

A NORFOLK HIGH POINT... BACONSTHORPE CASTLE

A quiet lanes ride to Norfolk's almost highest point (a breath-defying 275 feet!), the atmospheric ruins of Baconsthorpe Castle (great for a picnic).

If you are heading for the pub please check the opening times (telephone numbers are shown).

Distance: Around 10 miles.

Conditions: A mostly easy ride.

PLEASE TAKE CARE TO LOOK AHEAD FOR OBSTACLES WHEN RIDING ON TRAILS - AND ADVISE THOSE WHO ARE BEHIND YOU

Leave Kelling Heath Holiday Park by its main entrance and turn right on to the road. Follow this road to take the next left (BEFORE the main road) into the village of Bodham. Follow this lane to its junction with the main Holt to Cromer road and cross straight over **EXTREME CARE, although this is a 30mph zone it is a busy road and the crossing is on a bend... make sure you cross at a point where you have a good view of the traffic in both directions.**

Turn right immediately by the Red Hart pub, follow the lane to its end, turning left at the t-junction. You are starting a gentle climb now, then take the next right. Ahead, at the top of the rise, you will see a tall radio tower which marks the spot of Norfolk's high point... it's worth pausing to take in the views which are extensive. (Norfolk's actual highest point is Beacon Hill, near West Runton, an awe-inspiring 338 feet! But it is surrounded by tall trees so there is no view).

As you admire the view you have two choices.

CHOICE 1 You can return to the t-junction and turn right to head for The Wheatsheaf pub at West Beckham (a short 1.25 miles away). Take the next left (**but first see the NOTE at the end of this text**) then continue on to the t-junction. Turn right for a couple of hundred yards to The Wheatsheaf (telephone 01263 822110). Serving a range of real ales this atmospheric pub (with gardens) was once the Manor Farmhouse.

When you are ready to leave turn right out of the pub. Continue straight on to return to the village of Bodham - where you retrace your route back to Kelling Heath (crossing the main road is easier this time as the visibility is good).

CHOICE 2 You can visit Baconsthorpe Castle. From the high point continue on down the hill to take the next lane on the right. This lane soon turns hard left, at which point a track on the right leads the short distance to Breck Farm and then Baconsthorpe Castle. The castle, an atmospheric ruin dating back to the 15th century, is run by English Heritage. It's fun to explore, or just relax. Admission is free and it is open all year.

At this point you can either retrace your route back to Kelling Heath or carry on. If carrying on then return to the point where you left the lane and continue straight on. Turn right into the village of Baconsthorpe and follow this road.

Follow this road (passing Selbrigg Pond) to the t-junction. Turn left. After passing a garden centre you reach the main Holt to Cromer road. Cross straight over onto Bridge Road. Continue straight along this road, over the railway bridge and up to the cross roads. Turn right. This road can be busy at times, please watch



younger riders. Continue along this road past Emcy Garden Centre. After a short distance, on your right you will see a vehicle width track with a public footpath signpost pointing right. Turn right. Keeping right follow this path until you reach the white railway crossing gate next to a cottage. Cross the track taking care and always looking for trains. Please shut the gates on either side as you cross. Continue straight ahead along the track until you reach the bottom of the site. Continue straight on the tarmac road until you reach the village centre.

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