

In spite of its deep, rich colours, beautiful draftsmanship and fascinating imagery, stained glass is one of the most under-rated artistic legacies of the medieval period. A distinctive style and quality of craftsmanship has led to stained glass made by Norwich workshops being displayed in museum collections across the world but, largely unknown to visitors, medieval glass remains in over 200 of the county's parish churches. This series aims to draw attention to some of these medieval treasures and encourage visitors to explore the beautiful churches where these windows are to be found.

Collect the complete series:



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Hungate Medieval Art  
St Peter Hungate Church  
Princes St, Norwich NR3 1AE

**Opening hours**

Thursday to Saturday 10.00 – 16.00  
Admission charges apply: Adult £3, Concession £2.50

Written and produced by Hungate Medieval Art with David King (UEA) as part of the Stained Glass Exhibition. Hungate Medieval Art promotes the medieval art and artefacts visible across the county of Norfolk. Photos with thanks to Mike Dixon and David King. Designed by The Click Design Consultants.

Hungate Medieval Art.  
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## HUNGATE STAINED GLASS TRAILS: NO.4

North Tuddenham • Elsing • Weston  
Longville • Ringland



Hungate  
Medieval Art  
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**NORTH TUDDENHAM, ST MARY. NR20 3DH.  
TG 056 130. For the key, ring 01362 637225.**

A little-visited church of great grandeur with its old rectory alongside and a strung-out village cut in two by the A47. The fine tower guides one there – approach it from the west.

This is a rare opportunity to see medieval glass at eye level: the porch windows contain a jumble of what was left over when the main windows had been restored. Entering the church after that is a shock, for the interior has a vigorous Victorian scheme of stencils, tiles and stained glass. For a moment one wonders if the porch was what one had come to see but then (binoculars are essential here), one discovers an extensive collection of older glass in the tracery and the west window. Apparently it was bought for just over 10 shillings from a builder's yard by the vicar to whom we owe the late 19th-century restoration.

There are saints, including the rare Geron and Roche, on the chancel screen and more, bought from a lumber shop this time, on the tower screen. On the south side of the sanctuary are two 17th-century Skippe family memorials.

**The Glass**

This church has an important collection of 15th-century glass including three main-light narrative panels in the west window, but none appears to be original to the church except for a shield of Oldhall in the north west window of the nave and a few pieces in small tracery openings. Sir William Oldhall was patron of the church in the mid fifteenth century. William Wotton, Baron of the Exchequer, was lord of the manor in 1527 and his shields singly and also with that of his wife are in the two easternmost south nave windows.

The bulk of the medieval glass was almost certainly installed in 1868 when the building was restored.

It was bought by Robert Barry, rector from 1851 to 1904, from a builder's yard in East Dereham for half a guinea. The first of the three panels at the bottom of the west window depicts S Margaret sitting and spinning with her sheep around her while a servant tries to persuade her to agree to his master's wish to make her his wife or mistress. Margaret says on a scroll in Latin 'There can be no agreement' and the squire wears on his belt the arms of Glemham. These two seemingly insignificant details help tell a story too complex to detail here which sees this, the next panel in the west and several other fragments as part of a Life of S Margaret, probably commissioned by Bishop Wakeryng of Norwich in the 1420s, for the now ruined church of Wigenhall S Peter. In it, S Margaret was also seen as a personification of King's Lynn (the church there was dedicated to her) and the saint's refusal of an agreement echoed the town's obduracy towards the king in a political dispute of the time. John Glemham was one of those commissioned by the king to seek an agreement.

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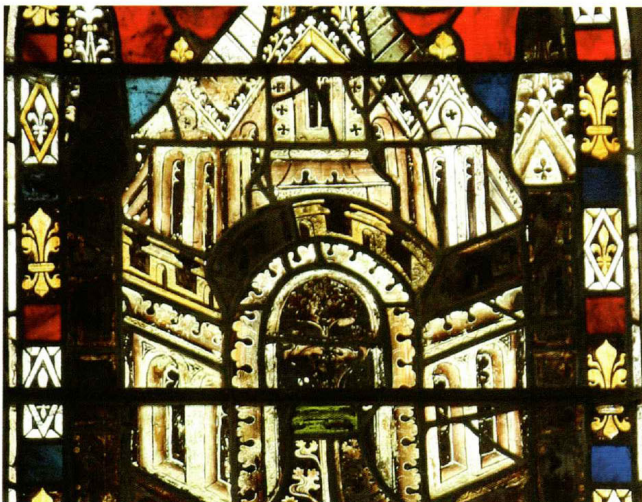
The S Margaret series and the third west-window panel with scenes from the Life of S George are sophisticated in both style and content as befits a gift from a bishop. A large part of the tracery-light glazing of the nave and chancel can be linked to this glass, including the bishop and royal saints with other saints and angels in the two south chancel windows. Other glass, such as the splendid figure of Moses with rays of light coming from his ears in the westernmost north nave window, is later in date, around 1450, and probably comes from elsewhere.

**ELSING, ST MARY. NR20 3EA.  
TG 052 166. Normally open.**

High, wide (an amazing 39'6") and handsome, S Mary's dates from around 1330 and was built by Sir Hugh and Margery Hastings. The 1347 Hastings brass is one of the finest in England and commemorates Sir Hugh, who fought at the battle of Crecy. A replica is provided for brass-rubbing.

One enters through two ogee arches. There is scarcely time to take in the scale of the interior before the eye is caught by the tall, elegant font cover, as old as the church and sensitively restored. The best of the tracery is in the east window, which once contained the glass now set in windows on the south side of the chancel – tall figures giving a chilling reminder of what has been lost elsewhere.

There are also a George IV royal arms, a quirky Victorian stove, a plough and other agricultural implements and a delightful space for children. Altogether a building full of character – and, in the porch, something one sees too rarely: "Coffee and drinks available at the Mermaid Inn from 11a.m." The Mermaid is just opposite the gate!



**The Glass**

Much blame has been attached to iconoclasm for the loss of our medieval glass. A quotation from the Norfolk antiquary Thomas Martin gives a different picture for this church: 'The East Window has been beautifully adorned with painting, and indeed so have all about the church which were never broken by design, but suffered to fall to ruin by the Incuriousness of the Parishioners'. The church was built by Sir Hugh Hastings (d. 1347) and he was once seen kneeling with his wife in the east window holding a model of the church, together with five scenes from the Life of the Virgin Mary. Of all this, only a few fragments including the head of the ass from the Nativity survive in a tracery light.

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The rest of the old glass is now in the two south chancel windows. The eastern light of the first has a medley of fragments, including what may be the original Virgin Mary from her Coronation in the east window, a shield with the arms of Foliot (Margery Foliot was Sir Hugh's wife), a censuring angel and part of a depiction of the Holy Trinity. The other lights contain highly restored figures of three Apostles standing under canopies and carrying scrolls with texts from the Creed – Matthew, Jude and Philip. The latter has been given the fuller's bat of James the Less in the restoration. The date of the glass is a problem, probably around the time of Sir Hugh's death, but possibly later.




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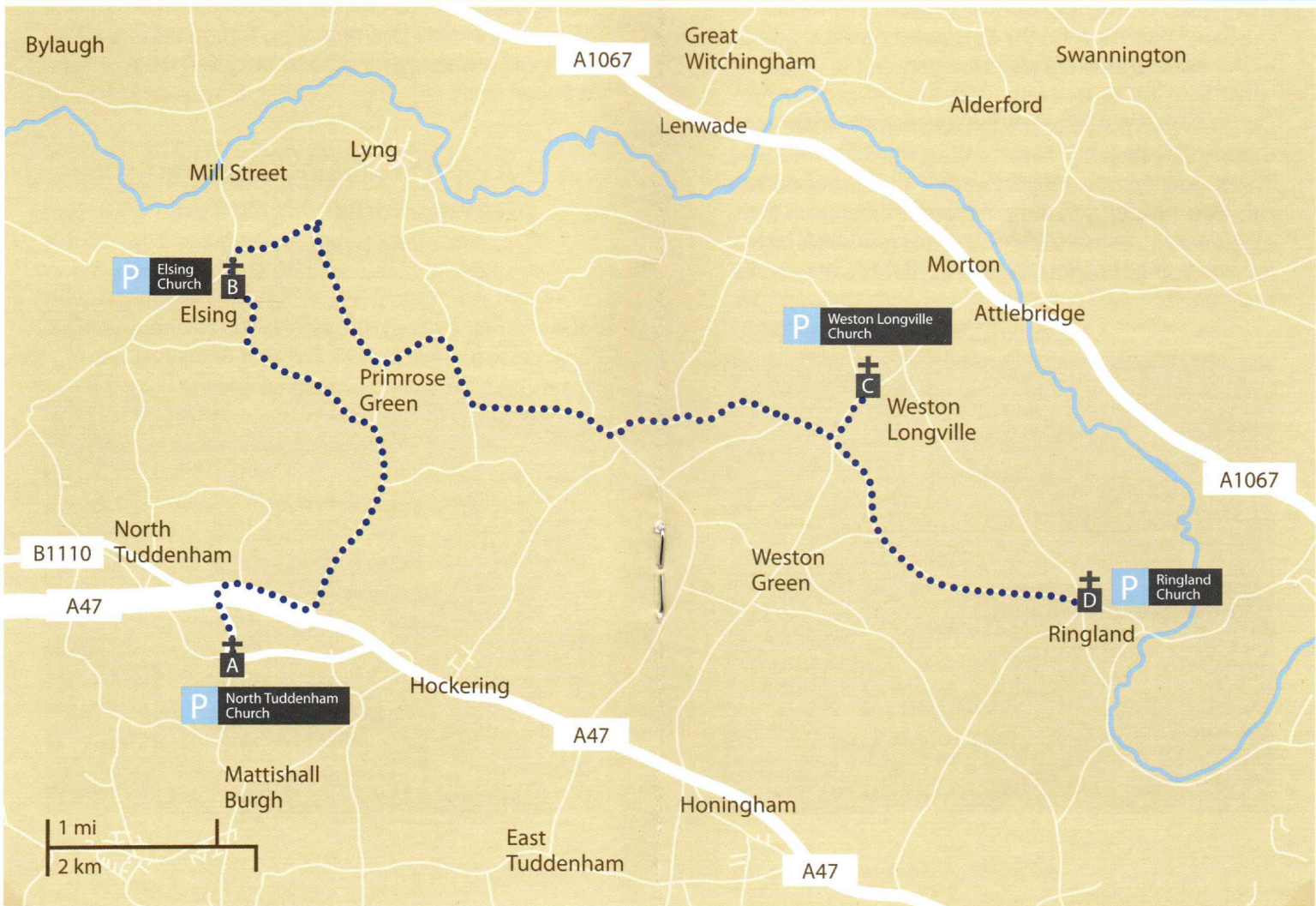
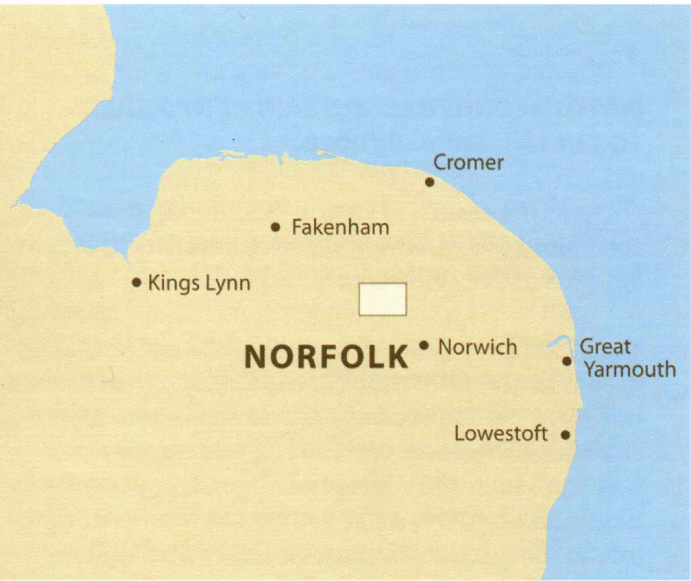
Opposite:  
Stained glass at Elsing church

## MAP OF THE TRAIL

Please note these maps are to be used as a guide.  
We suggest you use the postcode or co-ordinates on  
the information pages for more detailed directions.

### Key

- Trail Route 
- Church 
- Parking 



**WESTON LONGVILLE, ALL SAINTS. NR9 5JU.  
TG 114 158. Normally open.**

This was the church of Parson Woodforde, the celebrated diarist, who was rector here for the last decades of the 18th century.

The oldest part is the 13th-century tower. The church itself is largely from the next century, with lovely tracery in the south windows and an elegant, later clerestory. The porch was paid for with money bequeathed in 1481. Note the original furniture for the south door. The wall-paintings on the north wall (of the same school as those at Little Witchingham, three miles to the north) and the figures of St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist on each side of the chancel arch are also 14th-century.

On the western step of the font is a trace of a Saxon Calvary. The screen is 15th-century, much restored. There is delicate carved decoration above the sedilia, the seats for clergy in the sanctuary. Across from the elegant stair rail to the pulpit are box pews in which Parson Woodforde's more affluent parishioners would have sat.



**The Glass**

What survives cannot compete with the fine wall paintings of c.1350-70, or the Apostles with Creed Scrolls on the screen. The only remains are in the tracery of two of the south aisle windows. The easternmost has in the second and fifth openings partly-restored figures of musical angels of typical Norwich workmanship. The head and part of the left wing and background of the left figure are new, and that on the right has been given a robe, when originally it had feathered legs. One plays a gittern and the other a harp.

Although of the simplest and cheapest type of 15th-century figured glazing, this glass still maintains a standard which is higher than much of the screen painting and some of the manuscript painting of the period. The third window from the east again has old glass in two of the tracery lights. The figure in the fourth light has been restored, probably correctly, to represent S John the Evangelist with his cup and devil and the sixth has S Philip holding a basket of loaves and some larger loaves.

The fifth is a rather good 19th-century copy, perhaps by John Dixon of Norwich, of the figure of S James the Great, with whelks instead of scallops on his coat, in Norwich, S Peter Hungate. The Apostles are similar to those at Field Dalling and Wighton and are the work of the large workshop led by John Wighton in Norwich.

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Opposite:  
Stained glass at Weston Longville church

**RINGLAND, ST PETER. NR8 6JJ.**

**TG 134 142. Normally open or ring 01603 867437 or 860844.**

The church is handsomely situated, up a slope beside a crossroads at the west end of the village.

Mostly 14th century but the clerestory is from the third quarter of the 15th. As you go in, notice the angels with huge wings in the spandrels above the entrance.

The most striking interior feature is the unexpectedly grand nave roof. It is similar to S Peter Mancroft's in Norwich, the hammerbeams concealed behind wooden coving, with elegant quatrefoils beneath and heads with individual features supporting the wall-posts. The saints' faces on the rood screen have been obliterated with unusual vigour, but some pew-ends have survived in the chancel. Inconveniently tall 17th-century altar rails have been recycled to the front of the aisle pews.

A couple of miles east, across the Wensum, is Taverham S Edmund with a partly 11th-century round tower, a font, screen, stalls and communion rails, all worth a visit. Normally open 2 – 4.



**The Glass**

Named donor figures normally give a clue to date, but in this case, none of the names visible in the north clerestory windows has yielded any concrete information. However, the mitre and carved initial W on the roof suggest a date for the 15th-century rebuilding in the episcopacy of Walter Lyhart, Bishop of Norwich, 1446-72, and a more precise indication of the date of the glass is given by the similarity of these donor figures to those at Taverham, which can be dated on historical grounds to c.1466. Stylistically, a date in the 1460s would seem right. The painting of figures is characterised by a sharpness of detail, with thin, pointed facial features and a rather fussy treatment of drapery and accessories. This is best seen in the large figures in the clerestory, which represent the Annunciation in two panels, the Holy Trinity, the Virgin and Child (another from here is now in the cathedral), and S John the Baptist.

*“Such a collection of main-light figures is a rare survival in Norfolk”*

Such a collection of main-light figures is a rare survival in Norfolk, it is a pity they have been re-set so high up. Note also the carefully-drawn but faded roundels above bearing sacred monograms and the symbols of the Evangelists. The lower windows here once had complete 14th-century glazing of which only a few canopy fragments and a beautiful centaur roundel survive.

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Opposite:  
Stained glass at Ringland church