

Selsey Action for Wildlife

Involving local people in caring for their environment



"A Sense of Place"

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

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

Selsey Action for Wildlife draws volunteers together in positive action for wildlife and the benefit of the community.

Contact

Selsey Town Council Tel: 01243 605803

Contributors to this leaflet

Maggie Smith (Design and Production)

Sarah Hughes (Design and Production)

Carole Hampton (Design and Production)

© 2007 Sally Blackmore (Design and Production)

© 2007 Peter White (Art work)

©2007 Eileen Savill (Artwork)

©2007 Selsey Parish Map Group

March 2007

Supported by Chichester District Council,
West Sussex County Council, Selsey Town Council,
Sussex Wildlife Trust, with funding from the
Heritage Lottery Fund

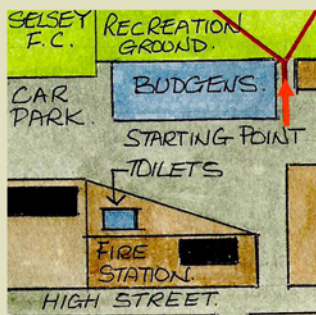
Distance 2½ miles Time 1½ hours

Start: Public car park, Budgens
GR854935

Maps:- OS Explorer 120, Landranger 197
Has two stiles and may be muddy at times
Toilets in the car park



Detail of start of walk



Please note

The walk is described starting from the public car park close to Budgens supermarket, High Street, Selsey.
An alternative start is the Windmill at Bunn Leisure Holiday Park, Mill Lane.
Please note there is no parking at the alternative start.

Selsey Walks



A Sense of Place Tales of the Medmerry Marshes

A Sense of Place

Walk 2: Tales of the Medmerry Marshes

Start by taking a path which leads between Budgens Supermarket and the adjacent Medical Centre to reach the recreation field (1). Cross this field diagonally, to the right, to a cross-road (2). Cross the road and go through a gap into the next field and continue diagonally, in the same direction, to emerge in Warners Lane. Turn left but take care as this road has no pavement and can be busy, especially in the summer (3). ⚠️ Continue along Warners Lane past the new housing estate, until reaching a PF* sign on the left. Climb over the stile into the grassy field and cross the field following the direction of the PF* sign towards a low bungalow and the distant tower of the coastguard station.

Go over a second stile onto a rough track (Drift Lane) round to the left and then onto a tarmac road (4). Turn right at the junction and follow Mill Lane to the windmill by the entrance to Bunn Leisure Holiday Park (alternative start, toilets are available here) (5) (6) (7).

At the windmill look for a PF* facing south and follow this path to the coast. Beware of uneven ground and the ditch on the right-hand side. ⚠️

Turn left and walk either along the beach or the path on the top of the low cliff face to reach West Street (8) (9) (10). Go left, away from the sea, and pass Selsey Coastguard Station (11). Walk along West Street (12), bearing left at a junction into Crablands (13), then first right to join Paddock Lane. Beware no pavement here. ⚠️ Continue along Paddock Lane (14) and turn right just past the football ground, cross a ditch and go through a small gate to return to the recreation field (15).

Cross the field to get back to Budgens and the car park.

* PF = public footpath

1 Cricket Field Cricket was first played in Selsey as early as 1834. In the 1950s Charlie Rusbridge, a farmer, gave this land to the Cricket Club at a peppercorn rent in perpetuity for cricket and recreation.



2 Tornado On Wednesday 7th January 1998 at 11.45 pm a tornado swept through Selsey, causing millions of pounds worth of damage. It hit Medmerry School and tore up roofs, fences and trees.



Danger—beware of the traffic

3 Hedgerows A survey in 2001 showed that the parish has over 17000 metres of hedgerows. They provide food and shelter for wildlife and safe corridors for movement between otherwise isolated habitats.



4 Crablands Meadow Rough grazing for at least 300 years, these wet meadows are a remnant of the pre-Enclosure Act field system and are managed for their wildlife value. Migrating and over-wintering birds use the meadows for feeding and resting. Listen for the bubbling call of curlews in winter and look for peregrine falcons which visit in the summer. The meadows come alive in summer, buzzing to the sounds of insects like the great green bush cricket. These insects grow to over 5 cm long and are restricted to southern UK counties.



5 Caravan Park Douglas Bunn opened his first caravan park here, White Horse Caravan Park, in 1959 and after further purchases of land renamed it West Sands. This is the second largest caravan site in Europe.



6 Blackshirts In 1937 the British Union of Fascists had their annual summer camp, under canvas, here in July and August. Over 1500 men attended when Oswald Moseley gave a speech on the 1st August



7 Windmill This windmill dates from 1820 and is built of locally made, red bricks. The rare beehive cap is the only one of its kind in Sussex. Flour was milled until 1910 but pepper was the last thing to be ground. The mill closed in the 1920s.



8 Romans A Roman fort may have stood on Mixon Reef, now underwater, two miles out to sea. There is also evidence of a Roman road under the sea here. Roman coins and pottery have been found all over Selsey.



9 Beach Fossils found on the beach mostly date from the Eocene period, 30-60 million years ago. Mermaid's purses (dogfish egg-cases), and cuttlefish bones also wash up on the shoreline. Plants have to be very tough to survive here. Thrift has long roots, can tolerate salt laden winds and transforms the area into a sea of pink in the summer.



10 Wreck A French warship of 50 guns and 350 crew was captured by the English in 1703 and commissioned as HMS Hazardous. It was driven ashore and wrecked in 1706. Rediscovered in 1977, it is now a popular place for divers, yielding many interesting artefacts.



11 Coastguard Selsey has had a coastguard service since the 1200s, when it was a defence against the French. Built in 1972, this station is manned by a team of twelve who provide search and mud rescue units and deal with 60-100 calls each year. The Coastguard Cottages date from the 1800s.



12 Geology West Street has a number of interesting older buildings. How many different building materials can you find - thatch, brick, tile, wood, stone and flint? The light coloured stone is Mixon rock from the Roman quarry, now two miles out to sea. Bricks that had been made locally are smaller than modern day ones. The Trojan brickworks closed in 1930.



13 Colin Pullinger Invented a humane mousetrap which held up to twelve mice at a time. It fascinated Queen Victoria when displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851. Possibly born in Ivy Cottage (number 10) in 1815, his Inventive Factory was in the High Street, where the Town Hall is today. He employed forty men and boys in 1883 making 960 traps a week, costing 2/6d for a mousetrap and 5/- for a rat trap. He died in 1894.



14 Large Acres This estate is named after the home of Edward Heron-Allen (1861-1943), a famous polymath and Fellow of the Royal Society. He wrote a history of Selsey as well as books on geology, violin making, palmistry and science fiction.



Danger—beware of the traffic



15 Football Club The first club was started around 1903. A boxer named 'Bombadier' Billy Wells played in the 1930s for one season. His real claim to fame was as the muscular man who struck the gong at the beginning of the Rank Films.

