Belaugh St Peter
Set in a beautiful position with a lovely view of the Bure Valley this 15th century church is one of the most charming in Norfolk. It is a large church built mainly in the perpendicular style. Through the generosity of a mediaeval benefactor, the church was maintained in a good state of repair through the years. Some restoration work was carried out from 1831 onwards and the thatched roof was replaced with slate in 1861.

The rood screen was used as a division in mediaeval times, as the church was used for secular as well as religious purposes. The screen is ornate and shows twelve saints-unfortunately their faces were rubbed away in Puritan times, as the pictures were thought to be superstitious. The saints were identified by symbols rather than names—often these depicted the way they met their death, such as St Bartholomew, killed with a knife, and St Andrew, crucified on a cross.

William Butterfield, the great Victorian architect, designed the pews, communion rails, pulpit, desk and lectern, in the late 1800s.

In the chancel are ledger stones to Thomas and Willoughby Husband, and a brass (1508) to John Felede Priest who left 10 shillings for its making. The Field family have local connections and there is another brass to William Field, 1500. In the north aisle is a memorial to Catherine Paynell (d.1687). The Paynell family were the first owners of the land after the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. Also of note is the 11th century blue font, thought to be a relic from a previous church on the same site. The ledger on the west wall was used as seating before pews were put in.

The exterior lower east wall is rough in texture as a channel house stood here which was used for storing bones during grave digging. The south wall has a variety of different styles as work was carried out in different periods. Part of the graveyard is a Norfolk Naturalists' Trust Conservation Area and several species of rare wild flowers grow here. The church can also be visited by boat as it has its own mooring on the River Bure.

Buxton St Andrew
This attractive church originates from the 13th century, but the tower, porch and chancel were rebuilt in 1881. The restoration work followed the same basic design, but also incorporated improvements and additions. It was funded largely by the local Stacey family. The position of the porch was changed and two pairs of carved heads were added to the arches. Part of the inner door dates back to the ancient church and the clerestory windows have survived from the 14th century.

Note the screen, made in 1508 as the result of a legacy. Further bequests were given in 1521 and 1527 for painting it. It has been partially renewed but sections remain from mediaeval times. There is also a modern screen in the tower to separate the bell ringers from the rest of the church.

The 13th century piscine is the oldest feature in the church. The church contains some interesting memorials including a floor slab to Benjamin Griffin, Vicar of Buxton, who died in 1691 at the age of 37, showing a skull and bones together with wings and an hourglass, which signifies waiting for the resurrection of the dead. There is also a grey and white marble wall monument dated 1773 with a moving inscription to Mary Anne Kent who died of smallpox, aged 4. The brass inscription to Johannis Manning in the north aisle has excellent lettering for its date of 1506 and is recognisable as coming from the Norwich workshops.

Thomas Cubitt was baptised here in 1788. He made his fortune as a carpenter and built more of 19th century London than any other man.

The church has beautiful stained glass windows—the east window is dedicated to John Stracey (d.1858), with scenes of the Nativity, Crucifixion and Ascension which are worth a close look for their detail. Note the huge ornately carved bishop’s chair in the chancel, with the heads of two bearded men on the arms.

In the churchyard is the grave of Col. Claud Bourchier, awarded the Victoria Cross for extreme bravery, who died in 1877. Also note the south facing cross—marking the grave of suicide.

Tuttington St Peter and St Paul
This is a bright and spacious church on the edge of the small village of Tuttington. The tower is one of over 100 round towers in Norfolk and was built soon after the Norman Conquest, with the top being added in the 1200s. The spire and parapet were added in 1750, to replace an earlier taller spire. The rest of the church dates from the 13th and 14th centuries although there have been additions and restorations throughout the centuries. The chancel is built in the style of the early 1300s. The Church Commissioners are lay rectors of the parish and have funded repairs in more recent years including renovation of the chancel in 1889. The nave is slightly later, and was restored in 1884. Note the high porch—it was originally two storeys, but the floor of the upper room is missing. Inside the church is a door and stairway which would have led to the room over the porch.

The font is 14th century, with shields decorating the sides and four lions and four roses carved into the base. The cover is dated 1638, made around the same time as the oak pulpit. The windows contain some pieces of stained glass, dating from mediaeval times. The 15th century bench ends feature an elephant and castle, a man with a lute, a women holding a basket of poultry being eaten by a fox, a milkmaid and church, and a dragon. There is also a corbel beam support to the right of the chancel arch in the shape of a dragon’s face.

Also of note is the Jacobean altar dated 1632. This is an unusual and attractive church with many interesting features.

Blickling St Andrew
This lovely 15th century church stands on a rise overlooking the magnificent Blickling Hall and shares its history with the families of the estate. The most famous of these is Anne Boleyn’s family to which there are several memorials in the church. The history of the Hall dates back to the days when King Harrold was Earl of East Anglia. The pillars supporting the arch in the porch are probably part of an older church on the same site, built in his reign.

G E Street and W Butterfield restored much of the church between 1850 and 1878—money for this was given by Constance, eighth Marchioness of Lothian. There is a wall monument to her and a magnificent memorial in the centre of the church to her husband, William, who died in 1878, showing a recumbent figure with beautiful marble angels in attendance. The tower was replaced in 1878, as part of the improvements.

The oak panelled Lady Chapel has a large cenotaph in front of it, erected in the 16th century. Along its sides are shields to the Clere family, relatives of the Boleyns. Another interesting monument shows the kneeling figure of Elizabeth Gurdon who died on a visit to the Old Blickling Manor just before the Spanish Armada in 1588 aged 17. The iron bound chest is over 400 years old - the church valuables used to be locked in it. The organ dates from 1762 and is one of the few remaining Snetzler organs. Other items of interest are the fine 17th century pulpit and the 600 year old font with eight lions holding it up. There are various monuments and brasses to local people including Sir Nicholas Dagworth (d.1404) who built the first house here, Anne Astley (d. 1454), shown with their 16 children. This church has an interesting history attached to it and has much appeal for both local people and visitors.
This tour begins in Belaugh. From the Norwich outer ring road take the A1151 north east of the City signed Wroxham. Continue for 5 miles to Wroxham going over the railway bridge. Stay on this road for a further mile going over the river bridge and take the first left turn. At the end of this road turn left and after ¾ mile turn left signed Belaugh into Top Road. Take the third right turn signed ‘to the river’ going down hill. As the lane bends to the right take the left hand track up the hill to the car park of the first church on our tour.

From the church take the track downhill back to the top of the lane and turn right. At the top of the lane turn left and follow the road back to the village.

At the junction turn left signed Coltishall and continue for ¼ mile into the village. You will pass Coltishall church.

Turn right at the garage signed North Walsham (B1150) then left signed Lt Hautbois. Continue for 1¼ miles, going over the railway bridge, and take the next left.

At the end of this road turn left into the street signed Buxton. Follow this road for a further mile passing the Friends Meeting House and the Quaker Burial Ground on the left. Here is the stone for Anna Sewell, authoress of Black Beauty who died in 1876. Pass Buxton Mill on the right and follow the road under the railway bridge. The next church we visit is on your right.

From the church turn right into Aylsham Road. Continue for ¾ mile then turn right signed Brampton, continue along this road.

Take the first right signed ‘Oxnead’ and then straight over at the next junction (signed Tuttington). This will take you through Brampton and its pretty hamlet of Oxnead, heading for Tuttington. Go straight ahead at the crossroads and our next church is on the right.

After the church turn left opposite the Tuttington village sign.

Continue for ½ miles to the main A140 road, turn left signed Norwich.

Follow this road for ½ miles and turn right at the roundabout signed Aylsham. Continue on this road through the town centre passing the ‘Black Boys’ Inn on the right. Stay on this road for a further mile out into the countryside towards Blickling and our next church is on the right.

This is where our tour ends. To return to Norwich take the road back to Aylsham and the A140 Norwich road is signed from the market place.