Southwold is an interesting town on the Suffolk coast, with many fine buildings, traditional amusements and gift shops, evokes seaside holidays of the past. In 2013 the Pier was bought by Gough Hotels and remains a family run business. Gough Hotels will build on the success of the previous owners and in time develop the pavilion into a luxury Art Deco style hotel to transform the business into a 365 days a year enterprise.

F: Gunhill Cliff - view of the coastline. For this reason, it was chosen as the place to locate the town’s defences. The cannon have been produced with the generous support of Gough Hotels. 01502 722105 www.southwoldpier.co.uk

E: Southwold Harbour - is used by a handful of fishing boats and many pleasure craft. In the early 1900s there were over 100 working boats and a fish market and processing unit. The Harbour Inn has a line on the wall showing the height of the floods in 1953, a reminder of the vulnerability of coastal communities. Near the river mouth, the 1893 Alfred Corry life boat is displayed in a traditional boat shed.

D: Southwold Pier, with its wooden buildings, traditional amusements and gift shops, evokes seaside holidays of the past. In 2013 the Pier was bought by Gough Hotels and remains a family run business. Gough Hotels will build on the success of the previous owners and in time develop the pavilion into a luxury Art Deco style hotel to transform the business into a 365 days a year enterprise.

C: The Lighthouse was built around 1889 to guide ships entering the River Blyth to warn of dangerous shingle banks along the coast. It remains a working lighthouse today, although remotely controlled from Harwich. During the summer, it is sometimes open to visitors.

B: The Town of Southwold has many fine Georgian, Regency and Victorian buildings. Fire destroyed the town in 1659 and the numerous ‘greens’ of Southwold are thought to have been left as fire breaks. The Church of St Edmund is one of the finest seaside churches in England. Near the lighthouse is the Sole Bay Inn. The name recalls the Battle of Sole Bay fought off Southwold in 1672, part of an on-going war with the Netherlands over trade and naval superiority. Southwold is well known for its brewing industry. Adnams has brewed beer in the town since 1872. To find out more about the town’s history, visit Southwold Museum in Victoria Street.

A: Southwold is part of the Suffolk Coast National Nature Reserve. They are an important home for birds such as bittern, marsh harrier and heron. The Marshes were claimed from the River in the 19th century when flood defence banks were built.

Images: Front cover - Southwold Pier. A: Southwold Pier - traditional seaside fun (Southwold Pier Ltd). B: The Lighthouse - an iconic feature of Southwold. C: Strawberry Clover - the pink seedpods are visible in late summer (Darren Underwood). D: Bittern - elusive marsh dweller. E: Southwold Harbour - home to a small fishing fleet. F: Gunhill Cliff - the cannon have a fascinating history.

Visiting Southwold

- Ordnance Survey Map No. 231 (Southwold and Bungay).
- Easy access via the A12 and A1095.
- Plenty of parking.
- Public transport information: www.suffolkonboard.com or call 0845 606 6171
- Southwold Tourist Information: www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk or call 01502 724729
- Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB 01394 445225 www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org

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The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

The Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of Britain’s finest landscapes. It extends from the Stour Estuary in the south to the eastern fringe of Ipswich and north to Kessingland. The AONB covers 403 square kilometres, including wildlife rich wetlands, ancient heaths, windswept shingle beaches and historic towns and villages.

Key to Map
- AONB area
- Additional project area
- Railways/stations
- Main roads
- Woodland
- Heathland
- Additional route checking by Mary and Tony Bishop. Printed on Recycled, FSC, ECF, Carbon Balanced paper.
**‘Buildings and Boats beside the Sea’**

**Time:** 2 hours  
**Terrain:** Paths and tracks, which can be muddy after rain. Section of beach walking. This walk takes you onto public highways. Please be aware of traffic. We recommend high visibility clothing.

Start in front of Southwold Pier facing inland. Turn left and follow the path beside the railings onto the low cliffs. The path continues past greens and elegant houses.

When you reach South Green (signed) turn right. Walk inland across the grass until you come to a large green. Continue past the post box. Continue past the post box into a short dead-end lane. At the end, take the path between two flint walls. As the path turns left, continue ahead on the footpath.

**Turn left, towards Walberswick.** This is the track bed of the Halesworth to Southwold Railway, which closed in 1929.

Just before the river bridge, turn left. Follow the footpath alongside the river to join the unmade road through Southwold Harbour. When the road turns sharply left, leave it and cross the car park. Walk over the dunes onto the beach or follow the wide grassy area behind the dunes.

When you reach the first beach huts, look for the Gunhill Beach Café. Take the path beside the Café that turns right and leads up Gunhill Cliff. Walk through the gardens beside the railings and drop down to the promenade. Continue along the promenade to the Pier or explore the town.

**‘Harbour, Marshes and a Bracing Beach’**

**Time:** 1 hour 30 mins  
**Terrain:** Well surfaced paths and tracks. Section of beach walking. This walk takes you onto public highways. Please be aware of traffic. We recommend high visibility clothing.

Follow ‘Buildings and Boats beside the Sea’ Walk until you reach the post box.

Turn left at the post box and follow the road as it drops downhill. At the bottom, where the road turns left, keep straight ahead on the footpath towards Southwold Harbour.

When you reach the road at Southwold Harbour, turn left. When the road turns sharply left, cross the car park and walk over the dunes onto the beach or follow the wide grassy area behind the dunes.

Follow the beach (or grassy area) and promenade back to the Pier.