

Welcome

Our lovely little village, nestled in the heart of rural Suffolk, has a long and varied history.

In Anglo Saxon times this was *beort seate*, meaning 'bright sett' or 'brightly seated' and at 91 metres above sea level, this is the highest place in East Suffolk. Slightly less pleasant accounts suggest the name could mean 'fold or stable infested with gadflies'!

The heart of the village centres on the tiny village green and the adjacent Victorian school now serves as our Village Hall.

A visitor to the village in the 1920's described it as "queer in its general appearance, having a windmill without sails, a hump-backed bridge, and, near the Post Office, a few cottages ranged beside the village green. Chickens roamed in the church yard."

Today, houses stand where the windmill once stood, chickens no longer roam the church yard, the hump backed bridge is still here and the Norman Church is still surrounded by centuries old cottages beside the tiny village green.

The walks described in this guide take you on a fascinating journey around the parish. Each walk is 3-4 miles long and can be easily combined to make longer walks. Each starts at the village hall.



Location



Great Bricett lies on the B1078, about 5 miles west of Needham Market, 9 miles north of Hadleigh and 10 miles west of Ipswich.

Public Transport

Limited public transport is available to Great Bricett. Visit www.suffolkonboard.com for timetables or www.travellineeastanglia.co.uk (08712 002 233) to plan your journey.

Discover Suffolk

Discover more great days out across Suffolk at www.discoversuffolk.org.uk

Produced by Suffolk County Council and Great Bricett Parish Council as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations for Queen Elizabeth II.



Great Bricett Walks

Two historic circular walks



The Airfield and Hall Route

Start: Village Hall

Distance: 3.5 miles (5km)

Duration: 2 hours

From the village green head to the main road. The house on the right was once the village shop. Opposite the junction is St Peters Court, dating from 1500. Turn right and then left at the footpath by the village sign ❶ which contains images of St Mary and St Lawrence Church, the smock mill and Blenheim bombers, stationed at RAF Wattisham during WW2.

Keep ahead, turning left at the next footpath to walk beside a wood. The path passes what was RAF Wattisham's Old Astra Cinema ❷.

During WW2 the noise of bombers shattered the peace of this once quiet, secluded village. However, the development of the base meant that local roads were surfaced and the village shopkeeper (already the baker, sub-postmaster and postman) could add taxi driver to his list of services!

From 1942 the US Army Air Force used Wattisham as a fighter base. On 19th June 1944, a USAAF Fortress loaded with bombs crashed into a field near the village and exploded. The crew escaped and nobody was hurt but considerable damage was done to properties, including the church.

Today the base is used by the Army Air Corps, home of the Apache helicopter, and the RAF, who operate Sea King Search and Rescue helicopters.

Bear right and continue until you reach a footpath. Follow this path, keeping the ditch and hedge on your right ❸.

Just before a small bridge turn left, keeping straight ahead uphill across a field until you reach the road at Ringshall ❹.

Turn right and follow the lane, crossing the main road to continue along the lane opposite. This quiet lane is full of wildlife, especially finches: Greenfinch; Goldfinch; Bullfinch; Yellowhammers; and occasionally Linnets.

Past Squirrel Farm and Ringshall House (c1620-1630), at the junction ❺, turn right and continue down the hill past Tollemache Hall, the location of Little Bricett Church ❻.

Beyond an arched thicket, pass the first signpost on the right and turn right at the second signpost over a wooden bridge ❻.

Cross the field and just before the small wood turn left to the road. Cross into Mill Lane and then left onto the footpath.

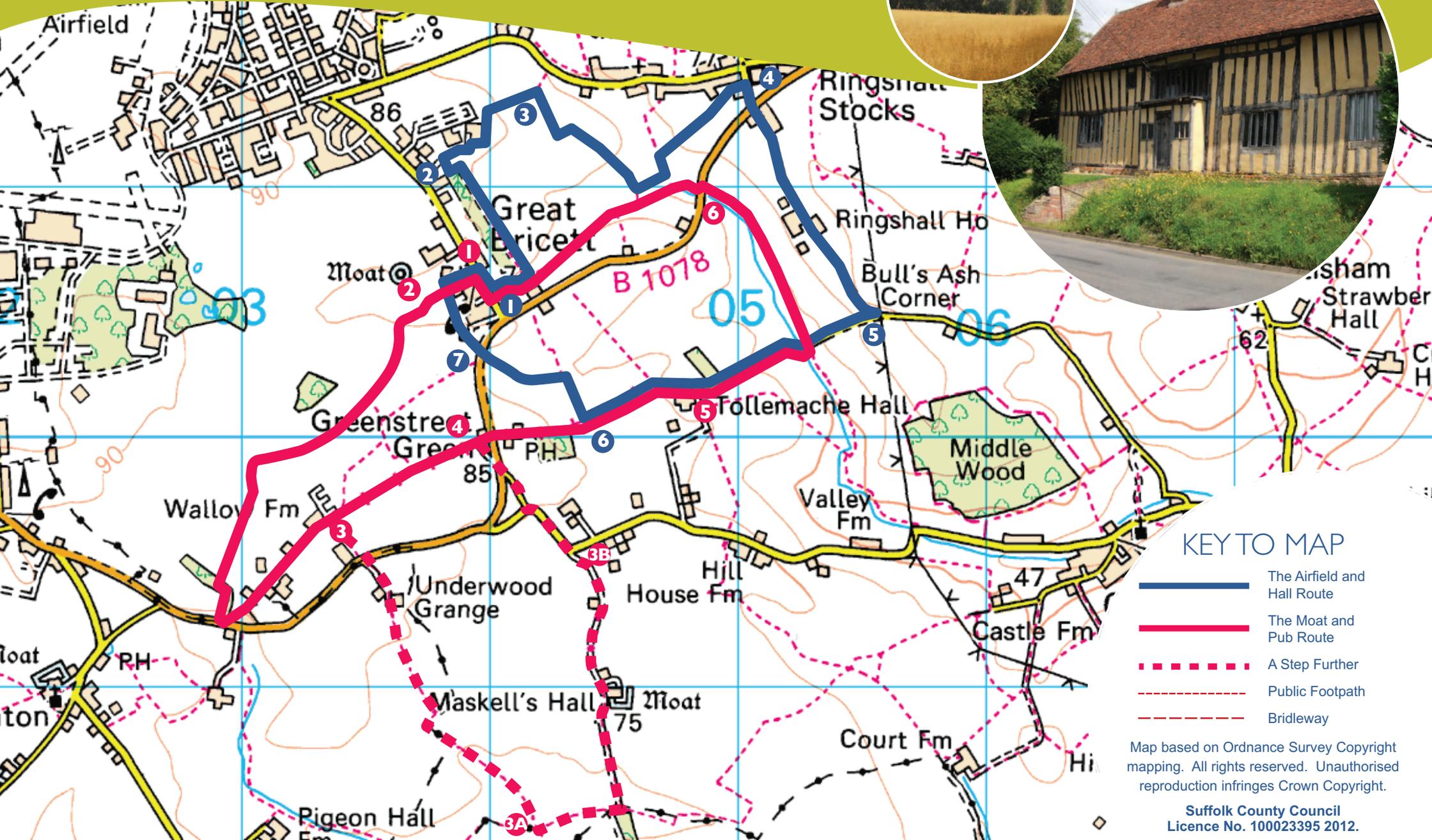
This is near the site of a smock mill ❼ – a horizontally weatherboarded mill, the shape of which resembled a farmer's smock. The mill collapsed after a gale in 1954 and was never replaced.

There are lovely views from this footpath of Great Bricett. The path leads between paddocks to a short bridge, over a stile and across a small field to return to the church and village green.



Great Bricett Walks

Two historic circular walks



KEY TO MAP

-  The Airfield and Hall Route
-  The Moat and Pub Route
-  A Step Further
-  Public Footpath
-  Bridleway

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The Moat and Pub Route

Start: Village Hall
Distance: 4 miles (6km)
Duration: 2 hours

The Church of St Mary and St Lawrence **1** is nothing if not unusual, being long and towerless with a nave and chancel all under one roof.



This was once the church of the convent of a 12th century Benedictine Priory (St Leonard near Limoges). There is a plan of the Priory on display inside. The dedication of St Lawrence comes from the long-vanished church and village of Little Bricett, a mile south. Inside the porch, in the Norman decoration of the main south door, is an inscription 'Leonardus', added in Victorian times.

The churchyard is on the south side only as the former priory quadrangle on the north side now forms part of the private garden to Great Bricett Hall, a 16th century house built into the west end. This also contains remains of the former priory.

The south side is like an encyclopedia of early medieval windows - few styles are unrepresented - and a curious arch at the east end reveals the site of a former transept chapel.

Inside, the Norman font has distinctive carved designs and the wooden pulpit, probably Jacobean, is an unusual octagonal design. Most of the East window is clear; the former



Victorian glass destroyed by a wartime explosion. A nearby window shows St Mary and St Lawrence in modern stained glass.

From the village green, facing the church, follow the footpath left, crossing the corner of Great Bricett Hall's garden to climb a stile and cross a field to a stile at the far right corner.

Turn left and then right to cross a field. In the middle of the field, where five paths meet, look back. Just west of Great Bricett Hall is Nunnery Mount **2.**

The exact nature of Nunnery Mount is not known; it's too small to be a motte and bailey but it does bear resemblance to early Norman moated features. Early maps refer to it as Nunnery Hill and an adjoining field is identified as Nunnery Field.

Turning back, take the 1st path right and leave the field, past the end of an open garden to cross a small bridge. Follow the footpath (keeping the ditch on your left), through a small wood until you reach the main road. Turn left and left again into Wallow Lane. Follow this for almost a mile through Marshmoor Mobile Home Park **3, continuing on the Byway to the main road **4**.**

Across the road the byway continues past The Red Lion; opposite is Red Lion Cottage built about 1570. Continue to Tollemache Hall, formerly the manor house of Little Bricett **5**. The Hall dates from 16th century and Little Bricett church was once situated adjacent to the Hall.

A Step Further...

(2.5 miles/4km, approx 1.5 hours)

At **3** turn right and continue to the road, then follow the footpath opposite.

In the large fields there are often roe deer and in spring the ditch banks are full of cowslips, primroses and wood anemones. In winter flocks of lapwing and golden plover land here.

Turn left over the wooden bridge (keep the ditch on your left) and at the path junction **3A** left again.

At the end of this path, by the footpath signs, turn left to follow a track past Maskells Hall, past a row of cottages to meet Offton Road **3B**.

Turn left, then first right and cross the main road to follow the small lane opposite. Rejoin the main route **4**.

Just after crossing a small stream, turn left and follow the footpath to the main road. A brick kiln **6** was once here and opposite are Brick Kiln Cottages, which show the variety of bricks made at the kilns.

Cross the road, down steps and follow the path over a small bridge. On the hill to your left is a 17th century thatched Tudor Cottage. Continue ahead to return to The Street in Great Bricett.

