A peaceful reserve set on the freshwater mashes of the Norfolk Broads, home to variety of rare flora and fauna including the elusive bittern and attractive swallowtail butterfly.

Depending on your ability and interests there is much to do and see and to make the most of your visit check out the information contact the site managers Norfolk Wildlife Trust or visit the www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/wildlife-in-norfolk/nature-reserves/reserves/hickling-broad website

This Broadland reserve is outside the Norfolk Coast AONB and offers a different experience to those on the Norfolk coast at Titchwell and Cley. The Swallowtail Trail (green waymarker) starting at the visitor centre is a circular route incorporating the two wheelchair accessible hides. Explore the freshwater marshes, reedbeds, ponds and woodland and for families the visitor centre has a variety of displays including interactive and wildlife detective explorer packs. Between Easter and end of October there are boat trips from the jetty on the Swallowtail Trail.

Boardwalk sections in general are kept in a good state of repair (2016 site visit maintenance was being carried out) and other paths around the Swallowtail trail are over firm ground, a little narrow at times and with gated sections allowing grazing access having easy opening mechanisms.

**Walks for all Hickling Broad**

**Walks for all** are a selection of easy access walks that aim to provide the opportunity to experience the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for everyone including the less able, wheelchair users and families with buggies.

**Suitability checklist**

**Distance:** about half a mile (700 metres)

**Accessibility:** Parking area, visitor centre, hides and much of reserve paths and boardwalks are wheelchair, buggy suitable. Optional additional routes may be viable depending on individual user requirements

**Gates and barriers:** Some gates on this site with mechanisms for easy access use; doors to hides

**Facilities:** Disabled suitable toilets at main visitor building; shop with refreshment machine

**Seats:** Some benches alongside paths, around visitor centre including picnic tables and in the viewing hides

**Planning your visit:** Signposted from Hickling village down Stubb Road. Map Ref: TG428222; Postcode NR12 0BW

**Open:** Reserve open dawn to dusk all year, entrance charge, NWT members and children free. Visitor Centre open April to October 10:00-17:00 (*October—weekends and half-term only)

**Public transport:** nearest Bus stop at Heath Road (one mile) No.34, 6.

**By bike:** Norfolk Coast Cycleway optional route; **Walking:** Weavers Way runs along the reserve boundary

**Dogs:** NWT no dogs policy. Visitors can use Weavers Way

**Site contact:** Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Tel: 01692 598276
Walk instructions

1 Commence from the visitor centre through the picnic area and into a short gated crossing section. On exiting there are viewing and dipping platforms on either side with a bench on the left overlooking a small pond. A second gated section which exits by the Cadbury Hide.

2 The Cadbury Hide has level access, wide wheelchair with door with clear space directly inside. As with the NWT hides at Cley the small glazed panel in the bottom of the door provides enough light for safe manoeuvring inside.

3 Exiting the hide continue along the path which becomes wider until joining a boardwalk.

4 Continuing towards the boat trip jetty till the sign for Secker’s Hide. The final 20m to the entrance is unsurfaced, a covered entrance door into the hide which is larger than the Cadbury and has additional clear panels along the base of the back wall. The viewing arch from this hide is impressive covering ponds, reedbeds and the wider landscape.

5 Return to the boardwalk and turn left to the boat trip jetty and observation point. A couple of benches to rest at and savour the tranquil surroundings before continuing through a small band of trees and across a ditch before emerging at the observation point and jetty.

Explore more . . . the path beyond here becomes unsuitable for all but walking and makes for the larger circular walk past the observation tower and Bittern hide before returning to the visitor centre car park via the access road to Whiteslea Lodge. The surface is firm, a little stony and potholed but would be ok for most buggies and some types of wheelchair.

6 Return by retracing your route to the boardwalk only continuing at the junction for Cadbury Hide along the boardwalk to exit into the car park alongside the visitor centre.

The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of 46 AONBs in the UK, which together with 15 National Parks comprise our finest landscapes, rich in wildlife and cultural heritage.
Along the way . . .

Good information for visitors

Hickling Broad start of walk

Gated crossing of path

Pond dipping platform

Access into the Cadbury hide

Boardwalk and bench near Secker’s hide

Entrance to Secker’s hide

Boat trip jetty

Boardwalk section