

The Story of East Anglia

An Archaeological History from Earliest Humans to the Present Day

This lecture series presents an overview of the development of the East Anglian landscape from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods. Drawing on many of the region's most important archaeological sites and new discoveries, the course also introduces the techniques used to 'read' and interpret the historic landscape.

Thurs 7th Oct

Session 1: Prehistoric East Anglia

This session examines the archaeological evidence for prehistoric East Anglia, beginning with the million-year-old footprints discovered at Happisburgh and ending with the rise of the Iron Age Icenii tribe during the first millennium BC. Themes include flint tools, burial practices, farming and settlements, and key sites such as Grimes Graves, Must Farm and Tasburgh hillfort.

Thurs 14th Oct

Session 2: Roman East Anglia

This session looks at the archaeological evidence for the impact of the Roman invasion on the Iron Age tribes in East Anglia, which culminated in the Boudican Revolt and resulted in five centuries of Roman rule in the region. Subjects covered include Roman forts, roads, settlements and religion, and key sites such as Colchester, Burgh Castle, Fison Way and Caistor St Edmund.

Thurs 21st Oct

Session 3: Early Anglo-Saxon East Anglia

This session comprises a guided visit to the West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village, near Bury St Edmunds, during the course of which we will examine the rich archaeological and historical evidence from the Anglo-Saxons' arrival in the 5th century AD and the establishment of the kingdom of East Anglia.

Thurs 4th Nov

Session 4: Late Saxon and Medieval East Anglia

This session explores the landscape of Late Saxon and medieval East Anglia, from the coming of the Vikings and the martyrdom of King Edmund, through the impact of the Norman Conquest and ending with the Dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s. Subjects covered include castles, monasteries, parish churches and settlements, as well as the rise of towns and trading ports.

Thurs 11th Nov

Post Medieval East Anglia

The session offers an exploration of the changing landscape from the 16th century to the present day. Subjects covered include the development of country houses and landscape parks, the effects of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, and the impact of Parliamentary Enclosure. The session ends by considering the legacy of 20th-century conflicts in the region.

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Sources of Information

Geology of Britain Viewer

<https://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

This tool from the British Geological Survey allows you to explore the bedrock and superficial geology of the UK, overlay and compare maps, and download borehole logs.

The National Heritage List for England (NHLE)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

The definitive list of designated heritage assets, maintained by Historic England. Includes listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and registered battlefields.

The Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER)

<http://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/>

The database of all of the known archaeological sites in Suffolk, comprising records of archaeological fieldwork, monuments and findspots. A version of the HER is available via the Suffolk Heritage Explorer website.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme

<https://finds.org.uk/>

A national database containing details of archaeological objects discovered by members of the public, primarily metal-detectorists, which have subsequently been reported to and recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The National Library of Scotland

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/find>

The National Library of Scotland has scanned many of the Ordnance Survey maps in its collection and made them available online. You can search by area and map series and view high-resolution copies of historic Ordnance Survey maps for most of the country.

East Anglian Archaeology Monograph Series

<https://eaareports.org.uk/>

The EAA series has been running since the 1970s and publishes the results of archaeological fieldwork conducted across the eastern region.

Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History

<http://suffolk institute.pdfsrv.co.uk/>

An online archive of the Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, which has been published annually since 1853.

Norfolk Archaeology

<https://doi.org/10.5284/1078322>

An online archive of Norfolk Archaeology, which has been published annually by the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society since 1847.