

2020

Saxmundham to the Coast

Saxmundham, the hub of the Heritage Coast, lies in the valley of the small River Fromus, with new estates to the east and west, a varied compact shopping centre and an interesting museum of local history.

Bus service **64** from Ipswich and Woodbridge passes through the town centre, only 5 minutes' walk from the rail station. (Go down Station Approach, turn left along the Market Place into North Entrance) The train runs every hour and there is through train/bus ticketing. The bus runs every hour (except Sundays) up the hill past the church and into open country of rich farmland to **Leiston**, 4 miles away, sometimes referred to as "The Town the Garretts built". Apart from a ruined abbey to the north, there were only a few cottages in Leiston until Richard Garrett established his agricultural engineering business in 1778. The firm flourished and, in 1852, built the Long Shop, believed to be the first purpose-built assembly line in the world. The factory grew steadily as did the little town, where it was the major employer until its closure in the 1980s. The railway had reached Leiston in 1859 but closed to passengers in 1966.

The bus stops in the town square, outside the Long Shop, now a unique industrial museum open from March to October www.longshopmuseum.co.uk Its steam locomotive ("Sirapite"), traction engine and steam rollers are sometimes in action. Leiston Works Railway has been partly restored.

Two miles away on the coast is the hamlet of **Sizewell**, once just a fishing settlement but now dominated by a nuclear power station to the north. There are pleasant walks across the heathland to the southeast of Leiston to **Thorpeness**, built in the early 20th century as a model village, with its "House in the Clouds" (actually a disused water tower) and artificial lake, The Meare.

The **64** bus continues south from **Leiston**, past the town's independent cinema, to Aldringham and then through undulating woodland to **Aldeburgh**, where it descends a hill past the church and along the broad High Street- which has a famous fish and chip shop among the range of independent shops and cafés - to terminate at Fort Green, by the Brudenell Hotel. Tourist information is available from the Festival Office and Cinema in the High Street. At the northern end of Aldeburgh you can buy freshly caught fish from huts by the beach and view

the 16th century Moot Hall (home of the Town Council), which was once in the centre before coastal erosion and storms caused buildings east of it to disappear under the waves.

ALDEBURGH AND THE ARTS

Probably the most famous residents of Aldeburgh were the composer Benjamin Britten and the singer Peter Pears. They founded the Aldeburgh Festival in 1948 and today it attracts music lovers from all over the world every June. The Scallop on the north beach, created by Suffolk artist Maggi Hambling, is a memorial to Britten, who also created the concert hall at Snape Maltings. The poet George Crabbe (1754-1832) lived in Aldeburgh and his work has been set to music by Britten. The Red House, where the composer lived, is now a school of advanced music and place of research and is open to the public.

THE GARRETTS Apart from Leiston Works, Snape Maltings are also an example of the enterprise of the Garrett family. Newson Garrett established them in the mid 19th century and nowadays they form a cultural centre with accommodation and shops. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was the first English woman to qualify as a doctor who, in later years served as Mayor of Aldeburgh.

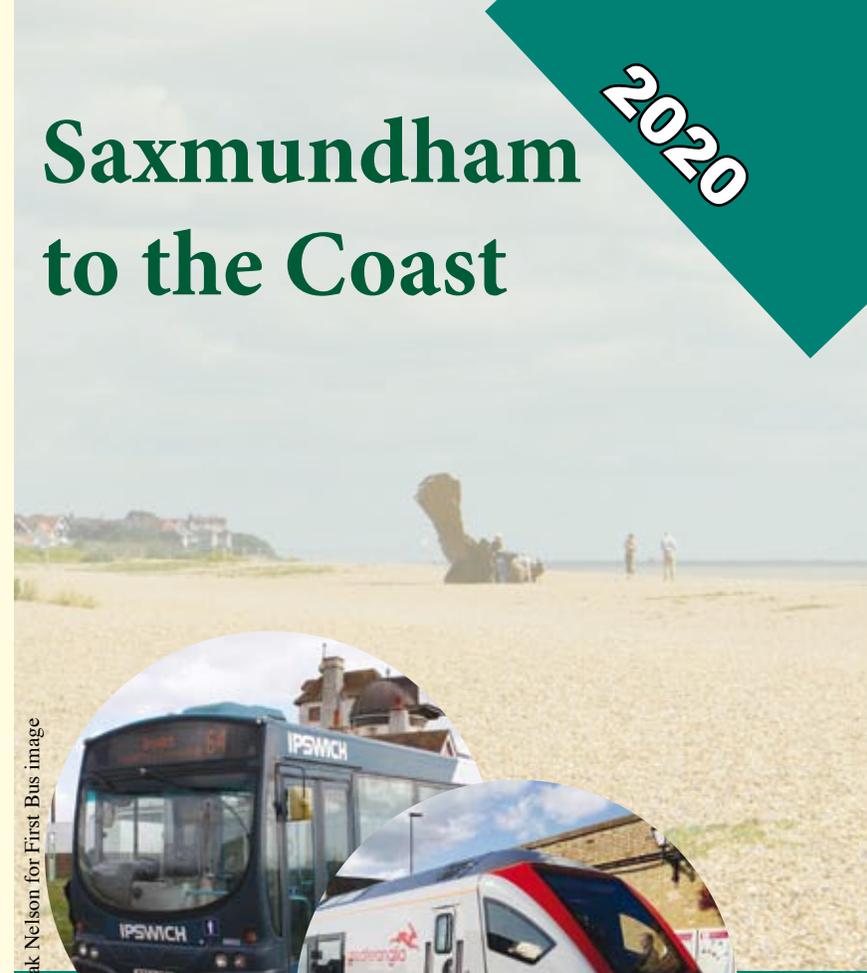
OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

SNAPE has only two buses a day **First Group 65**, but can be reached easily by bicycle from Saxmundham or Wickham Market (Campsea Ashe) or on foot from Aldeburgh via the long-distance Sailors' Path.

THORPENESS is served by three buses each way between Saxmundham and Aldeburgh, Border Bus **521**.

FURTHER INFORMATION: For walks, we recommend using the Landranger or Explorer OS maps. The Sailors' Path is on the website eastsuffolkline.com/walks For train times: phone Greater Anglia 0345 600 7245 or visit greateranglia.co.uk For train and bus times, phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit traveline.info Tourism information from local libraries in Saxmundham, Leiston or Aldeburgh or the Aldeburgh Festival Office in the High Street.

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ESTA has taken every care to ensure that the information in this leaflet is accurate but cannot be held responsible for any errors or changes since publication in April 2020



Zak Nelson for First Bus image



With the Saxmundham Train, and the Leiston & Aldeburgh Bus

Useful map and information inside



East Suffolk Travel Association - EST 1965



WHAT IS ESTA?

The East Suffolk Travel Association, which has published this leaflet as part of a series of three, was formed as an independent voluntary body in 1965 when the Ipswich - Lowestoft rail line was proposed for closure. Over the years it has campaigned successfully for the modernisation of the railway and for local bus services, which reach towns such as Southwold, Leiston, Aldeburgh, Framlingham and Bungay that are no longer on the rail network. ESTA collects evidence of passenger experiences, good and bad, as part of its campaigning and wants to see integrated transport with trains and buses playing a greater role for local people and the many visitors to our area.

eastsuffolktravel.org.uk

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