INTRODUCTION
Southwold is surrounded by river, creek and sea resulting in limited access to a popular island. This walk takes the visitor out of the town on public rights of way and cliff top footway to explore the harbour and marshland paths around the parish boundary. Except in dry conditions, waterproof footwear should be worn.

SOUTHWOLD
Little of the former medieval town survives except St Edmuns Church, saved from a fire which destroyed the town in 1669. However, periods of prosperity have provided Georgian, Regency and Victorian styles to the town, dominated by the lighthouse and brewery. A booklet entitled 'Discovering Southwold' is available from local shops and is recommended for visitors wishing to explore the town.

HARBOUR AND MARSH
For centuries this part of the coast has suffered from currents and tides which alter the line between land and sea. What was once a flourishing harbour serving a fishing fleet and the local trade has been reduced by siting and modern needs to the requirements of recreation and local fishermen. The surrounding marshland and tidal river are rich in wildlife and provide habitat for Shelduck, Red Shank and other visiting waders.

SUFFOLK HERITAGE COAST
The Suffolk Heritage Coast extends from Keswick to Felixstowe and is an area of splendid landscape and great wildlife interest. This is one of a series of circular walks that will help you enjoy this very special stretch of the coast.

COUNTRY CODE
Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work ● Guard against all risk of fire ● Fasten all gates ● Keep your dogs under close control ● Keep to public paths across farmland ● Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls ● Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone ● Take your litter home ● Help to keep all water clean ● Protect wild life plants and trees ● Take special care on country roads ● Make no unnecessary noise ●

HOW TO GET THERE...
Southwold is 10 miles from Lowestoft, 35 miles from Ipswich and 35 miles from Norwich. The nearest railway stations are Darsham and Halesworth.

BY BUS
Lamberts Coaches:
Telephone 0502 717579
Wayslands Minibus:
Telephone: 050 845 474
Eastern Counties:
Telephone: 0603 788890

BY ROAD
Southwold is situated at the end of the A1095, 4 miles from the A12 at Blythburgh or 4.5 miles from Wrenham via the B1127.

PARKING
Harbour Car Park, and Beach Car Park.

REFRESHMENT
The town provides a range of facilities for refreshment and accommodation, details can be found in the town guide leaflet available locally.

This leaflet has been supported financially by:

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
Edwin Banitt
County Planning Officer
J. J. Shirefield
County Surveyor
St Edmund House
County Hall
Ipswich IP1 1LZ
Tele Ipswich 230000

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL
THE WALK

From the Start at the Harbour Car Park follow the River Blyth inland along the road and track providing access to the facilities of a typical small harbour. Alternatively in the summer take the foot ferry (1) to the Walberswick side and walk the footpath on the opposite bank as far as the bridge. Note the flood level marked on the Harbour Inn (2) an indication of how the area suffered in the floods which hit the east coast in 1953. The modern Bailey Bridge (3) rests on the piers of a former structure which, until 1929 provided a crossing point for the old narrow gauge railway to Halesworth and the main line.

Cross the bed of the old railway following the path on the embankment along Buss Creek or, to avoid a number of stiles, use the route of the former railway to rejoin the walk on the A1095 at Mights Bridge (4). The creek once provided anchorage for large vessels but silting has left the area as marshland and a haven for wildlife.

Before crossing the A1095, the only road into Southwold, note the fishing facility provided by the Southwold Angling Society for disabled people at Mights Bridge. Follow the embankment path past the Boating Lake to emerge at the Beach Car Park (5). At this point we join the Suffolk Coast Path stretching 50 miles from Lowestoft to Felixstowe.

Continue south past the Pier (6), now considerably shortened since the days when paddle steamers called and along the cliff top path to Gun Hill (7) noting the former coastguard lookout which houses an RNLI Museum. Alternatively you may wish to wander through the town to seek refreshment or use the Promenade and beach for this section of the walk.

Return to the Harbour Car Park, via the Ferry Path with views across Town Marshes or wander through the Dunes behind the beach. In the summer round off your walk with a visit to the Suffolk Wildlife Trust Information Centre near the Start to identify the natural history prevalent in the area.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following Ordnance Survey sheet shows other rights of way in the area: Pathfinder Sheet TM 47/57 Southwold/Halesworth.

If you would like further details of the other coastal and countryside walks in Suffolk please contact: Planning Department, St Edmund House, County Hall, Ipswich IP4 1LZ Tel: Ipswich 265131.