

# Woodbridge

## Explorer Guide



Enjoy three varied walks exploring the riverside town of Woodbridge.



Woodbridge is an historic market town on the beautiful Deben estuary. Streets lined with traditional buildings lead to a waterfront, where yachts and house boats lie at anchor.

dates from 1793 and was working until 1957. It was saved in 1968 and restored to working order a few years later. Recently, the mill has undergone further restoration, allowing visitors to learn about its history and see it in action.



- 4 **Sutton Hoo** is a mysterious place on the hill across the River from Woodbridge. In 1939, the then owner, Edith Pretty employed local archaeologist Basil Brown to excavate some mounds on her Sutton Hoo estate. This excavation uncovered the burial of an Anglo-Saxon King, possibly King Raedwald of the East Angles, who died around 625 AD. He had been buried in a great ship surrounded by many stunning artefacts. These included the famous helmet, which is now displayed in the British Museum. Sutton Hoo is managed by the National Trust.



- 5 **The River Deben** is a great habitat for breeding and migrant birds. The extensive mudflats and salt marsh support 70 species of bird, including cormorants, oystercatchers and curlews. The estuary has one of the most significant overwintering populations of avocets in the UK and a large population of redshanks. The importance of this habitat is recognised by its designation as a Special Protection Area by Natural England.



### Highlights of Woodbridge

- Woodbridge waterfront** is a bustling place with a fascinating history. From the 1400s to the 1700s the area was the centre of a thriving ship building industry. Merchant and naval ships were built for customers including Edward III and Sir Francis Drake. The quays allowed the town to prosper, with local products such as cloth and rope being traded. The Whisstocks Project aims to reopen one of the boat building yards as a training centre.
- Market Hill** is a beautiful collection of old buildings. At its centre is the Shire Hall, which was built in the 16th century as a local court and corn exchange. Nearby is the imposing 15th century St. Mary's Church. It contains memorials to many wealthy residents of Woodbridge, including Thomas Seckford, who died in 1587. He established the Seckford Foundation, which still plays a major role in the town and owns almshouses and schools. Further down New Street is the 'Ye Olde Bell and Steelyard' Inn. The projection from the first floor housed a device that weighed goods being traded at the market.
- The Tide Mill** is an unusual kind of grain mill. As the tide rises, water is trapped in a large pool, which is then released to turn the machinery. There has been a tide mill on this site for over 800 years. The present mill



Images: Front cover – Walking the river wall from Woodbridge. A. Woodbridge Quay – lots of boats! B. The Shire Hall, Woodbridge – 16th century corn exchange. C. The Tide Mill – a working mill and museum. D. The River Deben with Sutton Hoo beyond – a mysterious landscape. E. The River Deben – a great place for wildlife.

### The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

The Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of Britain's finest landscapes. It extends from the Stour Estuary in the south to the eastern fringe of Ipswich and then north to Kessingland. The AONB covers 403 square kilometres, including wildlife rich wetlands, ancient heaths, windswept shingle beaches and historic towns and villages.

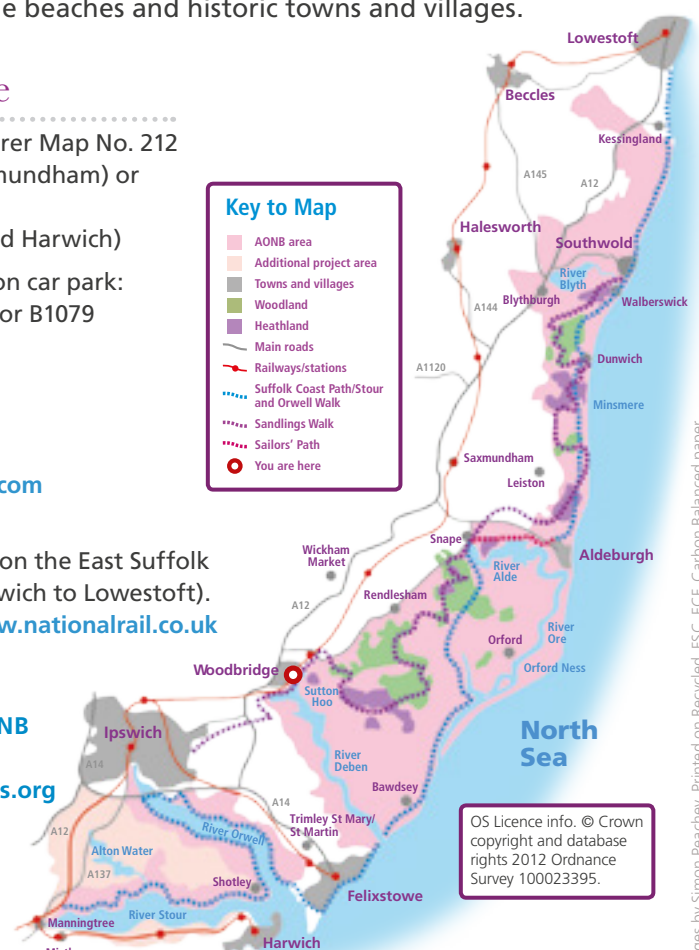
### Visiting Woodbridge

- Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No. 212 (Woodbridge and Saxmundham) or Explorer Map No.197 (Ipswich, Felixstowe and Harwich)
- Car: Woodbridge Station car park: accessed via the B1438 or B1079 from the A12.
- Bus information:  
[www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)  
or call **0871 200 2233**  
[www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com)  
or call **0845 606 6171**

Woodbridge Station is on the East Suffolk Line (hourly service Ipswich to Lowestoft). Train information: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) or call **08457 484950**

**Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB**  
**01394 445225**  
[www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)

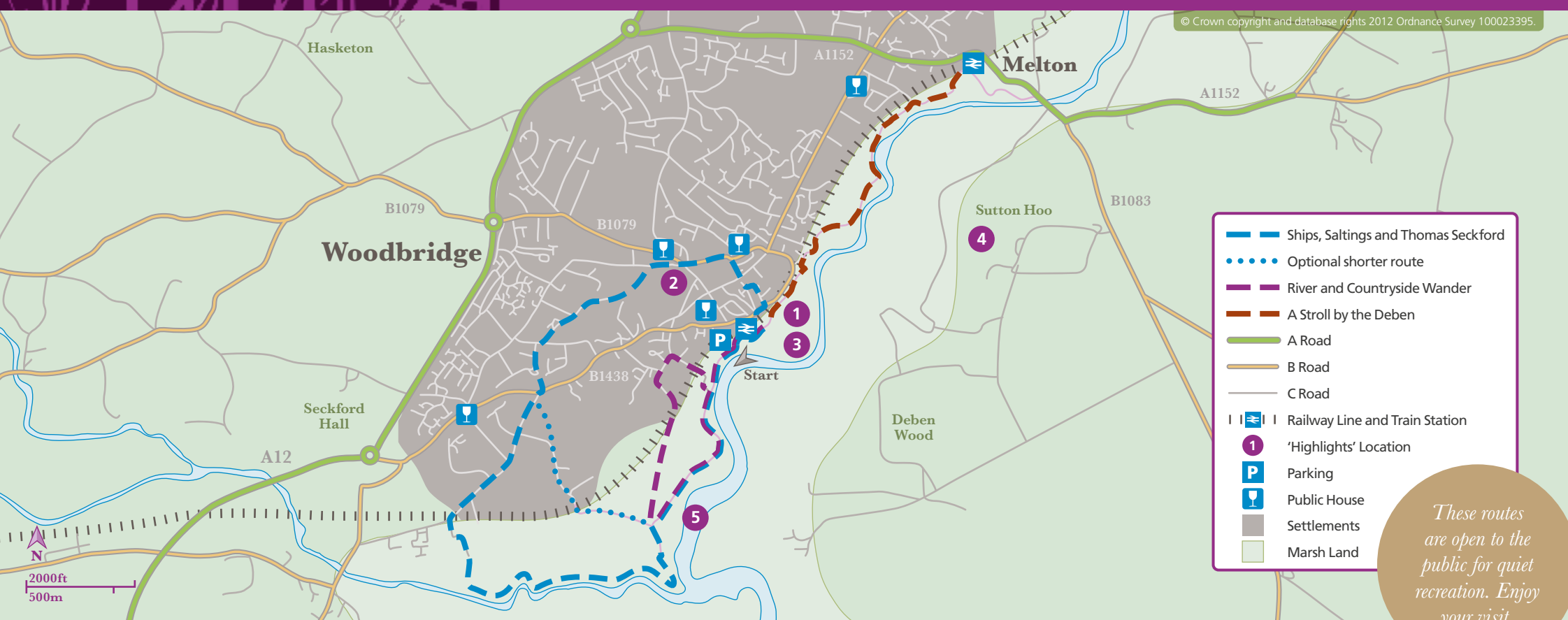
Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB is a partner of the BALANCE project, part-financed by the European Union through the Interreg IV A 2 Seas Cross-border Programme.



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These routes are open to the public for quiet recreation. Enjoy your visit.

## ‘Ships, Saltings and Thomas Seckford’

Distance  
3.6 miles (5.8 km)

**Time:** 2 hours

**Terrain:** Route follows exposed paths beside deep, tidal water. Some sections can be muddy. Follows some busy roads and passes through urban areas. High visibility clothing recommended.



Start from Woodbridge Railway Station. Cross railway by bridge just north of station and bear right along river wall path, keeping river to left. Follow path for some distance. When you enter woodland, bear left and join track. (If route is flooded return to where you bore left and follow optional shorter route shown below\*). Almost immediately bear left off track to shore. Walk along shore then re-join path at grassy area.

Follow path around Kyson Point and onto river wall beside Martlesham Creek. Continue to end of Creek, then turn right at path junction. Follow path to road. Turn right and follow road until junction with main road, then turn right along pavement. †After short distance, take path on opposite side of road to right of Sandford Place.

Climb steps and bear right at path split. When road reached, go straight

### \*Optional shorter route

(saves you 30 mins)

Turn right and follow track for shortcut or if above route is flooded. Continue on path. Cross over the railway line and follow track until you reach road. Turn right and follow road until junction with main road, then turn right and continue with remaining walk from point †.

over into Portland Crescent. Follow Portland Crescent, ignoring all exits and continue on road through cemetery. When road becomes track, bear right down hill. At bottom of hill, turn left. Follow path beside green and up steps to road. Turn right along road between houses.



At Market Square, keep on right pavement. At bottom of Market Square, cross road and take road to left of Bull Hotel – this is New Street. Follow road down hill, bearing right and ignoring all left exits. Go straight across main shopping thoroughfare. Keep straight on until car park, then turn left. Follow road as it bends to right and passes roundabout. At main T-junction, cross to far side of road using pedestrian crossing and turn right along pavement. After short distance, turn left into Tide Mill Way. When quay reached, turn right along path to station.

## ‘River and Countryside Wander’

Distance  
1.6 miles (2.6 km)

**Time:** 1 hour

**Terrain:** Route follows exposed paths beside deep, tidal water. Some sections can be muddy. Some sections on roads and through urban areas. Route crosses railway line so take great care. Several stiles crossed. High visibility clothing recommended.



Start from Woodbridge Railway Station. Cross railway line by bridge just north of station and bear right along river wall, keeping river to left. Follow path for some distance. At woodland, immediately leave this path (‘double back’). Follow path until left bend.

Cross railway and bear right across recreation ground, keeping playground and tennis courts to right. On far side of tennis courts, turn right along road. Re-cross railway line. At river wall, turn left and return to station.

## ‘A Stroll by the Deben’

Distance  
1.6 miles (2.6 km)



**Time:** 1 hour

**Terrain:** Route follows exposed paths beside deep, tidal water. Some sections on roads and through urban areas. High visibility clothing recommended.

Start by catching train from Woodbridge to Melton. Leave Melton station; turn right beside road and cross level crossing. Turn right at kissing gate just beyond crossing and follow path to river wall. Turn right along river wall path. Follow path for around half a mile. When tarmacked area reached beside level crossing, turn left and then right in front of brick cottage. At junction with road to Tide Mill, turn left then right beside quay and return to Woodbridge station.

Images: A. Martlesham Creek – the mudflats at low tide attract many birds. B. ‘Ye Olde Bell and Steelyard’ – an historic inn. C. Woodbridge Tide Mill – an iconic building on Woodbridge’s riverside – Woodbridge Tide Mill Trust. D. Boats beside the Deben – look out for historic barges. E. Redshank – this wading bird with orange-red legs and bill can be seen alongside the river – Phil McLean/FLPA.



### Countryside Code

The area has a network of footpaths and bridleways. We have shown suggested routes on this map. Here are a few simple suggestions to help you enjoy the area safely and assist our work in caring for it.

Follow the Countryside Code:

Plan ahead and follow any signs

Leave things as you find them

Protect plants and animals, control fires and take your litter home.

Dogs are very welcome, but please keep them under close control at all times and on lead as advised.

Thank you.

Find out more about the Countryside Code:  
[www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)