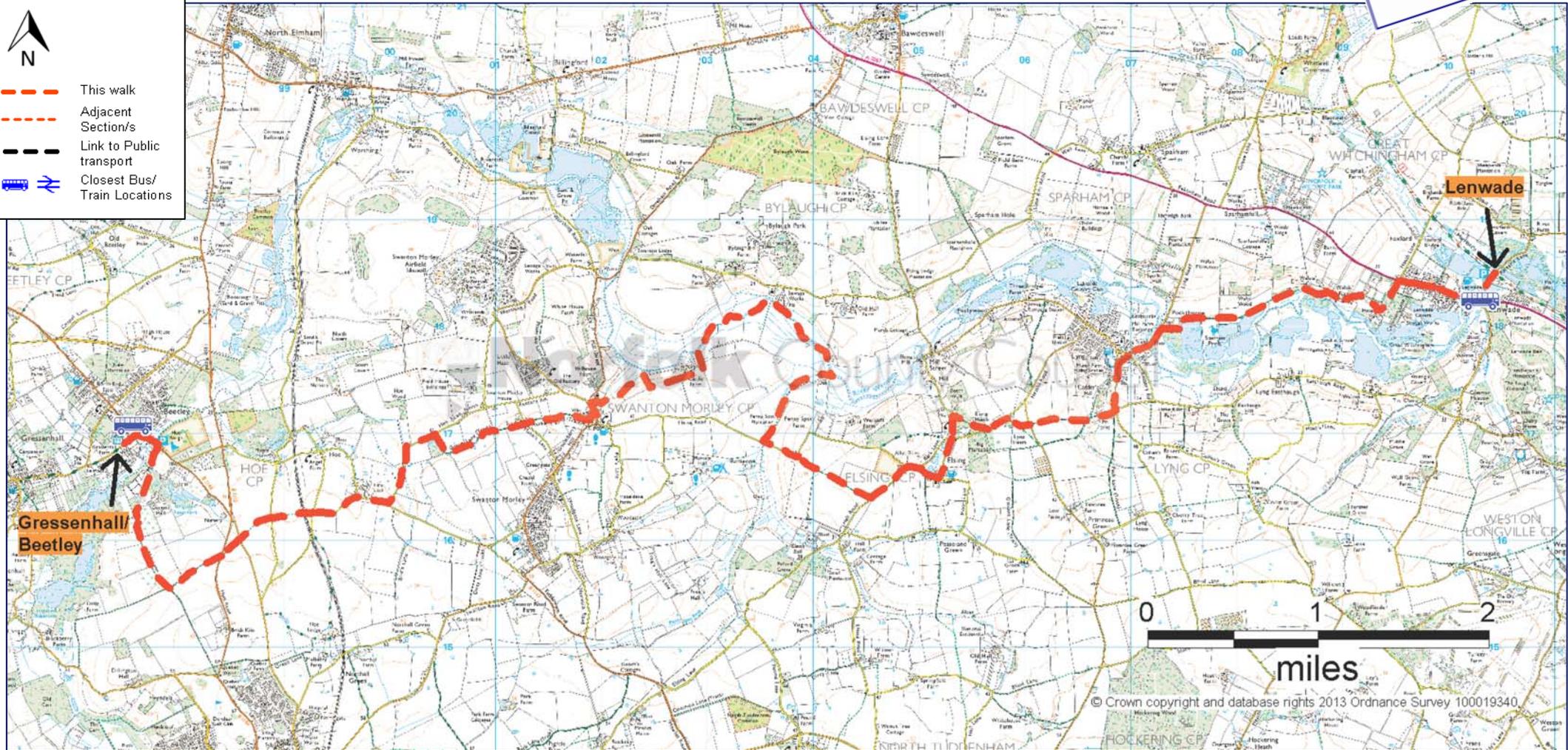


Wensum Way (Gressenhall museum to Lenwade)

Length:
12.5 Miles

Legend

-  N
-  This walk
-  Adjacent Section/s
-  Link to Public transport
-  Closest Bus/ Train Locations



Along the way

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse museum at the start of the Wensum Way and Nar Valley Way is a former workhouse that now serves as a museum depicting everyday workhouse life and Norfolk's rich social history. The farm here once used to grow food for the workhouse inmates. Now it is farmed using traditional techniques and uses Suffolk Punch horses to plant, harvest and plough.

Between Beetley and Swanton Morley the Wensum Way crosses the route of the former Mid-Norfolk Railway. The line linking Wymondham and Fakenham was built at the height of "Railway Mania" when railways were being built across the whole country. The track can be seen running into the distance but until recently the line has lain disused for many years. Restoration work by the Mid Norfolk Railway Preservation Trust has meant the first public passenger train since October 1964 ran north from Dereham on 18th May 2013.

Arriving in Swanton Morley, the large 14th century Church of All Saints can be seen on top of a hill to the north. The village has two pubs, one of which, The Angel, was once home to Richard Lincoln, an ancestor of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States. The village's Mill Bakery has been in business since 1645.

Elsing Mill is just a short detour from the trail, a little way north of Elsing, next to the Wensum. Although no longer working, this was one of several mills that used to operate along the course of the River Wensum. Originally built as a paper mill in the early 19th century, it was later used to make animal feed before conversion into a private dwelling in the late 20th century.

Another surviving 18th century mill house can be found a little further on at Lyng where the Wensum Way crosses the River Wensum next to a weir. Several large concrete anti-tank blocks dating from World War II can also be seen here alongside the new bridge.

Sparham Pools are, flooded former gravel pits just north of the Wensum that are now used for nature conservation and managed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. This is an excellent place to see birdlife, dragonflies and butterflies.

At the eastern end of Lenwade the Wensum Way passes a large 19th century mill building by the river, that is now converted into dwellings. A mill has stood here on the same site for centuries.

The Wensum Way meets the Marriott's Way at the eastern end of Lenwade. Marriott's Way is a 26-mile footpath, cycleway and bridleway that follows the trackbeds of two disused railway lines that once ran between Norwich and Aylsham.

Further information on this trail is available in three short walks including more detailed maps.

See Short Walk 1: Gressenhall to Swanton Morley, 2: Swanton Morley to Elsing and 3: Elsing to Lenwade. There is also a Short Walk linking to Dereham. All available at www.norfolk.gov.uk/wensumway

Walk summary

A 12.5 mile walk through rural central Norfolk countryside and the Wensum Valley.

Getting started

This walk starts at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse (farm crossing) at (TF975169) and finishes at Lenwade at the Marriott's Way car park on Porter's Lane (TG104185).

Getting there

Bus service: Konectbus 21, (Beetley for Gressenhall), Norfolk Green X29 (Lenwade)
Bus stops: Beetley, opp Beech Road (for Gressenhall Museum), Lenwade, adj Porter's Lane

Traveline enquiries: 0871 200 22 33

www.travelineeastanglia.org.uk

Maps and guides

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 238, Dereham & Aylsham, available from Ordnance Survey shop
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite

What to expect

Footpaths, farm tracks and rural lanes. No stiles. Short stretches of wooden boardwalk, pavement along the busy A1067 in Lenwade.

Facilities

Parking and café at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse museum (opening hours only), shop with post office and B&B accommodation in Gressenhall
 Pub, shops, tearoom, accommodation and parking at Lenwade