

KELLING COASTAL EXPLORER

The route crosses Kelling Heath into the village of Kelling (tearooms), then onwards to the sea before heading for the coastal village of Salthouse (choice of refreshments, marshland birdlife and a lofty church). A short sharp climb is rewarded with extensive sea views. Also on the route is the Stonepit Plantation (a protected lowland heath), and two 'brief' encounters with the North Norfolk Railway. Optional detours add to the length of this route. Always watch where you are riding and keep an eye out for obstacles.

Distance: Around 9 miles.

Conditions: A circular route starting and finishing at Kelling Heath. It follows tracks and quiet lanes (with a brief walk option to avoid a short stretch of the busy coast road). Some of the tracks are a little bumpy, but overall this is an enjoyable ride.

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

With the cycle hire centre at your back follow the road round to the right. At the t-junction turn right. Follow this until it turns sharply right. At this point head straight on past the sign No Tourers Beyond This Point.

At the level crossing on the North Norfolk Railway go straight across (best to let the trains go first, so as not to damage the bikes). At the junction with the road go straight across, picking up the track opposite signed 'Restricted Byway' (please be courteous to fellow trail users and only pass them at walking speed).

After a few hundred yards, at the point where several tracks come together, take the track diagonally to your left (not hard left). This track goes downhill (please be careful of your speed here in respect of other trail users, and be aware that there are soft sand sections but these do not last for long).

At the junction with the A149 coast road **CARE** turn left and then right on to the track signed Public Bridleway just past the 20mph sign **TAKE GREAT CARE ON THIS CORNER** (alternatively cross straight over the road and use the concessionary footpath - walking only).

DETOUR: Just across the road to the bridleway is the delightful and friendly Old Reading Room and Gallery in Kelling village (teas with books and antiques - but the cakes are pretty fresh) with seating indoors and out. Note the busy stream which you can see a little further up the road that runs beside the tearooms.

Returning to the bridleway continue straight on (with the stream running by your side). A little further on to your right is a lake that is a great favourite with birdlife (but can be dried up in summer). Also to your right is evidence of wartime buildings in the distance and sometimes military vehicles being put through their paces. They are all part of the former Weybourne Camp which is now home to the Muckleburgh Collection Military Museum.

At the point where the track splits you can turn right to visit the beach (the high shingle bank ahead of you). Do not attempt to swim here - the waters are deep and the currents strong. Indeed, due to the deep water, this was one of the areas where Britain feared it might be invaded during the War (hence the military reminders). It is said that mines are sometimes still uncovered on the beach!

If you do not wish to visit the beach (there are other opportunities a little further on in Salthouse) take the left hand track. Just before this track bears round to the left note the well hidden (in the undergrowth on your left) wartime pill box. Although damaged it is probably one of the smallest you will ever see, and perhaps held just one brave soul. As you continue on, the ruin you can see on the hilltop in the distance is an ancient barn.



At the junction with the sometimes busy coast road **EXTREME CARE** turn right for a short distance along the road into the village of Salthouse (if you are not happy about this, use the path that runs alongside the coast side of the road). At busy times this stretch is a stark reminder of how invasive the car has become in our lives.

DETOUR: If you wish, take the road on the right (signed Beach which leads to... er, the beach). This area is a favourite for bird-watching. Local folklore tells of a 10-year-old boy who used to herd bullocks naked on the once desolate marshes, and ate gunpowder to make himself strong.

After visiting the beach continue straight on (the excellent Macs Chip Shop is just ahead (there are a few seats inside, or get a take-out for the beach - but please leave no rubbish). Turn left into Cross Street.

DETOUR: If you want more refreshment options continue straight on for a brief distance for Cookies Crab Shop, and the Dun Cow public house. Just as you start this detour the track on your right is another route to a more isolated part of the beach, but after the small bridge it becomes a footpath, so please walk this short section.

Returning to Cross Street continue up this slight rise and take the track on your right signed Church - lofty St Nicholas Church is a good spot for a picnic and well worth a visit (and often the scene of summer events).

Continue straight ahead through the churchyard and take the enclosed footpath ahead (please walk this short section if there are others present). At the end of the footpath **CARE** turn left onto the road.

Take the next left into Market Lane and the start of a climb! As the road passes the top of Cross Street it levels out but further on, as it bears to the right, there is another short sharp climb - good for the heart, and good for the eyes too with a feast of extensive sea views (unless there is a coastal sea fret - a weird and eerie sea mist - in which case you won't see a thing and you will feel very chilled).

Continue on to a t-junction but just before you get there note the seemingly uninspiring field on your right. Part of a campaign to save local orchards it has been planted with 40 varieties of apple and pear trees... all native to Norfolk (www.applesandorchards.org.uk).

Back at the t-junction turn left then, within a few yards, take the second track on your right. (if you reach the 'road narrows' sign you will have gone a little too far). Follow the track as it bends to the left and continue straight on.

At the t-junction with the road turn right **CARE** (the village of Kelling is below you at this point). As you ride along note the Church of St Mary on your left. Continue on, passing the road junction on your right (this junction is a turning for the Norfolk Coast Cycleway - 59 miles from Cromer to King's Lynn).

Take the next turning left (signposted Kelling - **at this point, if you want to visit the Georgian market town of Holt, continue straight on for about 1.5 miles**).

At the crossroads **CARE** turn left. 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.

