Outdoor swim locations in the Brecks and nearby with accessible parking

List of places in the Brecks and beyond with parking nearby – right by and within a few minutes walk. Not full accessibility access yet. Location detail is not included for all of them, but will be added later, and I will be putting it on my website. You can find location info in the files here and on my website. Please let me know of any others I’ve missed, including how near you can park and info on how easy access is into the water, also any info on how deep it is and how far you can swim.

Please always park responsibly, avoiding field gates and entrances to properties, and reduce numbers by car sharing or using other ways of travel where and when you can.

***Please note:*** *all swims are at our own risk. Including a location does not indicate that it is recommended or that it is safe; each must do their own risk assessment each time they swim or travel to a location. I accept no liability for the choices that people make. There is* [*Swim Safety info on this website*](https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/issues/swim-safety/)*, and on* [*Outdoor Swimming Society website, Survive section*](https://www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/category/survive/)*.*   
*Please follow the* [*Outdoor Swimmers Code*](https://www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/outdoor-swimmers-code/)

[Two sections – very close parking (Calibri font); around 5-10 minutes walk (Times New Roman font)]

**PARKING CLOSE OR VERY CLOSE**

**Thetford**

Ford Meadow

park in Nuns Bridges car park, 0.2 miles, two minutes walk, two narrow stretches of this are crossing the bridges, or slightly longer walk using the footbridge by the lido

**\*OR – at the moment –** you can actually park right next to the river, where the digging equipment was, not sure if that might get gated later but at the moment there’s nothing to stop you.

get in upstream of the new fish pass, soon gets very deep upstream, can go quite a long way

**\*fairly long swim possible**

Riverside car park, slipway

water not very deep, some rocks underfoot

School Road car park, slipway – yucky underfoot!

Some deeper water upstream

Melford Bridge

informal car parking next to old Bridge Tavern

short walk and cross road, short stretch of meadow, access on shallow beach

water not deep, slightly deeper upstream

**Knettishall Heath**

car park (not free)

short walk across sand/grass

shallow sandy beach entry

small area of deeper water

**Bridgham**

Limited parking by bridge, 2 to 3 cars, layby just before bridge

entry into the water by the bridge possible, off concrete

deeper water downstream

**Santon Downham**

car park at St Helen’s picnic place

short walk down to river

sandy beaches, easy entry

water mostly shallow with some deeper areas

**Brandon Staunch**

drive down past the leisure centre to riverside car park

very short walk to slipway

easy entry, recently deep water soon after entry

can swim downstream

**\* longer swim possible as long as can return against current**

**Hockwold Common/The Lode**

drive down past the red lion and the church, all the way to the river

easy chalk beach entry

deep water, long distance swims possible in either direction

**\* longer swims possible**

**Lakenheath Mill Pond**

also known as Claypits

parking right next to the pond

mostly used for fishing, but anglers don’t mind when it’s not too busy

entry into water not that easy, chalky bank next to fishing platform

deep water, reasonable size to swim

**Stoke Ferry Common**

drive down school road to large parking area near Cut Off Channel

short walk to river, diagonal sloping path down, possibly slightly rough

easy entry shallow beach, water deep, distance swimming possible in either direction

**\* longer swims possible**

**Wissington**

opposite the sugar beet factory

car parking beyond the car park along by the river fishing platforms

only reasonably easy to get in on platform 14 (might be possible from other platforms using a ladder)

this will depend if it is in fishing season and if there is any fishing going on

entry at 14 is from fishing platform onto some stones in the water

water deep, river wide, distance swimming possible upstream and across

**\* longer swims possible**

Outwell

drive over the road bridge near Mullicourt aqueduct for a small car parking area, slipway into the Well Creek, easy access. Can be murky and/or weedy, but reasonable distance possible. Some boats

<https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/places/locations-for-monday-cambs-swims/>

Magdalen (Great Ouse relief channel)

access to the water from the car park, possibly a bit of a step down into the water.

water deep, river wide, distance swimming possible upstream and down, minimal current <https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/places/magdalen-relief-channel/>

**\* longer swims possible**

Icklingham

park next to the river, fairly easy access, small deep pool, some swimming possible upstream, but mainly for a dip

Isleham Marina

car parking next to the bridge to the marina, entry to the water down a slipway. Possible to swim downstream for a little distance, or dip in the pool by the slipway

Prickwillow

some parking next to the river, some across the road in another layby. Can be busy. Entry into the water not that easy. Can do long swims upstream (or downstream)

**\* longer swims possible**

Ickburgh

park next to the river or a few minutes away just past the bridge and weir. Small pool, easy shallow rocky entry, can play in weir (though potential to pull you under even in summer). Dip only.

Didlington

one parking space on the bridge, easy entry into fairly shallow water, can be possible to swim upstream (though probably not in a dry summer), mainly for a dip.

Hilborough Ford

park next to the ford, only deep enough to paddle or wallow/dip

Hilgay

some parking on the road near the bridge, more in a car park a few minutes away. Entry by slipway below the bridge, or from a meadow just upstream. Some boats.

**\* longer swims possible**

**PARKING 5 TO 10 MINUTES WALK**

**Thetford**

Thetford Garden Centre

walk to ‘sandpits’ swim spot, along trodden mud paths

access to water shallow beach

deeper water upstream

Canterbury Way

car park by school/church hall

walk downhill and along river upstream

entry down shallow bank

water not very deep, some weeds in summer

Nuns Bridges car park

walk across Ford Meadow, turn left, into water opposite Ford Place, about five minutes walk.

entry down short bank (or see above for closer parking to Ford Meadow)

fairly deep water, fairly long swims

Barnham Cross common, small car park

walk south, then turn left and follow the edge to the river

shallow beach

shallow water, just enough for a wallow except in a dry summer

Two Mile Bottom

possible to drive under the railway bridge and to park near the river, be aware of model flying club times and don’t park in their car park. Easy entry into the water, water levels vary, can be low in summer.

Honington/Sapiston

some car parking near the bridge, some at the village hall if no events on. Swim downstream from the bridge, dip in a pool, not very easy access from the bank next to the bridge, easier access upstream of the bridge then walk or slide under the bridge. Or from that entry swim upstream, but not very deep. Deeper point next to the platform, entry beside it.

**Santon Downham**

car park at Forestry England

short walk along road, across bridge, down to river just upstream

sand/mud entry, fairly easy

water mostly shallow with some deeper areas, some weed in summer

Cavenham/Tuddenham/ Temple bridge

several cars can park at the end of tracks either from the nature reserve side or the Icklingham side. Short walk to the bridge, shallow entry, water not very deep. Dip.

Mildenhall

park in the lower car park by Jubilee Fields. About five minutes walk across to the river, entry just upstream of the bridge, or downstream on the other side. Can be some weeds, not very deep and muddy bottom. fairly long swims possible.

Barton Mills, downstream of A11

not quite sure about parking, used to be able to park by the waffle shack. Short walk to river, not that easy entry. Reasonably long swims downstream with many get in and get out points, all the way to Mildenhall.

Barton Mills, upstream of A11

Park in layby opposite Environment Agency gates, at the moment you have to climb over them, sometimes the entry into the area is easier. Walk down to the sluice, get in through reeds from a grassy area (kept cut short) just above it. First part of the swim to get into the lane river Lark is rather shallow and weedy, but the main channel is deep and clear for a reasonable distance upstream and downstream.

Eriswell

longer walk from recreation car park down to Cut Off Channel, entry through reeds just to the right of the bridge. Weedy in summer. Other times longer swims possible.

Worlington

park near the church, walk down to the river, easy entry. Mainly for a dip, some deeper sections.

Fordham (Norfolk, near Downham Market)

car park just off the road, 3-5 minutes walk to the river (Cut Off Channel), fairly easy entry from next to sluice or next fishing point just upstream. Long deep warm river. Occasionally has algae issues. Endless swimming for absolutely miles – highly recommended! <https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/places/fordham-near-downham-market/>

**\* longer swims possible**

Some of the spots are on this map, <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1H2zT-AWbKpnagdFPZRKb9Zyl7uaCY1ix&ll=52.34410756156592%2C0.5003407532421811&z=13>

many can be found on my website, might need to search <https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/places/>, many on this page, <https://www.imogensriverswims.co.uk/blog/places/brecks-swims-locations-4-7-oct/>

Also info available in Outdoor Swimming in Breckland Facebook group and Suffolk Wild Swimmers Facebook group.

At a few of the spots swimming is not allowed, for example the Cut Off Channel, but in reality there would not be any issues. Might need to be aware of anglers and check with them about sharing the space.

Note: Imogen Radford, June 23

More locations and details will be added soon, and this will go on my website and in the local groups. Suggestions welcome

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