

# A Sense of Place

## Walk 4: Beyond the Sleepy Lagoon

Start at the car park entrance (1)(2)(3)(4) and walk along the tarmac road. (5) Take the first turning on the left, signposted 'to Pigeon House and Greenlease Farms only, Private, Public Footpath'. (6) Carry on down this road (7), past 'The Clock Tower' on the left, until it takes a sharp right hand bend just beyond Greenlease Farm. At the bend continue straight ahead on a wide, grassy track to reach a field.

At the field corner turn left (public footpath sign) (8) to follow the field margin, keeping the ditch and remnants of a hedgerow on your left. Continue past 'Kitty's Seat' (9) and go through a damp, wooded area (10) to reach a shingle ridge (11) with views across the reed beds to Pagham and across the sea to Bognor Regis (12).

Turn left at the top of the ridge and walk with the sea on your right (13). It is easiest to walk along the top of the ridge on the hard shingle track (14) (15).

When views of open mudflats and saltmarsh (at low tide) (16) or shallow water (at high tide) appear, turn left and descend off the ridge over a path laid with railway sleepers. Go past a bench on the left to follow the hard shingle track along the edge of the harbour.

There is a small wooded area after which a wide track on the left leads directly back to the car park at Church Norton (17). 2 miles

### Optional extension:

Continue along the harbourside track (may be wet and muddy in places), ignore seats and steps up to a bird-hide. Go up the second set of steps and turn left to follow the path between two hedgerows along the top of the bank. At the end of the path go over the stone stile into the churchyard of St. Wilfrid's Chapel. Straight ahead is the churchyard gate which leads back into the car park. 2.25 miles

The walk is described anticlockwise to combine with the walks 'Seaside Stroll' and 'East Beach Amble'.

**1 St Wilfrid's Chapel** Wilfrid and his small entourage arrived in Selsey in 680 and set up his foundation at Norton. Later he raised his timber Cathedral close to the Priory and the present site of the Chancel. It would have been near the remains of the Roman lookout tower which preceded the Norman Motte and Bailey castle. Wilfrid remained in Selsey for about five years but his Cathedral stood for 394 years, with 26 Bishops, until the see was removed to Chichester around 1074/5.



**2 Churchyard** The Medieval parish church of St Peter stood here until 1864 when all but the chancel was demolished and rebuilt at Selsey. The chancel was then dedicated to St Wilfrid. It is thought to be the site of St Wildrid's original church and cathedral see.



**3 A mass clock** or sundial is just visible on the south west side of the chancel, etched into the stonework. It was used to work out when it was time for services to be held.



**4 St Wilfrid** founded a Benedictine monastery near here. Monks observed a strict timetable which made sure their lives were used in God's service. Banks within the Priory's coppiced wood show it is very old.



**5 The Main Village** was originally here in Rectory Lane in Norton (North Town) and included the Parish Poor House and the Post Office at Rose Cottage ( see picture). The village declined when the Church was moved.



**6 The Airfield** During 1944 four squadrons of spitfires flew from here to Normandy on D-Day and one of them shot down the first German Plane. See the Blue Plaque in Rectory Lane for more details.



**7 Tithe maps**, made in the 1840s, recorded the name of each field, who owned and farmed them – and how much money each had to pay the local clergy in tax. Fields here were owned by the Lord of the Manor.



**8 The Coastguard Station** called Wall End situated here in 19th Century until early 20th Century. In 1899 it was manned by 10 men. Before 1852 there was a station on the beach but this 'was no longer safe to live in'.



### 9 Kitty's Seat



See stone for Kitty's details

**10 Oak knopper galls** are mis-shapen acorns. They grow where minute gall wasps lay their eggs. They were first recorded in the UK in 1959. A Turkey Oak must also be nearby for the wasp to complete its life-cycle.



**11 Water Voles** A good network of well managed ditches and rifees is needed over the Peninsula to help water vole numbers re-establish and thrive. Site surveys and mink trapping help but their future is still far from secure.



**12 Eric Coates** was inspired in 1930, while looking across the sea from East Beach, to Bognor, to compose 'By the Sleepy Lagoon' which is still used for the radio programme 'Desert Island Discs'.



**13 Severals** The term 'severals' came into our language in the later Middle Ages, from the French meaning separate. When applied to land it means privately owned. Now it forms an important reed bed habitat for wildlife.



**14 Vegetated Shingle plants** can often vary their growth form according to their habitat. A low cushion shape avoids wind damage and conserves moisture (sea campion). Many plants here have fleshy leaves for water storage.



**15 Fossil Beds** Fossil remains of rhinoceros, hippopotamus and straight tusked elephants from the Pleistocene era have been found along the shoreline. The fossils relate to the first epoch of the Quaternary



**16 Salt Marsh** Food and sediment are brought onto the mudflats twice a day by the tides, making the habitat rich in worms and small snails. These are eaten by many types of wading bird who probe for food in the mud.



**17 The Mound** Turn the corner to see a display board to learn about the Mound. A picture of the tower can be seen at Chichester Cathedral.

# Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group

Involving local people in caring for their environment



“A Sense of Place”

Every place is unique, shaped by its past, and echoes of the past can be found all around.

This walk connects stories of the people, landscape, plants & animals that were and are uniquely Selsey

Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group draws volunteers together in positive action for wildlife and the benefit of the community.

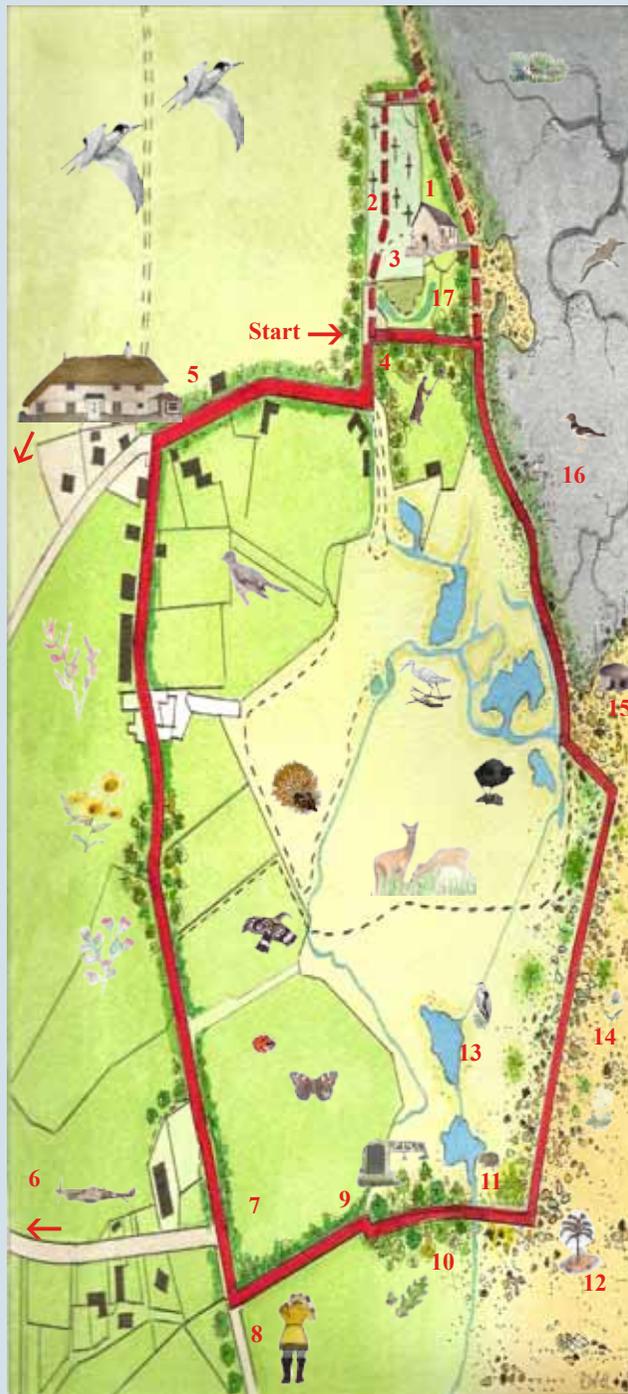
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Supported by The Friends of Pagham Harbour

Distance: 2 miles or 2.5miles Time: 2 hours  
Start: Church Norton Car Park GR 872956

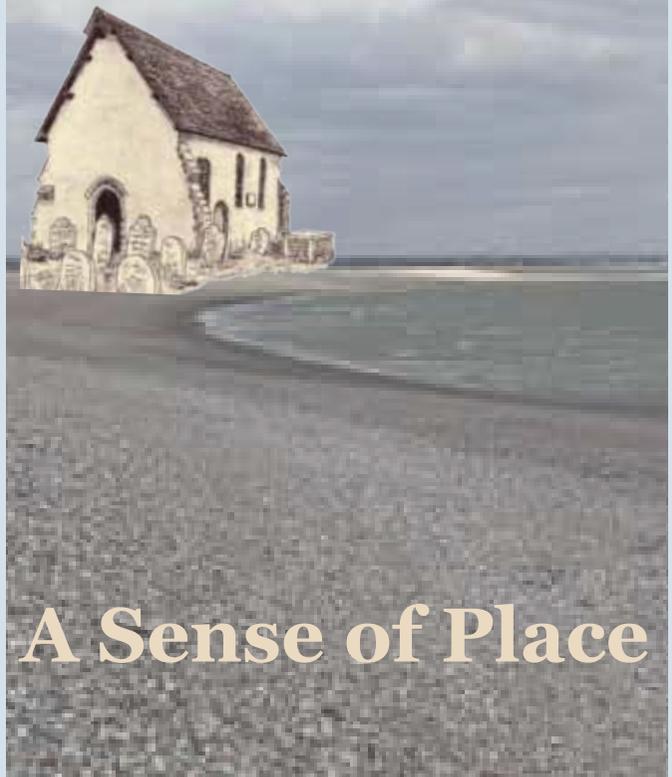


Limited parking - please be considerate to those wishing to visit the churchyard.

# Selsey Walks

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