



## Shottisham

You can see the Deben estuary from the churchyard of St Margaret's on a clear day. Set on a knoll above a quiet village in the Sandlings, the present building dates from 1313 and is said to have been built by the monks of Butley Abbey, now Butley Priory.

Discover the brass in the nave floor dated 1612 and featuring rose and sunflower, note the ancient roodloft staircase, and admire the altar kneelers, designed and stitched locally.

## Alderton

The ivy-clad ruin of a tower is one of the first things to notice about this church. Already crumbling through lack of funds, it finally collapsed in 1821. Note the little turret for the bell to mark the Millennium.

Spot the wild man stalking a dragon in the stonework of the handsome late medieval north porch. Inside, admire the fine 'Light of the World' altar frontal with its fish to symbolise St Andrew.



## Ramsholt

The miles-from-anywhere location of this centuries old seamount church up a tiny lane, rewards the walker with a hauntingly beautiful view over the River Deben.

Pause to admire the splendid Waller tombstones and the curious buttressed tower built of flint, brick, and the local riverbed stone known as septaria. Step inside to a simple interior with box pews installed in the 1850s when the church was rescued from ruin.



## Hollesley

The lofty tower of All Saints featured on the earliest maps as a landmark for ships entering nearby Orford Haven.

Stepping inside you will be drawn by the wonderful collection of carved bench ends, mostly the work of an Ipswich carver in the 1950s. Especially poignant is the modern commemorative window in the north aisle by Welsh artist Meg Lawrence



Other trails in the series:

Woolpit Eye Southwold  
Clare Framlingham

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### Route 4 ■■■■

Hollesley to Shottisham  
2.5 miles/4.25km



Leave Hollesley church through the WW2 memorial gates to the main road and turn left. Almost immediately, turn right on to a waymarked track by the 16th century former Fox Inn where silver fox and beaver were farmed in the early 20th century.

Follow the track and, when it meets a house, bear left on to the footpath. After a few yards, turn left on to a boardwalk with landscaped gardens and a large pond populated by exotic wildfowl on your right. Continue on to a bridge over a stream with a metal gate. Bear diagonally right across the meadow to reach a wooden gate in the hedgerow. Take the uphill track and, at the top, bear right to pass under the field irrigator, dipping down and back up to a gate. Pass through and follow the track over a cattle grid to meet the corner of a road. You are now at the site of Holy Stile where Hollesley's annual three-day fair took place in the Middle Ages. **1** Turn right down Bussock Lane. This



ancient tree-lined track was the main highway from the peninsula to the river crossing and Woodbridge.

Where the track leaves the trees at two cottages, turn left up a sandy farm track. At the top of the hill, take the left hand track between fields, **2** heading towards a small wood.

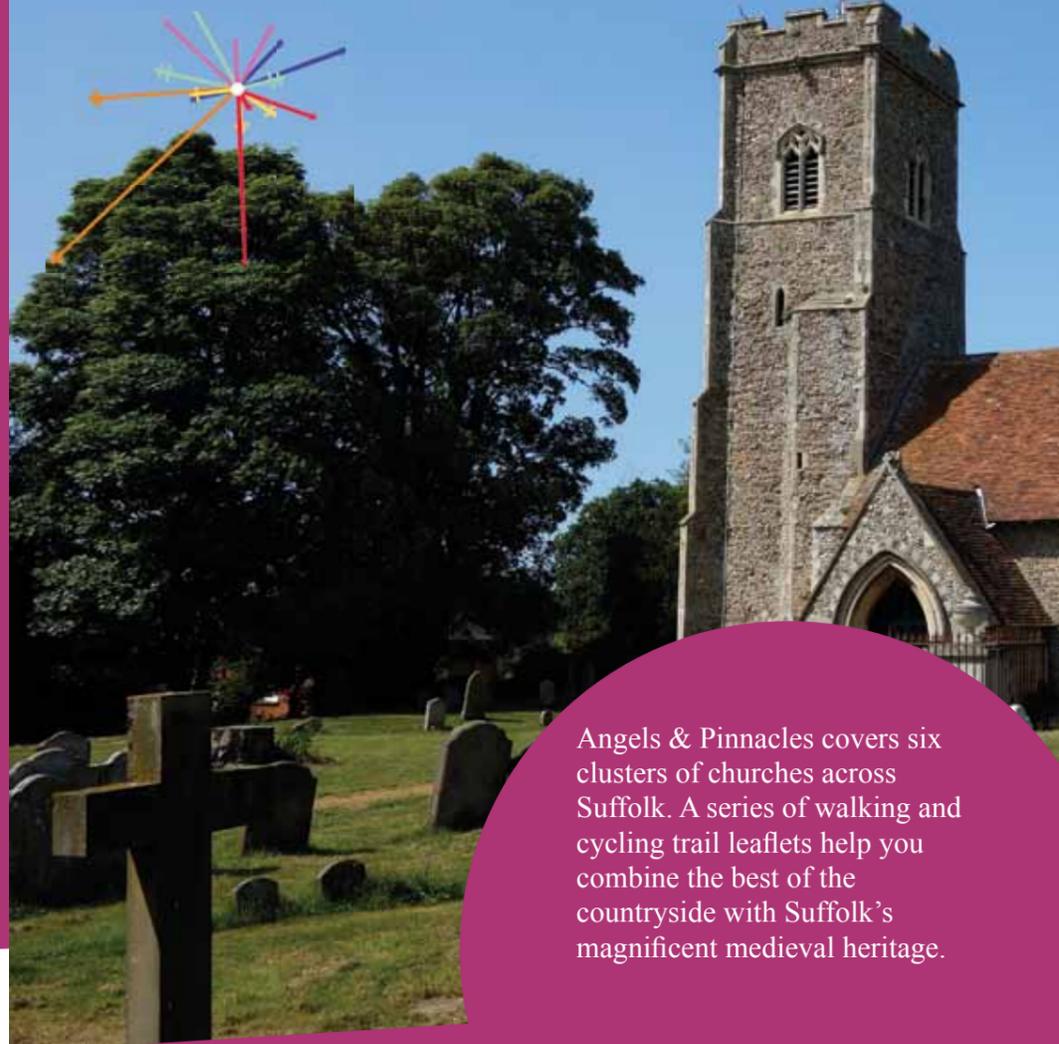
At the wood, take the right fork along a footpath with trees on your left and a fenced field on your right. Continue along the track and, where it opens out to heathland, you will see a small wooden gate on your left which leads to the path taking you to Shottisham church.

### Explore further

Use the map overleaf to enjoy a circular walk of all the churches or relax with a section at a time. The map also shows two pleasant diversions — a short walk south on the B1083 to Bawsey church, or a visit to Sutton, reached by footpath from Shottisham. You can also take in all the churches on a day's cycle ride.

## Angels & Pinnacles Church Heritage Trails

No.6 in the series: Shottisham cluster



Angels & Pinnacles covers six clusters of churches across Suffolk. A series of walking and cycling trail leaflets help you combine the best of the countryside with Suffolk's magnificent medieval heritage.

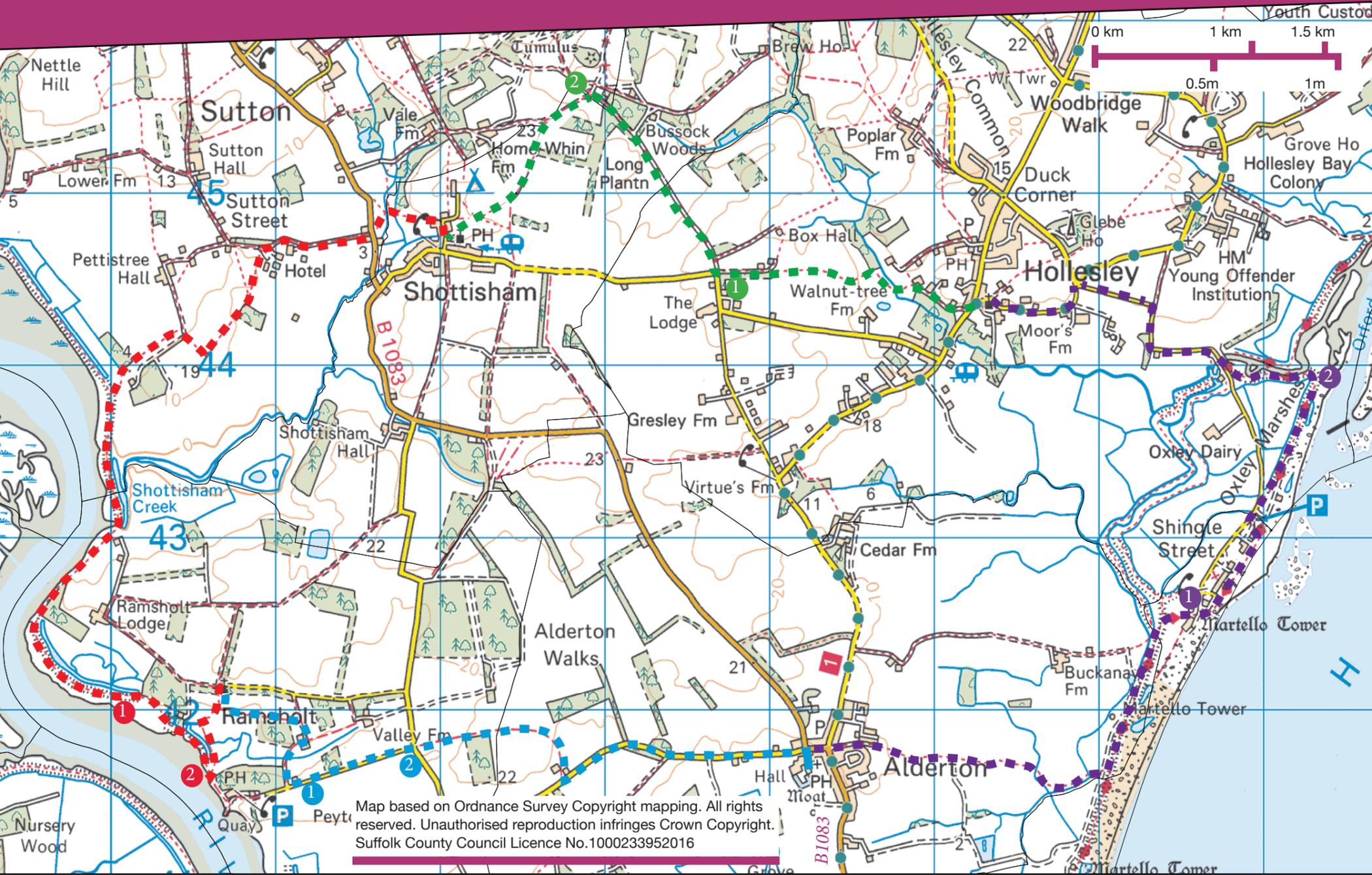
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St Margaret's Shottisham – All Saints' Ramsholt  
St Andrew's Alderton – All Saints' Hollesley



# Angels & Pinnacles – Church Heritage Trails



## Route 1 — 4 miles / 6.5 km

St Margaret's Shottisham to All Saints' Ramsholt



Take the steps at the western end of the church towards the Sorrel Horse pub and turn right into Church Lane. At the allotments, turn left along a footpath, passing through a gate. Follow the path and, after crossing the stream, bear left to a stile.

Cross the road and follow the private road down to Wood Hall, extended in 1903 by Sir Cuthbert Quilter of Bawdsey Manor as a home for his mother. Bear right past the hall and take the footpath to the left just after the entrance to the Coach House. Pass through a wooden gate to a metal gate and follow the path up to a corner at Sutton Knoll, for centuries the heart of the Sutton village. Turn right to follow the track alongside the wood, passing the board for the Pliocene Forest. Now head down to the Deben. Note the pits once dug out for coprolite (fossilised clay) to improve the sandy soil in the district. Turn left to follow the path downstream, passing over Shottisham Creek, walking above

some low cliffs before reaching disused oyster beds with views down the river to Bawdsey and Old Felixstowe. **1** This stretch of the river was once a busy port where Edward III assembled his fleet to invade France. After a short climb up through woodland, descend back towards the river and the dock at Ramsholt, built in the 19th century for importing coal and exporting coprolite. It had been a ferry crossing for centuries. Walking along the rebuilt riverbank, Ramsholt church will appear on your left. At the end of the new bank, **2**

## Route 2 — 3 miles/5 km

All Saints' Ramsholt to St Andrew's Alderton



Turn right out of Ramsholt church porch, passing through a wooden gate to turn left down a steep, hedged path to a three-way brideway sign. Take the left turn and follow the field edge round until reaching another three-way sign. Turn right and follow the track down to 'The Street', past Gamekeeper's Cottage and the 1879 Victorian Old School House, enlarged in 1913 to accommodate 56 children but closed in 1926. Walk on past the thatched cottage, once a shop. Only a few people live here now. Continue on to the bottom of the shallow valley, following the path back up to a road where you turn left by a wall. Pause to admire distant views of Bawdsey Haven and imagine how, in medieval times, it was an international port with the monopoly on wine imports from Calais. **1** Follow the road to a junction. **2** Now go straight ahead to pick up the footpath. Follow the yellow arrows round to the right to meet up again with the road, next to a small farmhouse. Turn left on to the road and follow it down to Alderton church.

## Route 3 — 4.5 miles / 7.25 km

St Andrew's Alderton to All Saints' Hollesley



From Alderton church, walk the few yards to the village shop at the crossroads at the centre of the village. Across the street is the Swan Inn, a smugglers' rendezvous in the 18th century with heavy duties on such items as spirits. Take the track to the left of the shop between houses and a playing field. Walk downhill and you will soon see the sea and two Martello Towers. Built 1810-12, they made up a chain of fortresses to defend against an anticipated invasion by Napoleon. Continue to follow the track downhill and cross a wooden bridge over a ditch.

Turn right over the bridge, following the footpath down to the sea. Keep to the path on the sea defences and turn left to pass the first Martello tower. **1** Head for the second tower at the end of Shingle Street and reflect that the whole community of this village was given just 48 hours to leave their homes in 1940 when the beach was heavily mined and bombing trials destroyed most of the buildings. Walk along the shingle between the sea and the houses to the old coastguard cottages. At the small car park, make your way back along the sea defences, following them as they turn back inland to the road. Pause for a fine view of Orford Castle up the coast. **2** On reaching the road, turn right. Follow the road as it turns and climbs past 'Dumb-boy Cottage', where smugglers could leave messages without fear of betrayal. Turn left at the first road junction, and continue to Hollesley church.



There is a small car park at Shottisham church, just downhill from St Margaret's Campsite.

There are parking spaces near Ramsholt church but no dedicated parking at Alderton and Hollesley churches, although there is rarely a problem finding space nearby.

The area is served by the Suffolk Links Wilford, bookable up to a week in advance. Details at [suffolklonboard.com](http://suffolklonboard.com)

The service connects with other bus services as well as the train stations at Woodbridge and Melton.



Nearby pubs are: Sorrel Horse, Shottisham; Shepherd & Dog, Hollesley; Ramsholt Arms, Ramsholt, The Swan, Alderton

Convenience stores are at Hollesley and Alderton.

Toilet with disabled access at Bawdsey Quay picnic area. 1 April-31 October only.

More walks and great days out at: [www.discoversuffolk.org.uk](http://www.discoversuffolk.org.uk)