



Welcome to Downham Market

On the banks of the River Great Ouse stands the town of Downham Market, one of **Norfolk's oldest market towns**, dating back to Saxon times. With the River Great Ouse at the heart of the region, Downham Market is a traditional and fascinating place to enjoy. Whether it be strolling around the busy market and unique independent shops, visiting attractions or discovering the Fen Rivers Way, there is plenty to do.

The area is brim full of **historic buildings** and amazing architecture. Discover why Downham Market has its nickname 'Gingerbread Town' and saunter through the countryside to explore fascinating nearby villages.

Downham Market is the perfect base to **experience the great outdoors**. Sailing and boating enthusiasts will certainly feel at home here with plenty of waterways to navigate. Cruise along the river to Denver, where there are several moorings along your voyage to stop and enjoy the unique landscape.

The special environment of West Norfolk provides fantastic **bird watching** opportunities – see the spectacular display of swans at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Welney.

A chance to get active, there are countless **walking routes and footpaths** to discover along with sailing clubs, golf clubs and angling sites. Horse riders can enjoy an effortless trek through the idyllic countryside and tranquil bridleways.

For **foodies**, there are plenty of places to satisfy all appetites in and around Downham Market, from tea shops to hearty pub meals, fish and chips to gourmet restaurants.

In Downham, enjoy lazy days watching local matches on the sports fields or just simply sit and enjoy the summer sun on the Howdale.

There are regular events and **annual festivals** hosted in and around Downham Market. Look out for St Winnolds Day, St George's Day celebrations and the Christmas lights

switch on ceremony. Smaller events can include craft fairs, performances in the Town Hall, morris dancing and music on the town square.

There is a wealth of nearby attractions for **great days out** with something for everyone, such as Church Farm Rare Breeds Centre, Oxburgh Hall, Gooderstone Water Gardens and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Welney.

The surrounding countryside has a **variety of landscapes** including heathland to the east, unspoilt coastline in the north, and fertile fens to the west, where wide vistas can be enjoyed. Historically, the Fens has primarily centred on a farming community. This originates from when the Fens were first drained in the 17th Century to protect the area from flooding and to reclaim land for agriculture.



Downham Market

MINI GUIDE



Discover Downham Heritage Centre

Discover Downham is well worth a visit. Located in the Old Fire Station in Priory Road, the museum's permanent exhibition reveals the social history of this fen edge market town and the surrounding villages of the Clackclose Hundred, its people, their work, leisure, conflict and the ever-present influence of the Fens. Temporary summer and winter exhibitions and events highlight special features of the area. **FREE admission. Free parking. Disabled access. Children's area, Dog friendly.** Museum opening times: Thursdays and Fridays 10am - 4pm, Saturdays 10am - 1pm. Please check the website and find us on social media for details of special events, workshops and children's activities on other days.
Tel: 01366 384428 **Web:** discoverdownham.org.uk
Email: info@discoverdownham.org.uk

Boating Rules

Navigation authority licence fees are required for boats using waters controlled by the Environment Agency. The agency produces a comprehensive navigation guide covering the Downham Market area.
Contact details: PO Box 544, Rotherham S60 1BY
Tel: 03708 506506 (Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm)
Web: gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

North of Denver Sluice, the tidal River Great Ouse provides access onto the Nene Ouse Navigation Link at Salters Lode.
Contact Details: Middle Level Commissioners, Middle Level Offices, 85 Whittlesey Road, March, Cambs PE15 0AH
Tel: 01354 653232 **Web:** middlelevel.gov.uk

Angling Information

A free guide to fishing the waters in the region is available from most tackle shops or visit the King's Lynn Angling Association's comprehensive website
Web: klaa.co.uk

Events

Downham Market is host to a number of fun events throughout the year. A diary of events can be found on downhammarkettowncouncil.org.uk and visitwestnorfolk.com.

Local Produce

You will find many local butchers, bakeries and food producers in the area, particularly on market day. There are also a number of farm shops, the larger ones being at Hilgay, Stowbridge and on the A1122 south of Downham Market. Take a drive west across the fens from Stowbridge where you will come across local produce sold direct from the farms.

Shopping in the Town

Explore the historic town on foot and you can find plenty of shops to browse, including craft shops, delightful independent stores and boutiques. Combine these local businesses with well-known retailers and department stores and you are in for a pleasurable shopping experience. For a directory of many local businesses, visit: downhamweb.co.uk

Explore Local Trails

The Explore West Norfolk website and its two apps (the Walk West Norfolk and Explore West Norfolk free apps) provides information and interactive maps for those wishing to explore beyond the town – including circular walking and cycling trails along the Fen Rivers Way and lots more.

If you have enjoyed visiting the local churches, use the Explore West Norfolk app to find other churches and historic sites well worth visiting in and around rural west Norfolk. The app will also tell you about other places to visit and a selection of places to stop off for refreshments! Both of the above apps are available now, completely free, from the Apple App Store or Google Play.
Web: explorewestnorfolk.co.uk

Tourist Information Centre

Although situated in King's Lynn, the Tourist Information Centre offers a wide variety of leaflets and pamphlets that feature the Downham Market area.
Tel: 01553 774297 (King's Lynn TIC)
Email: kings-lynn.tic@alivestwestnorfolk.co.uk

Places to Stay

There are a number of accommodation providers around the Downham Market area. **Web:** visitwestnorfolk.com

Public Transport Information

Explore by bus: See the map inside for the main bus stop in the town centre. For local and national bus information phone Traveline: 0871 2002233 or visit: traveline.info

Explore by train: Govia Thameslink Railway operates services from London King's Cross to Downham Market and King's Lynn, hourly (half hourly at peak times). For further information contact Govia Thameslink Railway.
Web: thameslinkrailway.com

Alternatively contact National Rail Enquiries for timetable information.
Tel: 03457 484950 **Web:** nationalrail.co.uk

Early Closing Day

Officially half day closing is Wednesday, but most shops do stay open.

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Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

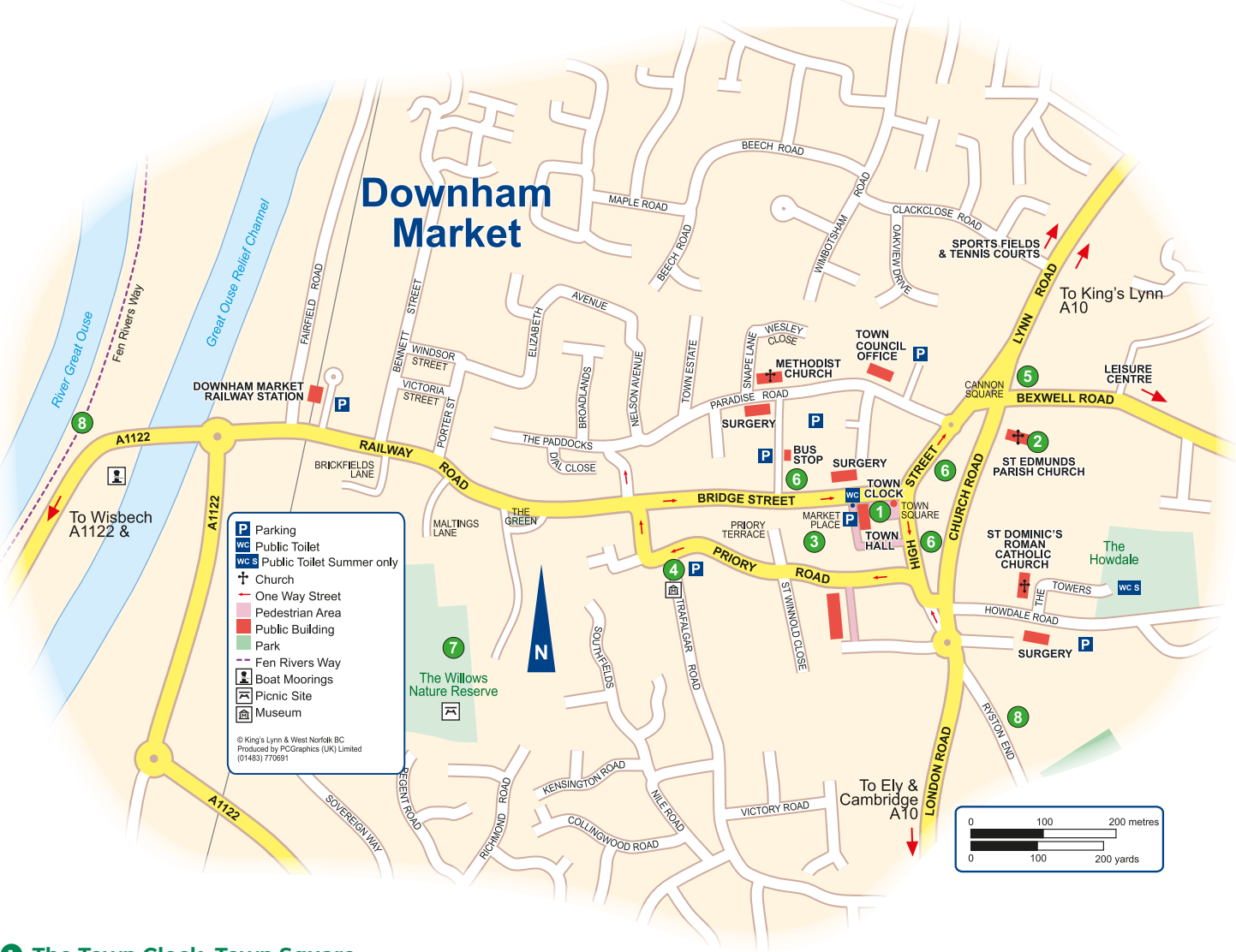


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visitwestnorfolk.com

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Bustling Market Town...



1 The Town Clock, Town Square and the Town Hall

At the heart of Downham Market lies the town square home to the unique black and white clock tower, probably Downham Market's most distinctive feature. The Town Hall was constructed to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887 and is now a busy function venue. The Town Hall is also home to the local cinema, showing a whole variety of films. Telephone 01366 387770 for details of currently screened films.



2 St Edmunds

The parish church, overlooking the town centre, is the town's oldest building dating back to Norman times and is Grade I listed. The crown and arrows of St Edmund can also be found inscribed on the town sign.



3 The Market Place

Downham Market is a bustling market town, boasting two outdoor markets every week on Fridays and Saturdays selling a variety of local produce. A craft and collectibles market is held on some Fridays and Saturdays. (See overleaf for market information)



4 Discover Downham Heritage Centre

Through changing exhibitions and displays the museum tells the story of the area's people, industry and conflicts through the ages. It provides a venue for a variety activities. (See overleaf for opening times)



5 Gingerbread Town

Throughout Downham Market you will notice many buildings built with distinctive local carrstone, hence the town's nickname 'Gingerbread Town'. Look out for fine examples of carrstone walls, gate pillars and archways giving access to the rear yards, a legacy of the layout of the medieval town.



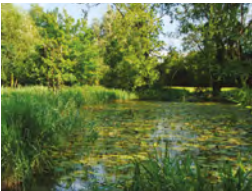
6 Shopping

Alongside popular high street names you will find many long established independent shops along the High Street and Bridge Street. Whether shopping for a unique gift to take home or local food produce, you will find the perfect souvenir.



7 The Willows Nature Reserve

A great spot for all the family to take a walk, the secluded nature reserve is home to woodland, reed beds, ponds and a wealth of wildlife. Access to the Willows is via Brickfields Lane.



8 Footpaths

Experience the unique qualities of the Fens on a riverside walk along the Fen Rivers Way. There are also footpaths to enjoy throughout the town for example, take a leafy walk up Ryston End.



Rural Escape...

1 Denver Sluice

As well as a very scenic setting, the Denver Complex also gives an interesting insight into the history and management of the fascinating local waterways. To arrange a suitable time to visit contact the Denver Complex superintendent on 01366 382013.

2 Church Farm Rare Breeds Centre

Visit Church Farm in Stow Bardolph for a tremendous day out, whatever the weather! Make friends with the animals, enjoy a nature walk, take a tractor ride or play in the exciting adventure playground, and the tree house indoor play area. Visit the tearoom and browse the gift shop. Open daily to 31st October. Thu-Sun from 1 Nov 2021 - 9 Feb 2022. Tel: 01366 382162.

3 Gooderstone Water Gardens

A great day out for all garden lovers, naturalists, artists and photographers. Stroll through an enchanting garden, explore the nature trail, perhaps spot a kingfisher and enjoy delicious home made cakes. Open daily all year (tearooms seasonally). Tel: 01603 712913.

4 Oxburgh Hall

Visit National Trust Oxburgh Hall, a magnificent 15th Century moated manor house. Discover secret doors, a priest's hole, the magnificent Tudor gatehouse along with miles of woodland walks and trails. Opening times vary throughout the year. Tel: 01366 328258.

5 Walking the Footpaths

As well as the long distance trail, the Fen Rivers Way, there are many public footpaths starting in the town leading out into the nearby countryside and alongside the waterways. Visit explorewestnorfolk.co.uk for details.

6 Bird Watching

For fantastic bird watching visit the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Welney with its eco-friendly visitor centre. Open daily from 10am in the summer. Contact WWT Welney on 01353 860711. There are great bird watching spots throughout the area such as The Ouse Washes. Visit visitwestnorfolk.com for details.

7 Horse Riding

For a great equestrian experience explore miles of open fenland and countryside bridleways. Visit countrysideaccess.norfolk.gov.uk for bridle route information in the area. The Maggie Centre provides horse riding for the disabled. Tel: 01553 810202 or visit rda-westnorfolk.org.uk. Wings Farm Equestrian at Marshland St James provides riding lessons, hacking and pony days. Tel: 01945 430749.

8 Cycling

There are many cycling routes through the area, including National Route 11 and National Route 1. Route information can be found on sustrans.org.uk. Other local routes are detailed on the Norfolk Trails website norfolktrails.co.uk.

9 Fishing

Angling is a popular pastime in this area. Some fishing areas on the River Great Ouse, Great Ouse Relief Channel, Great Ouse Cut Off Channel, River Wissey and the Middle Level are controlled. A permit can be obtained from the King's Lynn Angling Association (overleaf). A rod licence can be obtained from the Environment Agency (overleaf). There are also various private managed fishing lakes in the area where you can pay on the day.

10 Boating & Sailing

Registered boats with an Environment Agency navigation licence can moor up next to the pub in Denver or Stowbridge to stop for lunch and roam the countryside. The River Great Ouse connects with the main inland waterways network (more details overleaf). Both Denver Sailing Club and the West Norfolk Rowing Club are based at Denver Sluice. The rowing club offers taster sessions and learn to row courses. Details: wnrc.westnorfolkrowingclub.co.uk

11 Golfing

There are two golf clubs in the area, an 18 hole pay and play course at Denver Golf Club and a 9 hole course at Ryston Golf Club. Both offer superb courses and day tickets for visitors. Denver Golf Club: 01366 385716 Ryston Park Golf Club: 01366 382133

12 Arts & Crafts

Enjoy outdoor summer theatre performances at Oxburgh Hall and look out for concerts and drama performances in the Town Hall. Pick up a local souvenir from one of the craft markets on the Town Square or a local craft shop.

13 Denver Windmill

The windmill, a Grade II-listed building, tearoom and bar in the village of Denver, is now lovingly restored to full working order. 95 Sluice Road, Downham Market PE38 0DZ.

14 Watatunga Wildlife Reserve

A stunning new wildlife reserve. Situated amongst 170 acres of woodland, grassland and lakes, Watatunga provides a unique environment for over twenty types of ungulate and rare bird species to roam freely. Tel: 01553 396007 watatunga.co.uk

