

West Wittering

At the mouth of Chichester Harbour, West Wittering is renowned for its large expanse of firm sand and East Head, a sand dune spit with salt marsh nestled behind it. Common seals can be spotted here at high tide.

 **Approx. 2 miles with optional 1.5 mile add on.**

1. From the western end of the main beach car park, take the footpath right, overlooking saltmarsh on your left. Look for wading birds such as the orange-billed **oystercatcher**, listen for the 'peewit' calls from a **lapwing**, or spy a camouflaged **curlew** (right) with its long, downcurved bill.
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2. After a third of a mile you will emerge onto a triangular grassy field. Keep right and follow Coastguard Lane. At the first footpath fork, turn left to walk between caravans and out across a small field.
 3. Hop over the stone stile leading up to St Peter and St Paul's Church. Walk towards the church and exit the churchyard through a gate on your left.
 4. Turn right, passing the primary school on your left. When you emerge onto the lane which runs south to the beach car park, you'll see both the FLOW wetland sites in front of you as they are opposite each other. There is a narrow gravel footpath that separates the sites and is a good place to view the stream from.
 5. Continue back to the car park by heading down the same lane you drove in on.
 6. To make your walk 1.5 miles longer, go back to point 1 and head straight onto the spit to walk a circular loop around East Head. You can either walk on the beach or along the boardwalk through the dunes, keeping to the permissive paths.



1 West Wittering Estate

2 Cakeham Manor Estate

Parking: West Wittering Car Park, Pound Rd, PO20 8AJ

Public transport: Bus 52/53 stops in the village

Cakeham Manor Estate



This wetland copse was previously being used as an unofficial green waste area, leaving it cluttered and unsightly. Dominating willows and bramble had taken over, hiding the small stream.

Before

Local residents and FLOW volunteers transformed the site by cutting back the overgrown vegetation, including non-native *leylandii* trees and bamboo, and removing lots of garden waste. Native fruiting trees were then planted around the site to support wildlife.

Ongoing management ensures sunlight can reach the stream supporting the abundance of **wildflowers** that flourish on the banks and form the basis of a healthy food chain.

Look out for a dazzling electric blue jewel darting across the stream, it could be a **kingfisher**!



After



Can you see the **pendulous sedge** fringing the stream? Its leaves are so strong they could be used as rope!

West Wittering Estate

This site is connected to the Cakeham Manor Estate via the stream. It used to be full of willow and sycamore trees that cast dark shade across the site.

Some trees were removed with planning permission, and the wood was used to create a bordering dead hedge and log piles. These dead wood habitats are ideal for **wood mice**, **slow worms**, hibernating **frogs** and **hedgehogs**.

With the increase in sunlight, wildflowers including **lesser celandine**, **yellow flag iris**, **teasel** and **red campion** sprung to life and colonised the understory and stream banks.



The stream is home for semi-aquatic **water voles** (left) who eat a huge variety of tasty wetland plants including rushes, sedges and reeds!

