

**BECCLES** is a fine gateway to the valley of the River Waveney which forms the border between Suffolk and Norfolk. Modern trains call every hour, seven days a week, at its station, which has a welcoming café. The town is dominated by the unusual detached tower of its fine church and its seasonal attractions include a riverside lido and a museum (April to October). The church tower is open on certain days providing great views from the top. The historic **Public Hall** is the venue for concerts, dramatic productions and even a beer festival. In the summer, the Big Dog ferry gives trips from the lido up the river to **Geldeston Locks**, which can also be reached on foot along the Norfolk side of the river.

A delightful walk from **Beccles station** takes you over the railway line and along the Avenue to the extensive Common. From the Quay you can access a variety of walks by the river and across the marshes.

**Beccles** is an important destination for **Broads** holidays, as the river is navigable here and this helped the growth of the town, which received its charter from Elizabeth I. There are many independent shops, a variety of places to eat and drink and a Friday market. Look out for events such as the Antique Market, the Food & Drink Festival, the Carnival and the Christmas Lights SwitchOn. More information is available on the recently updated website <https://visitbeccles.co.uk> and there are seven Visitor Information points. (Library, Beccles Books, Quayside, Bear & Bells, Saxon's, Sports Store and Station Café.)

Buses leave the Old Market (service **580** on the Suffolk side, **581** on the Norfolk side of the valley) every day except Sunday. **Geldeston** on the Norfolk side is head of navigation with its popular Locks Inn Community Pub by the river and Wherry Inn in the village centre. **Ellingham** has a picturesque water mill. You can go contactless on the buses and also on the bus from **Halesworth** to **Bungay**.

**BUNGAY** is a historic market town which you can reach by bus from **Norwich** (service **41** and **X41**) and **Diss** (service **581**) via **Harleston**, as well as from **Halesworth** (**X41**) and **Beccles**. Here you can explore the romantic ruins of a 12th century castle and see the unique mining galleries left from the castle siege of 1174. As in Beccles, there are streets full of delightful Georgian architecture. In the town centre stands a 17th century **Butter Cross** and there are many opportunities to sample local food and drink in independent shops, cafés and pubs.

The town has numerous speciality shops: Market Day is Thursday and special seasonal markets (Christmas Market, Garden Street Market and Antiques Market) are also very

popular. The **Fisher Theatre**, dating from 1828 offers a broad range of programmes, performances and art

Bungay has an abundance of folklore and legend. You can find the ancient **Druidstone** in the churchyard and examine the doorway of **St Mary's Church** for the claw marks left by the demon dog **Black Shuck**, who appeared in the church during a summer thunderstorm in 1577.

Take a walk round **Outney Common** along the river and see if you can spot an otter, heron or kingfisher or follow the **Bigod Way** footpath along quiet lanes and farm tracks before ascending Bath Hills for a fine view of the Valley.

You can follow the **Angles Way** to **Beccles** (7 miles). It is mainly on the Suffolk side of the valley and can be done in stages using the **580** or **581** bus ([www.eastsuffolkline.com/walks](http://www.eastsuffolkline.com/walks)).

Canoe hire is also available all year in Bungay at **Outney Meadow Caravan Site** with possible sightings of swans, herons, kingfishers, otters and in the summer damselflies and dragonflies ([www.outneymeadow.co.uk/canoeing](http://www.outneymeadow.co.uk/canoeing)).

There are Visitor Information Points at the library, town council offices and castle.

You can also explore the valley by bicycle – in which case the Norfolk side is less hilly! Beccles Library has a good selection of cycle ride leaflets.

Service **581** continues to Harleston and then Diss, passing along Victoria Road a few minutes walk from the rail station.

For details of all regional and Inter City trains, operated by Greater Anglia, log on to [www.greateranglia.co.uk](http://www.greateranglia.co.uk) or phone 0345 600 7245.

For First Eastern Counties buses, log on to [www.firstgroup.com/easterncounties](http://www.firstgroup.com/easterncounties) or phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

BorderBus operates service 580 - look them up on [www.borderbus.co.uk](http://www.borderbus.co.uk) or phone 01502 714565.

Simonds Countrylink operates service 581 (and works closely with BorderBus on this route) - find out more on [www.simonds.co.uk](http://www.simonds.co.uk) or by phoning 01379 647300.

The EAST SUFFOLK TRAVEL ASSOCIATION is the local independent voluntary association for train and bus users.

You can join us via our website [www.eastsuffolktravel.org.uk](http://www.eastsuffolktravel.org.uk)

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ESTA has taken every care to provide accurate information in this leaflet but cannot be held responsible for any errors or changes since publication in April 2024.

# Discover Beccles, Bungay & the Waveney Valley



Zak Nelson for First Bus image

By  
**Train & Bus**  
Useful map & information inside



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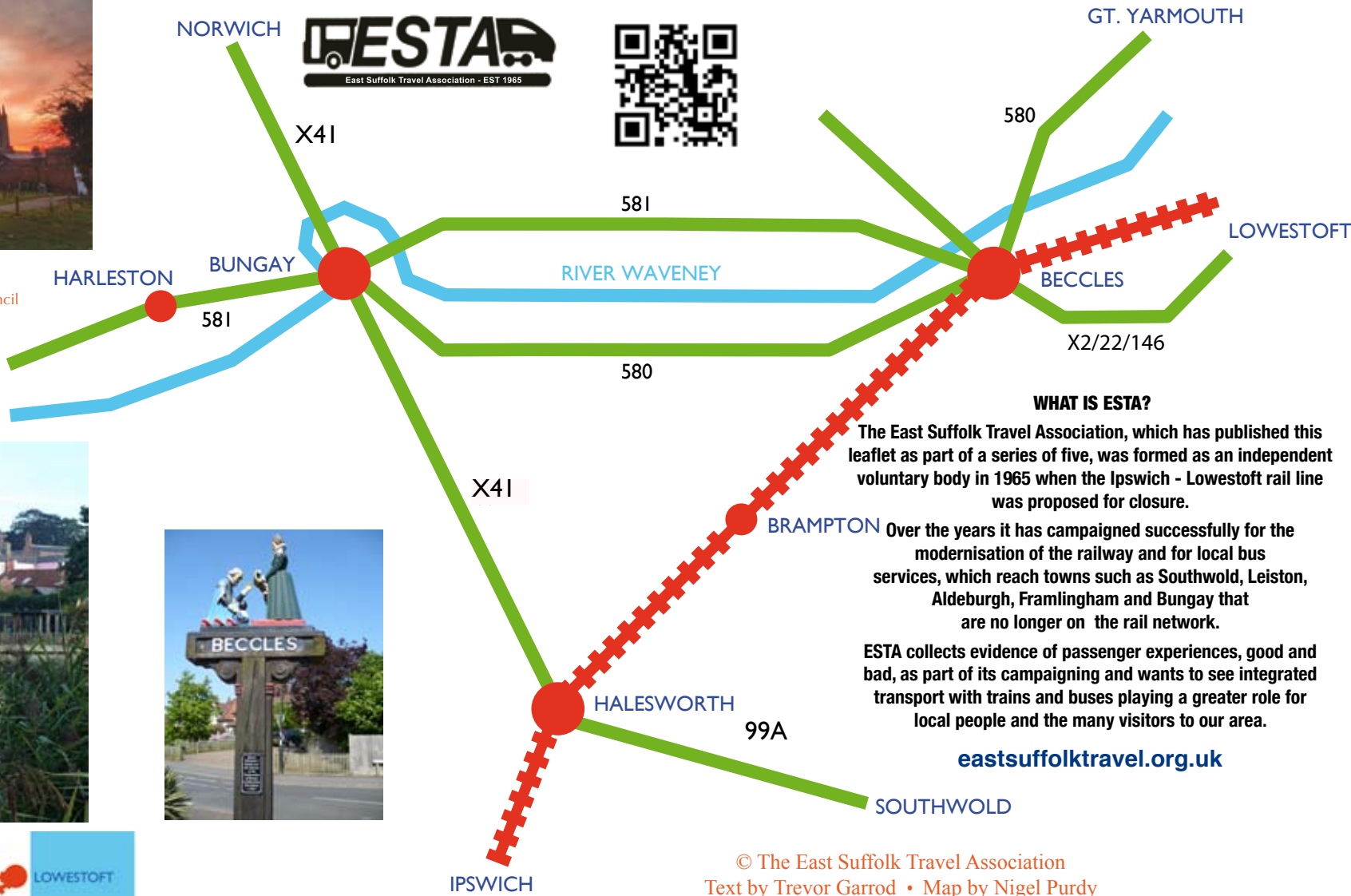


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**WHAT IS ESTA?**

The East Suffolk Travel Association, which has published this leaflet as part of a series of five, was formed as an independent voluntary body in 1965 when the Ipswich - Lowestoft rail line was proposed for closure.

Over the years it has campaigned successfully for the modernisation of the railway and for local bus services, which reach towns such as Southwold, Leiston, Aldeburgh, Framlingham and Bungay that are no longer on the rail network.

ESTA collects evidence of passenger experiences, good and bad, as part of its campaigning and wants to see integrated transport with trains and buses playing a greater role for local people and the many visitors to our area.

[eastsuffolktravel.org.uk](http://eastsuffolktravel.org.uk)

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