

11 SUFFOLK THETFORD FOREST

▶ Distance: 7½ miles/12km ▶ Time: 4½ hours ▶ Grade: Moderate

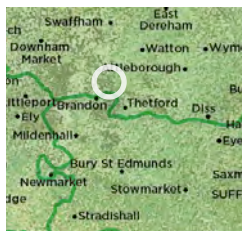
SEE
FEATURE
ON PAGE 74

Near the popular High Lodge
visitor area in the forest.



PHOTO: TOM BAILEY

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Forestry England car park in Santon Downham, grid ref TL815877, IP27 OWB

Is it for me? Forest tracks, riverside path, short stretch on road. Some of the forest tracks don't correspond to the OS mapping; our directions go by what you see on the ground

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Brandon

Refreshments Café at High Lodge visitor centre, pubs in Brandon

Public toilets At start & at High Lodge

Public transport Bus 200 /201 Thetford-Mildenhall to Santon Downham (coach servicesltd.com). Trains to Brandon/Thetford

Maps OS Explorer 229; Landranger 144

heading south to large crossroads with meadow R. ➔



CHOSEN BY...

NICK HALLISSEY

Thetford Forest planted to replenish

England's timber supplies after the First World War. Today Forestry England manages the forest as timber source, leisure venue and conservation project all in one. This walk starts in the heart of the forest in the hamlet of Santon Downham, and explores deep into the forest, visiting the popular High Lodge visitor area and the town of Brandon, before returning along the picturesque valley of the Little Ouse.

1 Start

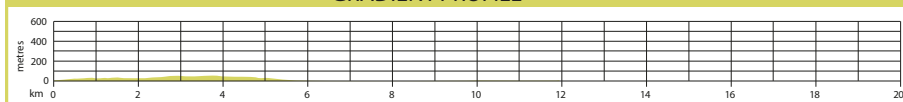
Exiting car park, turn R and follow lane uphill. At junction

by church, turn L on forest road. After 0.5km, where road veers L, take footpath heading sharp R (west) into forest (NOT the wider firebreak track continuing south). At first crossroads of paths, turn L (south). At next crossroads, go straight ahead on grassy path and continue to reach road (B1107).

2 1 miles/1.8km

Cross, turn R then L and continue into forest beside large open field. At first crossroads of paths, continue ahead. At second crossroads (telegraph line overhead), turn L on dirt track. This emerges into cleared area (Claypit Belt on OS Explorer map) where it meets a gritted track. Take this,

GRADIENT PROFILE



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► OS Explorer map 229 ► Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

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Take track diagonally L, passing vehicle access bar. Pass car park R and continue across picnic area to reach visitor area of High Lodge. (Detour L of café, passing underneath Go Ape entrance, to explore short circular trails with play areas if desired.)

3 2 miles/3.2km
From main meadow, take footpath L to reach large woodpecker sculpture. Turn R on path, passing wooden owl L and remains of farmhouse R. At junction by goshawk sculpture, turn L then R onto crossing track, heading north-west. Track joins forest toll road, passing toll barriers. Where

road veers R, turn L on path. (NB: Also a mountain bike trail so look out for cyclists.) Where track veers R, take path branching L into woods, re-emerging on road (B1107).

4 3.4 miles/5.5km
Cross road and take short path cutting across V-junction. Cross minor road and go through alley opposite, into housing estate. Turn L then R, following Woodcock Rise. After road bears sharp L, turn R into Downham Way. At sharp L bend, take alleyway ahead to emerge on Gashouse Drove. Turn L and follow for ¾ mile, eventually emerging on main street in Brandon.

5 4½ miles/7.2km
Turn R and follow road as it crosses bridge over River Little Ouse. Turn R on Riverside Way (signed for Santon Downham) then turn R to reach Little Ouse Path, running by river. Turn L and follow for 2½ miles to reach road bridge at Santon Downham. Turn R over bridge to return to start. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:
walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING

