

Cycling The Bure Valley Way, Norfolk

A few days ago, we found ourselves with a unexpectedly free day, which happened to be sunny- Hurrah! Since our last trip, which saw us cycling along **The Marriott's Way**, we've been on the hunt for other local traffic free cycle trails to go onto our list of places to go. It wasn't long before we found **The Bure Valley Way**, a cycle/foot path that follows the 15 inch Narrow gauge railway that runs 9 miles between Aylsham and Wroxham. A quick Caravan Club search ensued and we were on the phone to Heath Farm CL in Buxton, exactly half way along the Bure Valley. Perfect.

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Buxton is less than an hour from us so we were up and on the road and pitched up by 11:00. The site was really pretty, with fields surrounding it. Be warned- it's a very basic CL, offering 2 stand alone water pipes, electric, chemical loo point and a toilet and shower (although it was a very basic one, we chose to use our own facilities on board!)- but the price was remarkable – just a mere £9 per night!! What bargain and really, what more does one need?!

Keith's agenda for the day was to be able to test his new bit of kit, his **Memory Map Adventurer 3000 GPS (currently on sale)**. We've had the old version for 5 years

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now and it has successfully ~~prevented navigational arguments~~ guided us ever since, until someone dropped it **ahem** and the screen COMPLETELY smashed in!!



Once set up, it was soon off on the bikes. Heath Farm campsite was only 1 mile outside of Buxton and we used the memory map to guide us down a very tiny back road into the pretty village and onto the Bure Valley Way. There is a small path that follows beside the train line for the whole 9 miles.



We chose to head towards Wroxham first see-

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ing as the sun was only set to be out until lunchtime before it was supposed to cloud over. It was about 5 miles and we were passed by several small steam trains - it was a lovely sight.



Wroxham is a largish village on the Norfolk Broads and has everything from a supermar-

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ket to Kebab shop, tourist info to fishing tackle shop, and most importantly, what we were after... a nice pub with area to sit out overlooking the river.



After a pint each and a chance to catch our breath, we ate our packed lunch and then, after a quick look round Wroxham Signal Box were back onto our bikes for the return leg – this time to the other end of the line to Aylsham.



It took us just under an hour to cycle the 9

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miles, and we rewarded ourselves with a nice ice cold can of coke from Tescos and some Ben and Jerry's to take back to Bluebell's freezer for pudding!

We doubled back on ourselves the 3 miles back to Buxton station where we were to leave the trail and head back to our camp-site, passing numerous train spotters that we had seen earlier on! During our cycle, we were passed by probably 10 trains, all in wonderful condition, and with lots of passengers on board. I think there were some visiting engines from another railway also running that day. Hearing them choo chooing along the railway was a lovely experience.

We headed back to Bluebell (*Memory map

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informed us we had cycled 21 miles!) and enjoyed a really lazy evening and following morning, just what we needed with it being the end of term, we are frankly frazzled. The campsite owner was very easy going, he told us there was no hurry to leave, so we enjoyed a lay in and fry up, before packing up and heading the short journey home. Definitely would return, and do the cycle to Wroxham again - but next time, would leave the packed lunch and enjoy fish and chips instead!!

Until Next time

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