

Tunstead and Ashmanhaugh

The leaves are off the trees and the Norfolk countryside is open and exposed but there is still much to enjoy. Round towers are quite a feature on our walks recently, and here we will see another, alongside a much larger church. We will walk through the industrial heartland of Norfolk- wide open skies and large fields. We will see two stags, the Place, hoops, two power stations, a black boar, migrant workers, and suffer some mild peril. Maybe we will need a pick-me-up at the Wilkes Head after all that! **Around 5 miles, dog-friendly.**

1. Start facing the Horse and Groom (A) and head right down the road about 50yds to enter Wateringpit Lane on your left.
2. Follow the metalled Wateringpit lane, across the main Norwich-Sheringham railway (take care! Watch out for trains!) and follow the track away from the village.
3. After about half a mile, there is a footpath signed to your right, which you take. Follow the hedgerow until you emerge onto a road opposite houses where you turn left.
4. After a few yards, turn right on another road, and follow this past a smallholding.
5. Pass a turning on your left and continue on until you reach a wind turbine on your right; turn left up a grassed track towards a number of signposted cottages. It was around here that a World War II bomber crashed (B)
6. Follow the track beyond the houses, bearing slightly left; when you see a footpath going off to the right, take it and follow the edge of the field.
7. In 500yds, you will see a path heading right into the church (C), which is worth a look.
8. Exit the Churchyard through the main gates and head down the lane, slightly right, and passed a cricket ground.
9. At the end of the road, turn right passed the reading rooms and houses until you reach Stone Road.
10. Turn right down an avenue where you will pass the same wind turbine and Eastview Farm (D); this time, take the road heading off right.
11. Follow the road down and take the next left. Follow this road straight on, ignoring other roads and passed a large vegetable farm, on your right.
12. The road leads up to Tunstead War memorial (E) and Church (F).
13. At the church turn left, follow the road round and then take the footpath on the left, just past the church.
14. The footpath takes a sharp left turn in about 100yds, then another turn right after another 100yds; it then follows field boundaries to cross the Main line railway again. Eventually it comes out on the main road through Tunstead.
15. The Horse and Groom is to your left and the finish; but you may wish to make a deviation to look at the Manor House (G) and the Hall Farmhouse (H) which are up the street a little on the right.

A. Copperfields/Horse and Groom, ex Wilkes's Head

Small brick building, formerly known as the Wilkes's Head, a rare name referring to the 18th century politician and one of the few pub names that changed between 1797 and 1939. North gable wall and rear wall of chequered brickwork of around 1700; west façade replaced in the 19th century with pilaster at each end. Original south gable wall is now a partition and contains timbers. Central stack with lobby entrance. South fireplace has a domed bread oven and inglenook seat with a curved head. South room has plain ceiling beam, north room has a beam with bar stops at one end only. On east, cellar with barrel vaulted brick roof is above ground. To the north, a stable with a roll moulded beam (probably a late imitation) which was bought in 'from a barn near Spixworth', and a barn with a tie beam dated 1842, probably the date of the barn although there may be older flintwork in the north wall.

Known as the WINDMILL in mid 1700's. By 1783 it was the PITT'S HEAD. Became the WILKES HEAD by 1789. Named the HORSE & GROOM from 1795.

B. World War Two Wellington bomber crash site

Wellington T2563 was badly damaged by enemy fire and headed for RAF Coltishall but missed the airfield and crashed at 2200 hrs. The plane hit the ground approximately halfway down the field and slid into the barn, catching fire and eventually burning out. Despite the fire, locals helped the crew from the aircraft. The injured crewmembers, R.A. Hodges, A.J.A. Day, C.D. Taverner and S.W. Morton all sustained injuries and were taken to the farmhouse and given tea and first aid. Sgt. Evans was probably killed during the mission, as the crewmembers heard nothing from him during flight home. Sgt. Evans is buried in Scottow Cemetery in Norfolk.

C. St Swithin's Church, Ashmanhaugh

Saxon, Saxo-Norman or early Norman church that was extended and heightened by the end of the 12th century. The knapped flint round tower may also be 12th century although it was rebuilt in 1849. The church was restored in the 19th century.

Nave has quoins and eaves of old walls outlined in conglomerate, some blocks massive. Beyond to west are Norman doors and round tower (rebuilt 1849) and Norman window embrasures cut the former eaves, suggesting the IBC work is Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman. Nave windows and doors remodelled c.1300; chancel 14th century; porch 15th century. Note the leaning southern wall.

Much 19th century restoration. Fittings include 16th century and earlier wood carvings and 16th century tomb. Possible demolished sacristy. On 21 January 2004 the base of rood stair was discovered.

D. Eastview Farm, Stone Lane

A common edge site. The different bricks used in the walls of the farmhouse suggest it was built around 1760-1780. The house was refaced in the 19th century and a barn was constructed.

House has right hand gable wall of brick bearing diagonal skintlings arranged in patterns - the left hand wall has bricks with horizontal skintlings. The change between the two types in Norfolk dates to around 1760 - 1780, possibly indicating a difference in date between the two walls. Perhaps more probably the house was built in that period using a mixture of bricks - the builder was careful enough to form patterns, and thus careful enough to sort the bricks. In the 19th century the house was refaced and a rear catslide given an upper storey thus moving the centre line of the gables. A barn was constructed at the same period.

E. World War One memorial, Tunstead

World War One memorial constructed from granite, in the form of a freestanding wheel-head cross in St Mary's Churchyard, Church Lane, Tunstead.

This memorial was erected around 1920 to commemorate sixteen local servicemen who died in World War One. The memorial was Listed Grade II in April 2018. It has been described as "on a trapezoidal plinth with a moulded cap, below which is a single-step stone base" with a concrete foundation. There is an inscription on the plinth in leaded lettering.

Inscription: TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN EVER / GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THE MEN OF / TUNSTEAD WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE / GREAT WAR 1914 – 1918 / THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE / [NAMES].

F. St Mary's Church, Tunstead

This Magnificent large church has a Decorated style nave and a Perpendicular style chancel, with an early Perpendicular style west tower. It is situated some distance away from the present village, and is of flint with limestone dressings and a spectacular flushwork arcade in the south nave wall. Inside it has an unusual, raised platform-reliquary at the east end, and retains a late 15th century rood screen and beam, and reredos.

G. Manor House (formerly Old School House), Market Street, Tunstead

House in Market Street north of school.

This brick and flint building is thought to date to the 16th or 17th century, but perhaps older, and has a south façade of three bays over two storeys. The west gable has two windows blocked in Tudor brick, and two slit windows below, and the north side has wooden mullioned long-low windows, cut by a later wing of flint and brick in chequered work.

H. Hall Farmhouse, Market Street.

English Heritage Listing: Farmhouse subdivided into two dwellings. Dated 1826 on plaque to rear elevation. Brick with corrugated tile roofs. Two-storey service extension to rear of nearly square main block. Two storeys. South façade of three bays of sash windows with glazing bars beneath skewback arches. Angle pilasters and a slightly advanced centre bay. Fine Doric doorcase of a pair of fluted columns supporting an entablature with triglyphs, guttae and mutules. Hipped roof with a pair of axial stacks. Interior retains original staircase with stick balusters, open string and swept and wreathed mahogany handrail.