

Green and pleasant land

A self guided walk around Walsham le Willows in Suffolk



Explore a picturesque 1,000 year old Suffolk village
See charming cottages and spectacular rural scenery
Discover the surprising origins of village flora, fauna and farm life
Find out how international the English countryside can be

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**the stories of our landscapes
discovered through walks**





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The
Heritage
Alliance



Cover image: Barn Cottage © Rita Gardner

Green and pleasant land

Discover the worldwide stories of a Suffolk countryside village

Welcome to Walk the World! This walk in Walsham-le-Willows is one of 20 in different parts of the UK.

Each walk explores how the 206 participating nations in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games have been part of the UK's history for many centuries.

Along the routes you will discover evidence of how different countries have shaped our towns and cities.



Riding Farm house

Rita Gardner © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain



The Avenue

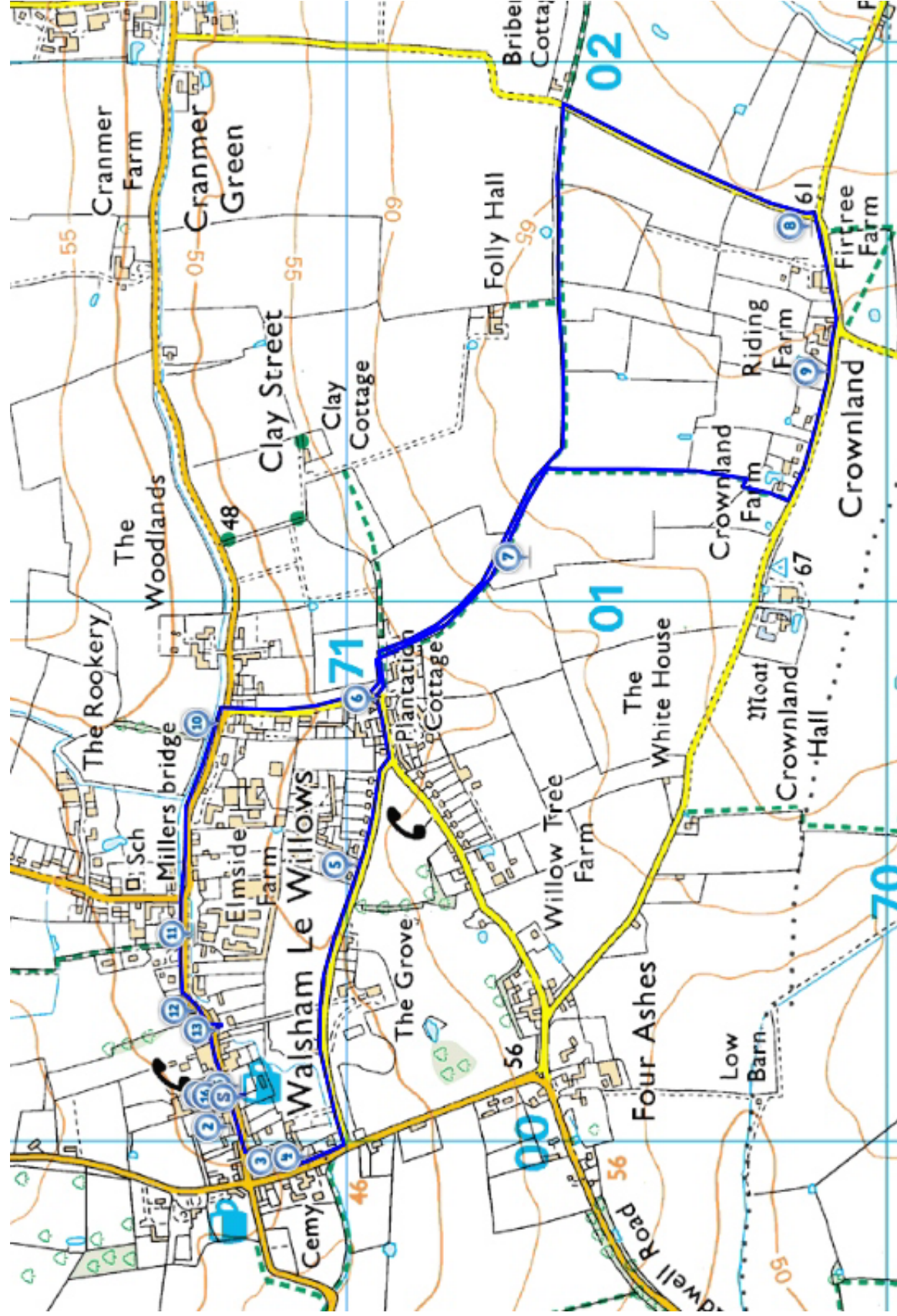
Rita Gardner © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

The picturesque Suffolk village of Walsham le Willows can trace its history back over 1,000 years. The gentle rural landscape of farm fields, ancient hedges and country cottage gardens, fits many peoples' image of England as a green and pleasant land.

Yet beside their obvious charms, many of the rural villages that seem quaintly English are full of international stories. Walsham le Willows is a good example.

On this walk you can enjoy spectacular scenery and discover how an English village landscape can be brimming with international connections - from the trees by the roads to the crops in the fields, the goods in the shops to even the ground beneath your feet!

Route overview



Practical information

Location	Walsham le Willows, Suffolk, East of England
Getting there	<p>Car - Walsham le Willows is about 11 miles from Bury St Edmunds, Diss and Stowmarket. Access via the A143 to the north of the village or the A14 between Cambridge and Ipswich to the south of the village. There is some free parking outside the Village Hall.</p> <p>Bus - The route 338 services runs between Walsham and Bury St Edmunds railway station. There are bus stops in Walsham by the Six Bells pub, along The Street and on both Palmer Street and Townhouse Road.</p> <p>Train - The closest station to Walsham le Willows is Elmswell (5½ miles away). Elmswell station is on the line between Ipswich and Cambridge with services hourly during week days and every two hours on Sundays.</p>
Start & finish point	Walsham le Willows Village Hall car park, IP31 3AZ
Distance	3 ½ miles
Need a shorter route?	<p>There are two options to shorten the route if required.</p> <p>For a walk of around 2 miles Stops 8 and 9 can be missed out.</p> <p>To explore the village only, take the short cut along The Avenue (after Stop 4).</p>
Level	Gentle - a mostly flat village and rural walk.

Terrain

Most of the walk is on pavements and paths. The rural paths can be muddy after rain. Stops 6-8 are on a mixture of narrow footpaths, tracks and small roads - ensure you have suitable footwear.

Suitable for

Families - family-friendly with plenty of sights for all ages

Wheelchairs & pushchairs - An entirely step-free route

Dogs - Must be kept on a lead especially on farm land

Refreshments

There are various food shops in the village. The Six Bells (Tel: 01359 259726) and The Blue Boar Inn (Tel: 01359 259168) both serve food. The Blue Boar has an evening restaurant, note though it is closed on Mondays.

Facilities

Customers can use the toilets in the two pubs.

Other info

Walsham Open Gardens festival is held each August Bank Holiday weekend. The event offers a chance to visit 32 village gardens plus enjoy live music, art and craft exhibitions, refreshments and a village market. Open 11am-6pm.

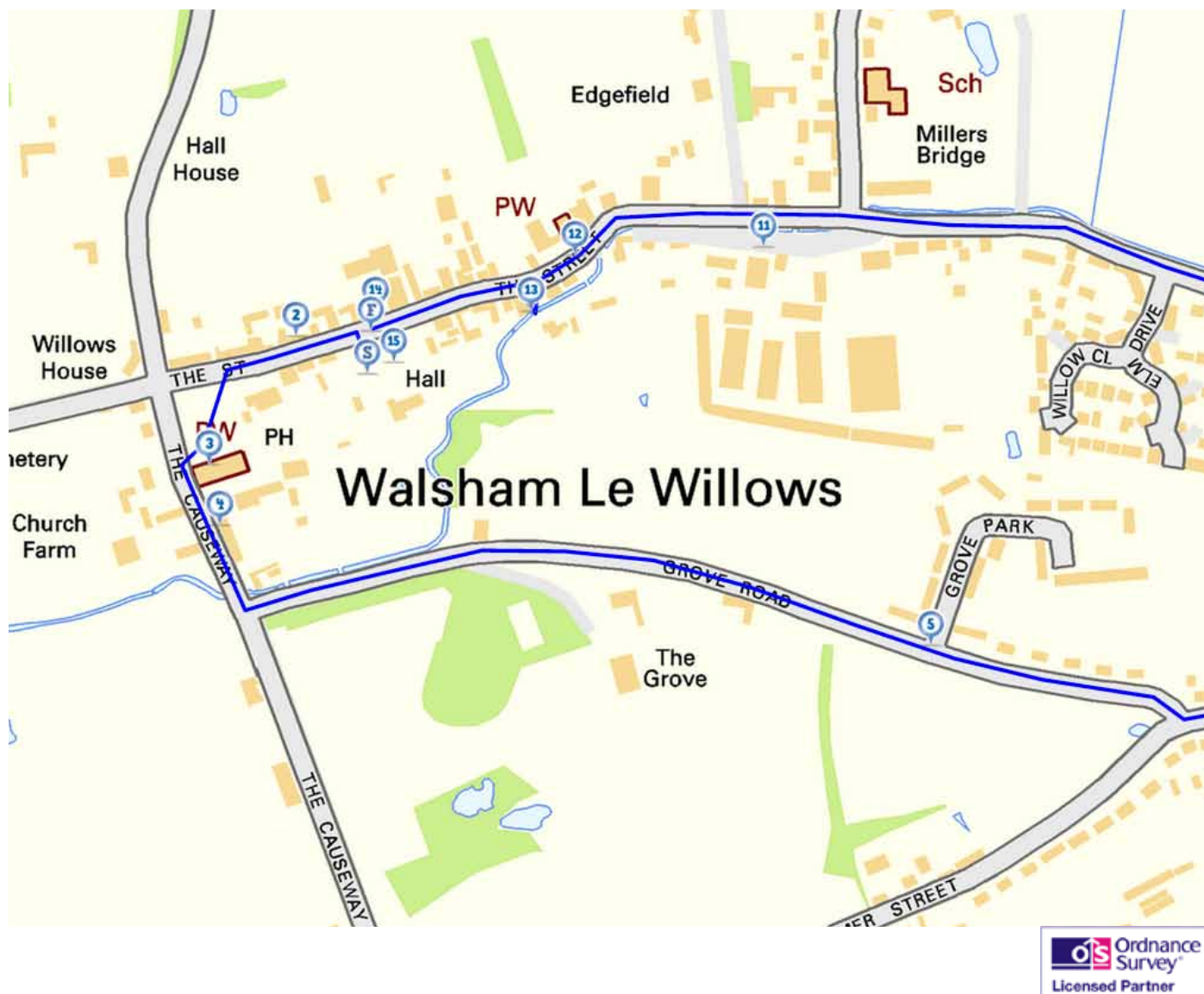
Places to visit

St Edmundsbury Cathedral can be found in nearby Bury St. Edmunds (13 miles from Walsham-le-Willows), open daily from 8.30am to 6pm.

Tourist Information

The nearest is **Mid Suffolk Tourist Information Centre** in Stowmarket (around 11 miles from Walsham-le-Willows). Located at the Museum of East Anglian Life on Crowe Street, IP14 1DL. Tel: 01449 676800 Email: tic@midsuffolk.gov.uk

Start and end sections of the route



Stopping points

- | | |
|---|---|
| S. Walsham Village Hall car park, The Street | 12. Shops and Congregational Church, The Street |
| 2. Barn Cottage, The Street | 13. The Avenue |
| 3. St Mary's Church, The Causeway | 14. The White House and Willow Cottage, The Street |
| 4. Gardens along Grove Road | 15. Walsham bowling green |
| 5. Grove Park | F. Walsham Village Hall car park, The Street |
| ... | |

Middle section of the route



Stopping points

- 5. Grove Park
 - 6. The Pound, Palmer Street / Townhouse Road
 - 7. Mill Lane
 - 8. Bribery Lane
 - 9. Riding Farm and The Quillet
 - 10. Birch tree plantation, The Street
 - 11. Clarkes, The Street
-

Directions

These directions are for use with the Walsham le Willows walk audio commentary. Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

1. Welcome to Walsham le Willows Walsham Village Hall car park

Directions 1

Start from the village hall car park in the centre of the village. Leave the car park then turn left along the pavement, on to The Street. Stop in front of the first yellow cottage and listen to Track 2.

2. Curved tiles from flat lands Barn Cottage, The Street

Directions 2

Continue up to the former Guildhall. Opposite the Guildhall, turn left into St Mary's Church. Stop in the churchyard and listen to Track 3.

3. In memoriam St Mary's Church, The Causeway

Directions 3

When you are ready leave the church through the gates and turn left onto the pavement. Proceed left and pause in front of the two white houses on the left, looking at their front gardens. At the small bridge soon after turn left into The Grove. Walk about 75 metres down this small lane beside the stream then stop and listen to Track 4.

4. An international grove Gardens along Grove Road

Directions 4

Continue along Grove Road, passing Brook House on your left, until you reach the black double gates on the right. Opposite the gates is a small pedestrian lane called The Avenue.

For a shorter route turn left now and head along the avenue of trees to the centre of Walsham village. Near the end of The Avenue, beside the white barrier gate, you will re-join the walk at Stop 13. For the full walk, continue along Grove Road and stop by the first turn on the left. Listen here to Track 5

5. The green revolution

Grove Park

Directions 5

Continue down Grove Road to its end, where there is a T-junction. Bear left here into Palmer Street. After about 100 metres you will reach a small brick compound on the corner of Palmer Street and Townhouse Road. Stop beside this compound and listen to Track 6.

6. Missing mouflon

The Pound, Grove Road

Directions 6

Take the signed footpath track just past the Pound. Follow it to two footpath signs, just before the old pink cottage (Plantation Cottage). Take the right hand path, through the kissing gate and go up the hill following a thick hedge. Continue a short distance along this footpath at the edge of the field beside the hedge. Listen to Track 7.

7. Global farming

Mill Lane

Directions 7 - When you reach the narrow tarmac lane – called Bribery Lane – turn right onto it and follow the road. Stop when you reach the end and listen to Track 8.

8. Apples and pears

Bribery Lane

Directions 8

Turn right onto the Westhorpe to Walsham Road, signposted 'Walsham 1 and Badwell Ash 2'. Continue for about 100 metres past Fir Tree Farm. Stop when you reach the next white house on the right, Riding Farm house, and its neighbour The Quillet. Listen to Track 9.

9. Tobacco and a ban

Riding Farm and The Quillet

Directions 9

Continue a short distance further to the footpath sign on the right. Cross over the stile and follow the footpath across Mill Field. On the way try to imagine the teams of horses in years gone by ploughing this great open field divided into strips, and admire the view of Walsham village in its valley.

Once you reach the far side of the field and the 700 year old hedge, turn left onto Mill Lane footpath and retrace your steps back to the kissing gate. Turn left back to the Pound. Then turn right and walk all the way along Townhouse Road.

At the end of Townhouse Road turn left onto the pavement. Stay on the left hand side and stop after about 30 metres. Listen here to Track 10.

10. A tale of two birches

Birch tree plantation, The Street

Directions 10

Continue along the pavement past across Elm Drive. When the pavement divides around a small stream take the left fork, up beside the builder's yard and some houses, keeping the stream on your right. You will soon come to the gates of Cygnet House on the left and then the gates of Clarke's of Walsham. Stop here and listen to Track 11.

11. Festive firs

Clarkes, The Street

Directions 11

Continue along the pavement, past Bank House, looking at its garden plants as you pass by. Among them you will see Mahonia japonica with its bright yellow winter flowers – a native of northeast China – and Aucuba japonica, the spotted laurel native to Japan and China. Stop on the small bridge where the pavement rejoins the main road, Church Street, opposite Rolfe's of Walsham and the Congregational Church. Listen to Track 12.

12. Body and soul food

Shops and Congregational Church, The Street

Directions 12

Continue along Church Street for about 60 metres until you reach a narrow pathway on the left beside Avenue House. This is The Avenue. Turn down The Avenue and stop beside the white barrier gate. Listen here to Track 13.

If you have taken the short walk, you turned into the far end of The Avenue at Directions 4 and will need to walk up The Avenue until almost at the end.

13. English country garden?

The Avenue

Directions 13

From The Avenue retrace your steps back to Church Street and continue towards the starting point in the Car Park. Stop at the bowling green, beside the wooden bench that is a memorial to Catherine Martineau. Look across the road to the White House and the adjacent pink painted Willow Cottage. Listen to Track 14.

14. Thatched variety

The White House and Willow Cottage, The Street

Directions 14

From the same point turn to look at the bowling green. Listen to Track 15.

15. Bowled over

Walsham bowling green

Directions 15

Walk the remaining few metres to the car park and then listen to Track 16.

16. The world beneath our feet

Walsham Village Hall car park

Directions 16

You are now back at the start of the walk. You may like to explore or enjoy some refreshments in the village.

Further information

Walsham le Willows village website

www.walsham-le-willows.org

The Blue Boar Inn

www.theblueboarwalsham.co.uk

Rolfes of Walsham

www.rolfesbutchers.co.uk

The Six Bells

www.walsham-le-willows.org/amenities/sixbells

St Mary's Parish Church

www.walsham-le-willows.org/churches/parish

Walsham Open Gardens

www.walshamopengardens.com

Walsham le Willows Sports Club

www.walshamlewillowssportsclub.com

Wattisfield Wines

www.wattisfieldwines.co.uk/index.html

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Walk the World walk:

- **Rita Gardner** for creating and researching the walk and providing photographs
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Big, big skies over Mill Field
© Rita Gardner



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