

Ancient Hautbois

This one will explore hidden Coltishall, taking a gentle meander up the Bure and back, looking out for a castle, a disused church, a secret tunnel, an old bridge and a quiet village green. Around 4 miles, dog-friendly.

1. Start outside the Pharmacy, Coltishall High Street. Cross Over the street to Point House, a Grade II listed building.
2. Proceed West on this side of the street to cross the bridge over the Bure. Continue along this road until you reach the Recruiting Sergeant **(A)**.
3. Turn right immediately beyond the pub and follow the road round a gentle bend until you reach Church Cottages **(B)**
4. Take the gate through the churchyard behind the Tithe Barn Hall and follow the path to the right of the church **(C)**. It exits towards the river at the rear of the churchyard- turn left and follow the path across a field, ignoring the path down to the river.
5. Past Church Farm, **(D)** the path is joined by a track coming in from the left; follow this track until you reach the waymarker just before the cottages. Take the path on the right round the buildings and enter a field via a stile where Shetland ponies can often be found.
6. Continue on the well-marked track through fields. Glimpses of the Bure can be seen on your right. Pass to the right of an old barn and continue on.
7. Eventually the distinctive water tower of Horstead Hall and its associated buildings **(E)** will be seen across fields to your left. Shortly after this the track turns sharply right for 50yds, then left over a small bridge.
8. Continue on this path across fields and following the Bure valley until you reach a road onto which you exit and turn right.
9. Cross over Mayton bridge. On your left is the site of Maideston, a deserted medieval village **(F)**. Continuing up the lane you pass the entrance to Hautbois Hall on your left, and the site of St Mary's Church and hospital, now overtaken by Bridge Farm **(G)**
10. At the junction do not cross the bridge (known as the Adam and Eve bridge as the building on the other side is a former public house of that name **(H)**) but turn left and then, after 20 yds, descend a set of stairs to the course of the Bure Valley railway. Turn right and follow the track.
11. After a while you will see below you the buildings, village green and a pond that comprises the idyllic rural hamlet of Great Hautbois **(I)**. Continue on beside the railway until you reach the next bridge crossing the railway where you climb the stairs on your right to reach a road.
12. Turn right and follow the road down to another main road. A small diversion is made here by crossing the road and turning right past Church Farm fishery. After about 400yds there is a track on your left down beside some woodland to Theobalds Church **(J)**. Follow this track until you reach the ruins, on your right.
13. From here you can also see the site of Hautbois Castle **(K)**. Now largely subsumed into the fishery, it is possible to imagine the keep sitting on the island surrounded by its squared moat.
14. After exploring the extensive ruins return to the road, turn right and retrace your steps past Holy Trinity church **(L)** and thence return to Coltishall High Street where your journey began.

The following historical notes are taken from the Norfolk Heritage Explorer website <https://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk> More information and references can be found here using a map search of the area.

A. Recruiting Sergeant Inn

This brick and flint 18th century building was built around an earlier 16th century core. Part of the 16th century work, a brick pattern, can be seen on the flint east gable wall.

Brick and flint with pantiled roof. Two storeys and attics, to east two storeys only. Late 16th century core shown by brick diaper pattern on flint east gable wall of lower east section. Otherwise visible exterior 18th century; three windows and offcentre porch to main block, three windows to lower. Curved brick gable on porch, pilaster by porch. Parapet gables with internal stacks and axial chimneystack also.

Opposite the pub there is an **18th century milestone marking Norwich 7 miles and North Walsham 7 miles** One of 5 surviving milestones along the former Norwich to North Walsham turnpike. This turnpike was created in 1797 and was dis-urnpiked in 1873. Also the site of a **Pillbox** This is quite a rare type 24 brick and concrete pillbox. It was built around 1940 when it stood at a crossroads. Pill box. Brick, polygonal, concrete roof, splayed loopholes. In garage yard. First noted by Pill Box Survey. Red brick shuttering. Low gate still in place.

B. Church Cottages

These former 18th century poor houses have rendered walls and a slate roof. They were extended at each end in the 20th century.

C. All Saints' Church, Horstead with Stanninghall

The earliest parts of this church may be Saxo-Norman. The western flint tower is 13th century and the south porch may be 15th century. The rest of the church was rebuilt in 1879 reusing some 14th and 15th century features. Just outside the Churchyard **Two undated human skeletons** were found in shallow graves about 30 and 60cm (1 foot and 2 feet) deep beside Church Lane in 1967. One was in bits and pieces, possibly due to scavenging but the other one was laid out east to west.

D. Church Farm, ex Mill Farm

Apart from the house, of which no details are given, only three 19th century brick and flint sheds of unknown function remain from this farm, which belonged to the Horstead Hall estate and was once known as Rednall.

E. Horstead Hall and farmbuildings

Horstead Hall was built in 1835, possibly on the site of an Elizabethan house, marked as Horstead Hall on this site and shown in a 1671 estate map. The current house was largely demolished in the 20th century. Only one brick range of early 19th date – of red brick and with tall rear chimneys – still survives. A number of ancillary and farm buildings, garden walls and a squash court also survive, although many are now derelict. They include one remarkable farm building- a **Germanic water tower** with brick arcading.

A personal account indicates that the hall was used as a low grade cipher base during World War Two. The base was used by 41 Brigade, 2nd AA Division Signals. The headquarters and officers' billet, offices and the mess were in the hall itself, while several Nissen huts were positioned around the grounds to provide domestic accommodation, the NAAFI, etc. Some possible evidence of the World War Two site is visible on 1940s aerial photographs.

Horstead Hall Farm Buildings are described in a proposal to convert the surviving farm buildings into a restaurant and holiday accommodation:-

The farm buildings are dominated by a multi-purpose agricultural building with steam powered machinery and a water tower. The barn has recently been severely damaged by fire and has lost the roof over the main block. The walls still stand to their full height. The building is constructed of high quality brick, with pantile roofs. There are arched openings with rubbed brick openings in some cases and raised borders to other openings. The structure consists of a two- storey main block flanked by single storey sections. The main block is of five bays, with the central bay marked by the main doorway and a large opening with a gable above which was formerly embellished with an oculus. The sill is flush with floor level and a platform projected from it to allow hauling sacks etc. to the upper floor. The fixing positions for the platform are still visible in the brickwork. To the left of the central entrance is a large cart entrance and to the right are two offices with domestic sash windows.

The water tower takes its shape and decoration from Italian campanile. Openings have been blocked due to the tower having been converted into a grain silo in recent times. The top storey where the tank was situated has a series of loops framed by stilted arched corbel tables beneath bold cornices, the whole crowned with a pyramidal roof. It is divided from the main body of the tower by a heavy band of raised brickwork. The lower storey has recessed vertical panels with loops and tree openings below. The entrance to the tower is a large arched doorway. The rear of the building has an aisle which housed the carpenter's shop and timber yard. It has since been converted to animal pens but retains its original structure. The building is divided into two by a through passage from which a masonry stair supported on a rampant arch leads to the upper floor. Beside the stair was the boiler room and steam engine. A separate purpose-built steam house stands close to the barn to provide additional power.

The left half of the main block has a cart-size entrance with a segmental relieving arch. Sliding doors are shown on the original plan and may have been a fairly new development in 1874. The windows have sliding vents beneath fanlights.

The early 19th- century barn is of brick and flint with a shallow pitched hipped roof and lower wings to the sides. The doors are placed centrally, with a pair of tripartite glazed sash windows above. The bricks are re-used and the bond is almost entirely of headers. The rear or west elevation of the barn is of one storey owing to the building having been built into the side of a hill. It is of knapped flint with brick dressings and has pediments over a pair of tripartite sash windows. It is given a decorative face probably to make it seem more appealing when viewed from the hall. The interior of the barn shows a roof of re-used timbers with empty mortises on the tie beams and principle rafters. The roof has single butt purlins to each of the main pitches. The single storey building on the south side has a former glazed lunette window in its south elevation, a third of which has been converted into a

doorway. The barn is of special interest due to its re-use of materials and its polite treatment of the façade facing the hall.

July 2009. English Heritage Advice Report recommending refusal of application to list farm buildings.

See (S9) for full report with history and description of buildings. The assessment concluded that the main multi-purpose building by Edward Boardman was too severely fire damaged and that there was little evidence of the powered processes within that were integral to the building's design. Other elements have been significantly altered or become derelict. The C19 barn was described as of modest quality, with reused material and of conventional form.

F. Maideston deserted medieval village

The site of the deserted medieval village of Maideston is recorded in old documents. Little if anything is visible of the village site. Earthworks at the site may mark its location, although they might result from cleaning modern drains. Mentioned in Domesday Book. Bodleian charters contain complaints of inhabitants petitioning against seizure of their lands. There are signs of a possible moat surrounding Little Hautbois Hall.

G. Site of St Mary's Church, Little Hautbois

The site of a medieval hospital and church, founded in the 13th century as a travellers' hospital. By 1535 it was reduced to just a chapel. This was abandoned in the second half of the 16th century when the village became deserted. The remaining foundations were noted in 1907, but nothing is to be seen today. Metal detecting before 1980 recovered a Saxon strap end, medieval buckles and a Papal bulla. Post medieval metal objects were also found. It was licensed to have a chapel in 1257.

The survey of 1535 enters this house as the Chantry of the Blessed Mary de Atto Bosco, in Gt.Hautbois. By that date the hospital had apparently been reduced to a mere chapel.

H. Adam and Eve House

An 18th century two storey patterned brick former pub with a pantiled roof, set out in an L-shaped plan. Former public house. 18th century, red brick with patterning in dark headers. Flint plinth. Steeply pitched pantile roof. Two storeys, L-shaped plan. Main façade of three bays with central segmental-headed opening. Three-light casement windows with segmental heads. Three gabled dormers with 20th century casements. Parapeted gables with brick tumbling and internal chimney stacks. Plat-band on southwest gable. Lower two storey block projecting at north west corner with two two-light casements at first floor. Ground floor openings rearranged with 20th century casements and door. Gable chimney stack.

I. Grove Farm, Great Hautbois

A farm complex, probably dating to the mid 19th century, with an elaborate timber framed granary and cartlodge, as well as barns, stables and other farm buildings. The farm building complex was recorded in 2013 ahead of conversion to residential use.

J. St Theobald's Church, Great Hautbois, Coltishall

A parish church, dating to the 11th century, with later medieval alterations. The early Norman walls also contain Roman bricks. The church is now in ruins except for the chancel. The churchyard remains in use. Extended about 1300 and in 15th century. Also known as St Mary's. Ruinated about 1860.

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service February 2013. Building record

K. Remains of Great Hautbois castle

A medieval castle, built in the early 14th century A castle and building is shown on a map of 1671. The foundations of buildings survive on a sub-rectangular platform, with a bailey and moat to the southeast. Site of medieval castle built by Sir Robert Bainard in 1312, foundations of a porter's lodge and house remain. License to crenellate granted in 1313.

L. Holy Trinity Church, Great Hautbois, Coltishall

A parish church, built in the late 19th century in the Gothic Revival style of 1864 by Thomas Jeckyll, and the only surviving example of late 19th century transfer glass in Norfolk. Contains font from medieval church and chalice with a 12th century font from St Theobald's, the medieval parish church.

The original plans for Great Hautbois were for restoration and re-seating of the old round-towered church of St Theobald, but by 1862 these plans had been superseded by a commission to build a new church. However, the new church designed by Jeckyll was built at minimal cost: in total less than £1000 was spent. Both the nave and chancel have barrel-vaulted ceilings, and the chancel ceiling has diamond-pattern ribbing and is painted dark blue with gold stars. Carving is minimal in the interior, with the exception of the corbels on the chancel arch. Jeckyll wished for chairs rather than pews or benches, but the parishioners objected, and at the time of the consecration the old pews from St Theobald's church were in use in the new church, and no pulpit, communion table or lectern had yet been provided.