

## Lost towns and ports

### Out and about:

#### Visit Dunwich Museum

Why don't you go and visit Dunwich and see where the Church would have been and imagine the town underneath the sea. Dunwich has a great museum – take a look whilst you are there [www.dunwichmuseum.org.uk/](http://www.dunwichmuseum.org.uk/)

### Dunwich

Dunwich was once a large port with eight churches, three chapels and two hospitals! It was one of the largest towns in the country. In 1286 a large storm swept much of the town into the sea, and in 1328 another storm destroyed the harbour. 19 years later in 1347, four hundred houses were lost. Erosion has continued ever since, and the buildings you can now see on the cliffs were once a mile inland. The last of the churches, All Saints, fell into the sea on 12 November 1919. The remains of the churches can still be found under the sea.

Dunwich - All Saints Church 1903



1909



1919



### Felixstowe and Harwich ports

There had been a small village at Felixstowe for centuries, but it wasn't until 1875 when the Port of Felixstowe was built, and the coming of the railway fourteen years later, that the town really began to grow. Before World War One it was so smart that the German Emperor came to stay at South Beach Mansion. During World War One and World War Two it was used as a Royal Navy base. During the 20th century the port has expanded massively, and the river channel has been dredged to allow bigger and bigger ships to dock. The town isn't quite so fashionable any more but it is now the busiest container port in Britain.



Harwich Customs House

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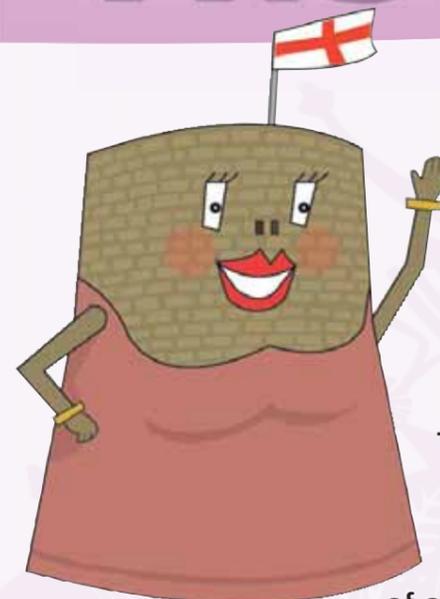
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[www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)

# History



"Hi I'm Ma Tello did you know the Suffolk coast has many secrets. Read on and find out its exciting past."

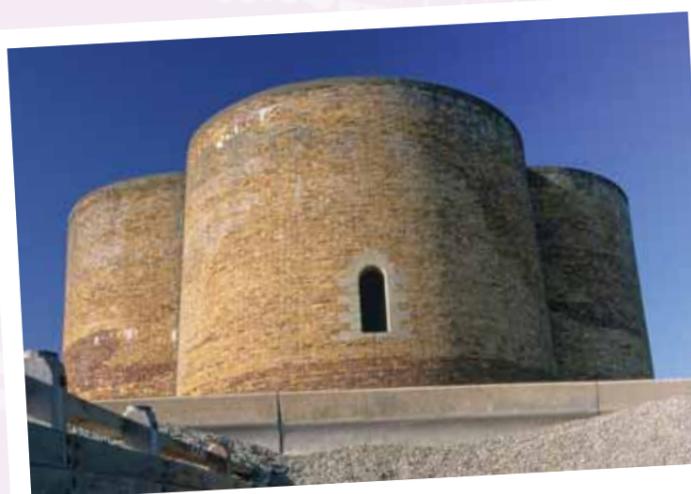
The seaside and its historic buildings you see today look very different compared to when your grandparents were children. The coast is a story of change; whole towns and ports have been lost to the sea in a story that is older than history books! See the Erosion fact sheet for more information.

The Suffolk coast has often faced another threat from invading armies, and all along the coast you can see the remains of military defences. There have also been important scientific inventions developed here which have changed our world. The Suffolk coast is an exciting place, full of castles and towers and gun batteries to explore!

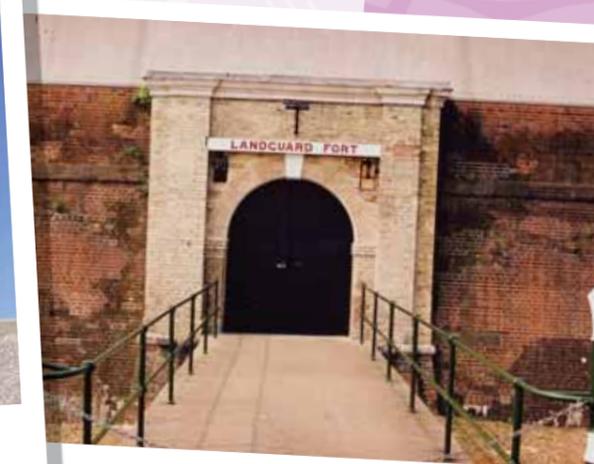
### Out and about:

#### Spot the Martello Tower

See how many Martello towers and pillboxes you can spot next time you are out in Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. You could use the internet to find out how old they are.



Martello tower, Slaughden



Landguard Fort entrance

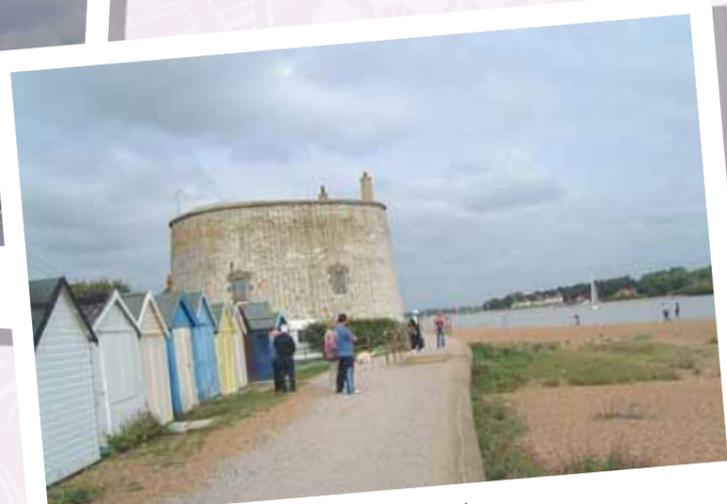
# Historical monuments

## Martello towers

The oldest forts you can easily see in Suffolk are the Martello towers. They were built about 200 years ago at places like Felixstowe, Bawdsey and Shingle Street to protect the country from Napoleon and the French. These round towers can be seen all along the coast, and were built to withstand cannon fire from enemy ships. The soldiers and guns within each tower were intended to fend off any invasion until more help arrived.



Light house at Orford Ness



Martello tower Felixstowe



Sea has eroded the coastline

Pillbox at Bawdsey

## Pillboxes

One hundred and thirty years later in 1940 it was the Germans who were threatening to invade. This time, Britain was unprepared. There was a rush to protect the important harbours and towns with heavy gun batteries. All over the County "pillboxes" were built to provide cover for small groups of soldiers. Just like the men in the Martello towers of the Napoleonic Wars, they were expected to delay and disrupt any invasion.



## Get arty:

### Build a lighthouse

Build a historic building like a light house, castle or Martello tower from recycled cardboard with your class. You could then use it as a pen holder or desk tidy!

# Wartime experiments on Orford Ness

Built for secret military research

During World Wars One and Two the Ministry of Defence owned Orford Ness and used it for secret military experiments. They tested explosives and bombs, and during the 1950s they used the area to perfect the triggers for nuclear weapons. The strangely shaped "Pagoda" buildings shielded the explosions from spies.



Pagoda Orford Ness

Some of the most important experiments that happened on Orford Ness took place between 1935-37, when Robert Watson-Watt invented Radar. The Radar station is now at Bawdsey and you can visit to see how Radar works! Without Radar the history of Europe would have been very different and the Germans might have had the chance to test Suffolk's coastal defences for real.

Orford Ness is now looked after by the National Trust and if you want to visit this extremely special place you can get a ferry across to the Ness from Orford Quay.

## Get arty:

### Explore historic buildings

What historic buildings have you seen on the coast? Find out why they have been built there and draw a picture to show how it was used.



Dunwich's changing coastline



"Did you know Suffolk has an Atlantis – a town hidden beneath the sea!"