

Erpingham and Ingworth

This four and a half walk starts from the Erpingham Spread Eagle and leads us over a small hill to Ingworth. On a clear day there are views in all directions from the top. Sir Thomas Erpingham, who is mentioned in Shakespeare's Henry V and built a gate for the cathedral came from here. We will encounter a short tower, a thatched church, a mighty manor house, griffons and delightful scenery. If the weather is kind, then there are magnificent views dominated by the large Parish Church, proceeds of the successful wool trade. Mainly country lanes and tracks, suitable for dogs. It is very muddy in places, so probably not the best time to break in your new trainers!

1. Begin at the junction of The Street and Eagle Road outside the Spread Eagle, Erpingham. From here head West a little way and then turn left down School Lane.
2. Follow the road out into the country round several sharp bends and past the still operational primary school
3. Once past the school you start to climb gently to a T junction. At the junction take the signed footpath straight on, located slightly to your right.
4. Climb the narrow path between fields (can be muddy) until you reach a wider track where you turn right.
5. Follow the track until you reach a set of gates topped by griffons. Here take the track on your left, immediately opposite the gates and follow this until you reach a house on your right.
6. At the head of the slope turn left and follow a track down hill towards another cottage.
7. After half a mile you will reach a road; proceed straight across and head up a paved driveway past houses, which soon turns into a muddy track.
8. Follow this round until you reach a road where you turn right and drop gently downhill.
9. You now enter the village of Ingworth. Be sure to admire the unusual thatched church **(A)** that dates from Norman times. The old mill bridge **(B)** and the river Bure can be seen from the churchyard.
10. If you want to extend the walk turn left at the triangle and follow directions (i-vi); if you want to stick to the 4 mile walk, turn right. **(C)**
11. Pass the Mill House and carry on for 200yds to take a minor road leading off to the left.
12. Follow this road up the hill past Wolsey's Farm **(D)** and Ashtree Farm. **(E)**
13. Immediately after Ashtree farm look for a signpost on your right and follow the track up the hill.
14. Eventually you will arrive at the gate with the griffons on; carry straight on and retrace your steps by taking the footpath downhill to your left between fields; once at the road turn right, then immediately left to follow School Lane back to the Spread Eagle and the end of the walk.

If you want a longer walk, when you reach the T junction (point 10 above) at Ingworth Church turn left, not right, and follow these instructions:

- i. A: Follow the main street down to a sharp right hand bend and Ingworth Bridge (this can be busy so watch out for traffic).
- ii. Cross the bridge, looking back to admire the Bure flood plain and Ingworth village

- iii. Immediately after the bridge the road swings left; after 50 yds there is a turn off to the right. Take this and follow the minor road for about a mile. The Blickling Estate is on your left, and views over the river valley to your right.
- iv. Eventually you will see an arched metal bridge over the Bure; pass through a kissing gate on your right and descend to the river to cross over via the bridge. This area can be very boggy
- v. Follow the path that twists a little to the right and ascend to a track
- vi. Follow the track up until it meets a road and turn left to continue up the hill. You have now re-joined the original walk at point 12. Follow points 12-14 to end the walk.

A. St Laurence's Church, Ingworth

Set on a mound in middle of the village, this is one of Norfolk's more unusual churches. The massive conglomerate blocks in the northwest and northeast corners of the nave, and the remains of the round west tower suggest the church dates from the mid 11th century. The chancel was remodelled in the 13th century and the whole church renovated in the 15th century, when new nave windows and the rood stair were added, the nave being extended south and given a new south door and porch. The buttresses were added at this time as well. 17th century work to the building included the flying arch against the tower and the upper part of the rood screen.

The west tower fell in 1822, but its stump was stabilised and topped with a conical thatched roof during a restoration of 1895: it is now used as a vestry. Inside is a set of 18th century box pews and a 14th or 15th century font below the organ gallery. It is thought the font had decorated panels depicting the Seven Sacraments, but if so, these have been erased. The lower part of the rood screen is a medieval survival, as is a fine panel of continental glass in the east window. Balancing this at the far end of the church is a carved royal arms for William III, an unusual survival. The 17th century pulpit is a cut down remainder of what must have been an impressive three-decker model. Possible traces of wall paintings have been noted.

B. Mill House, bridge and site of post medieval watermill

The site of a watermill, marked on a late 18th century map. The mill was demolished in 1912, but its sluice gate, complete with machinery, remains in the west part of a 19th century brick and stone bridge. The adjacent Mill House, attractively set between the river and St Laurence's church (NHER 7411), is an early 19th century two storey brick and flint building, with 19th century ranges to the right and left, and later additions to the rear.

C. 19th century milestone marking Norwich 13 miles and Cromer 9 miles

One of 11 surviving milestones along the former Norwich to Cromer turnpike. This turnpike was created in 1794 and was disturnpiked in 1876.

D. Wolsey's Farm

A brick farmhouse, which dates back to the 16th century, with an early 18th century extension. The originally timber frame was replaced with brick, probably in the 19th century.

Originally timber framed, with contemporary or later brick gable wall of 16th century, extended about 1700. C18 earlier and later. Brick; pantile and Belgian tile roofs. C18 central section, barn to left, mainly C19 to right with earlier core. 4 bay, 2 storey central section, brick plinth, moulded brick platband. C20 cross casements under gauged flat arches to ground floor; soldier arches to first floor. First bay partly rebuilt, doorway now partly blocked and C20 window inserted. Off-centre axial stack. Right hand 2-storey range of random C19 fenestration. Left hand gable return of earlier structure probably C16. Right hand gable post 1945 as damaged by V2 bomb. Barn to left of house mostly C19 with re-used timbers, C20 walling in part. Interior. Right hand range has remains of timber-framing and 2 C16 brick fireplaces, rendered, that on the ground floor restored. Much damaged brick stair beside stack. Central part has roof with 2 rows butt purlins, some windbraces.

E. Ashtree Farm

Long building clad in late brick work, but has basic timber frame, very crude resembling a barn rather than a house. However, one gable wall and stack is in 16th/17th century brickwork, much earlier than the brick cladding.