

# The Pocket Guide to EAST SUFFOLK Coast, countryside & so much more!

Lowestoft, Felixstowe & Everything In-between  
Maritime & Market Town Heritage  
Family Fun • Walks, Cycle Rides & Themed Itineraries  
Food & Drink • Cultural Activities & Events



## DISCOVER EAST SUFFOLK

Coast, countryside & so much more!

East Suffolk is just made for relaxing breaks and awesome adventures. With oodles to enjoy all year round, it's a place where a little time-out can always go a long way. Just a short journey from the bustle of London, meet one amazing space that's worlds apart, with a refreshing buzz all of its own.

Whether you're seeking first class family-time, the chance to catch up with friends, make memories with loved ones, or just a bit of me-space, East Suffolk has all the right local ingredients for a perfect getaway.

And with so much to see and do, so many new things to try and so much more on its horizon, who can resist coming back for more?



### Beaches & Broadlands

There are countless beautiful sand and shingle beaches to explore all along the coast of East Suffolk. One great spot that's popular with families lies around **Lowestoft** - the gateway to the **Broads National Park**. Tear yourself away from the sun, sandcastle fun and seaside razzmatazz of Lowestoft's resort and take time to discover the watery world of **Oulton Broad** - the largest of the National Park's shallow lakes, created by medieval folk digging out turf for fuel. East Suffolk is 'bookended' by two of its major seaside resorts which are also the area's largest towns. At the southern point, **Felixstowe** remains a relaxed seaside holiday destination for all ages, having been 'discovered' as a spa town in 1891 by Empress Augusta of Germany. Edward (VIII) and Mrs Simpson also later helped put it on the map. Like Lowestoft and ever-popular **Southwold** and **Aldeburgh**, Felixstowe lies on a river estuary with access to wonderful wetland habitats excellent for birdwatching at Trimley.

So much heritage

### Superlative East Suffolk

- Most Easterly Point in England:** Lowestoft known locally as Ness Point  
**UK's Busiest Container Port:** Felixstowe  
**Britain's only shingle spit with a foreland:** Orford Ness  
**Largest Town:** Lowestoft (70,000)  
**Most eccentric landmark:** House in the Clouds  
**Most famous river:** Orwell - Eric Blair (aka George Orwell) borrowed its name  
**Biggest Character:** Lowestoft's Gulliver, one of the UK's tallest onshore wind turbines  
**Most Famous Resident:** Global popstar, Ed Sheeran

### Market Town Must-sees

Bungay's Butter Cross is a Georgian gem. Both arty **Aldeburgh** and **Halesworth** (great for antiques) creatively combine practical shopping with cool café culture. **Beccles** boasts a lido, squares, 'scores' and an historic town centre. **Saxmundham** market hides behind historic houses and a crinkle-crackle wall, whilst **Leiston** loves its Victorian heritage and nostalgic cinema. Shop, then picnic above castle mere in historic **Framlingham** or enjoy green spaces and grazing independent shops by the beach-huts at **Southwold**. While away a day in Deben-side **Woodbridge** or pop in at old coaching stop **Wickham Market**.



### Glorious Green Valleys

Slip through the gateway to the Broads to follow the winding **River Waveney** inland through hugely historic landscapes towards the fine market town of Bungay. The river was navigable all the way there when Bigod built his castle and planted vines on the river cliff, but these days even pleasure boats must stop not far beyond St Michael's impressive Beccles bell tower. With wonderfully wide water-meadows and magnificent viewpoints, the Waveney Valley makes for excellent cycling country.

Blythburgh's Holy Trinity church - the 'Ship of the Marshes' - stands land-locked now, but the village on the **River Blyth** was a significant medieval harbour. In Victorian times, additional engineering made the waterway navigable to Halesworth maltings. Why not walk the riverside and old railway track footpaths from Halesworth to Southwold?

South of Minsmere River, the **River Alde**'s path has been blocked by an enormous shingle spit. Continuing as the River Ore, it's even joined by Butley River before exiting into the North Sea. Follow the Sailors' Path from Snape Maltings to Aldeburgh to explore its varied landscape.

The **River Deben** cuts a gorgeously green valley south of Framlingham, twisting and turning past ancient abbeys, watermills and probably Europe's longest stretch of

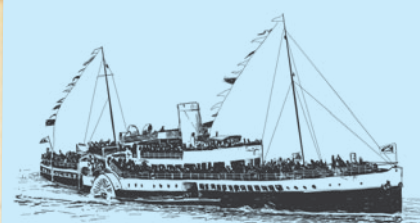
crinkle-crackle wall at Easton, before its final silty stretch from Woodbridge to Bawdsey. Enjoy it from the riverbank on a station to station walk (see over) or on a boat trip from Waldringfield.

The 11.5 mile **River Orwell** estuary meets the Suffolk Stour and North Sea at Felixstowe's peninsular. Its marshland and mudflats at Trimley, Levington and Nacton are nationally important birdlife habitats with Peregrine Falcons nesting on nearby Orwell Bridge.



### The Heritage Coast Ever-Changing & Captivating

- Dunwich was England's 10th largest town in the 1200s, but destroyed by storms two centuries later. Legend goes that bells of 11 lost churches still toll beneath the waves.
- Orford Ness has grown five miles since Henry II built Orford Castle.
- Aldeburgh's seafront Moot Hall museum was once in the medieval town centre.
- Covehithe is home to a clifftop church within a church. But not for long...
- Felixstowe and Southwold owe their piers to visiting Victorian passenger-filled steamboats.
- Thorpeness Meare was dug as a centrepiece for Glencairn Stuart Ogilvie's 'Merrie Olde England' - an Edwardian fantasy holiday village for his friends and colleagues.



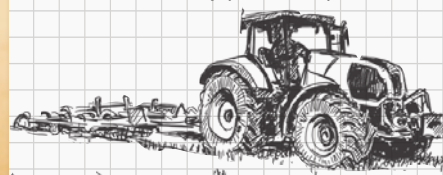
Coast & country

### The Garden of Suffolk

As coast-side sandy soils give way inland to rich boulder clays, East Suffolk agriculture really comes into its element. Cereal and root crops, asparagus fields, soft fruit farms and orchards - the pickings are rich and so too the farming history.

Pioneer James Josiah Smyth sold his patented seed drill worldwide, returning to Peasenhall to build assembly rooms inspired by alpine chalets. At Leiston, Richard Garrett's 'long shop' - now a magnificent museum - made mighty steam engines on Britain's first production line. And Yoxford was where James Allen Ransome established his agricultural machinery business before building a world-renowned firm in Ipswich, later to create the first commercially produced, powered lawnmower. Cutting edge stuff in 1902.

Today East Suffolk continues to be at the forefront of innovation, design and new technologies and still showcases its ongoing achievements and agricultural heritage at the annual Suffolk Show.



### STAY A WHILE

Boutique hotels, historic inns and farmhouse B&Bs; self-catering cottages and country clubs; camping, glamping, festival stays and event-tenting; caravan sites, holiday parks and river cruisers; volunteering holidays and children's adventure breaks - East Suffolk's has them all. Which one(s) will you choose?

**House in the Clouds** (Thorpeness)  
The ultimate in blue-sky thinking breaks.  
**Glamping pods on the water** (Beccles)  
Well, whatever floats your boat...  
**Snape Maltings on-site cottages**  
A real inspiration for every artist.  
**Martello Towers** (Bawdsey & Aldeburgh)  
Are you on the look-out for these?  
**Vintage Airsteam Caravans** (Leiston)  
The silver lining's on the outside.



### GETTING AROUND

In easy reach of London, London Stansted airport and Harwich International port, East Suffolk is served by road and rail. Buses also operate in and around towns and rural communities. There is a considerable network of signed footpaths, cycle routes, bridleways and byways.  
Buses: [suffolkonboard.com](http://suffolkonboard.com)  
Trains: [nationalrail.co.uk/eastsuffolklines.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk/eastsuffolklines.co.uk)  
Walking/Cycling/Horse-riding: [discoversuffolk.org.uk](http://discoversuffolk.org.uk)

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### Inspired by East Suffolk

Painters, writers, classical composers, sculptors and singer-songwriters - East Suffolk has been (and still very much is) an inspiration to them all.

- William J. (1785 - 1865) & Joseph D. Hooker (1817-1911) (Halesworth)
- Edward Fitzgerald (1809 - 1883) Woodbridge
- Charles Dickens (1812 - 1870) Blundeston
- Sir Henry Rider Haggard (1856 - 1925) Kessingland
- Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868 - 1928) Walberswick
- Sir Alfred Munnings (1878 - 1959) Bungay
- Arthur Ransome (1884 - 1967) Levington
- George Orwell (Eric Blair 1903-1950) Southwold
- Imogen Holst (1907 - 1984) Aldeburgh
- Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976) Kirkley, Lowestoft (birthplace); Snape/Aldeburgh
- P.D. James (1920 - 2014) Minsmere, Dunwich, Southwold
- Ruth Rendell (1930 - 2015) Orford, Aldeburgh
- Maggi Hambling (b. 1945) Aldeburgh
- Ed Sheeran (b.1991) Framlingham

**East Suffolk**  
has something for everyone  
& a whole host of events to enjoy.

Its towns & villages regularly stage carnivals, fêtes & street fairs; antique & craft markets, arts festivals, open studios & festive themed events.

Head to its many theatres & concert halls for evenings of music and performance or to listen to prize-winning authors. Enjoy your favourite music & comedy acts in stunning surroundings at top international events such as Latitude, FolkEast & the Aldeburgh Festival.



Find out what's on & so much more at...

THE SUFFOLK COAST.CO.UK



# TIME FOR A TASTY TOUR OR TWO? EAST SUFFOLK – SO MUCH TO SEE & DO

## Local & Lovin' it

Market days and food festivals. Farm café breakfasts. East-Suffolk-sun-ripened strawberry tea treats with rich local cream. Orford oysters and snips of wood-smoked salmon. Aldeburgh's famous fish and chips. Fresh asparagus from the roadside stall. Bacon and hams sliced before your eyes at the UK's oldest artisan producer. Delicious breads with Baron Bigod cheese or rich rapeseed dipping oil. Crisp new wines and flavoursome cordials. A tippie of gin or heart-warming ales from breweries great and small.

## Take a tour and discover them all...

**Southwold** (Adnams Brewery & Distillery) » **Blythburgh** (happy pigs, enjoying malty feasts!) » **Dunwich** (famous fish & chip café) » **Middleton** (farm shop) » **Aldeburgh** (Fish, chips and so much more) » **Snape** (oyster bar, farmers' markets and annual food festival) » **Orford** (smoke houses) » **Ufford** (micro-brewery) » **Marlesford** (farm café) » **Framlingham** (vineyard, home of 'Frampagne') » **Peasenhall** (Emmetts hams) » **Heveningham** (Hill Farm Oils rapeseed fields) » **Cratfield** (free range Christmas turkeys) » **Wissett** (vineyard) » **St Peter South Elmham** (St Peter's Brewery) » **Bungay** (raw milk and Baron Bigod cheese).

## MARKET TOWN – MARKET DAYS

**Monday:** Southwold  
**Tuesday:** Framlingham  
**Wednesday:** Saxmundham, Wickham Market  
**Thursday:** Bungay, Southwold, Woodbridge  
**Friday:** Beccles  
**Saturday:** Beccles (1st & 3rd), Framlingham, Halesworth (2nd), Kesgrave (3rd), Snape (1st), Wenhamston (last)  
**Sunday:** Felixstowe

Lowestoft – no set days

## Don't miss...

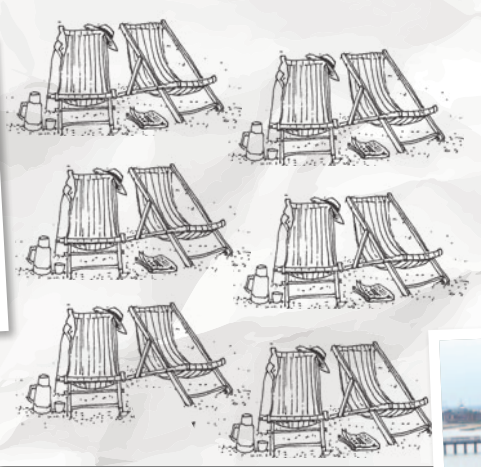
### Delicious Food & Drink Festivals

- Beccles Food & Drink Festival (May)
- Woodbridge Shuck Festival (Sept)
- Aldeburgh Food & Drink Festival (Sept)
- Framlingham SausageFest (Oct)

Food & drink

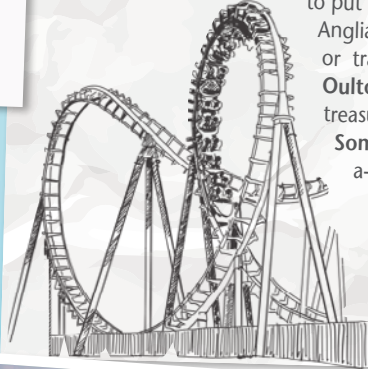


## Find the odd one out



## Loop the Loop Lowestoft-style!

Rollercoaster and historic tram rides, boat trips, boardwalks and even close encounters of the big cat kind – beyond **Lowestoft's** super-sandy South Beach, its piers, prom and refreshing Royal Plain fountains, lie so many surprises. Take your tribe to **Kessingland** to find Africa Alive and its cheeky lemurs monkeying about in the trees. Swing by **Carlton Colville** for some pond-dipping at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve or to put a toe in the past, riding the East Anglian Transport Museum's buses, trams or trains. There are boat trips on **Oulton Broad**, golden moments to treasure at **Lound** church, whilst **Somerleyton** Hall's gardens are truly a-mazing.



Still energy left? Time then to hit the rides at **Corton's** Pleasurewood Hills Family Theme Park! But what about a **Lowestoft** walk to England's most easterly point? Or maybe a climb to the museums and gardens in Sparrow's Nest and zig-zag up and down the steep fishermen's steps known as 'The Scores'?



Great for families

## ENJOY MORE FUN TIMES IN EAST SUFFOLK

### What's on your bucket list?

- ☒ Meet a Suffolk Punch horse at their Hollesley home near Woodbridge
- ☐ Find the scary claw marks left by devil dog, Black Shuck, in Blythburgh church
- ☐ Feed a lamb at Easton Farm Park
- ☐ Whizz off on a power-boat ride from Southwold
- ☐ Climb Ed Sheeran's 'Castle on the Hill' in Framlingham
- ☐ Row across to Peter Pan's property on Thorpeness Meare
- ☐ Lose yourself in the maze at Somerleyton Hall
- ☐ Go for a dip in Beccles outdoor 'lido' swimming pool
- ☐ Hide up with your binoculars at Minsmere
- ☐ Count the spots on the giraffes at Kessingland's Africa Alive
- ☐ Climb up inside Saxtead Green post mill near Framlingham
- ☐ Watch Tim Hunkin's cheeky water clock 'perform' on Southwold Pier



## DEBEN ESTUARY WALKS Tides & Ancient Times

Alight at Melton train station near Woodbridge to enjoy two history and wildlife rich walks, both fully waymarked by the East Suffolk Lines Community Railway Partnership.

**Woodbridge Wander** (1.5 miles/2.4 kms each way) Follow the Deben downstream via boatyards and some brilliant birdwatching to Woodbridge's iconic tide mill. Explore the mill's living museum, graze the independent shops, or wander up to St Mary's and Shire Hall on Market Place. Watch out for more waders on the way back, or simply take off by train directly from Woodbridge station.

**Sutton Hoo Circular** (5.5 miles/8.9 kms) Discover the Deben – Valley of the Kings – heading upstream via Bromeswell Green nature reserve and St Edmund's church to curve round over the soft, shifting 'Sandlings' to the mysterious ship burial site at Sutton Hoo. Was this the tomb of Anglo-Saxon King Raedwald? Will you spot kingfishers on your way? Why was the church dedicated to Edmund? Wonder as you wander and enjoy superb viewpoints over Woodbridge before returning to Melton station.

For full directions and mapping for these and other East Suffolk Lines country and coastal walks from railway stations across East Suffolk, visit: [eastsuffolklines.co.uk](http://eastsuffolklines.co.uk) and [suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk](http://suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk)



## The Coast with the Most

Southwold's fantastic free museum has the longest, best preserved Viking warship steering oars in the world! Its Sailor's Reading Room houses all sorts of ship figureheads and its Amber Museum is full of golden oldies.



## Felixstowe Favourites

Colourful beach huts, buzzing cafés and a bright new pier entrance; great shingle beach stretches and long lengths of prom; nostalgic cliff-top villas and historic public garden terraces – the resort of Felixstowe is a firm favourite at any time of year. But its thriving seafront isn't the only breath of fresh air. Breeze along to Trimley Marshes, the birding haven by Felixstowe Port's great cranes, or simply get straight to Landguard Point. Follow the nature reserve's boardwalk across precious vegetated shingle to admire the Napoleonic fort, explore the fascinating Felixstowe Museum or just settle down at a vista-rich café to enjoy a slice of River Orwell action.

You'll get a different helping of fish and ships on the Deben estuary. If you go fishing around Felixstowe Ferry, cross by boat to the 'home of radar' experience at Bawdsey. Alternatively head inland for river trips from Waldringfield or Newbourne Springs nature reserve - truly refreshing stuff.

## Did you know?

East Suffolk has 40 miles of heritage coast. Its river estuaries and RSPB Minsmere are part of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths 150 square mile Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which attract millions of migrating birds each year.

## East Suffolk Foot Ferries

- Southwold – Walberswick
- Felixstowe – Bawdsey
- Felixstowe – Shotley/Harwich
- Butley

Fab news for walkers & cyclists!

## WAVENEY VALLEY BIKE RIDES

### When The Saints come cycling in...

'The Saints' is an area full of history and mystery. Discover the Waveney Valley's secrets by cycling out from fine market towns, Beccles and Bungay. Enjoy circular cycle rides (incl. part of National Cycle Route 1) through gentle, colourful countryside, dotted with farmsteads, wide commons and ancient monuments.

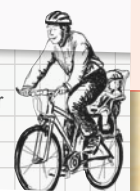
### The Saints Tour

**Start/Finish:** Bungay **Distance:** 16 miles/26 kms  
**Highlights:** Eight 'Saints' villages; Mettingham Castle; Rumburgh Priory Church; ruined South Elmham Minster (detour); St Peter's Brewery.

### Marshes & Lanes

**Start/Finish:** Beccles or Bungay **Distance:** 17 miles/27.5 kms  
**Highlights:** Explore both sides of the river. Ringsfield Church; Mettingham Castle; Gt Common Ilketshall St Andrew; Geldeston (detour to Geldeston Locks); Ditchingham Maltings.

Full directions, mapping, more day rides and Suffolk Coastal Cycle Route info: [discoversuffolk.org.uk](http://discoversuffolk.org.uk)



## Fancy some forest?

Rendlesham Forest near Woodbridge has fab walking and off-road biking trails. But do you dare track down sites of alleged alien encounters on its UFO trail..?



## History & Heroes

Home to mighty curtain walls or castle keeps at Framlingham, Orford and Bungay and Napoleonic fortifications along the coast, East Suffolk has also seen many a flying fortress in more recent times. During World War II, great swathes of countryside were put to tarmac as East Suffolk played host to British and American Airforce personnel by the thousand. Today museums from Felixstowe's Landguard Point to Lowestoft's Sparrow's Nest or Flixton (Bungay) keep precious memories alive, so too the roadside memorials, concrete traces of rural airfields and more chilling post-war reminders like Bentwaters Cold War Bunker (Woodbridge) and the haunting pagodas on Orford Ness.

**Monuments and Memorials Trail** Orford Castle for views over the Ness. Adjacent Sudbourne village was a WWII tank training ground. **Debach** 393rd Bomb Group Museum holds regular hangar dances. **Parham** airfield restored control tower, 390th Bomb Group Memorial Museum. **Framlingham** Castle used as a drill hall for volunteers. **Flixton** Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum (446th Bomb Group) home to rare WWI Felixstowe F.5 'flying boat'. **Bungay** Castle besieged, mined and originally destroyed in 12th century! **Halesworth** Airfield Memorial Museum (Holton), bomb base visited by Glen Miller, now home to different propellers. **Minsmere** Leiston Old Abbey ruins house WWII pill box; best-preserved German Hedgehog defences (Dunwich Heath) **Theberton** church has twisted German L48 Zeppelin fragments from local 1917 disaster. More in **Leiston's** Long Shop Museum.



For more information visit  
[THE SUFFOLK COAST.CO.UK](http://THE SUFFOLK COAST.CO.UK)

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