

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 Healesurdda 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 via the Thoroughfare into the west area of Halesworth, one of the most rural parts of East Anglia. This leaflet can also be linked to Halesworth Circular Walks East 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 West

Historic walks through rural countryside



The Old Town and Fishing Lakes

DISTANCE: 2 miles (3 km)

DURATION: 1 hour

TERRAIN: Mostly tracks, quiet lanes and pavements.



From **A** walk through the gateway to the welcome sign and the Thoroughfare **1**. Turn right.

The general structure of the Thoroughfare remains unchanged since the Middle Ages. It was once the main access for all road traffic until the relief road, Saxons Way, was built in the 1980s. The buildings range from medieval to Victorian. Adjacent to a brick archway is a notable 14th Century building known as Ancient House. Above the door is an unusual and intriguing carved bressumer beam with two lions holding a shield. Also known as Dame Margery's House, this house may once have been the home of Margaret de Argentein.



The Argentein family originated from Normandy and were prominent Suffolk landowners between the 11th and 15th Centuries. Their surname has had numerous spellings from 'de Argentomago' to 'Argentine'.



Cross over the River Blyth, known as the Town River. At the library turn left into Rectory Street **2**. Continue to the junction and turn left into narrow Rectory Lane **3**.

Rectory Lane is referred to as both 'Parson's Lane' and 'Duck Lane'. Behind the brick wall on the right is the Old Rectory, a 16th Century Listed building. Its core possibly stands on the site of an older rectory. During World War II it served as a billet for Land Girls (civilians working in agriculture, replacing men gone to war). It is now a private house.

Follow the crinkle crinkle wall beyond the Town River to Chediston Street **4**.



A 'crinkle crinkle' wall is a serpentine style of wall dating from the mid-18th Century. Providing shelter for growing fruit and delicate plants, the curving lines give additional strength without the need for buttresses. Suffolk has 50 such examples which is twice as many as in the rest of England.

In 1862, Chediston Street was the scene of a notorious crime. The young policeman Ebenezer Tye was murdered watching the residence of John Ducker. Born in Halesworth, John Ducker lived in one of the 'courts', a maze of housing leading back from this street. Ducker was hanged in 1863 after his trial at Ipswich Suffolk Assizes and was the last person to be publicly executed in Suffolk.

Turn right and follow the pavement past houses and a scout hut to the end of the pavement. Turn right on to a footpath **5**. Continue along, recrossing the Town River and climbing gently to a lane. Turn right **6**. Continue along the lane passing Halesworth Lakes fishing lakes to reach Wissett Road. Cross the road with care and turn right **7**. Continue to the end of the layby, re-cross the road with care onto a grass verge and continue along this side to pavement and then a footpath between houses on your right **8**. Follow this footpath under a link-house roof to reach Rectory Street. Follow the pavement round to the Thoroughfare to return to **A**.

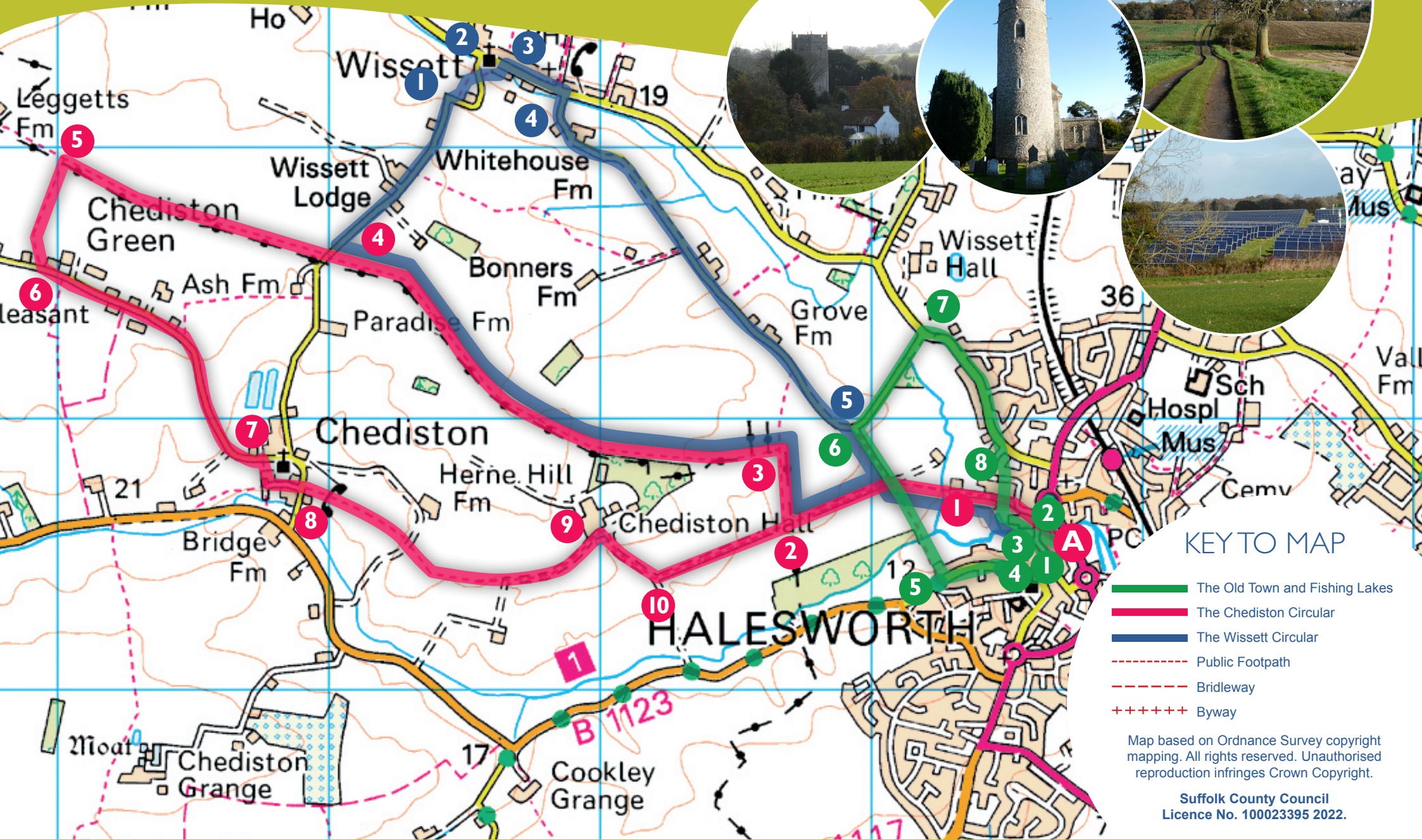
Please follow the Countryside Code:

- ✓ 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 West

Historic walks through rural countryside



KEY TO MAP

- The Old Town and Fishing Lakes
- The Chediston Circular
- The Wissett Circular
- Public Footpath
- Bridleway
- Byway

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The Chediston Circular

DISTANCE: 6 miles (10 kms)

DURATION: 2.5 hours

TERRAIN: Field edges, and quiet lanes.

Some sections can be muddy after rain.



Follow the Green Walk to 2. Continue along Rectory Street past Rectory Lane to the junction and then go straight ahead along School Lane to a gate.

The school was erected in 1853 in memory of Priscilla Johnston whose remarkable abolitionist work resulted in a petition to Parliament in 1833. The petition had 187,000 signatories calling for an end to slavery.

Go through the gate 1. Continue across the field and through the next gate. Continue ahead for approximately 400 metres. Turn right on to a grassy track 2. Continue for approximately 300 metres. Turn left onto another grassy track 3. Continue ahead for over a mile, under pylons and passing a solar farm on your right.

The solar farm covers 70 acres and was once one of the largest in the country.

Keeping the hedge line on your left, cross over a wooden bridge. Continue until you reach a road.

Cross over the road 4. Continue along the path through the next four fields, keeping the hedge line on your left. Turn left over the wooden bridge 5. Continue along the footpath with a hedge now on your right and pass through the gate. Turn left on to Chediston Road 6. Continue past Chediston Pottery to reach Chediston village. St Mary's Church is visible to your left. Just after the 30mph sign turn right on to a footpath to a short track 7. Follow the track to St Mary's Church.

St Mary's Church and its tower base dates to the 13th Century. Later additions were made, and it was restored in 1895. The churchyard is bordered by small



houses with tracks leading to some of the dwellings.

Inside the church, the East Anglian font has lions and woodwoses around it. Woodwoses are 'wild men of the woods', common in Suffolk.

The fascinating 17th Century decalogue board depicts Moses and Aaron beside the Ten Commandments and is one of the best surviving boards in East Anglia. The stained-glass war memorial of 1949 by Edith Rope depicts beautiful rural Suffolk scenes.



Follow the track through the churchyard to reach a road. Cross over onto a footpath 8.

Continue along the footpath, with wire fences on both sides. Pass through two kissing gates to reach a farm drive. Cross over the drive and pass through two further kissing gates. Continue to another gate and over a crossfield path to reach a farm track. Continue along the track towards Chediston Hall Farm.

Chediston Hall, originally a Tudor Jacobean house, once stood near here. Rebuilt in the 1830s to the designs of Edward Blore (who completed the design of Buckingham Palace) the Hall was used by the military in World War II. Following fire damage, it was demolished in 1955.

Just by the farm buildings, bear right keeping the pond on your right 9. Continue along the farm drive passing a field on the left.

Turn left at the next footpath 10.

Continue straight ahead to a junction of paths. Go through the gate and retrace your steps over the field and through the next gate back on to School Lane to return to A.



The Wissett Circular

DISTANCE: 5 miles (8.5 km)

DURATION: 2 hours

TERRAIN: Field edges, and quiet lanes.

Some sections can be muddy after rain.



Follow the Red Walk to 4. Turn right and follow the road past Wissett Lodge on the left.

16th Century Wissett Lodge has a connection to the renowned Bloomsbury Group which included the novelist Virginia Woolf. In 1916, Woolf's painter sister Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, also a painter, and the novelist David Garnett rented this house hoping that it would prove a sanctuary from which the two men could work on the land as conscientious objectors in World War I. Woolf visited her sister and described Wissett as 'wonderfully harmonious'.

Where the lane bends sharply right 1 turn left on to the footpath and continue over the field to the church 2.

11th Century flint church of St Andrew has one of 41 round towers in Suffolk. After the Great Storm of 1987 its damaged east end was rebuilt. The Norman south door has mouldings of madly grinning faces. The cluster of angels in the only stained glass is 15th Century. Around the font bowl's stem are carvings of angels, lions and woodwoses.

Follow the pea-shingle path and cross over a short bridge to the road. Turn right 3. Continue past The Plough. Turn right on to Mill Road 4.

In 2011, Wissett was the site of an important archaeological find of a hoard of palstaves (axes) and spear heads. Described as 'one of the finest Middle Bronze Age Hoards in the country', the find is now displayed in the Halesworth and District Museum.

Continue for one mile. Bear right onto the footpath 5. Continue ahead and pass through the gate on your left. Retrace your steps to return to A.