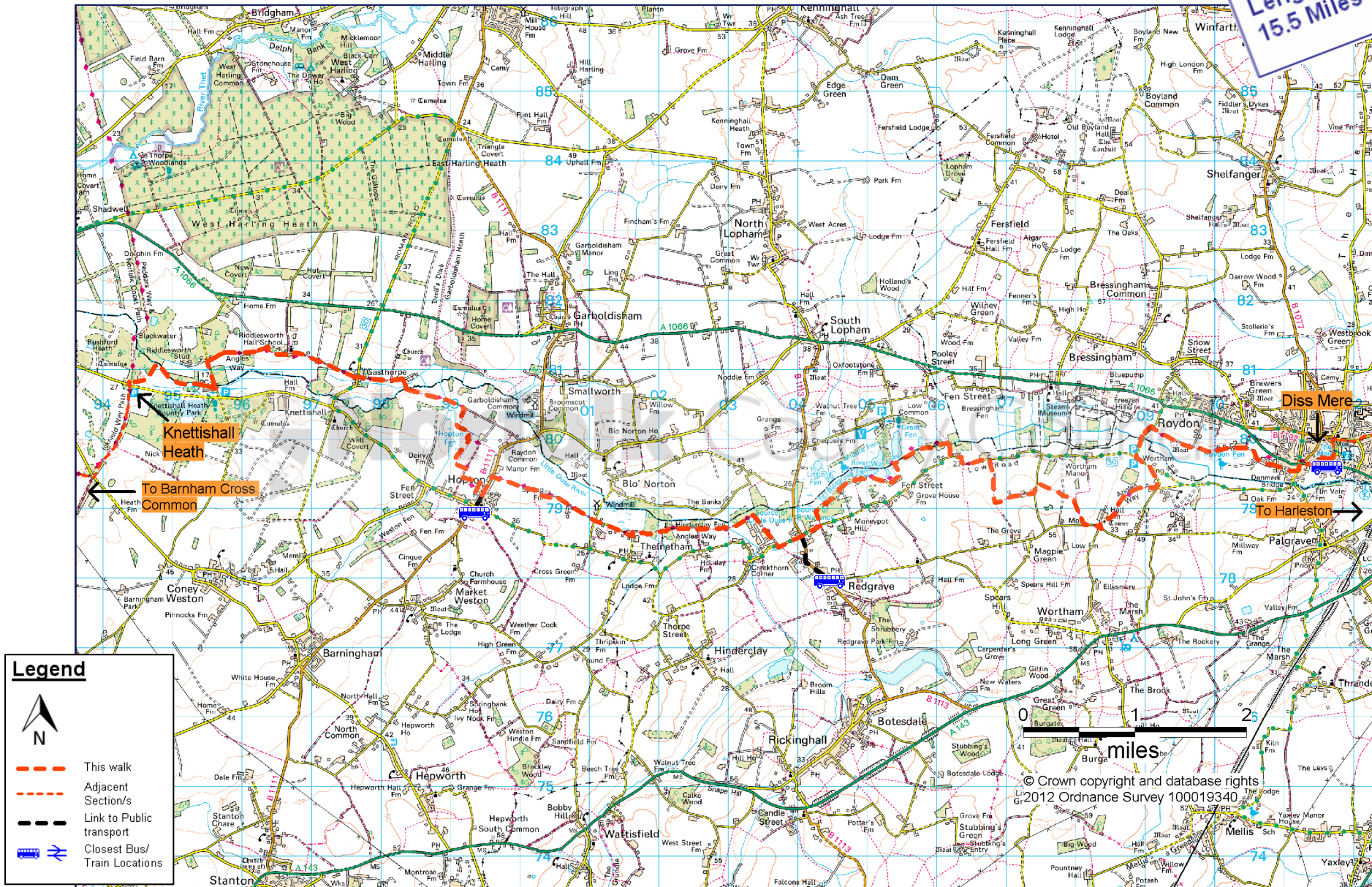


Angles Way Long Section 6 (of 7) Diss Mere to Knettishall Heath

Length:
15.5 Miles



Along the way

Just south of Diss is Fair Green. A fair has been held here for 800 years, look for the inscribed stone pillar near the car park celebrating this. The green is surrounded by an attractive mix of timber framed, clay lump and brick built houses dating from the 16th century through to the present day; a good example of how settlements evolved around a common green.

A highlight of this section of the walk is to find the source of the River Waveney and also the River Ouse. At grid reference TM039790 on Redgrave Road, alongside Redgrave and Lopham Fen, a small bank forms the watershed between the catchments of the Ouse and Waveney and marks the source of both rivers, with the Waveney flowing east and the Ouse flowing west. Redgrave and Lopham Fen, owned by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, is an internationally important spring-fed valley fen, the largest remaining river valley fen in England.

As a contrast to the somewhat damp fens, Angles Way also crosses Wortham Ling, a large area of common land in the village of Wortham. The site is heathland and acid grassland and is very similar to a Breck heath despite lying in the claylands.

On the way to Knettishall Heath will pass a number of Sites of Scientific Interest along the way including Hopton Fen, Blo'Norton and Thelnetham Fen, all part of the Waveney and Ouse Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation. These small valley fens have survived the threat of nearby dredging of the Little Ouse River and are havens for water-loving plants, where waterlogged peat allows unique plants and animals to flourish.

The open landscape of Knettishall Heath was created about four thousand years ago when our bronze age ancestors cleared the forest for cultivation and grazing livestock. Since then the land has been used for sheep and rabbit grazing. In 1950 there would have been virtually no woodland. When myxomatosis virtually wiped out the rabbit population in 1953 and following the decline of sheep grazing in the 1960s, tree seedlings invaded the open heathland and developed into the mature woodland you walk through. The grassland is now managed by grazing Exmoor ponies, Black sheep and Jersey cattle.

Further information on this walk is available in three short sections, including more detailed maps. See Short Sections S14; Diss to B1113, S15; B1113 to Hopton and S16; Hopton to Knettishall heath at www.norfolk.gov.uk/anglesway



www.norfolk.gov.uk/trails



Walk summary

Stretch out for 15.5 miles of Angles Way from Diss to Knettishall Heath, pausing at the source of the River Waveney at Redgrave and Lopham Fen on the way.

Getting started

This section is between Diss Mere (TM116797) and Knettishall Heath (TL943807) Thetford Road, the junction of three long distance paths; Angles Way, Peddars Way and the Icknield Way.

Getting there

Train London to Norwich line. Diss Rail Station, Station Road, Diss

National Rail enquiries: 08457 484950.

www.nationalrail.co.uk/

Bus service For Knettishall Heath, use the Suffolk Link Brecks dial-a-ride service between Knettishall Heath and Thetford bus or train station. Telephone 01638 664304 to book your journey up to a week in advance.

Maps and guides

Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps Diss and Harleston 230 available from Ordnance Survey shop
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite

What to expect

Footpaths through and beside fens which are usually wet throughout the year. Farm tracks, heathland, pasture, stiles and quiet country roads.

Facilities

Parking and toilets at Diss and Knettishall Heath
Accommodation, pubs, restaurants, shops (not at Knettishall Heath)

Further information about planning a break in this area is available from www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/visiting/index.asp and www.brecks.org.



Waveney Valley