

STEPPING OUT

In the first of a new series of local walks, Nicholas Rudd-Jones enjoys a coastal stroll from Stiffkey to Blakeney

THIS walk takes you along the coast with an outlook towards Blakeney Point, one of the most stunning natural landscapes you will ever experience, with creeks, marshes and wildlife in abundance.

Walk data

Distance: 7.3km (4 1/2 miles)

Typical time: 1 3/4 hours

Height gain: none

Map: OS Landranger 132 NE Norfolk & 133 NW Norfolk

Start: Coasthopper bus stop Stiffkey Stores

Finish: Coasthopper bus stop Blakeney Bus Shelter (on the main A149 coast road)

Terrain: straightforward; sturdy footwear recommended

Norfolk Coast Path: this route follows the Norfolk Coast Path for almost its entire length. The path is well signed and the route is marked with an acorn motif.



Points of Interest

Seal Trips depart regularly from Morston Quay, depending on tide and weather. The seals are usually to be found basking on the sandbanks at the far end of Blakeney Point. On many trips, you will have the chance to land on Blakeney Point and see the evocative blue Lifeboat House.

Beans Boats 01263 740038

www.beansboattrips.co.uk; Bishops Boats 01263 740753 www.bishopsboats.com; Temples Seal Trips 01263 740791 www.sealtrips.co.uk

Blakeney Point, a four-mile-long sand and shingle spit is part of Blakeney National Nature Reserve, and has been managed by the National Trust since 1912. It's designated as one of the most important sites in Europe for nesting terns.

Blakeney was a commercial seaport until the early 20th century. Just inland from the harbour is Mariners Hill. This vantage point is believed to be man-made, probably as a lookout point for the harbour. Adjacent to the hill is the old Guildhall with a 14th century undercroft.



Pit stops

The Stiffkey Red Lion (150m west of Hollow Lane) offers good food and real ale. 01328 830552, www.stiffkey.com

Stiffkey Stores (by the bus stop) sell all sorts of lovely local and organic produce, including artisan breads and savouries. They bake incredible cakes and serve the most delicious coffee too! 01328 830489, www.stiffkeystores.com



The White Horse, Blakeney is a cosy and welcoming pub, just up the High Street from the harbour on the right. 01263 740574, www.whitehorseblakeney.co.uk

The Moorings, Blakeney is a lovely spot for a drink, slice of cake or light lunch, just a stone's throw from the harbour up the High Street. 01263 740054, www.blakeney-moorings.co.uk

The route:

1 From the Coasthopper bus stop, head a short way NW along the main road, then turn right (N) up a lane with a footpath sign, which takes you to the sea

2 On reaching the creek, turn right (E) along the North Norfolk Coast Path and follow it to Morston Quay, the embarkation point for seal trips

3 Cross the parking area and continue on the other side along the coast path; follow the path all the way to Blakeney. It comes in at the W end of the harbour;

proceed to the main parking area and centre of the village, just by the Blakeney Hotel

4 When it's time to catch the bus back, head back E and then down S down Westgate Street to the main road and the bus shelter.

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