



## Tendring CAMRA RambAle route 13

### Wrabness to White Hart, Weeley Heath

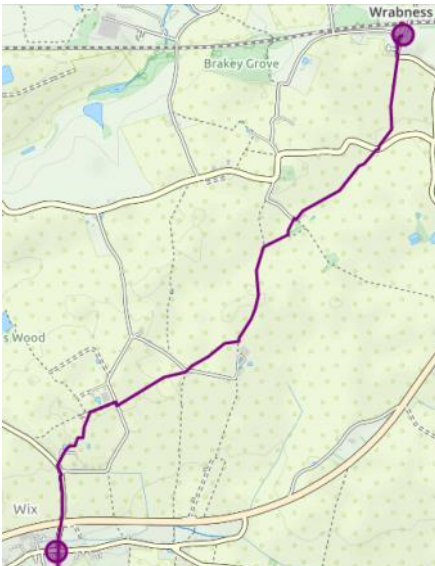
Start: Wrabness Community Café and Shop

Finish: White Hart, Weeley Heath

Total Distance: 8.3 miles (13.5 km)

### Wrabness Community Shop to Waggon, Wix

Distance: 2.5 miles (4.1 km)



Head straight ahead when leaving the shop or station car park, take the pavement on the left passing the former Black Boy pub, followed by a village noticeboard and a former phone box. Where the road bends sharply left cross the road carefully and follow the public footpath straight ahead of you. Follow the path down the hill and across a small footbridge. The footpath then leads to the Harwich Road crossing another small footbridge as you reach the road. As the road has quite fast traffic at this point and the path meets at a bend, cross very carefully.

After crossing, follow the footpath with the ditch to your right (to the left of the ditch you are in Ramsey and Parkeston parish, since crossing the road; to the right you would still be in Wrabness parish). After a short distance the path crosses to the other side of the ditch using an access between fields and you follow the path with the ditch to your left for a while. After a while you find another footpath marker just left of a tree where the footpath cuts across the next field—aim for the right hand end of the



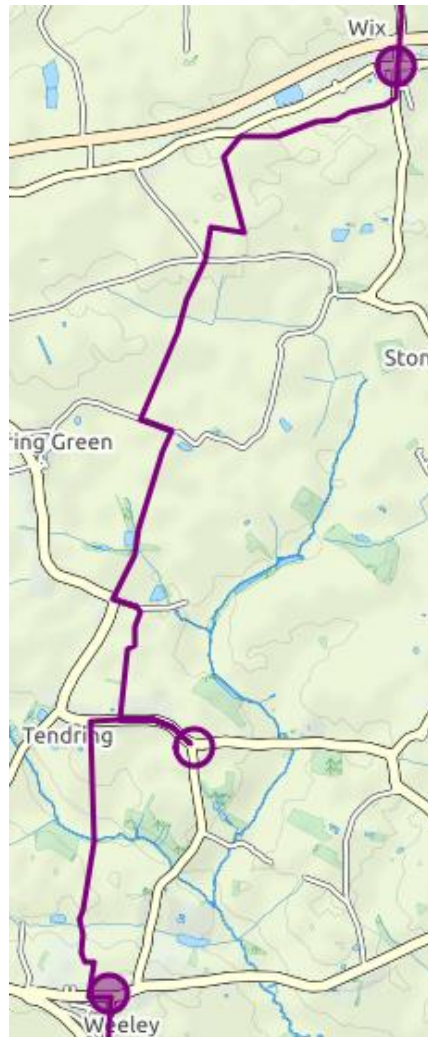
hedge in front of the farm, then keep the hedge to your left until you reach a lane (Butlers Lane) with the gate to Butlers Farm on your left. A number of paths meet here; you want to go right on the lane, then very soon left where the wooded area ends and the field starts. The path should lead diagonally across this field to a footbridge, but at the time of testing this was hidden behind a fallen tree and was discovered by walking around the field edge until it was obvious. After crossing the bridge the path turns right—follow the track around the edge of the field and follow it until you reach a gate with a stile to the left; markers on the stile indicate two different footpaths from this point and you want to take the one diagonally to the right—you should be able to see the next stile at the other side of the field. After crossing this next stile you should be able to see the footpath marker post which marks a footbridge exit from the field, and having crossed the bridge you can hopefully see two fingerpost footpath signs and another footpath marker post at the far side of the field which mark where you reach Willow Hall Lane. All being well the two paths that leave on the opposite side of the road are obvious through any crops; you want to take the one off to the right. This crosses a footbridge into the next field and turns slightly left although during testing again this had been mown to make it clear. Follow this path to Spinnels Lane. Turn right onto the lane then left onto the concrete track which leads down to a substation. Just before the substation gate ignore the footpath off to the right, but turn left on the path at the edge of the field, with the hedge on your right. After a while it turns right into the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Wix. It isn't clear when walking whether the path goes straight ahead to the obvious gate, or turns left past the bell cage to pick up the main path to the church. Take either as they both lead to the driveway to the church. Turn left and head down to Bradfield Road, passing Wix Abbey on your left. On reaching the main road, it is perhaps best to stay on the verge on the left until you've crossed Spinnels Lane, when a surfaced footpath begins on the other side of Bradfield Road; cross carefully and follow this path down to the Waggon.

## **Waggon, Wix to Black Boy, Weeley**

Distance: 4.9 miles (7.9km)

Turn right out of the Waggon onto Clacton Road and follow the pavement on the right hand side. A public footpath leads right after Wix Haulage Yard that you should take. Follow it until it turns sharp right to join Colchester Road and instead take the path that bears left—this path was quite obvious bare ground through the crop when testing the route. When you reach the next

field the path has been diverted left around the field edge. Follow the field edge until you reach a corner where the path leads past a house and joins Colchester Road. Cross carefully; the path carries on slightly right of straight across. Continue with the hedge to your right. The path leads down to a footbridge over a stream, then continues straight ahead with a line of trees on your right. After the trees and before a hedge a footpath marker marks where you need to move slightly right so that the hedge is on your left before you pass it. At the end of the intermittent hedge when you reach the corner of the field continue ahead until you reach a lane (Wolves Hall Lane). Turn left, crossing over to walk on the right, taking care as this short stretch of lane was surprisingly where most cars were encountered during testing. You will see two large barns ahead; the footpath to follow turns right after these through the farmyard of Wolves Hall Farm, continuing as a track. At the bottom of the hill where the track around the field edge turns left and another track slopes up to the right take the footpath straight ahead through a narrow strip of woodland, crossing a footbridge over a stream into the next field. Continue up the hill keeping the field edge on your right. The path brings you out at the bend in the road in Tendring around Tendring school's grounds—turn left away from the main road into Lodge Lane. After Oakley House/The Rondavaal semi-detached houses on your left you will see a footpath on the right. Take this. It initially bears left then turns right around the field edge. Follow the path around the field edge until it leaves the field over a footbridge and follow it straight ahead until you meet the main road through Tendring again (where The Street becomes Thorpe Road). If you are doing the 500m each way diversion to The Bicycle, turn left here and retrace your steps to this point after your stop, but otherwise turn

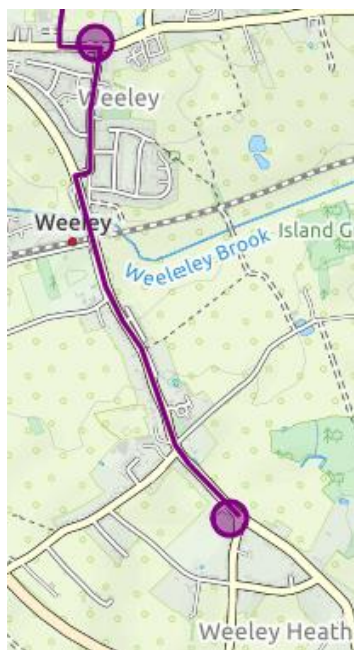


right, staying on the pavement on the right until you pass Ilex Cottage on the left, then take the driveway left (which is also a public footpath). After a while the footpath continues straight ahead through a kissing gate while the drive bears right. The footpath leaves this small field (which often contains horses) through another kissing gate and continues more-or-less straight on with the field on your left and a hedge to the right. After the hedge the path passes through another kissing gate and continues with the hedge on your left. After a while the path goes through a kissing gate and continues with a ditch and a hedge on your right. At the bottom of the hill a footbridge leads out of the field. The path now heads uphill, initially on grass but then possibly through a crop. Hopefully an obvious route to take has been reinstated but the actual route is somewhere to the right of the power lines and aims for a kissing gate which is easier to walk around as there is no fence or hedge either side of the gate. The path after this gate continues ahead between two fields. I think you are meant to be in the left-hand field walking with the boundary on your right, but at the bottom of the hill the path leads out of the fields through a kissing gate and over another footbridge over a stream so watch for this bridge. The path should then be quite obvious though the middle of the field ahead leading straight to another kissing gate. After this gate you emerge along the right hand side of the field which contains a modern stone circle until you get to a post marking where the path turns left. Theoretically you want to keep the hedge to your left to get to the kissing gate to leave the field, but electrical hookup points means you may find you need to divert around any caravans parked in the way. After the kissing gate turn right onto the track which leads down to Colchester Road, where you can turn left to get to the Black Boy.

## **Black Boy, Weeley to White Hart, Weeley Heath**

Distance: 1.1 miles (1.8 km)

From the Black Boy, cross over and walk down The Street, turning left when it reaches the B1441 Weeley By-Pass. There are pavements down both sides of this road so cross at some point before reaching the White Hart.



## Places of interest en route

### **Holbrook View, Wrabness (former Black Boy Pub)**

Situated opposite the Community Café at the top of Black Boy Lane. It was planning application 97/00094/FUL which granted change of use of the former Black Boy public house to a private residence. Reading the application documents online reveals the pub had closed 10 months previously, and had been sold by Pubmaster to the applicant in the three weeks preceding the application being submitted. An objection letter from a local resident included this paragraph:

*Prior to its closure, the Black Boy played an enormous part in community life. Not only did it facilitate a weekly doctor's surgery and the mobile library but was, obviously, the centre for activities such as darts, cribbage, etc. It welcomed the holidaymakers, ramblers, ornithologists and visitors to the nearby Stour Woods. Morris dancers and the hunt regularly visited. Most importantly, the Black Boy was the meeting place that maintained the community atmosphere.*

The council's comments included:

*Whilst there are Structure and Local Plan policies encouraging the development of community facilities there are no policies specifically to protect/safeguard rural facilities. Accordingly, given that the public house lies within the housing settlement limits of Wrabness I see no grounds for objection to this proposal.*

And:

*Re-use as a pub would be desirable in this small village but refusal would be difficult to justify and likely to result in the building just remaining empty and eventually starting to look untidy.*

### **Wix Abbey**

The small Elizabethan Hall House was built by the Vesey family between 1561 and 1575 on land once owned by Wix Priory, a small convent of Benedictine nuns. The nunnery was in existence for about 400 years until it was suppressed by Cardinal Wolsey in 1525 together with several other small monasteries in Essex to boost the royal coffers. The priory's lands were sold off and the buildings as well as the convent church were demolished.

Wix Abbey was built on part of the land that had been granted to Cardinal College Oxford - the college Wolsey had just founded. (In 1532, after Wolsey's fall, the college was refounded as King Henry VIII's College by Henry VIII; it is now known as Christ Church.)

The property was sold in recent years along with the unique chance to become Lord of the Manor of Wix; the title predates the house, having been held by Cardinal Wolsey until his downfall and subsequent arrest for treason and then passing to King Henry VIII. It stayed with owners of the abbey until the early 19th Century. In 2001 the then owners bought the title back at auction.

## **St Mary the Virgin Church, Wix**

In the grounds of this church you will pass a bell cage that was rebuilt on the site of an earlier cage according to a plaque inside the cage which begins:

### ***John Danyell's Bell***

*This cage is erected on the site of an old cage. The bell cast by John Danyell of London, circa 1460, was one of three bells hanging in the steeple of the parish church according to an inventory of 1552: it had been moved to the churchyard prior to 1633.*

According to Wikipedia, the church itself is a Listed Anglican church formerly associated with a priory from the Middle Ages, the present church dates largely from the 18th century.



The Benedictine Priory of St Mary was a religious house founded in c. 1125 by brothers Walter Mascherell, Alexander de Wix and their sister Edith, who were the children of Walter the Deacon, who owned much of area in the late 11th and early 12th Centuries. The house incorporated a church which had existed at the location since c. 1050. The priory was never large, containing only around ten nuns, but was still highly influential in the immediate vicinity. It owned large areas of land in Wix and much of the surrounding countryside. It held the status of a manor in its own right, and the tenants of its copyholds in Wix were obliged to perform manorial service. By the time of the Peasants' Revolt (1381), this was generating friction, and during the revolt, the priory was attacked by its angry villagers, who destroyed its Manorial rolls which detailed their obligations to it. After the Revolt had ended, those responsible were evicted by the prioress, who then fined each one before allowing them to return. The priory remained in operation until the 16th Century, though became increasingly rundown. In 1525, it was shut down by Thomas Wolsey, being one of thirty small religious houses which were closed to provide funding for The King's School, Ipswich and the Oxford institution now known as Christ Church. After its closure, the priory was demolished, leaving only the church. The only remains of the priory which can still be seen are the now-blocked 13th Century arches which form the church's north wall. The church was later restored and mostly rebuilt in 1744, then again in 1888, with much of the original limestone and rubble composition being replaced in brick. Listed status was granted in 1966. The church has a free-standing bell frame, which once contained three bells, though now has only one, dating from the 15th Century. An attempt was made in 1975 to steal the bell, which resulted in the frame being replaced with a modern design.

## **Weeley Stone Circle**

Created by Rainbow Nurseries as an April Fools joke in 2005 over 100 visitors came to see the reportedly 4000 year old structure, and their donations to view it and buy postcards helped raise funds for St Helena Hospice. Quoting part of a Gazette online article:

*It is hoped that the unveiling of the "Weeley stone circle" will have brought in several hundred pounds.*

and

*Mr Norris made it clear there was to be no charge for viewing from a distance - but any donations would go to St Helena Hospice.*

Please check pub opening times before attempting this route. Check WhatPub <http://www.whatpub.com> for the latest information, or check directly with the pubs themselves:

Wrabness Community Shop	(01255) 886068
Waggon, Wix	(01255) 870279
The Bicycle, Tendring	(01255) 830340
Black Boy, Weeley	(01255) 830361
White Hart, Weeley Heath	(01255) 830384

Please remember to score your beers and ciders via WhatPub:

<http://www.WhatPub.com>

Not a CAMRA member? Then why not join? More details at:

<http://www.camra.org.uk/>

Are you a local member? Keep up-to-date with what is happening in Tendring CAMRA by visiting our website:

<http://www.tendringcamra.org.uk>

Or follow us on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/TendringCAMRA>

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