



Discover the small market town of Eye. Photo: Getty

WALK

A walk from Eye to Hoxne

This countryside walk allows you to explore two idyllic Suffolk locations, with two stunning churches, wonderful scenery and plenty of history

WORDS: Discover Suffolk

Eye is a small market town in north Suffolk, named from the Old English for 'island'. Dominated by its town hall and Norman castle ruins, it offers historic buildings, independent shops and a traditional Suffolk atmosphere.

The soaring church tower of St Peter and St Paul in Eye, with its sublime flint flushwork, is one of the wonders of Suffolk. Largely built during the 15th century, this beautiful and lofty building has a glorious medieval chancel screen painted with the figures of saints. The 20th century rood loft and rood above are by Sir Ninian Comper and surmounted by a richly decorated canopy of honour.



Pretty gate at Hoxne church. Photo: Discover Suffolk

Hoxne, pronounced 'Hoxen', is an ancient north Suffolk village near Diss, known for the Hoxne Hoard of late Roman gold and silver found in 1992. Timber-framed houses, the medieval pub and links to Saint Edmund's martyrdom give this quiet rural community strong historical character.

The church of St Peter and St Paul, with its massive, embattled tower, stands aloft from the village. A church stood here in ancient times when the Bishops of East Anglia held court in Hoxne, and today's building dates from around 1350. Inside there is much to discover, including 15th century wall paintings, fine monuments and a 14th century parish chest.

THE WALK

1 Leave the church and take the Hoxne Road out of Eye. Just after the bridge, turn left at the sign of the Abbey to pick up the Mid Suffolk Footpath. The Abbey is the site of the ancient Priory of St Peter, founded in the 11th century, and the building to your right would have been the Prior's Lodgings.

2 Continue over the River Dove bridge and pause to admire the soaring tower of Eye church across the meadow. Through the next metal gate, turn sharp right to follow the grassy track then sharp left at the concrete standing to follow the track up a slight incline.

3 Watch for the gap in the hedge on your right and follow the pylons until you emerge at Mustard Pot Farm.

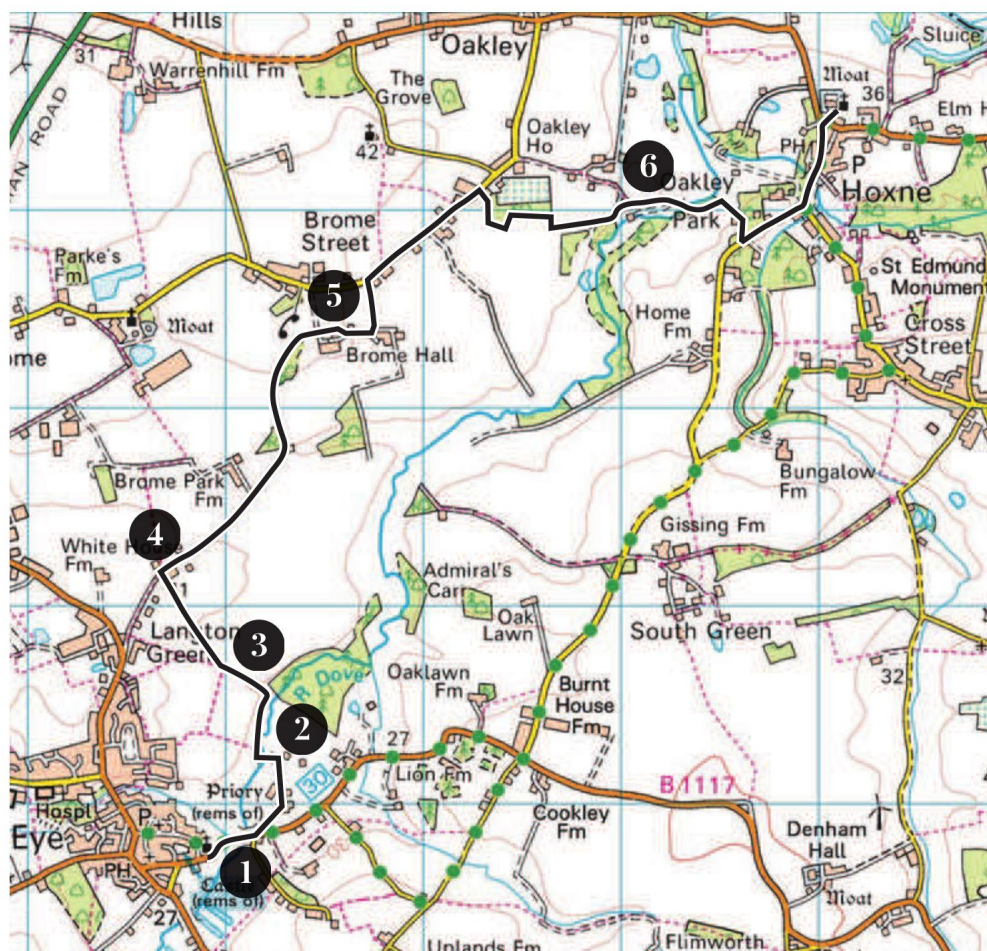
4 Turn right to rejoin the Mid Suffolk Footpath along a narrow lane. Follow the lane for about a mile until you come to Brome Lodge. Enter the gap at the side of the gate, following the drive round to the front of Brome Hall.

5 Rebuilt in the 1960s, the hall was formerly a fine Elizabethan mansion, built by Sir Thomas Cornwallis, member of the Privy Council of Queen 'Bloody' Mary. Emerging at Brome Street, turn right. After about 800 metres, take the footpath to your right in front of the thatched cottage. Follow the path round the wood and beyond as indicated with the tower of Hoxne church ahead of you.

6 Turn right down the slope towards Oakley Park, the site of the old Hoxne Hall, once the Bishop's Palace where Bishop Lyhart of Norwich died in 1472. His coat of arms can be seen on Hoxne church font. Cross the bridge and turn left through the poplar trees and up the slope to arrive at Eye Road. You are now close to the spot where a metal detector discovered the fabulous Hoxne Hoard of priceless Roman treasure in 1992. Turn left and after 400 metres, turn left into the Low Street with the 16th century Swan pub on your left. Just after the post office, turn right into Church Hill to emerge opposite the church. Return by the same route.



above: Enjoy the countryside between these two locations. Photo: Discover Suffolk



COMPASS POINTS

DISTANCE: 5 miles/8km each way

AREA OF WALK: The route from Eye to Hoxne and back is a day's easy walking.

PRACTICALITIES: Toilets are available in Eye church and Cross Street car park near the Town Hall, Eye.

Picnic tables are located at the Pennings, Eye and at Hoxne Village Hall.

REFRESHMENTS: Beard's of Eye is a café, deli and B&B in Church Street.



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