

DISCOVER SAXMUNDHAM



Sandwiched between two stately halls and boasting its very own South and North Entrances, Saxmundham is an East Suffolk market town like no other. Take a stroll down the High Street to graze its great little range of galleries, stalls, stores and cafés. Sample its truly historic streetscape, dotted with Dutch gables, Doric columns and decorative Art Nouveau detailing. Here, it's somehow only natural that successful supermarkets have taken root - along with a respectful back-seat - behind honest independent shops which have so often served the community for generations.

With a market charter dating back to 1272 and rich history of turnpike roads, railways and modern bypasses, the time-honoured trading hub of Saxmundham - gateway to East Suffolk and the Heritage Coast - is truly something to celebrate. Enjoy!

Did you know?

In 1336 'Sax' was known as Saxmundham Market, like near-neighbour Wickham Market.

Stay This Way ...

Relax in Sax. Pitch up for a spot of camping or caravanning right on its doorstep. Bed down in the heart of town at a traditional coaching inn, period home or comfy B&B. Catch a few days away - and some fishing-time too - at a luxury lakeside lodge, or net a little silver darling - a shiny airstream caravan - for some real retro-style glamping. From thatched countryside cottages to converted farm stables and beautiful barns, Saxmundham and its surrounding villages have simply great places to take roost and enjoy - all just a wing away from RSPB Minsmere, Snape Maltings and Suffolk's superb Heritage Coast.

Don't miss the pocket watches & grandfather clocks, reconstructed cinema & historic shops in Saxmundham Museum! It's fascinating and FREE! saxmundhammuseum.org.uk

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The Pocket Guide to SAXMUNDHAM

'Garden of Suffolk' Market Town & Gateway to the Heritage Coast
Farming & Industrial History * River Alde & Snape Connections
Independent Shops & Galleries * Arts, Festivals & Events
Green Spaces * Walks, Activities & Cycle Rides



Markets & Milestones

Market Town: since 1272
Market Day: Wednesday

Ipswich: 22 miles/35 kms
Lowestoft: 25 miles/40 kms
Norwich: 39 miles/63 kms
Aldeburgh: 7 miles/11 kms
Minsmere: 7 miles/11 kms
Snape: 4 miles/6.5 kms

Turnpike (Toll) Roads

Ipswich » Yarmouth: 1785
Saxmundham » Aldeburgh: 1792

Railway Lines

Ipswich » Lowestoft: 1859
Saxmundham » Aldeburgh: 1860-1966
(via *Leiston & Thorpeness Halt*)
Saxmundham » Snape Maltings: 1859-1960
A12 Bypass: 1988

Did you know?

From 1832, Sax hosted the forerunner to the Suffolk Show 14 times. It was held on 'The Layers' - the land opposite Hurts Hall near South Entrance, where stockmen would traditionally 'lay up' their animals before 'driving' them down the High Street to market.

By Car

10 mins » Snape Maltings
15 mins » Aldeburgh
20 mins » RSPB Minsmere

Don't miss Sax's Markets & Events saxmundham.org

Key

- 1 Market Place
- 2 Fromus Walk
- 3 Church of St John the Baptist
- 4 The Chantry
- 5 Monks' Cottages
- 6 Hurts Hall
- 7 Albion Mill (Remains of post-mill)
- 8 Railway Station & Signal Box
- 9 Fromus Square
- 10 Market Hall
- 11 The Bell Hotel
- 12 The Beeches
- 13 Old Brook House Farm Dairy
- 14 Old Toll House
- 15 St Peter's Church Carlton
- 16 Carlton Hall

- Railway Station
- Bus Stop
- Parking
- Public Toilets
- Museum
- Arts Station
- Library
- Chemist
- Post Office
- Campsite
- Footpath

- Sports Grounds/Tennis Play Area (Carlton Park)
- Recreation Ground Skate Park (Memorial Field)

Discover Digital Trails

Let your phone do the directing on an interactive trail around Saxmundham. Download the app and discover. thesuffolkcoast.co.uk

Complete the Country Pile Picture

Add a loop to Carlton Park & Sax's Garrett family connections. See overleaf: Landmarks & Legacies

GETTING AROUND

By Road: A12 (Ipswich/London/Lowestoft)
By Bus: thewaytogosuffolk.org.uk/suffolkonboard.com
By Rail: East Suffolk Line (Saxmundham) eastsuffolklines.co.uk; nationalrail.co.uk
By Bike: Near National Cycle Network route 1 & Suffolk Coastal Cycle Route (Regional route 41).
Walking/Cycling/Horse-riding: discoversuffolk.org.uk
Car Parks/Cashless & Ticketless
Parking: myringgo.co.uk
OS Maps: OS Explorer 212

TRULY WELL-CONNECTED

As well as roads and railways, rivers have also played a key (quay?) role in Saxmundham's development. There's evidence that the town's River Fromus - although tiny today - was once navigable way back in time. Finds suggest early Bronze Age (1500 BC), Iron Age, Roman and Saxon activities alongside it too. Perhaps Sax's name even comes from 'Saxon Hill Settlement'?

Saxmundham's other best buddy river-wise has to be the River Alde, located just 4 miles away at Snape. The quayside complex - now world-famous for its concert hall and festivals - was a thriving port served by great barges conveying malt, grain and even livestock from Suffolk to London. In Victorian times returning barges brought coal and often animal waste to fertilise our fields!

Home to Industrial Giants...

Eminent industrialist, Richard Garrett III lived at **Carlton Hall** just north of Saxmundham from 1860 until his death in 1866 and is buried in Carlton churchyard. He transformed his family's successful agricultural engineering and steam engine business by building the UK's first ever assembly line. He and his family also helped secure railway lines to his Leiston Works, Snape Maltings (another Garrett family concern) and Aldeburgh. The output of the 'Long Shop' (now a museum) was phenomenal and from the 1860s until after WWII, Saxmundham handled every bit of it!

And a Long Line of Lords

Impressive Hurts Hall near South Entrance may look Jacobean(-ish!), but it's all a Victorian illusion! The second hall styled here by the Long family since their acquisition of the Manor of Hurts in 1650, it's the 1893 work of Ipswich architect T.W. Cotman known locally for designing stations and properties in Felixstowe. The family supported Sax's turnpike road and paid for a school, Market Hall, church windows and the (Garrett-made!) town pump.

In honour of Kersey's, the clockmakers, established in 1769... Can you tick off these Saxmundham Timepieces?

- ☐ St John's Church Clock
- ☐ North Star Sundial (on John Noller's 1725 gravestone)
- ☐ Watches (at 23 High Street - originally Kersey's shop)
- ☐ Tollgate Cottage Sundial
- ☐ Market Hall Clock

Hidden throughout this Pocket Guide are 16 timepieces too. Can you find them all?

TOWN & COUNTRY HERITAGE WALK



FROM/TO: Market Place, Saxmundham IP17 1FX

Unusually sandwiched right between railway line/old turnpike road, **Market Place 1** is home to The Bell and two former inns: The Angel (1500s)/The Star (alongside 1838 water pump). Go north onto **High Street**. Cross to town sign. Turn right (**Street Farm Road**) to enter area east of River Fromus, site of Sax's earliest settlements. Opposite library, turn right onto foot/cycle path (**Fromus Walk 2**) to **Church Hill**. Cross road, turn right, then left (uphill path) to medieval church on Saxon site **3**. Return to road, turn left. Supermarket (left near junction) built on site of old playhouse cinema. At traffic lights, cross to town sign/The Chantry **4**, site associated with local early medieval big-wigs, the Wingfields and De la Poles. Turn left (**South**

Entrance), past shopfront with arches (former wine merchants for 100+ years). Just beyond historic, pargetted Monks' Cottages **5**, take footpath (right) uphill to view Hurts Hall **6** from The Layers.

Now, to reach **steps near top of Mill Road** either continue on footpaths (straight ahead, over railway, right at next two footpath junctions, briefly right at **Mill Road**, then cross) or retrace steps to traffic lights, turn left (**Chantry Road-Mill Road**), after **Mill Rise** (left) cross road.

Steps lead up to **Albion Street**. Straight ahead for old redbrick police station and tower of Albion Post-mill **7** (both on left/now houses). Turn around. Follow **Albion Street** to historic signal box and railway station **8**. Turn right (**New Cut**), then left (**Chantry Road**). At traffic lights, turn left along **High Street**, passing historic Queen's Head; No.23 (jewellers, formerly Kersey's est. 1769); No. 27 (stationers/ booksellers est.1834); **Fromus Square 9** (home to war memorial, regular market stalls, events); **Market Hall 10** (original Corn Exchange); Bell Hotel **11** (rebuilt 1840, once had stabling for 40 horses!); serpentine brick wall; No.46 (former ironmongers' shopfront with Art Deco detailing). At The Art Station AS (old telephone exchange), cross to return to **Market Place 1** or why not visit Saxmundham Museum M?

At the Heart of 'The Garden of Suffolk'

Head north out of Sax past Fairfield Road, Lambsale Meadow and up 'Clayhills' and the scene is already set even before you reach the little crop of organic farms edging Honeypot Lane. Prized farmland for centuries and now predominantly arable, these rolling High Suffolk claylands have a history of rich pickings and certain practical earthiness about them - more of an 'Allotment of Suffolk' perhaps?

Conveniently Close to the Coast

Even before Saxmundham's early railway branch lines played a vital role in establishing some of today's best-loved Suffolk resorts, the proximity of the coast was something much valued by certain members of its town and country communities. Poorly paid, seasonal farm labourers doubled up as fishermen or crew on river barges. Known as 'Greenhands', they took in their stride the walk to Snape Port or the extra stretch along the Sailors' Path to Aldeburgh. Others found the coast conveniently close for keeping starvation at bay by smuggling tea and tobacco. In the 1740s, they had to take care - the landlord of the Saxmundham Bell was also an excise officer!

Tall Stories?

Are these Sax facts true or false?

1. A shop-owner in Market Place put on stilts by climbing out of his first floor window.
2. England's oldest lawn tennis tournament was founded here.
3. Russian Cossacks gave riding displays on 'The Layers'.
4. Once 15.5 metres high, Sax's Albion post-mill was one of the tallest in Suffolk.
5. Composer Sir Benjamin Britten shopped here.
6. The Bell was the last dedicated coaching inn built in England.
7. Winston Churchill, Eisenhower and Montgomery held a D-Day planning meeting in Hurts Hall.
8. The railway station is home to a rare Victorian postbox and once had moving platforms.

Answers: Only no. 2 is false - it was the second oldest!



