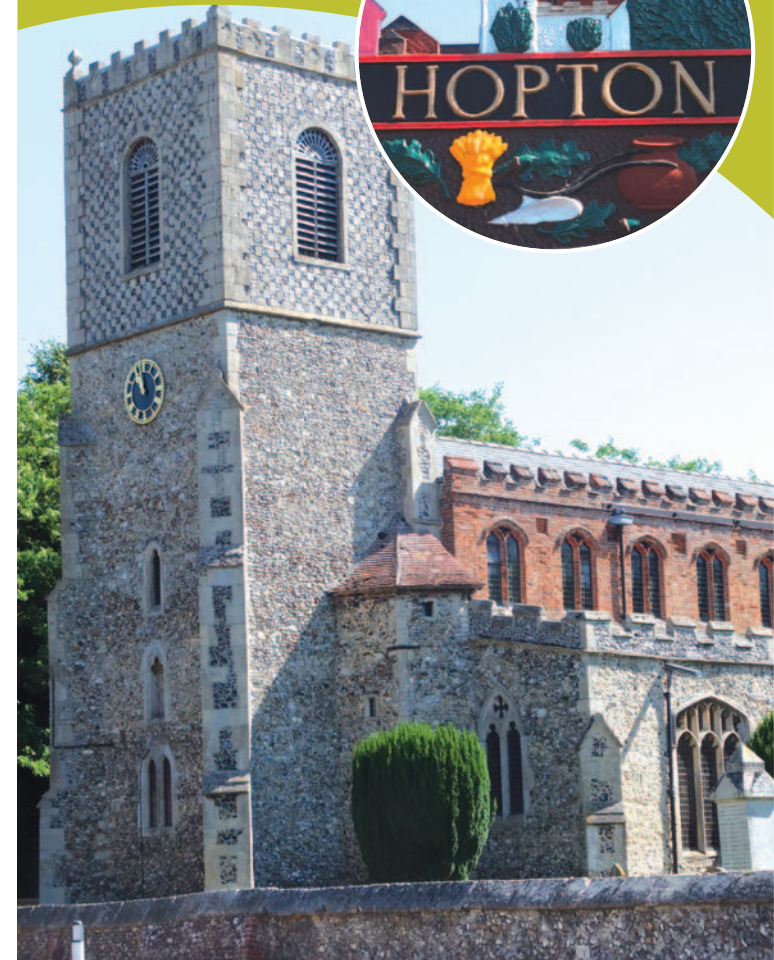
Discover more great days out across Suffolk at www.discoveruffolk.org.uk

Produced by Suffolk County Council and Hopton cum Knettishall Parish Council.



Hopton cum Knettishall

Three beautiful circular walks



Hopton cum Knettishall

Three beautiful circular walks



Knettishall Heath Nature Reserve

KEY TO MAP

- A Grand Day Out
- The Windmill Walk
- The Fen Walk
- - - - - Public Footpath
- - - - - Bridleway
- + + + + - Restricted Byway
- + + + + - Byway
- + + + + - Long Distance Route
- National Cycle Route

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The Blue Route between No. 9 and No. 10 is a permissive path that the landowner has kindly allowed the public to use with their permission. It is not a legally recorded public right of way and there is no intention for it to become so.

The Windmill Walk

Distance: 2¾ miles (4½ km)

Duration: 1½ - 2 hours

Waymarkers: Red Circular Walk



With the church on your right, head up the High Street, past The Vine pub and the fish & chip shop until you come to a bridgeway on your right ❶.



Following this track you pass a small pond to your left and keeping the hedgerow to your left follow the path until you pass through a gap in the hedge. Turn right and follow the path as it winds its way lazily over the rise and down to the road ❷.

Look to the left and enjoy the wonderful view of the Grade II listed tower mill at Thelnetham. Built around 1819 to grind wheat into flour, it became derelict in the mid 1920s. Restored in the early 80s by volunteers, it is now a working mill open to the public and one of the oldest surviving tower mills in Suffolk.

Turn left at the road at the bend, take the track on your right. Follow the track until you reach the top of the incline and come to a crossroad of paths; go right ❸.

To your left, nestled among the trees and looking picturesque, is Market Weston church.

Continue along the track until you reach another footpath junction ❹. Here you can follow the green route to Market Weston or stay on the track back into the village.

The Fen Walk

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Duration: 2 hours

Waymarkers: Green Circular Walk



With the church on your left, walk along Thelnetham Road until you reach Shortgrove Lane on your right ❶. Follow this lane past the bowls club and take the footpath on your right ❷. Continue along the tree lined footpath, turn left at the next waymarker and follow the field edge footpath until you reach a gate to exit onto Church Road ❸. Turn left and head towards the church.

Before you reach the 13th century church of St Marys, which stands proud and picturesque in the rural landscape, you will pass the Old Chimneys Brewery, a craft brewery since 1995 and winner of several awards. Contact the brewery on 01359 221411/221013 for shop opening information.

Walk through the churchyard to the rear left hand corner and follow the grass path to rejoin the road. Turn right and proceed through Market Weston, turning right at the village hall ❹.

The village was given a market charter in 1263, which is depicted on the attractive village sign.

Continue to Pond End Lane and proceed down here to cross the B1111. Take care when crossing this busy road.

Follow the track opposite until you reach Market Weston Fen Nature Reserve to your right ❺, where the route continues through the fen.

Market Weston Fen is a SSSI site and European Special Area of Conservation. The numerous ponds, formed during the ice age, support a diverse range of aquatic plants and animals. Snipe can be heard in the spring vibrating or 'drumming' their outer tail feathers, apparently sounding like a bleating goat! During the summer be amazed at the variety and colours of dragonflies and damselflies, for this fen is rich in wildlife.



After a gate, a bridge and two further gates you reach Fen Street ❻. Turn right and continue along the road until you reach a footpath on your right.

This path takes you along a leafy boardwalk and over a small bridge into a small meadow. Keeping the hedge line on your left continue until you reach the Old Rectory ❼ and a track. Follow this until you reach a footpath skirting the large field on your left. Walk up the footpath to Nethergate Street. Turn right and return to the village centre.

A Grand Day Out

Distance: 8½ miles (13½ km)

Duration: 4½ - 5 hours

Waymarkers: Blue Circular Walk, Angles Way, Yellow Trail



All Saints' Church has examples of fine church architecture such as the early Tudor red brick clerestory windows and the late medieval hammer beam roof. The tower houses eight bells; six recently restored bells, five of which date from the early 17th century and were cast at John Draper's Thetford foundry; the sixth was cast in Downham Market in 1807. Two new bells were added in 2010.

With the church on your right, head up the High Street and take the narrow public footpath ① on your left past The Vine pub.

Follow the Angles Way waymarked path between the houses out onto farmland until you reach Hopton Fen Nature Reserve. ②

Hopton Fen is managed by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lying in a valley close to the Little Ouse River. There is a permissive path which takes you through the fen, where you may hear a nightingale, sedge or reed warbler, that rejoins the Angles Way. ③

Keeping the reed bed on your left, follow the fern lined path which then continues along a field edge.

On a summer's day you can marvel at the array of butterflies such as Comma, Skipper, Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown.



Continue along the track following the Angles Way waymarkers until you reach a large bridge ④. Cross the bridge and stile and continue up to the silos where you turn left onto a tree lined track to reach Gasthorpe.

Gasthorpe ⑤ is a small pretty village with a quaint thatched old post office and 16th century cottages.

At the crossroads, continue straight ahead towards St Peter's Church. Just before the



church ⑥, take the footpath signed Angles Way on the left and follow the waymakers through woodland and past Riddlesworth Hall School.

Riddlesworth Hall School is an 18th century Georgian style mansion. Originally the seat of Sir Drue Drury, Sir Drue served at the coronation of Elizabeth I; he was also gaoler of Mary, Queen of Scots. His monument can be found in St Peter's Church. Princess Diana was a former pupil at the school.

Past the school, turn left onto a track which will lead to a quiet road ⑦. Turn left to reach Knettishall Heath Nature Reserve.

Within the nature reserve is Hut Hill, a 4,000 year old Bronze Age round barrow burial mound and The Warren, an area where the old industry of rabbit farming took place.

From the car park ⑧ pick up the yellow woodland trail to cross the road into the wood and follow the trail until you reach the road ⑨. Follow the track opposite along a permissive path.

You are now crossing what was a World War II airfield for the United States Army Air Force. The 388th Bombardment Group flew Flying Fortresses on 331 raids to European targets. There is a memorial to the 388th in Coney Weston.

Keep following the blue circular walk waymarkers to the road and continue on the other side until you reach a path on your left ⑩. Take this to the road, turn left until you see the entrance on the right into Weston Fen ⑤ and follow the Green Route back to the village.

