



A 1927 photo of carved angels from St. Agnes Church in Cawston. Image courtesy of Picture Norfolk, NCC.

The communities of Cawston and Reepham made their fortunes from wool and weaving, particularly worsted cloth and flannel. Some of this wealth was invested in very grand churches. St. Agnes Church in Cawston, for example, was financed by Michael de la Pole, 1st Earl of Suffolk, son of a wool merchant.

At 37 metres tall, St. Agnes towers over the surrounding countryside. The church is open daily and well worth a visit. Its 15th century painted rood screen, stained glass and hammer beam roof decorated with large carved angels are counted among Norfolk's treasures.

When the railway line opened in the early 1880s, it enabled local farmers to take advantage of a novel method of transport which connected to a national network. It became possible for large quantities of bulky produce, such as sugar beet, to be transported many miles away. After the Second World War, roads became a far more flexible and convenient mode of transport to rail. Demand for train services reduced and the station at Cawston and Reepham closed having served their communities for around 70 years.

Cawston once had many more pubs. The old sign for The Plough pub was removed and is now displayed in the church. Although Cawston retains The Bell and the Ratcatchers, the area has a far sleepier feel than it must have had in its heyday.

Enjoy wandering down the quiet country lanes, abundant in seasonal wild flowers, butterflies and bees, where small cottages also nestle in hedgerows.

CAWSTON



Square: ponies grazing on Booton Common. Circle: a woodcock in flight.



This pretty walk passes through Booton Common, a natural treasure. This species-rich fen and wet heathland, now owned and managed by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, is home to grazing ponies, several rare plants and a variety of breeding birds including snipe, woodcock and lesser whitethroat.

Good to Know: It's easy to start this walk from Cawston, or the car park at Kerrie's Farmhouse Pine (NR10 4LJ). The walk uses roadside paths and well-used trails across fields and common ground, which can get a little muddy after rain. Refuel at Kerrie's Tearooms or The Bell in Cawston (NR10 4AE).

Visit: www.thebellinnawston.co.uk and www.kerrispinefurniture.co.uk

