

Welcome



Situated in northeast Suffolk, close to the heritage coast, Halesworth is a town well worth visiting.

Although there are traces of prehistoric settlement, modern Halesworth has Saxon roots and is referred to as Healesurda and Halesuorda in the Domesday Book of 1086. St Mary's Church, of late Saxon origin, was the hub of the original town. Close by is the Market Place where the Lord of the Manor, Richard de Argentein was granted a weekly licence in 1222. A weekly market is still held on Wednesdays. A restored 16th century inn, now an Antiques Centre, is a highlight here. Next to the church in Steeple End is the Art Gallery housed in the impressive Almshouses (1686), with distinctive 'Dutch' gables.

The Market Place leads to the pedestrianised Thoroughfare. At the southern end, the 16th century Angel Inn, and at the northern end a bustling 20th century library. In between, the buildings range from medieval to Victorian. 14th century Dame Margery's, with intriguing carvings, is the most photographed! These buildings house a variety of independent shops and eateries.

There's more to explore: England's largest Millennium Green (over 50 wildlife-friendly acres) and 18th century New Reach canal. The Malt Heritage Trail sign-boards explain the town's brewing history with much more to be discovered at the Museum located at the Railway Station. Here other local trail leaflets can be found as well as at the Library, the Angel Inn and many shops. Finally, no visit to Halesworth is complete without checking out the programme at the Cut Arts Centre, located in a former maltings building.

All walks in this leaflet take you out of the town centre through the Millennium Green, to explore the eastern side of Halesworth along the River Blyth, and along the old railway to Bird's Folly. This leaflet can also be linked to Halesworth Circular Walks West in the Discover Suffolk series of walk guides www.discoversuffolk.org.uk.

Location



Directions

Halesworth is on the A144 signposted off the A12 and A143, approximately 9 miles west of Southwold and 9 miles south of Bungay. All walks start from the Town Centre Car Park **A** off the A144, Saxons Way, IP19 8AH (parking up to 4 hours). All day parking is also available close by at Angel North car park off Saxon Way roundabout.

Public Transport

Halesworth is served by a number of bus services and the railway station is on the East Suffolk Lines served from Ipswich and Lowestoft. Visit www.suffolkonboard.com for timetables and to plan your journey.

OS Explorer Map

Use OS Explorer 231 (Southwold & Bungay) to enjoy these walks and the wider area.

Discover Suffolk

Discover many more walks and great days out in the countryside by downloading the Discover App (Apple and Android) or visit www.discoversuffolk.org.uk. Follow us on :



Produced by Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan Group, Halesworth and District Museum, Halesworth Tourism Group, University of the Third Age, and Suffolk County Council.



Circular Walks

Halesworth Circular Walks East

Beautiful River and Historic Old Railway Walks



The Millennium Green Circular



DISTANCE: 2 miles (3 km)

DURATION: 1 hour

TERRAIN: Good paths, some road crossings.

From **A** exit the car park via the subway alongside the River Blyth. Continue around the toilet block bearing left onto a tarmac path into Town Park. Cross over the footbridge then turn right **1**. The channel on your left is New Reach.

New Reach was built to allow sailing boats and wherries travel the length of the Blyth Navigation between Southwold Harbour and Halesworth. Between 1761 and 1911 wherries, which were 30-40 feet in length with drafts of only 3 feet to allow for very shallow water, carried malt and grain to Southwold Harbour, transferring cargo to larger boats for London and northern ports with return journeys bringing coal to fuel maltings, the lifeblood of Halesworth's prosperity in the 18th and early 19th Centuries.

Follow the tarmac path past the skate park, over a cattle grid into Chestnut Meadows to a second cattle grid. Go under the railway bridge and through the gate into Millennium Green **2**.

Millennium Green spans over 50 acres and was created in 2000 from grazing marsh in the flood plains of the River Blyth. Rich in wildlife, geology, and history, it comprises of meadows, woodlands, rivers, ponds, heathland and orchard along the historic route of the old railway and even older navigation.

Continue along the tarmac path, through the gate and under the railway bridge signed Six Arches **3**.

Just after the bridge turn right on to the footpath towards Blyth Road Industrial Estate.

The 1901 edition of Gale's Almanac shows this footpath to be originally called Honeyplot Lane. It was later renamed as Swan Lane.

Continue through the industrial estate, past allotments and a playing field, crossing two roads, to Saxons Way **4**.

Cross the road with care and follow the footpath opposite past the supermarket on your left to London Road. Turn right **5**. Continue past the White Swan pub and Tudor style houses.

The road bends left to the War Memorial surrounded by the William and Joseph Hooker Memorial Garden and entrance to the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin Church **6**.

St Mary's Church predates the Domesday Book. It was rebuilt in the 14th Century with a new tower and additions financed by the de Argentein family,

prominent Suffolk landowners between the 11th and 15th Centuries. Inside, their coat of arms, depicting three covered cups, appears on the font and on the pillar between the Chancel and the Lady Chapel. On the south wall are a set of 9th Century Scandinavian 'Danestones'. On the base of the 15th Century font are four woodwoses depicting different poses of the Suffolk wildman of the woods bearing his club. A plaque on the south wall commemorates father and son Sir William and Sir Joseph Hooker, former residents of Halesworth, important botanists and first directors of Kew Gardens.

Leave the churchyard via The War Memorial and the Joseph Hooker Memorial Garden and continue straight ahead into the Thoroughfare back to **A**.

The general structure of the Thoroughfare remains unchanged since the Middle Ages with buildings ranging from medieval to Victorian: the 16th Century Angel Inn was originally a posting house for coaches; the Guildhall, at nos. 15/16 was built in 1474 for the Guild of St John the Baptist; the former ironmonger shop at no. 8 once belonged to Sir David Frost's grandfather – the shop's sign can still be seen under the brick archway. Adjacent to the brick archway is the 14th Century Ancient House with its bressumer beam, an unusual and intriguing carving above the door. The house is also known as Dame Margery's and may once have been the home of Margaret de Argentein.

Turn right through the archway to return to **A**.

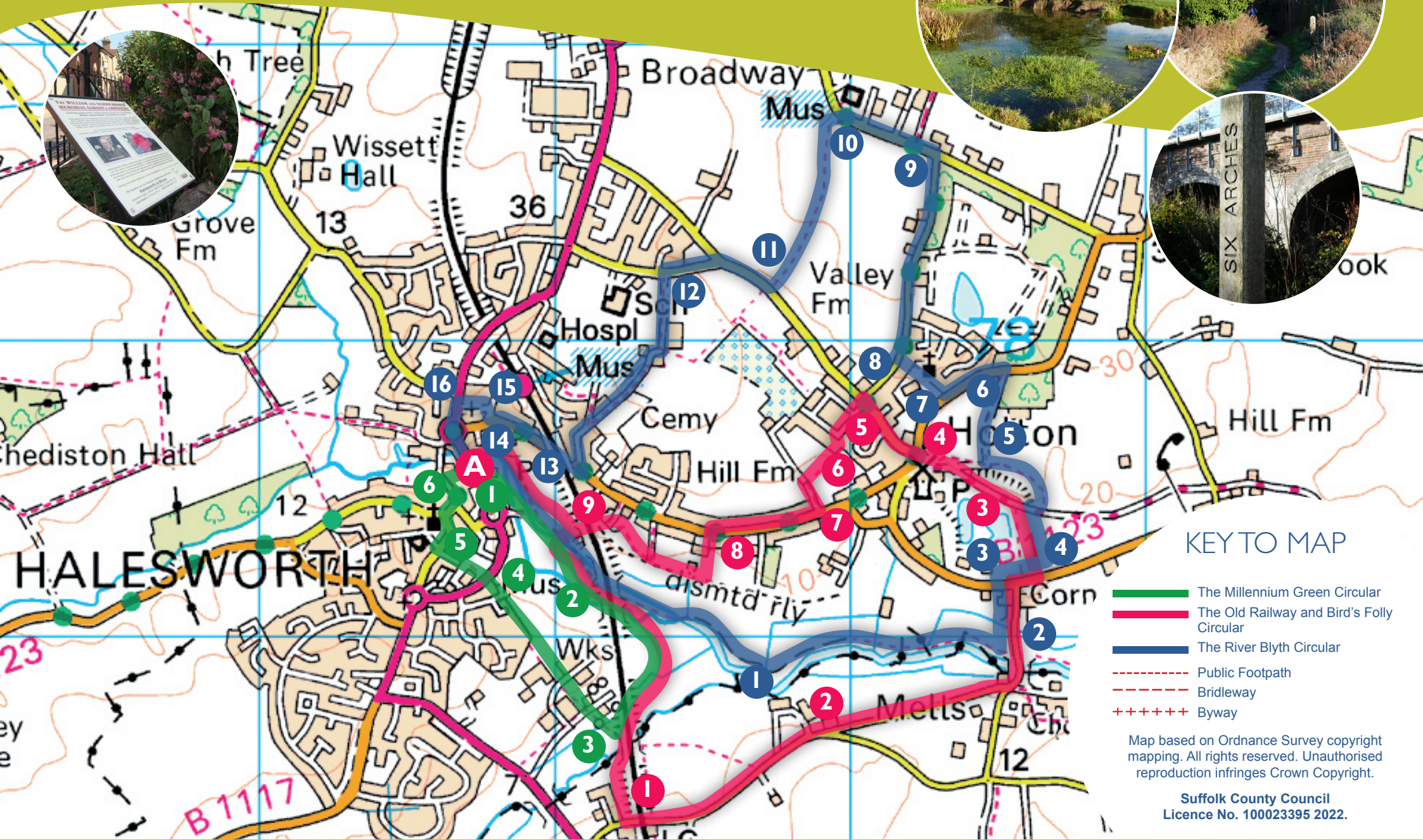
Please follow the Countryside Code:

- ✓ Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
- ✓ Leave gates and property as you would find them and follow paths.
- ✓ Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home.
- ✓ Keep dogs under effective control.
- ✓ Plan ahead and be prepared.
- ✓ Follow advice and local signs.



Halesworth Circular Walks East

Beautiful River and Historic Old Railway Walks



KEY TO MAP

- The Millennium Green Circular
- The Old Railway and Bird's Folly Circular
- The River Blyth Circular
- Public Footpath
- Bridleway
- Byway

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The Old Railway and Bird's Folly Circular

DISTANCE: 4 miles (6.5 kms)

DURATION: 1.5 hours

TERRAIN: Tarmac paths, country lanes and good tracks.



Follow the Green Walk to ③. Go over the river and up to a lane. Turn left towards Mells going over the railway track ①. Follow the lane for just under a mile, bearing left at the fork towards Holton ②. On the left in the distance is Holton Windmill.



Holton Windmill was built in 1749 and could be worked by wind or steam. It is no longer a working mill although the sails can still turn in the wind.

At the junction turn left towards Holton.

Right of the junction are the remains of St Margaret's Chapel built in 1104.

Join the Blue Walk from ② to ④. At a wider track turn left ③. Continue to cottages and bear right at the fork to the road ④.

Cross over and continue alongside the school. Turn left into Orchard Valley ⑤. Continue ahead onto a narrow footpath between houses ⑥. Follow the footpath to a track, turning left to reach Holton Road. Turn right ⑦. Shortly after a red post box cross the road to a footpath by a metal gate ⑧. Follow the footpath to Bird's Folly.



Bird's Folly, an area of old gravel workings, was the site of the Halesworth Engine Shed for the Southwold Railway which ran between Halesworth and Southwold from 1879 to 1929. This area is named after Mr Bird whose endeavours to get rich from gravel excavation were a folly.

Ahead are two bridges: one is the old Southwold Railway, and the second is the existing railway line. A lift bridge over the river was also once here, allowing barges to reach Halesworth Quay.

Continue ahead under both bridges, cross the river ⑨ and turn right to return to A.

The River Blyth Circular

DISTANCE: 5 miles (8 km)

DURATION: 2 hours

TERRAIN: Tarmac, cross field footpaths and country lanes. Some sections can be muddy.



Follow the Green Walk to ②.

After the railway bridge immediately peel off the tarmac path and continue straight ahead across the field with the river to your left. Continue to cross a footbridge on your left ① and with the river now on your right follow the footpath over several footbridges, across fields, and through tree belts to reach the road in Mells.

Turn left ②. Continue along the lane to the main road ③. Cross over with care. Turn right and after approximately 100 metres turn left onto a footpath ④.

Follow the footpath and cross over a wider track. Continue up around an old quarry and disused pit to reach a concrete track on your right.



A geological site of Special Scientific Interest, the disused Holton Pit marks the inland boundary of the early Pleistocene 'Westleton Beds', a coastal gravel accumulation.

Turn right ⑤ and continue along the concrete track with open fields either side to reach a road ⑥. Cross over, turn left and follow the pavement, turning right onto a footpath ⑦ to St Peter's Church.

The 12th Century round tower of St Peter's Church is one of the tallest in the county. Inside is a beautiful Norman inner doorway, above which is a Norman stone carving of a winged mythical beast holding something in its mouth. This type of superstitious imagery is relatively rare in East Anglia.

Continue along the footpath and turn right onto a country lane ⑧. Follow this lane for approximately ½ mile to the road. Turn left ⑨. Continue past the Bernard Matthews factory to the Halesworth Airfield Museum.



Halesworth Airfield, built in 1942, became the base for the US 56th Fighter Group, a most successful aerial combat group. The museum is on Sparrowhawk Road, named after HMS Sparrowhawk – the Royal Navy Advanced Flying training base which flew from here after the US departure until 1946. The museum has an extensive collection of World War II memorabilia, photographs and items specific to the airfield. Refreshments are available and there is a toilet. The museum is open Sundays and Bank Holidays from April to October. www.halesworthairfieldmuseum.co.uk

Cross over the road to follow a footpath ⑩ to a lane. Cross the lane ⑪ and turn right to follow a pavement to Town Farm. Turn left onto the farm track ⑫. Continue past poultry houses to a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap and bear right then left along a track, passing a cemetery on your left to Holton Road. Turn right ⑬. Continue along the pavement to Station Road. Turn right ⑭ and then left into New Cut ⑮.

Located in a former maltings, the multi-purpose venue 'The Cut Arts Centre' has changing exhibitions, theatre and cinema and a café and licensed bar. newcut.org

Turn left at the main road, cross at the crossing and continue downhill keeping right to enter The Thoroughfare and return to A.