Broads National Park

Broads Walks: Hoveton to Coltishall and Belaugh

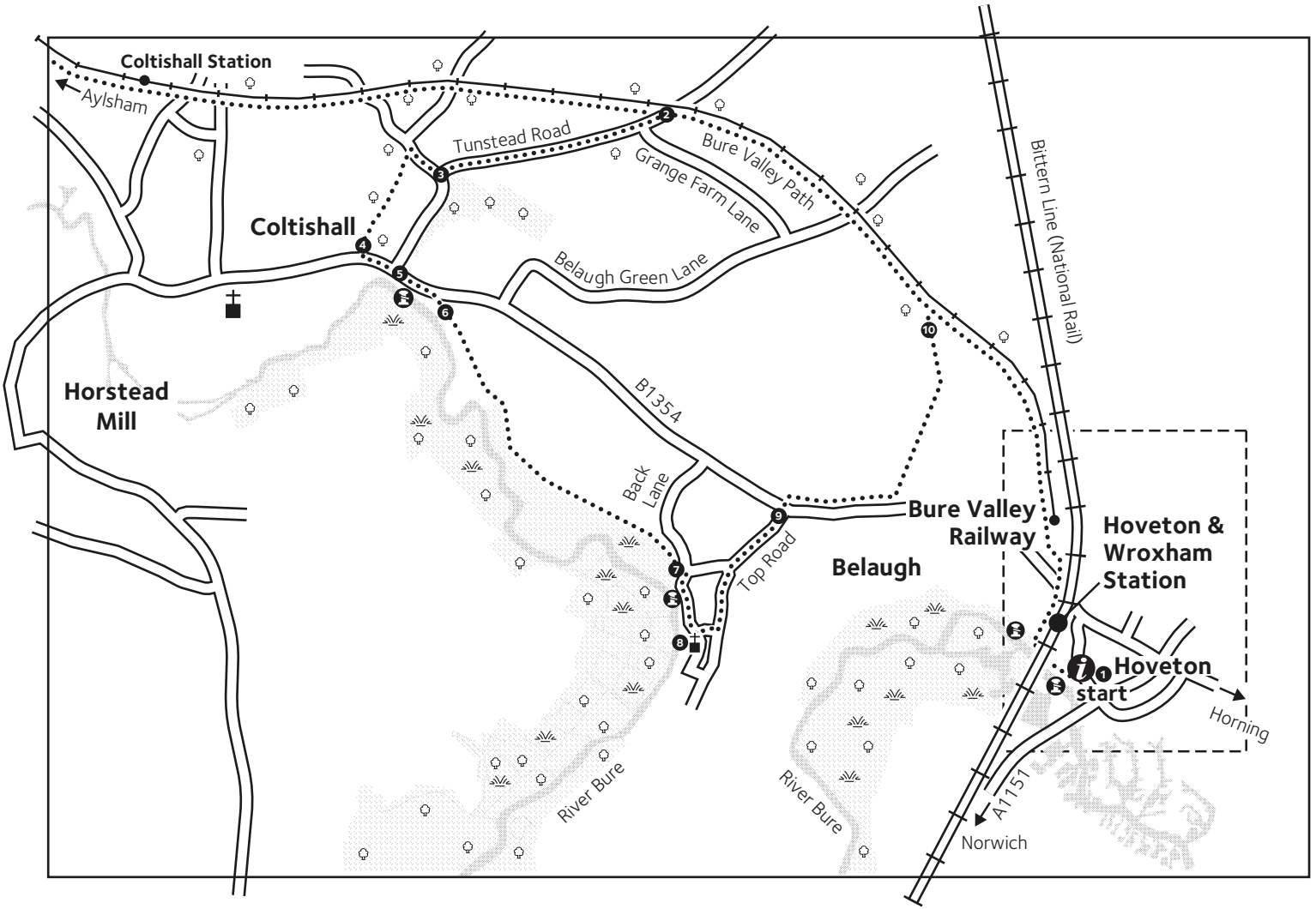
6 miles (9.6km) 4 hours

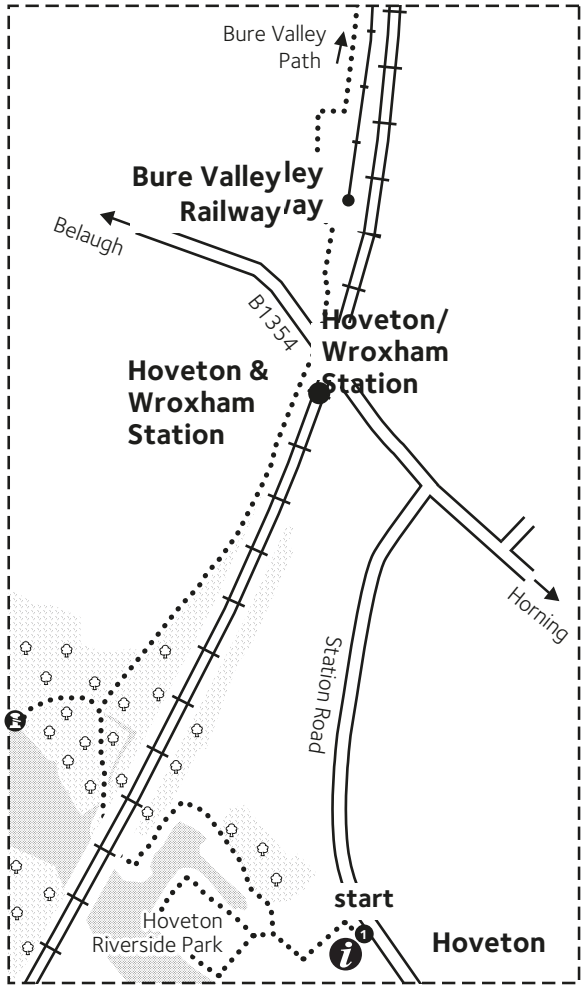
This is a circular route from Hoveton using the Bure Valley Path. You'll find it helpful to have an Ordnance Survey map if you plan to do the whole walk. Distances and times are approximate. See reverse for more information. From Coltishall you can also walk to Horstead Mill or take a route going north along the river from the road bridge. Hoveton Riverside Park and Horstead Mill are accessible places to visit as alternatives to this walk.

Start : Hoveton Broads Information Centre, Station Road, Hoveton NR12 8UR OS grid ref TG 303 183

N 0 1 km 0 1/2 mile

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Hoveton to Coltishall and Belaugh

At **Hoveton and Wroxham** you're at the heart of the history of Broads holidays. The Bure Valley Path follows the route of the former Great Eastern Railway between Wroxham and Aylsham, and Wroxham was well known as the capital of the Broads. Five of the remaining eight wherries, belonging to wherryyachtcharter.org, are based here, 'keeping history sailing' as they like to say.

Hoveton and Wroxham have toilets, free moorings, places to eat and drink, shops, bus services, National Rail services on the bitternline.com and many different boating activities, including trips on the Broads Authority's accessible solar boat Ra. The burevalleyrailway.co.uk (narrow-gauge), goes to Aylsham, with request stops at Coltishall, Buxton and Brampton.

Coltishall and the adjacent Horstead are good for an enjoyable village wander, and include a conservation area, with lots of architectural and historic interest. Wherries were originally cargo boats, with a shallow draught and a single huge sail. They carried goods such as corn, coal and timber. Coltishall was home to boat building from the early 1800s and Allen's boatyard was in Anchor Street, on the route of the walk. The last trading wherry, Ella, was built here in 1912. You're likely to see lots of wildlife along the whole route of the walk – look out for the electric blue of a kingfisher near the river and listen for skylarks in the meadows, where cattle are often grazing.

Coltishall has free moorings, places to eat and drink, shops, bus services, and bike and paddlecraft hire.

Belaugh has a conservation area too, centred around the river and staithe or mooring place (which you'll pass), The Street and the church. Saint Peter's at Belaugh was the inspiration for the poet John Betjeman's fascination with churches. He lived 1906-1984 and as a child had family boating holidays on the Broads. In two of his poems he recalls the River Bure and Horsey Mere. The steep Pilgrim's Path leads down from the church to another tiny staithe.

Belaugh has free moorings for about two boats and some bus services.

1) From the information centre turn left and then immediately left again towards the river. Turn right and walk through the park to the National Rail station and cross the footbridge, following the signs to the Bure Valley Railway (BVR). Head towards the BVR station building and pass behind it to join the Bure Valley Path (BVP).

2) Continue along this path, crossing a road and passing a crossing keeper's cottage. Pass under a red-brick railway bridge and immediately after this, turn left up some steps to join the road.
Turn right and follow this lane.

3) At the junction where there's a small wooded green, fork right and continue along this road. When the road bends sharply right, turn left. There are two paths – take the left one. It's narrow, with hedges on either side. It takes you into Coltishall, opposite a pub.

4) Cross the road carefully to the car park.
Cross the car park diagonally to the left. Cross a footbridge on to Coltishall Common.

5) Walk straight ahead along the common. At the end of the common, turn left towards the road, Anchor Street. Join the road and turn right past The Old Rectory and a dead-end sign. At the end of the street, pass into the field.

6) Take the footpath ahead through the meadow, with the hedge on your left and the River Bure across the meadow to your right. Continue along the path through the meadows. When you reach a small track ahead, follow it past a converted barn and a flint house. Fork right on to a footpath and enter a field with woodland. Follow the footpath and at the end join the road.

7) Turn right and walk through the village towards Belaugh Church, passing a small staithe on your right. Enjoy exploring around the church.

8) Retrace the route from the church and turn right uphill along the road. At the top of the hill turn left and you will presently meet the main road (B1354).

9) Cross this busy road, taking great care.
Go through the gap in the hedge opposite and turn right along the footpath. Continue ahead and then follow the footpath sign going left.

10) Eventually you'll reach the BVR embankment and steps leading up to the BVP. Take the steps and turn right on to the path. Retrace your steps back to the start of your walk.