



Æ Quernsteen

Æ Quernsteen (The Grindstone) is probably a part of a baptismal font from the 12th or 13th century.

According to the myth, a giant or a troll threw it here. At this place, there was a landing-place for the ships that carried goods and merchandise to and from Ribe. An annual race, Æ Quernsteensløb, is held in the autumn.



According to myth, a giant or a troll lived on the island Mandø. He wanted to hit Ribe Cathedral with this huge stone - and his "fingerprints" are still visible on it. Photo: Charlotte Lindhardt.

Øster Vedsted

The village Øster Vedsted has been inhabited since the Pre-Roman Iron Age (500 BC-0). The settlement developed from the area around Marskvej and Græsgaardsvej towards east until Tøndervej. The scenic village has many farms and houses erected in the architectural style of "Better Building". Øster Vedsted is a cultural environment.

About Landskabsgang



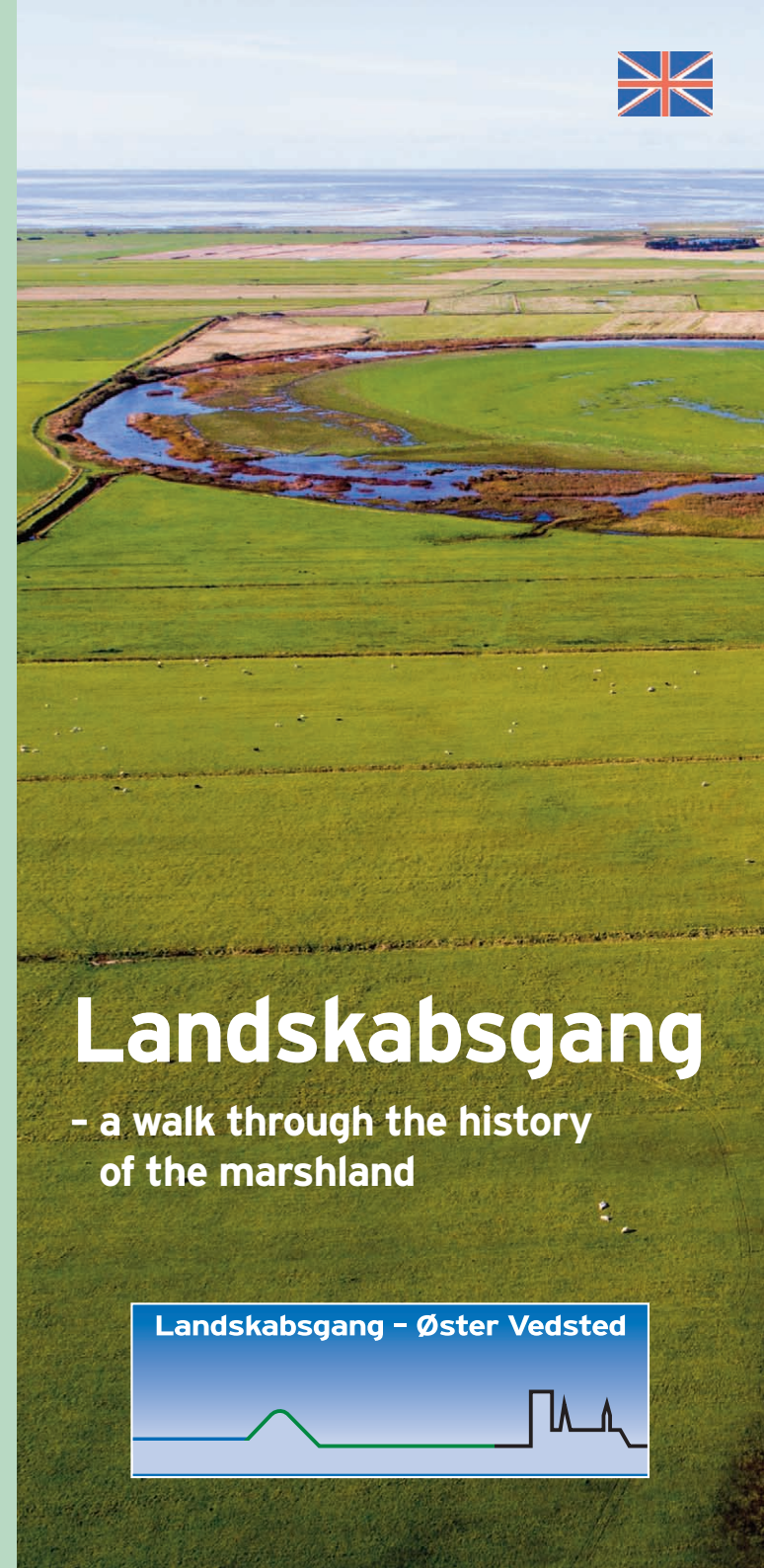
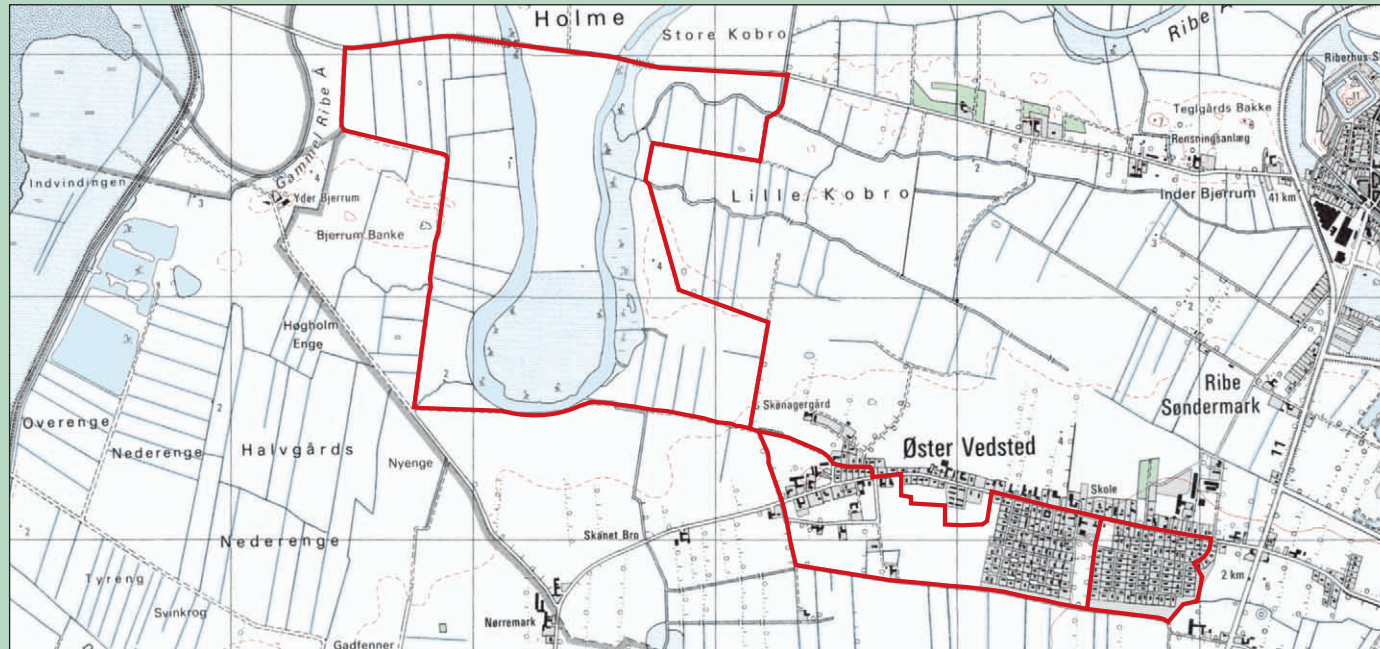
Landskabsgang translates as 'a walk through the landscape'. The route of Landskabsgang presents the Wadden Sea, the marshland, the nature, and the people, who have lived in the area through millenniums. Everybody can enjoy the flat marshlands of The Wadden Sea National Park through Landskabsgang, which is a continuous footpath with detours leading to other adventures nearby. Landskabsgang offers marsh meadows and wildlife in an internationally protected nature reserve; as well as the history of the people and the nature, which have affected the area.

Landskabsgang is a circular walk, which you latch onto anywhere. The main route is roughly 12 km long. It leads around the village of Øster Vedsted and around the largest man-made meander cut-off in Northern Europe. From there, you can either walk a bit further to The Wadden Sea, towards Ribe, or take a detour to one of the nearby villages and churches. The route crosses minor paved roads, unpaved trails, mowed paths, and field edges. Landskabsgang is maintained by volunteers. Please, show respect for the crops and the field boundaries.

Landskabsgang is signed, and along the route you will find information boards with maps and stories about the area (in Danish).

On the website www.landskabsgang.dk, there are more stories about the nature and the culture of the area, including references to other websites and literature (mainly in Danish).

Landskabsgang is created by Øster Vedsted Fællesråd and private NGO's with financial support from Esbjerg Municipality, Friluftsrådet, SE's Vækstpulje, Lokale- og anlægssonden, Brandkassefonden SydVest and DTE.



Landskabsgang

- a walk through the history of the marshland

Landskabsgang - Øster Vedsted



Inder Bjerrum

Inder Bjerrum is a natural plateau, which protected the two original farms against flooding. From the 14th century to the 17th century, two farms with tile works used soil from the marshlands for production of tiles for the buildings in Ribe. From 1923 to 1971, the Danish state had a research station investigating types of agriculture in the marsh.



The former research station is now a private residence. Photo: Charlotte Lindhardt.

Flora and fauna in the marshlands

The Wadden Sea National Park is habitat for more than 10.000 species of animals. Every year, over 10 million migratory birds visit the area, where you also will find oysters, bivalves, and seals. Salmon, trout, houting, and otter live in the stream Ribe Å. The vegetation varies from the tidal meadows at the mouth of Ribe Å to the meadows near the geest (higher ground).



A bar-tailed godwit in the marsh. Photo: Klaus Melbye, Vadehavscentret.

The place names reveal the history

Around the walk, several place names reveal the history of the area. For example, the cattle used to pass and graze at Lille and Store Kobro (little and big cow bridge). The inhabitants of the island Mandø used to gather hay for winter supply from Mandø Hølade (Mandø's hay barn). Inder and Yder Bjerrum (inner and outer hill) are situated on natural plateaus in the marsh. Øster Vedsted means Withi's eastern settlement.

Yder Bjerrum

Yder Bjerrum is situated on a natural plateau near the former mouth of the stream Ribe Å. It has been inhabited since the Middle Ages. The two original farms, Østergården and Vestergården (eastern and western farm), previously belonged to the crown and the church. From the 15th or 16th century and until 1923, one of the farms hosted an inn.

Ribe Holme

In 1294, king Erik VI Menved donated the islet Ribe Holme to Ribe. The town had a publicly funded breeding bull that grazed on the southern tip of the islet, Tyreng (bull meadow). The citizens of Ribe paid a cowherd to control and secure the field boundaries, the hay distribution, and the grazing of the cattle. Every summer until the 1930'ies, the owners of Ribe Holme held Holmefester (islet parties) during the hay harvest.



Transportation of cattle on a barge on Ribe Å. Photo: Ribe Byhistoriske Arkiv.

Churches in the marsh

In the Danish part of the Wadden Sea, the volcanic tuff stone was used for many church buildings. Five out of the six of the nearest churches are partly or entirely built of tuff: Ribe Cathedral, and the churches in Vilslev, Farup, Vester Vedsted, and Hviding. St Catharine's Church in Ribe is built of clay bricks.



Hviding Church. Photo: Charlotte Lindhardt.

Utilizing the marsh

The marshland farmers used the geest for agriculture, while the marshlands were used for grazing and hay harvesting. Since the Middle Ages, the inhabitants caught eel, salmon, and trout in Ribe Å. The stream provided drinking water for the animals as well as nutrition for the marsh meadows. Granly Skov (Granly Wood) has been laid out recently; and there is a nature playground.

Marling the marshlands

From the end of the 19th century until the middle of the 20th century, the farmers marled the sour parts of the land. At the farm Klåbygård, two marl pits existed from 1910 to 1951. Via small railway tracks, which were connected to the main railway, the marl pits provided lime filled nutrition for large parts of the inland and the marshlands.



The railway track for the marl delivery via Ribe Holme in 1930. Source: Jens Bruun-Petersen/H. Theuts Samling/Sydvestjyske Museer.

The stream Ribe Å

From 1855-1856, the mouth of Ribe Å was moved north, and a canal for a more direct entrance was dug. In 1918, the meander was cut off, and from 1954 the embankment near Ribe made it impossible for larger boats to enter Ribe. The Ribe Dike and Kammerslusen (chamber sluice) stood finished in 1912. Kanalhuset (the canal house) used to have an inn and a quarantine station.



During storm surge, Kammerslusen is closed, thereby keeping the inhabitants of the marshlands safe from flooding. Photo: Charlotte Lindhardt.

The Wadden Sea

The Wadden Sea is a listed, internationally protected nature reserve. The Wadden Sea National Park makes up app. 10 % of the Wadden Sea in Denmark, Holland, and Germany. The marsh meadows were often flooded during storm surge, and in the 12th century, the settlement moved to the higher ground; the geest. Wreckage from shipwrecks was government property and was sold on local auctions.