

THREE SUGGESTED WALKS

These walks explore the ancient marshlands on the north side of Beccles near the river Waveney. The three walks of different lengths are marked on the map and by waymarking arrows on the trails.

GREEN WALK - 4 miles - 2 hours 30 minutes

RED WALK - 3 miles - 1 hour 45 minutes

BLUE WALK - 1 mile - 40 minutes

All walks start at the footbridge on the Quay.

Cycling is permitted, except on the river bank, the Quay, the path to the south of Calves Hurn and on Worlingham Wall.

The river bank and Calves Hurn paths are definitive and are open at all times; the other paths are permissive and may be closed at any time.

Please keep to the footpaths and take care when walking near the river or dykes.

PLEASE RESPECT OTHER USERS OF THE MARSHES



HISTORY OF BECCLES FEN

In the Roman period the marshland was probably underwater, but by the time Beccles was taken out of his royal estate in 955-957 by King Edwy and given to the priests looking after the burial place of King Edmund, water levels had fallen. The priests were succeeded by monks who built the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds in 1020. By the late 14th century the people of Beccles claimed the Fen (which included the marshes and Common), but a court ruled in the Abbot's favour.

When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, the people of Beccles sent a prominent citizen, William Rede, to London with enough money to buy the Fen, but Rede made a deal which favoured him and his family. Decades of conflict followed, until Elizabeth I granted a charter in 1584. This put the Fen Lands into the hands of a portreeve, surveyors and council who drew up rules to manage the lands for the benefit of the people of the town.

By now the marshes had been partly drained through the digging of ditches. In 1857 a steam pump enabled more of the land to be used for agriculture. Today the agricultural land is grazed, whereas up to the early 1990s you would have seen a variety of crops, including cereals, carrots, beans and even horseradish. The names 'Calves Hurn', from an Anglo-Saxon word for a corner of land, and 'Oxholmes', from an Old Norse term for raised land in a marsh, suggest that some of the marshlands were used for cattle a thousand years ago.

Part of the green and red walks follows the track of the railway which opened in 1854 connecting Halesworth with Aldeby (and eventually Great Yarmouth). The line crossed the river by a swing-bridge, some evidence of which remains.

We hope that you enjoy the continually evolving landscape of the marshes and their flora and fauna which include some rare species such as the free-floating water soldier plant and the Norfolk Hawker, a large brown dragonfly that may be seen in June or early July.



BECCLES
TOWN COUNCIL



BECCLES
FENLAND CHARITY TRUST



Suffolk
Wildlife Trust

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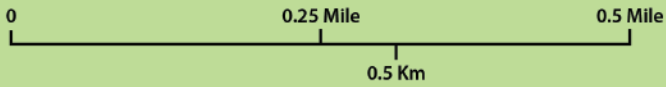
BECCLES MARSH TRAIL



WELCOME TO BECCLES FEN

Prepare for a walk through tranquil wetlands and picturesque landscapes. The trails are perfect for those looking to immerse themselves in nature's beauty.

Experience the fresh air, vibrant wildlife and serene atmosphere as you wander through the marshes.



BECCLES MARSH TRAIL

-  GREEN WALK
4 miles - 2½ Hours
-  RED WALK
3 miles - 1¾ Hours
-  BLUE WALK
1½ miles - 40 Mins
-  SEATING
-  FOOTBRIDGE
-  PARKING
-  TOILETS
-  INFO CENTRE
-  RAILWAY
-  ROAD



START OF TRAIL

A146 to NORWICH
THE QUAY

To BECCLES

A146 to LOWESTOFT