

Walk 9



SIZEWELL – DUNWICH HEATH

- The Route –
path terrain and conditions
- A – B Roughly surfaced access track. Mainly flat, sometimes uneven.
 - B – C Minor road, pavement present.
 - C – D Short grass/compacted sand through dunes; some loose sand & boardwalk. Flat but uneven; some vehicle access.
 - D – E Narrow grass path. Mainly flat; incline approaching E. Dirt access track through forest. Occasionally stony & muddy. Uneven. Slightly undulating.
 - F – G Rough track leading onto minor road. Mainly flat; uneven along track.
 - G – H Varying compacted dirt/grass/stone path. Mainly flat, sometimes gently undulating; uneven & muddy.
 - H – I Compacted sand/stone heath paths. Mainly flat.

Alternative Permissive Route –
path terrain and conditions

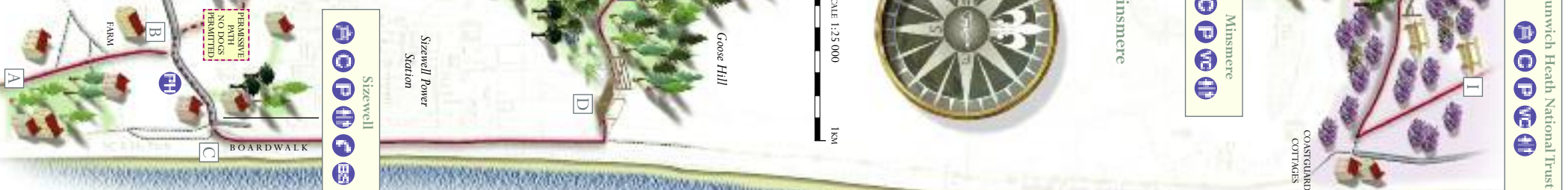
- B – C' Minor road with pavement leading to loose sand/dirt access track/grass paths. Occasionally undulating & uneven.
- C' – D' Dirt path, sometimes narrow; mainly across grazing land. Flat, slight incline to D'.
- D' – F' Grazing marsh leading to dirt/grass path through wood. Flat, slightly uneven, narrow & wet through wood.



- AS AMENITY SITE
- CAFE
- P PARKING
- PH PUBLIC HOUSE
- AD ADVANS FARM
- PC POST OFFICE
- S SHOPS
- TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
- WC VISITOR CENTRE
- TT TOILETS
- F TELEPHONE
- BS BUS STOP

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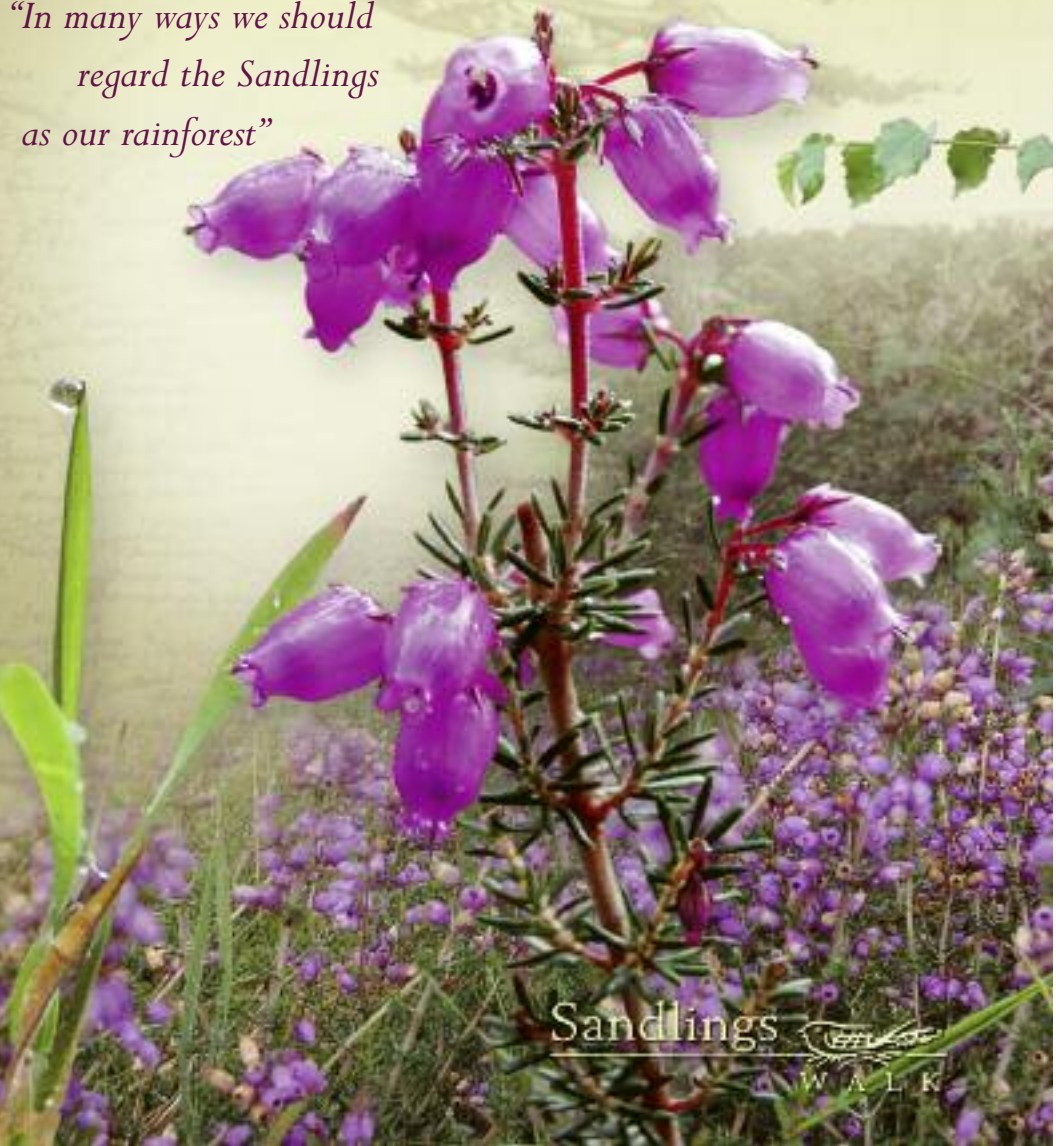


- SANDLINGS WALK
- SANDLING WALK (ON ROAD)
- SANDLINGS WALK (PERMISSIVE)
- ROAD
- RAILWAY LINE
- RAILWAY STATION
- PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
- PERMISSIVE PATH (IN FOREST)
- HEATHLAND
- WOODLAND / TREES
- FOREST PLANTATION
- MARSHLAND / REEDS
- COAST / BEVER / FORDS
- GOLF COURSE
- HOUSES / VILLAGES
- FARMLAND
- BARRIER/GATE: GARDIENS-1,2M
- BENCH
- BRIDGE
- STILE
- STEPS
- CHURCH
- TIMBER
- MAST

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Keeping the Sandlings special

“In many ways we should regard the Sandlings as our rainforest”



Sandlings WALK

Keeping the Sandlings special

Hopefully you will have discovered already that the Sandlings heaths are a very special place. They are also very rare as they make up 1% of the lowland heath still remaining in the world. In many ways we should regard them as our rainforest. How do we protect them and keep them special and make sure they are still here in the future?

In the early 1980's some people concerned about the decline and disappearance of Sandlings heaths created the Sandlings Group. Since then this group has worked to protect and manage the remaining Sandlings heaths and in so doing has gained national recognition. The group is made up of many nature conservation organisations and local government representatives. It is also helped and supported by many volunteers.

Heathland needs managing to keep it healthy; it does not look after itself and can very quickly turn into woodland. Birch and pine trees grow easily on the sandy soil. On the walk you will see or have seen large areas of self



VOLUNTEERS HAND PULLING WEED TREES

seeded woodland, which only recently would have been open heath. Bracken too can quickly cover large areas, smothering out heather and other heathland plants.

Until the early 1900s large flocks of sheep trampled the bracken and nibbled off any young tree saplings, keeping the Sandlings heaths open. Sheep flocks have once again been reintroduced to some heaths by the Sandlings Project. Good heathland also has heather of various ages, which sheep

grazing would have encouraged. In the past, areas of old heather were burnt so that new, healthy heather plants would grow in their place.

Heathland management can be fairly labour intensive. Felling trees for example and clearing large areas of scrub is done by hand. Many volunteers have spent many hours helping to do this as well as hand pulling bracken. Fortunately, there are easier ways of dealing with bracken. Tractors can cut the bracken and spray it with herbicide that has been especially developed only to kill bracken without harming any other plants or animals. In some parts of Britain rollers are used to bruise the new, young shoots. All these methods help to reduce bracken from spreading.



BRACKEN CLEARING



80% OF THE SANDLINGS HAVE DISAPPEARED FOREVER

Because heather seed can lay dormant for a long time in the ground, areas that are cleared of trees and bracken can revert to heath fairly quickly. The RSPB is trying to re-establish heathland at Minsmere on land that was converted into arable farmland from heath. It involves growing crops on the area for a few more years without applying fertiliser. This takes nutrients out of the soil. The correct, soil acidity is then established by applying iron or bracken mulch. Finally, heather seeds, harvested nearby, are sown and once grown will turn the land back to Sandlings heath. If this proves successful, some of the Sandlings lost to farming in the 20th century could begin to make something of a comeback in the 21st century.



HEATH CAN SOON REVERT TO WOODLAND

TURNING FARMLAND BACK TO HEATH RSPB

