Designated sites in Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

Correct at May-20

Alde, Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC	Protected estuaries, mudflats, sandflats and saltmarshes.
Aldeburgh Brick Pit SSSI	An important stratigraphic geological site with a sequence of Kesgrave Sand and Gravel, Chillesford Clay and Chillesford Crag overlying Coralline Crag.
Aldeburgh Hall Pit SSSI	This shallow pit is of great geological interest. It shows a section in very fossiliferous facies of the Pliocene Coralline Crag.
Alde-Ore Estuary Ramsar	An estuary complex of three rivers comprising various habitats including intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, a vegetated shingle spit, saline lagoons, and grazing marsh. The site supports nationally scarce plants and invertebrates and notable assemblages of breeding and wintering wetland birds.
Alde-Ore Estuary SPA	Protected for breeding avocet, lesser black-backed gull, little tern, sandwich tern and marsh harrier as well as numbers of non-breeding avocet, redshank and ruff.
Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI	The scientific interests are outstanding and diverse. The shingle structures of Orford Ness and Shingle Street are of great physiographic importance whilst the cliff at Gedgrave is of geological interest. The site also contains several coastal formations and estuarine features including mudflats, saltmarsh, vegetated shingle and coastal lagoons which are of special botanical and ornithological value.
Bawdsey Cliff SSSI	Bawdsey Cliffs are of great geological interest and potential for studies of non-glacial Pleistocene environments. The cliffs provide over 2km of section of the Early Pleistocene Red Crag. The site constitutes by far the largest available exposure of the Red Crag and is rich in marine Mollusca.
Benacre To Easton Bavents Lagoons SAC	Protected due to its important coastal lagoon habitats considered to be a priority for conservation at a European scale
Benacre To Easton Bavents SPA	Numbers of breeding numbers of little tern, bittern and marsh harrier important on the European scale.

Blaxhall Heath SSSI	Blaxhall Heath is one of the few fragments of the once extensive Sandlings heath of coastal Suffolk and is a good example of this type of dry lowland heath. The heath is of considerable historical interest with a well-preserved ancient bank and ditch along the southern boundary and a number of internal earthworks dating from the Iron Age.
Buckanay Farm Pit, Alderton SSSI	Buckanay Farm Pit is an important geological locality for demonstrating the sedimentological characteristics of the Red Crag.
Chillesford Church Pit SSSI	Chillesford Church Pit is a classic geological site showing Early Pleistocene crag deposits. Only here can the superimposition of the Norwich Crag (Chillesford Crag and Chillesford Clay) on the Red Crag be seen.
Crag Farm Pit, Sudbourne SSSI	The quarry at Crag Farm is an important geological site for the study of Coralline Crag and palaeoecology. It is probably the largest and most readily accessible Coralline Crag locality.
Crag Pit, Aldeburgh SSSI	This site is of geological interest because it represents the most northerly existing exposure of Pliocene Coralline Crag.
Crag Pit, Sutton SSSI	Crag Pit, Sutton is a small disused quarry of Red Crag, which contains a well-established colony of the nationally rare annual plant, Small Alison *Alyssum alyssoides.*
Deben Estuary Ramsar	The site qualifies by supporting a population of the Endangered Red Data Book mollusc Vertigo augustior. Martlesham Creek is one of only fourteen sites in Britain where this species survives. It also qualifies by regularly supporting internationally important wintering numbers of dark-bellied brent geese.
Deben Estuary SPA	The estuary is protected as it supports nationally important numbers of wintering avocet and internationally important numbers of wintering dark-bellied brent geese. The site also supports a notable assemblage of breeding and wintering wetland birds in addition to the species mentioned above. Breeding species include shelduck, gadwall, teal, shoveler, redshank, oystercatcher, ringed plover and snipe. Wintering species include cormorant, teal, pintail, wigeon, goldeneye, coot, oystercatcher, ringed plover, dunlin, snipe, curlew, turnstone and twite. The estuary is more important for many species of waterfowl in years when severe weather reduces food resources available on the continent.

Deben Estuary SSSI	The Deben Estuary is important for its populations of overwintering waders and wildfowl and also for its extensive and diverse saltmarsh communities. Several estuarine plants and invertebrates with a nationally restricted distribution are also present. The boundary of this site partially overlaps the boundaries of two geological SSSIs, Ferry Cliff, Sutton and Ramsholt Cliff.
Ferry Cliff, Sutton SSSI	This site is of geological interest because rocks of Palaeocene age here yield an important mammalian fauna including representatives of the seven orders, including the oldest British members of the Rodentia, Artiodactyla and Perissodactyla (rodents and hoofed animals).
Freston and Cutler's Woods with Holbrook Park SSSI	Although only Freston Wood is the only one currently sited within the AONB, these woods together comprise one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in Suffolk.
Iken Wood SSSI	Iken Wood lies close to the banks of the River Alde and may well be the only ancient coppice wood on blown sand in Britain. It is the most interesting example of lowland coppice oakwood in Suffolk and has a distinctive flora typical of woods on light soils.
Leiston-Aldeburgh SSSI	Leiston-Aldeburgh contains a rich mosaic of habitats including acid grassland, heath, scrub, woodland, fen, open water and vegetated shingle. This mix of habitats in close juxtaposition and the associated transition communities between habitats is unusual in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths. The variety of habitats support a diverse and abundant community of breeding and overwintering birds, a high number of dragonfly species and many scarce plants.
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths & Marshes SAC	The site is designated for the following important habitats: annual vegetation of drift lines; dry heaths; and, coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves.
Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar	This composite, Suffolk coastal site contains a complex mosaic of habitats, notably, areas of marsh with dykes, extensive reedbeds, mudflats, lagoons, shingle and driftline, woodland and areas of lowland heath. The site supports the largest continuous stand of reed in England and Wales and demonstrates the nationally rare transition in grazing marsh ditch plants from brackish to fresh water. The combination of habitats creates an exceptional area of scientific interest supporting nationally scarce plants, British Red Data Book invertebrates and nationally important numbers of breeding and wintering birds.

Minsmere to Walberswick SPA	Minsmere-Walberswick qualifies by supporting in summer nationally important breeding populations of bitterns, marsh harriers, avocet, little tern and nightjar. It also qualifies by regularly supporting, in winter, a nationally important wintering population of hen harrier, and in summer nationally important breeding populations of three regularly occurring migratory species: gadwall; teal: and shoveler. Also notable is a nationally important breeding population of bearded tit. The site qualifies also by supporting nationally important wintering populations of three migratory waterfowl: European white-fronted geese; gadwall, and shoveler. Minsmere-Walberswick is also of importance for an outstandingly diverse assemblage of breeding birds of marshland and reedbed habitats, including bittern, garganey, marsh harrier, water rail, Cetti's warbler and Savi's warbler. Also notable is an assemblage of wintering waterfowl including, in addition to species listed above, Bewick's swan, wigeon, teal, avocet; spotted redshank; and redshank. During severe winter weather Minsmere-Walberswick can assume even greater national and international importance as wildfowl and waders from many other areas arrive, attracted by relatively mild climate, compared with continental areas, and the abundant food resources available.
Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI	This composite site is situated on the coast of Suffolk between Southwold in the north and Sizewell in the south. It contains a complex series of habitats, notably mudflats, shingle beach, reedbeds, heathland and grazing marsh, which combine to create an area of exceptional scientific interest.
Nacton Meadows SSSI	Nacton Meadows are of special interest for their areas of fen-meadow, of a type that is very scarce in Suffolk. In Suffolk, there is a total area of approximately 55 ha of this vegetation type remaining in only five other sites that are of a similar quality. In addition, this site supports a relatively species-rich version of the vegetation community type compared to the other sites in the County.
Neutral Farm Pit, Butley SSSI	This pit is of geological importance as a classic site in the study of the Early Pleistocene history of East Anglia. It exposes magnificent cross-bedding structures within the crag and is rich in marine Molluscs.
Orfordness -Shingle Street SAC	Designated for its coastal lagoons, annual vegetation of drift lines and perennial vegetation of stony banks.

Orwell Estuary SSSI	The Orwell Estuary is of national importance for breeding avocet its breeding bird assemblage of open waters and their margins, nine species of wintering waterfowl, an assemblage of vascular plants, and intertidal mud habitats.
Pakefield to Easton Bavents SSSI	Pakefield to Easton Bavents is nationally important for the geological exposures of the Lower Pleistocene Norwich Crag Formations and associated Pleistocene vertebrate assemblages, and the coastal geomorphology of Benacre Ness. The site is also nationally important for its vegetated shingle features, saline lagoons, flood-plain fens, an assemblage of nationally rare and nationally scarce vascular plants, scarce breeding birds, four breeding bird assemblages in four different habitats and wintering bitterns.
Potton Hall Fields, Westleton SSSI	Potton Hall Fields are of special interest for their populations of the nationally rare Red-tipped Cudweed, several thousand of which have been recorded there. The plant occurs in only two other counties in Britain.
Ramsholt Cliff SSSI	The Coralline Crag at this locality can be seen resting unconformably on irregular, erosional surface of London Clay, and to be overstepped by Red Crag where it comes to rest directly on London Clay. At the base of the Coralline Crag the phosphorite deposit can be seen. This is the only locality where the Coralline Crag phosphorite deposit can be examined and is also probably the only existing locality where the 'boxstones', phosphatic remnants of a Miocene formation can be seen in situ. The section at Ramsholt represents the most southerly and, paleaoecologically, probably the most near-shore Coralline Crag deposited in East Anglia.
Red House Farm Pit, Sudbourne SSSI	This pit is of geological interest for its exposure of Pliocene Coralline Crag. A section of 3.5 metres in the sandwave facies of the Crag is exposed and it shows well-defined large-scale cross-stratification in the sediments.
Rockhall Wood Pit, Sutton SSSI	The pits at Rockhall Wood afford similar and excellent exposures of Pliocene Coralline Crag. They show a sequence from silty unleached sediment at the base to coarse bioclastic sediments from which the mineral aragonite has been removed by post depositional chemical changes. This therefore, represents one of the only localities where the vertical sequence of diagenetic change can be seen.

Round Hill Pit, Aldeburgh SSSI	This small pit is of geological interest because of the exposure of Coralline Crag deposited in the Pliocene age. The face, which is about 2.5 metres high, is notable for the profusion of horizontal burrows and displaced structures in the sediment as a result of burrowing activity.
Sandlings Forest SSSI	The Sandlings Forest SSSI lies between Snape and Woodbridge and is comprised of the areas known as Tunstall Forest and Rendlesham Forest. The main conservation interest of the forest lies in the open areas such as young plantations and rotational clearfell which provide suitable habitat for breeding woodlark and nightjar. The storm of 1987 affected a very large area, particularly in Rendlesham Forest, and this led to an increase in the extent of open habitat.
Sandlings SPA	Protected for its numbers of breeding nightjar and woodlark, important at a European level.
Sizewell Marshes SSSI	Sizewell Marshes are important for their large area of lowland, unimproved wet meadows which support outstanding assemblages of invertebrates and breeding birds. Several nationally scarce plants are also present.
Snape Warren SSSI	An important remnant of the once extensive 'Sandlings' heaths situated on sandy soils sloping down to the Alde Estuary the site is a fine example of the lowland heathland of eastern England.
Staverton Park & the Thicks, Wantisden SAC	Old oak woods on sandy plains.
Staverton Park and The Thicks, Wantisden SSSI	Staverton Park is an ancient park with a well-documented medieval history. It is composed of three main areas of woodland on an unpodsolized sandy soil. This site has a rich lichen flora and a large invertebrate fauna including several rare species only associated with ancient parkland trees. Additionally, the site is of ornithological interest.
Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar	An estuary comprising extensive mudflats, low cliffs, saltmarsh, and areas of vegetated shingle on the lower river reaches. The site supports internationally and nationally important numbers of numerous species of wintering wildfowl and waders. Several nationally scarce plants and invertebrates occur.
Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA	Of European importance for breeding avocet, migratory numbers of redshank, overwintering numbers of dark-bellied brent goose, pintail, grey plover, knot, dunlin, black tailed godwit and redshank; and for its waterbird assemblage being used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds.

Stour Estuary SSSI	The Stour Estuary is nationally important for 13 species of wintering waterfowl and three species on autumn passage. The estuary is also of national importance for coastal saltmarsh, sheltered muddy shores, two scarce marine invertebrates and a vascular scarce plant assemblage. The Stour Estuary includes three nationally important geological sites. These provide exposures of early Eocene sediments containing the volcanic ash formations between Harwich and Wrabness. The same rocks are also important for the fossil fruits and seeds that they contain.
Sudbourne Park Pit SSSI	This site is of geological importance for the study of the formation of Coralline Crag deposited in the Pliocene age.
Sutton and Hollesley Heaths SSSI	Sutton and Hollesley Heaths form one of the largest remaining fragments of the once extensive 'Sandlings' heaths of the Suffolk coast. They consist of characteristic dry acidic grass and heather-dominated heathland with much scrub, bracken and self-sown pine and birch.
Tunstall Common SSSI	Tunstall Common is a fragment of the once extensive 'Sandlings' heath of coastal Suffolk and is a good example of this dry lowland heath type.
Valley Farm Pit, Sudbourne SSSI	This quarry is of geological interest for its exposure of Coralline Crag. It is believed to be at the margin of the sandwave facies and a section of about 5.5 metres is exposed.

County Wildlife Site designation is non-statutory, but it recognises the high value of a site for wildlife. Many sites are of county, and often regional or national, importance. They are often designated because they support characteristic or threatened species or habitats. Information on Suffolk County Wildlife Sites is provided by Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service.

Information on Suffolk Roadside Nature Reserves including a map of their location is provided by Suffolk County Council.