

## The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

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### Visiting Snape & Aldeburgh

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No.212 (Woodbridge and Saxmundham)

Easy access via the A12, A1094 and B1069. Plenty of parking at Snape.

Public transport information:  
[www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) or call 0845 606 6171

Aldeburgh Tourist Information:  
[www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/tourism/tics](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/tourism/tics) or call 01728 453637

Contact: Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB  
Tel: 01394 384948  
[www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)

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Tel: 01502 722717

[www.suffolk-secrets.co.uk](http://www.suffolk-secrets.co.uk)

Snape Maltings Information  
Tel: 01728 688303

[www.snapemaltings.co.uk](http://www.snapemaltings.co.uk)

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# Sailors' Path Explorer Guide



Walk in the footsteps of the seafarers who travelled from the Suffolk coast to the village of Snape.



## Sailors' Path

Suffolk Coast & Heaths *Explorer Guide*

### Highlights of the Sailors' Path

**1** **Snape Maltings** rises above its surroundings like a great ship. Local businessman Newson Garrett built the Maltings in stages from 1846. The railway arrived in 1859 ensuring that the Maltings remained a viable business until it closed in 1965.



The Aldeburgh Music Festival was established in 1948. In 1967 The Maltings was converted into a concert hall. Snape Maltings has since become an internationally famous venue for music and the performing arts.



As well as the concert hall, the Maltings offers shops, places to eat and boat trips along the River Alde.



**2** **The River Alde** has one of the most beautiful estuaries on the east coast. The river flows through wide marshes and low hills under a huge Suffolk sky. In the past, barges transported goods to and from Snape Maltings. The barges moored at Snape today are used for pleasure trips.



**3** **Snape Marshes** are managed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. They are a vital wildlife habitat, combining marsh, reedbed and wet woodland. The freshwater dykes are home to otter and many kinds of insects and plants. The marshes are grazed by cattle to create the right conditions for wildlife.

The Sailors' Path follows a beautiful route between Snape Maltings and Aldeburgh. The Path is named because sailors would walk the path between Aldeburgh and Snape. Two shorter routes in this Guide explore Snape Warren and the marshes and village of Snape.

**4** **Snape Warren Nature Reserve** an area of heathland, grassland and scrub is managed by the RSPB. It provides a habitat for many birds, including nightjar, woodlark and yellowhammer. The higher parts of the Reserve give panoramic views across the Alde estuary.



**5** The coastal town of **Aldeburgh** is a popular place for holidays. In medieval times, the town had a successful shipbuilding industry. Fishing has also played an important role in the town's economy. Aldeburgh still has a small fishing fleet and fresh fish can be bought from huts on the beach.



One of Aldeburgh's distinctive buildings is the timber framed Moot Hall. The Hall dates from the 1500s and was built as a market place and meeting room. Aldeburgh has attracted writers, artists and musicians. Writers Wilkie Collins and Edward FitzGerald knew the town well. Aldeburgh Festival founders Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears lived in the Red House. Another resident was the poet George Crabbe, born in 1754. His poem, 'The Borough', was inspired by the town and its fishermen. It became the basis for Benjamin Britten's opera 'Peter Grimes'.

Images: Front Cover – Across Snape Warren on the Sailors' Path. A: Saltmarsh & Mudflats Alde Estuary M Watson. B: The Family of Man – Barbara Hepworth's memorial to Britten and Pears at Snape Maltings. C: Saltings and river, Alde estuary. D: Walking alongside wildlife – Snape Marshes. E: Yellowhammer. F: Family Fun on the estuary – Tony Pick. G: Aldeburgh Moot Hall – A distinctive seafront landmark.



## 'The Sailors' Path'



Distance  
6 miles (9.5 km)

**Time:** 3-4 hours (allow time for return bus journey).  
**Terrain:** Well-surfaced paths and tracks. Includes section beside busy road and road crossings. Take great care. We recommend high visibility clothing.

Leave Snape Maltings, turning right directly after bridge. Here you pick up signs for the Sailors' Path, which guide you all the way to Aldeburgh.

On reaching the main Aldeburgh road, follow Footpath to the right. Pass the entrance to Aldeburgh Golf Club (which is on other side of road). Follow road into Aldeburgh.



## Optional longer route

(allow extra 30 minutes)

Cross road beyond Golf Club entrance. After first houses turn left onto metalled track (Golf Lane). At "The Red House" fork left onto Footpath. Cross two fairways (beware of golf balls). Cross road and enter Warren Hill Lane. When lane ends follow path. At track turn left and immediately right. Views to the left of Thorpeness Gatehouse, The House in the Clouds and Sizewell Nuclear Power Station. Cross road to beach and turn right on metalled path. Return to Aldeburgh.



Images: A: The Sailors' Path – oak signpost. B: Wet valley adjoining the Alde – a vital habitat for wildlife. C: Boats on the beach – a feature of Aldeburgh seafront. D: Snape Warren. E: Snape Marshes

## 'Views across the Heather'

Distance  
3.5 miles (5.5 km)

**Time:** 2 hours

**Terrain:** Mostly well-made paths and tracks. Return path from Snape Warren floods at very high tides. Some walks take you onto public highways. Take great care. We recommend high visibility clothing.

Follow the Sailors' Path route to Snape Warren car park. Turn sharp right along a tarmacked lane, signposted 'Aldeburgh'.

Pass cottages and continue over heathland and beside woodland to a metal kissing gate on right. Go through gate into Snape Warren. Red marker posts guide you across the warren.

Cross track and go straight ahead. Path follows wire fence. The posts lead across a lane before entering woodland meeting a well-trodden footpath. Turn left.

The footpath provides fine views of the River Alde and Iken Church. Pass through gate to leave Snape Warren. Turn right to follow the edge of the saltmarsh. Soon after entering woodland, rejoin the path back to Snape Maltings.



## 'Snape Stroll'

Distance  
2.5 miles (4 km)



**Time:** 1 hour

**Terrain:** Mostly well made paths and tracks; some sections on minor roads and pavements. Take great care.

Follow the Sailors' Path to Snape Warren woods. When you enter the woodland, turn left. At next junction, take path to left to walk along the edge of marshes. At end of path turn right along track. If path is very muddy, retrace to previous path. Turn left to reach the road and turn left. Walk along road to village to re-join the route.

Turn left into Snape village. Cross straight over the main road to continue between houses on to open countryside.

Just before a flint walled cottage take the path left. Follow straight path to track and turn left. Continue on track to main road, turn right. Return to the Maltings.

