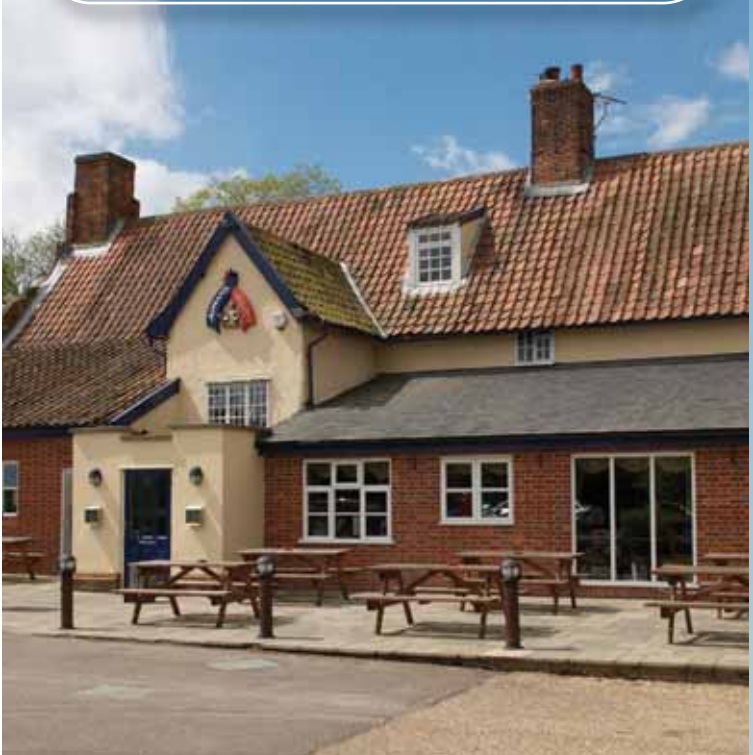


Local Adnams pub



WHITE HART INN Tel: 01502 478217
London Road, Blythburgh, Suffolk IP19 9LQ

Location: Village		Restaurant/dining room	Yes
Garden/courtyard	Yes	Bar meals	Yes
Children welcome	Yes	Accommodation	Yes
Disabled access	Yes	Dogs welcome	Yes
Parking available	Yes	Credit cards welcome	Yes



This leaflet has been produced with the generous support of Adnams to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.

"Adnams has been proud to work with Suffolk Coast and Heaths for many years on a variety of projects. We are based in Southwold, just inside the AONB and it is with this beautiful location in mind, that we have great respect for the built, social and natural environment around us. Over several years we have been working hard to make our impact on the environment a positive one, please visit our website to discover some of the things we've been up to.

We often talk about that "ah, that's better" moment and what better way to celebrate that, than walking one of these routes and stopping off at an Adnams pub for some well-earned refreshment.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the walk (and the pub!), please upload your comments and photos to our website adnams.co.uk."

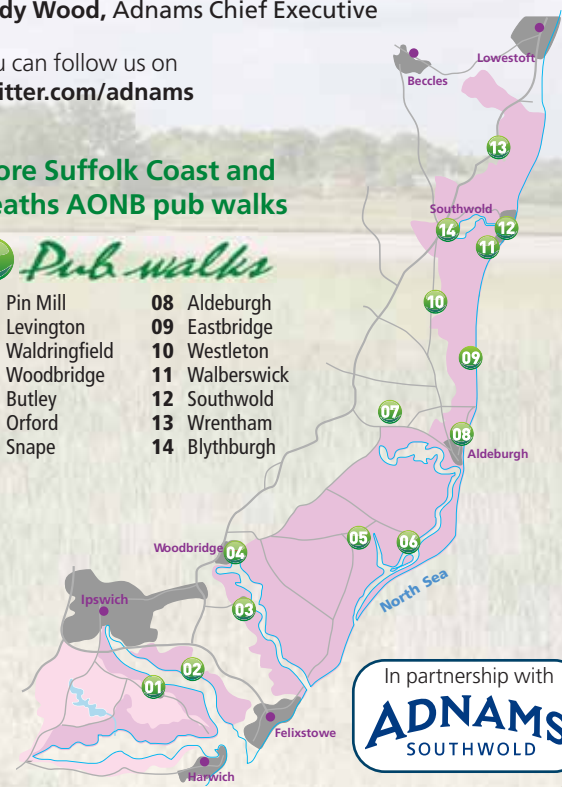
Andy Wood, Adnams Chief Executive

You can follow us on twitter.com/adnams

More Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB pub walks



- 01 Pin Mill
- 02 Levington
- 03 Waldringfield
- 04 Woodbridge
- 05 Butley
- 06 Orford
- 07 Snape
- 08 Aldeburgh
- 09 Eastbridge
- 10 Westleton
- 11 Walberswick
- 12 Southwold
- 13 Wrentham
- 14 Blythburgh



Blythburgh



Blythburgh Church



Blythburgh Route overview

This scenic 2.5 mile walk follows the River Blyth downstream towards Walberswick, following the river wall, before returning via Blythburgh village. There is an optional diversion to take in Blythburgh Church, and an alternative start, enabling you to visit the pub half way round the route. The path along the river wall may be muddy in wet weather, but the route is otherwise flat and undemanding. The diversion to Blythburgh Church involves crossing the busy A12 road – please be careful.

There is parking at the pub but please check with the landlord before leaving your car there, especially if you plan to walk first, and visit the pub on your return.

Further information

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

Tel: 01394 384948 www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org

East of England Tourism

www.visiteastofengland.com


Public transport:

www.suffolkonboard.com, 0845 606 6171

Dogs will enjoy both walks, but please do not allow them to disturb the estuary birds, for whom these marshes are a scarce and much-prized habitat.

Blythburgh

Main walk – 2.5 miles/3.8 km

 From the White Hart Inn **A**, turn right towards the bridge then right again down the lane to left of pub. At gateway to house, turn right (signed “Walberswick”) and enter the Walberswick National Nature Reserve. Alternatively, start by going to the bottom of the pub garden, through the gate onto the river wall and turn right.


Blythburgh’s location at the first practical crossing point of the River Blyth, and at the navigable head of the tidal river meant that it was once a much more important settlement than it is today. There has been a bridge here since the 12th century, and it was a significant site for the Anglo-Saxons.

The White Hart Inn was the court house for the port of Blythburgh in medieval times, while the house opposite was a customs house. Its red brick ‘Dutch’ gable end was a fashionable addition, added in the seventeenth century to a building that has been changed considerably over the years – much as the village has. Today there are few signs that Blythburgh was once a thriving minor port and market



town, larger and more important than nearby Lowestoft, Halesworth or Southwold. Its decline began following the arrival of the Black Death in 1349, although the port continued to trade in coal, timber and stone until the beginning of the 20th century.


In 1759, work began on the **Blyth Navigation**, a series of locks and other works built to enable boat traffic to reach as far as Halesworth, although little survives today. Later, the narrow gauge **Southwold Railway** line operated between Halesworth and Southwold, via Blythburgh, from 1879 to 1929.


 **The path follows the track of the Southwold Railway. After approx 1km, a path leads left, into reedbeds, to a public bird hide 1.**

Compared to the rest of the Suffolk coast, **land reclamation** in the Blyth valley occurred comparatively late, taking place mainly during the 18th century. Many of the walls in this part of the river have since been abandoned, or damaged beyond economic repair, allowing the river to spread once more across the valley floor. The walls were constructed by driving wooden stakes into the river, which were then covered with clay to build up a protective bank. You can still see the remains of some of these walls today, and the Ordnance Survey still record them as Rights of Way – though it would be unwise to venture along them!


At low tide the **bird life** of the river can be enjoyed, and Redshank, Dunlin and Lapwing are among the species likely to be seen. There has been a great increase in the number of over-wintering wading birds here since English Nature obtained most of the shooting rights in 1989. The river, coastal marshes and heathland between Blythburgh, Dunwich and Walberswick collectively form Walberswick National Nature Reserve, one of the outstanding wildlife sites for which the Suffolk coast is famous.



 **At cross tracks, where a path comes in from the right (and continues onto the old river wall), go straight across, leaving an area of fenced woodland known as Deadman's Covert to your right. At the end of this section of the wood you will reach a sign marking an area of Open Access ahead, but turn right here, curving round the end of Deadman's Covert, and soon at a T-junction with a larger track, turn right and to return along the southern side of the Covert 2, and keeping right through gateposts.**

 **Alternative starting point. There is a small car park on the Walberswick Road B1387, allowing the option to start from there and make the visit to Blythburgh the half way point on the walk. From the car park B, take the wide ride to the left and walk gently downhill through the heathland for approximately 500m until you reach point 2.**

Lodge Lane keeps to the higher ground on the edge of the Sandlings, a low, narrow plateau of sandy, acidic soils that run, almost unbroken, from Ipswich to Southwold. Unlike the river valleys, where cattle were frequently grazed, the Sandlings were better suited to sheep. Huge flocks once roamed this country, giving rise to the distinctive heathland landscape that can, in places, still be seen today.

 **Stay on this unpaved track (Lodge Lane) until it reaches the Dunwich Road 3. For a quick route back to the pub from here, turn right along road.**


The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of Britain's finest landscapes. Located on the coast of East Anglia and covering 403 square kilometres, the AONB extends from the Stour estuary in the south to the eastern fringe of Ipswich and to Kessingland in the north.

www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org



Blythburgh

Optional loop – 0.75 miles/1.2 km

 For the optional loop to Blythburgh Church, (adding a further 1.2 km) cross the road and take the bridleway. At the busy A12 road **4**, cross and continue on the footpath (slightly to right), and stay on this path as it bends right towards the church, eventually to join Church Lane, bringing you to the church **5**.


Holy Trinity Church, is one of the most famous landmarks on the A12, and fully justifies its popular nickname 'The Cathedral of the Marshes'. It was completed in 1480 and had a spire until 1577. Its site is reputed to be the burial place of the Anglo Saxon King Anna, a Christian, who died after being defeated by the pagan Penda at nearby Bulcamp in AD654. The church has a ceiling featuring beautifully carved wooden angels that bear damage from lead shot fired at them during the Civil War.



Blythburgh Church is one of the sites in Suffolk associated with the **Black Shuck myth**. It's said that on a fateful night in 1577, what was described as a fiery dog the size of a small pony, tore through the congregation, bringing mayhem and death to two worshippers. Legend says that the evil hell hound left deep scorch marks on the door as it fled from the Church. Could this explain the burn marks uncovered in 1933 when the door was cleaned? A more

likely, if still extraordinary, explanation is that the church spire was struck by lightning.

Just around the corner from the church, in the garden of a house called The Priory and not currently open to the public, are the remains of Blythburgh's **Augustinian Priory**. The Priory was founded 1125 and was never very large, but continued until 1537 when King Henry VIII suppressed it. The rushes and turf from the fen were valuable produce and the priory was often granted rights to take these, from long rectangular pits.

 The safest way back to the White Hart from the church is to turn right and follow Church Lane until it joins the A12. Here, cross and continue along Chapel Road opposite until the T-junction with Dunwich Road is reached. Cross the road, turn left and continue through the village back to the pub, taking care on the road where there is no footpath. This is not the shortest way back, but it avoids crossing the A12 on the dangerous corner in front of the White Hart Inn.

