

Field Studies on the Norfolk Coast

The Norfolk Coast is a special place. As an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, its coastal landscapes are recognised as being nationally important. The many overlapping nature conservation designations testify to the importance of its coastal habitats and wildlife in national, European and even global terms.

It offers rich opportunities for education and thousands of students visit the area each year to undertake field studies. This increases people's understanding and care for the area, but there is also a responsibility to ensure that its special qualities are not damaged by its use as an educational and research resource.

All land on the coast is owned and managed - something that is often not realised by visiting groups. Virtually all of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast, and much of the rest of the coastline, is protected by statutory nature conservation designations. Failing to contact the right people before your visit could mean that you are acting illegally, and unwittingly causing damage and disturbance to wildlife and the interests of local people. Even a simple beach visit in some locations in spring can cause problems to beach nesting birds such as ringed plovers - the nests and eggs are very well camouflaged and easily trodden on.

Some studies, or parts of study programmes, can be done in less sensitive locations, and we would always ask you to consider your proposed activities and do this if possible. For studies which can only be undertaken in the very special surroundings of the Norfolk Coast, the code of practice in

this leaflet has been developed and agreed by study centres and reserve managers in the area with the aim of promoting sustainable use for field studies. It applies everywhere, not just on managed reserves.

To make the most of your educational visit and to help keep the Norfolk Coast a special place, please follow the code when visiting any part of the Norfolk Coast for field work.

The Code of Practice



Always contact site managers or local contacts before your proposed visit. If you are not already familiar with the site, a pre-visit is also strongly recommended.

A telephone conversation with site managers or local contacts can help you and your students get more educational value out of the visit, provide advice on safety matters such as tide times and clothing, and help you to plan suitable activities in locations which do not cause harm or

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disturbance to wildlife and habitats. You should also consider alternative plans to cover the possibility of bad weather. Remember - if you turn up unannounced wanting to undertake activities which may cause damage or disturbance you may be turned away.



Consider the impact of your proposed work on the environment and help to develop improved, low-impact techniques of study.

These can be very simple - for example wearing soft shoes for work on dunes, or avoiding important bird nesting and feeding areas at certain times of year.

Consider party numbers and supervision ratios carefully.

Large numbers of students may be difficult to accommodate on site and to supervise effectively. This will detract from the educational value of the visit as well as making careless behaviour more likely.

Inform and involve supervisors and students beforehand in thinking about how to care for the environment while undertaking studies.

Making a copy of this code for everyone who will be on the trip and going through it with them is a good start.



Only collect samples if you have a good reason and specific authorisation.

In many cases, collecting samples (plants, rocks etc.) will actually be illegal, even with the landowner's permission. Studies can be designed to avoid the need for collecting.

Respect the needs of local communities and local people, and local ways of life.

This can cover a range of things such as behaviour in shops, avoiding surveys which involve public questionnaires, coach access and parking, making sure that your party does not interfere with the enjoyment or work of others.



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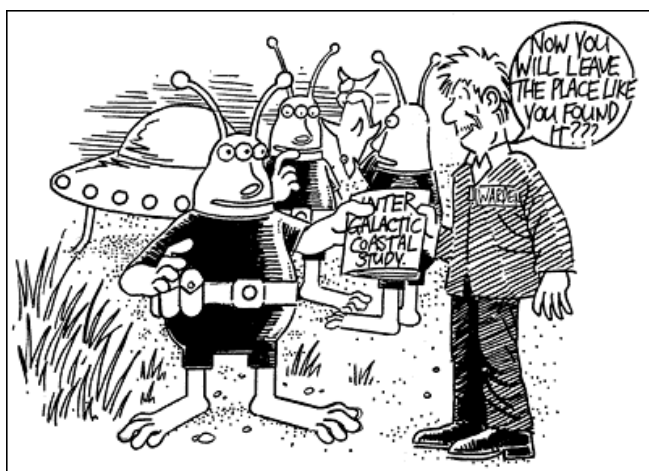
Leave the area as you found it. Don't interfere with any equipment, even if it appears to be abandoned, and ensure equipment used for study or research is removed when work is completed. Leave no litter, close gates, use established paths and avoid closed-off areas.

Use and support local services where possible.

Your support for local shops and other facilities can mean that they remain commercially viable and available for local people as well as visitors.

Ensure that the site manager receives a copy of any research work on the site, if this is requested.

This can benefit other groups as well as management of the site.



and last but not least . . .

Take the time to reflect on and enjoy the very special landscape, wildlife and atmosphere of the Norfolk Coast as well as completing your task!

PARTICIPATING CENTRES AND RESERVES

The following study centres, organisations and reserves have agreed the code and seek to implement it in their work with field studies groups on the Norfolk Coast:

Nature Reserves **Dersingham National Nature Reserve** (English Nature).

The Smithy, Wolferton, KING'S LYNN
Norfolk PE31 6HA
Tel. 01485 543044

Snettisham (RSPB). The Business Centre, 43a Lynn Road, Snettisham, KING'S LYNN Norfolk PE31 7LR
Tel. 01485 542689

Holme Dunes National Nature Reserve (Norfolk Wildlife Trust). The Firs, Broadwater Road, Holme-next-the-Sea, HUNSTANTON Norfolk PE36 6LQ

Tel. 01485 525240
(To book educational visits
Tel. 01603 625540)

Titchwell Marsh Nature Reserve (RSPB). Titchwell, KING'S LYNN Norfolk PE31 8BB
Tel. 01485 210432

Brancaster Marshes (National Trust). The Dial House, Brancaster Staithe, KING'S LYNN Norfolk PE31 8BW
Tel. 01485 210719

Scolt Head Island National Nature Reserve and **7. Holkham National Nature Reserve** (English Nature)
Hill Farm Offices, Main Road, Holkham, WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA
Norfolk NR23 1AB
Tel. 01328 711866 (Scolt Head NNR)
Tel. 01328 711183 (Holkham NNR)

Blakeney Point (Norfolk Coastal Properties) (National Trust). Friary Farm, Blakeney, Holt, Norfolk NR25 7NW
Tel. 01263 740241
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Cley Marshes Nature Reserve (Norfolk Wildlife Trust). Watchers Cottage, Cley-next-the-Sea, HOLT Norfolk NR25 7RZ
Tel. 01263 740008
(To book educational visits Tel. 01603 625540).

Sheringham Park and Felbrigg Park (National Trust). Gardener's Cottage, Sheringham Park, Upper Sheringham, SHERINGHAM Norfolk NR26 8TB
Tel. 01263 823778

Horsey & Heigham Holmes Estate (National Trust). Horsey Windpump, Horsey, GREAT YARMOUTH Norfolk NR29 4EF
Tel. 07885 581070

Winterton Dunes National Nature Reserve (English Nature). 19 The Green, Woodbastwick, NORWICH NR1 36AL
Tel. 01603 720788

Sheringham Cliffs and Foreshore and West Runton Cliffs and Fore-shore. English Nature, 60 Bracondale, NORWICH NR1 2BE.
Tel. 01603 620558
or North Norfolk District Council, Planning Dept., Holt Road, CROMER NR27 9DZ.
Tel. 01263 516142

Useful conservation websites:-

www.english-nature.org.uk
www.nationaltrust.org.uk
www.rspb.org.uk
www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/norfolk/

Field Study Centres

Hunstanton Youth Hostel
15 Avenue Road, HUNSTANTON Norfolk PE36 5BW **Tel. 01485 532061**
hunstanton@yha.org.uk

Brancaster Millennium Activity Centre (National Trust)
The Dial House, Brancaster Staithe, KING'S LYNN Norfolk PE31 8BW
Tel. 01485 210719
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/brancaster

Wells Field Study Centre (Norfolk County Council). Polka Road, WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA Norfolk NR23 1EF
Tel. 01328 710525
www.wells-field-centre.org.uk

Holt Hall Field Study Centre (Norfolk County Council). Holt Hall, Kelling Road, HOLT Norfolk NR25 7OU
Tel. 01263 713117 (Fax. 712396)
holt.hall.edu@norfolk.gov.uk

Sheringham Youth Hostel
1 Cremer's Drift, SHERINGHAM Norfolk NR26 8HX **Tel. 0870 7706024**
sheringham@yha.org.uk

Hilltop Centre. Old Wood, Beeston Regis, SHERINGHAM Norfolk NR26 8TS
Tel. 01263 824514
hilltopdc@lineone.net
www.hilltopoutdoorcentre.co.uk

Aylmerton Field Study Centre
The Old Schoolhouse, Aylmerton, NORWICH Norfolk NR11 8RA
Tel. 01263 837759
afsc@lineone.net

Kingswood Overstrand Field Study Centre. Overstrand Hall, Cromer Road, Overstrand, CROMER Norfolk NR27 0JJ **Tel. 01263 838384/579157**
ian.bell@kingswood.co.uk

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[* now known as Norfolk Coast Partnership]

Whilst we cannot guarantee accuracy of the contact details every effort will be made to keep them up-to-date so please let us know of any changes you are aware of.