



15 SUFFOLK DUNWICH HEATH & MINSMERE

▶ Distance: 6 miles/10km ▶ Time: 3 hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



SEE
FEATURE
ON PAGE 16

War-time defences on
Minsmere beach.



PHOTO: PHOEBE TAPLIN



CHOSEN BY...

PHOEBE TAPLIN

During World War II, the farmland around the Minsmere River, drained a century earlier, was deliberately flooded and turned back into marshes to help protect the coast against enemy invasion. Walkers can still follow a line of concrete anti-tank blocks along the beach. After the war, the wetlands became RSPB Minsmere, a flagship nature reserve with thousands of acres of reedbeds, heathland, woods, fields and shingle. This route, which combines well with a full exploration of the reserve, also crosses Dunwich heath and visits the atmospheric Minsmere

Sluice chapel. If you want to walk from Dunwich (about 1½ miles each way) can follow the waymarked coast path from near ruined Greyfriars to point 2.

1 Start

From the National Trust carpark, walk a few steps back along road towards Dunwich and turn L on footpath past Heath Barn. From open grassy space with picnic tables, turn R onto path with several way marks including blue-backed yellow arrow of Suffolk Coast Path. Follow coast path arrows, where you see them, forking L and then R to keep straight across Dunwich Heath for nearly a mile.

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking National Trust car park, Coastguard Cottages (£6, free for NT members), IP17 3DJ, grid ref TM475677

Is it for me? Easy level walking along paths, tracks and quiet lanes. Some mud in places

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Leiston

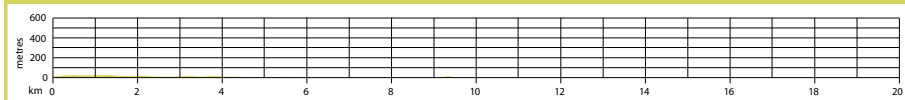
Refreshments Eel's Foot inn in Eastbridge (theeelsfootinn.co.uk, 01728 830154). Seasonal NT tearoom and kiosk at start/end (nationaltrust.org.uk/dunwich-heath-and-beach/features/tea-room)

Public toilets At start

Public transport Connecting Communities demand responsive minibus (book in advance on 01728 635938)

Maps OS Explorer 212; Landranger 156

GRADIENT PROFILE



15 SUFFOLK DUNWICH HEATH & MINSMERE

► OS Explorer map 231 ► Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

2 1 mile/1.6km

At signed junction of four paths, turn L onto bridleway (leaving coast path) and follow sandy path through trees and heather. Go through gate and continue on sandy track across heathland, past Scots pines and birches. Reaching another gate, keep straight through it on wooded bridleway.

3 2 miles/3.2km

At end of woods, cross lane and keep straight beside huge grassy area beyond (following waymarked Sandlings Walk). Follow path ahead into another wood and keep straight onto winding drive between tall coppiced lime trees. At junction, turn L on lane. Cross bridge over New Cut and continue on lane into Eastbridge.

4 3 miles/5km

Keep L and, about 100m past Eel's Foot pub, turn L on footpath signed Minsmere Sluice (leaving Sandlings Walk). Opposite brick cottage, turn R on narrow footpath. Follow fenced path L and R and keep straight beside fields for ½ mile past plantations. Go through small gate and wiggle L and R to continue in same direction with ditch on R. Go through wooden gate and continue with views L over marshy meadows. At junction of tracks, keep straight through metal gate on grassy path towards ruined chapel.

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5 4½ miles/7.25km

Turn L at chapel on a grassy path. Go through gate and turn R back onto track between reedbeds to reach Minsmere Sluice. Go through another gate, over a brick bridge and turn L along the coast beside line of concrete anti-tank blocks. Keep sea on your R for nearly a mile and take any convenient path along shore, passing bird hides and lagoons of RSPB Minsmere.

6 5¼ miles/

Approaching low cliffs ahead, fork L along the path and follow the bridleway up to the white Coastguard Cottages at the top. [CW](http://www.cw.gov.uk)

**VIEW THE WALK ON
OS MAPS ONLINE:**
lfto.com/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING