



# Top Family~Friendly Attractions In & Around East Anglia

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## AMUSEMENT PARKS (6)

**Cadbury World\***: [www.cadburyworld.co.uk](http://www.cadburyworld.co.uk)

A few children's rides and tour of the Cadbury chocolate factory in Birmingham.

Post Code: B30 1JR, Distance: 2 hours and 15 minutes

**Chessington World of Adventures**: [www.chessington.com](http://www.chessington.com)

Amusement park and zoo located south of London.

Post code: KT9 2NE, Distance: 2 hours

**Dinosaur Adventure Park**: [www.dinosauradventure.co.uk](http://www.dinosauradventure.co.uk)

Dinosaur theme park located north of Norwich with indoor and outdoor play areas, miniature golf, and other attractions for young children.

Post code: NR9 5JW, Distance: 1 hour

**Drayton Manor**: [www.draytonmanor.co.uk](http://www.draytonmanor.co.uk)

Amusement park, zoo, and home of Thomas Land on the outskirts of Birmingham.

Post code: B78 3TW, Distance: 2 hours

**Legoland Windsor Resort**: [www.legoland.co.uk](http://www.legoland.co.uk)

Lego-themed amusement park west of London.

Post code: SL4 4AY, Distance: 2 hours

**Thorpe Park**: [www.thorpepark.com](http://www.thorpepark.com)

Amusement park located west of London. Rollercoasters and rides are primarily for teenagers and adults.

Post code: KT16 8PN, Distance: About 2 hours

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## BEACHES & SEA VIEWS (4)

### Norfolk Coast Beaches

*The following Norfolk area beaches come highly recommended by people living in East Anglia: Brancaster Beach, Great Yarmouth, Holkham Beach, Horsey Beach, Hunstanton, Sea Palling, Sheringham Beach, Wells-Next-the-Sea, Winterton-On-Sea*

Average distance: 60-90 minutes

**Brighton Seafront\***: <http://tourism.brighton.co.uk/seafront/>

Pebble beach located on the southern coast of England about an hour south of London. It's one of the best known beaches in the UK.

Post code: BN2 1TW, Distance: 2 hours and 15 minutes

**Southend-On-Sea**: [www.visitsouthend.co.uk/things-to-do/beaches.aspx](http://www.visitsouthend.co.uk/things-to-do/beaches.aspx)

Seven miles of beach along the Essex coast with the "longest leisure pier in the world".

Post code: SS9 2DN, Distance: 90 minutes

**White Cliffs of Dover\***: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-white-cliffs-of-dover](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-white-cliffs-of-dover)

White chalk cliffs overlooking the English Channel towards the French coast.

Post code: CT16 1HJ, Distance: 2 hours, 30 minutes

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## CASTLES (13)

**Bodiam Castle (NT)\***: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodiam-castle>

Beautifully intact and preserved 14<sup>th</sup>-century castle surrounded by a full moat. A must see while living in East England.

Post code: TN32 5UA, Distance: 2 hours, 15 minutes

**Bolsover Castle (EH)\***: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/bolsover-castle>

Sprawling 17<sup>th</sup>-century castle built over the site of a medieval 12<sup>th</sup>-century castle. Ruins to explore as well as intact castle towers and walls to climb and walk along.

Post code: S44 6PR, Distance: 2 hours, 30 minutes

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**Castle Rising Castle (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/castle-rising-castle>

12<sup>th</sup>-century castle just north of King's Lynn with one of the best preserved stone keeps in England. It's surrounded by impressive earthworks that give the appearance of a dry moat.

Post code: PE31 6AH, Distance: 55 minutes

**Dover Castle (EH)\*:** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle>

Huge 11<sup>th</sup>-century castle that has been refitted over the centuries for its important defensive complex. No visit is complete without touring the secret wartime tunnels used in WWII.

Post code: CT16 1HU, Distance: 2 hours, 20 minutes

**Framlingham Castle (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/framlingham-castle>

13<sup>th</sup> century castle and brief residence of "Bloody" Mary. Walk the castle walls and explore the open courtyard and dry moat.

Post code: IP13 9BP, Distance: 65 minutes

**Hedingham Castle:** <http://www.hedinghamcastle.co.uk>

Privately owned 12<sup>th</sup>-century stone keep castle with four floors to wander through and extensive grounds/ woods to explore.

Post code: CO9 3DJ, Distance: 60 minutes

**Kenilworth Castle (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenilworth-castle>

12<sup>th</sup>-century castle that was expanded and improved in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was occupied much longer than similar medieval castles and has a fascinating history.

Post code: CV8 1NE, Distance: 2 hours

**Leeds Castle:** <https://www.leeds-castle.com>

Beautiful, privately owned 19<sup>th</sup>-century castle on an island in the center of a lake. The original castle on the site dated back to the 12<sup>th</sup>-century and was a popular residence for multiple kings.

Post code: ME17 1PL, Distance: 1 hour, 45 minutes

**Norwich Castle:** [http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/Visit\\_Us/Norwich\\_Castle](http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/Visit_Us/Norwich_Castle)

12<sup>th</sup>-century castle now converted into the Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery.

Post code: NR1 3JU, Distance: 50 minutes

**Orford Castle (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/orford-castle>

12<sup>th</sup>-century castle with small but unique circular stone keep that is very well-preserved.

Post code: IP12 2ND, Distance: 90 minutes

**Rochester Castle (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/rochester-castle>

12<sup>th</sup>-century castle with large stone keep that is also remarkably well-preserved with multiple levels to ascend and explore.

Post code: ME1 1SW, Distance: 90 minutes

**Warwick Castle:** <https://www.warwick-castle.com>

Reconstructed castle with its origins dating back to William the Conqueror in 1068. Now owned by Merlin Entertainment group, it's a popular tourist destination.

Post code: CV34 4QU, Distance: 2 hours

**Windsor Castle:** <https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle>

Just west of London, it's the largest and oldest occupied castle in Europe. The magnificent castle has undergone numerous rebuilds since it was initially founded in the 11<sup>th</sup>-century.

Post code: SL4 1NJ, Distance: 2 hours

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## CHURCHES & HISTORIC SITES (14)

**Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/bury-st-edmunds-abbey>

Once home to a wealthy and powerful Benedictine monastery founded in the 11<sup>th</sup>-century, its ruins now lie in the heart of Bury St Edmunds with its 14<sup>th</sup>-century Norman Gate still intact.

Post code: IP33 1LS, Distance: 20 minutes

**Anglesey Abbey (NT):** <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey-gardens-and-lode-mill>

12<sup>th</sup>-century priory converted to a country house in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century with a lavish interior on the outskirts of Cambridge. Its extensive gardens and outdoor play areas are equally impressive.

Post code: CB25 9EJ, Distance: 25 minutes



**Audley End House (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/audley-end-house-and-gardens>

17<sup>th</sup>-century palatial country house with extensive gardens and grounds along the River Cam.

Post code: CB11 4JF, Distance: 35 minutes

**Belton House (NT):** <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/belton-house>

Glamorous 17<sup>th</sup>-century country mansion with vast grounds and gardens and one of the largest adventure playgrounds in the region.

Post code: NG32 2LS, Distance: 95 minutes

**Canterbury Cathedral:** <http://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/visit/>

This stunning cathedral is the oldest in Britain and dates its founding back to St. Augustine in 597. It was extensively rebuilt in the 12<sup>th</sup>-century following a fire and its rich history includes the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket by the knights of King Henry II.

Post code: CT1 2EH, Distance: 2 hours

**Castle Acre Priory (EH):** <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/castle-acre-castle-acre-priory>

This small monastery was built in the 11<sup>th</sup>-century and remained active until the mid 16<sup>th</sup>-century. Exploring the impressive ruins and the remnants of Castle Acre Castle just down the road is a great way to spend an afternoon.

Post code: PE32 2XD, Distance: 40 minutes

**Ely Cathedral:** <http://www.elycathedral.org/visit>

Considered one of England's most beautiful cathedrals, it has become a frequent filming location for popular movies. It was founded in 672 but the present structures date back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to touring the main level, tower tours are also available.

Post code: CB7 4DL, Distance: 30 minutes

**King's College Chapel:** <http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/visit>

15<sup>th</sup>-century gothic chapel at King's College in the University of Cambridge. The chapel is known for its beautiful stained glass windows and its ceiling boast the world's largest fan vault.

Post code: CB2 1ST, Distance: 40 minutes

**Norwich Cathedral:** <http://www.cathedral.org.uk/visit/things-to-see-and-do>

This 12<sup>th</sup>-century church is considered the most complete existing Norman cathedral in England. It has the second tallest spire and second largest cloisters (covered walkway) in England.

Post code: NR1 4DH, Distance: 60 minutes

**Oxburgh Hall (NT):** <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/oxburgh-hall>

Scenic 15<sup>th</sup>-century country manor surrounded by a moat. While not a castle, Henry VII and Elizabeth once visited and famous needlework panels stitched by Mary, Queen of Scots hang on its walls. The 70-acre estate is full of beautiful walking trails and gardens.

Post code: PE33 9PS, Distance: 30 minutes

**Rochester Cathedral:** <http://www.rochestercathedral.org/visiting>

Second oldest cathedral in England, established by Justus who accompanied St. Augustine to England in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. The current cathedral was built and modified over the original church from the 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Post code: ME1 1SX, Distance: 1 hour, 40 minutes

**Sandringham Estate:** <https://www.sandringhamestate.co.uk/visiting-sandringham>

18<sup>th</sup>-century country house and private estate owned by the Queen. The Royal Family spends Christmas here each year.

Post code: PE35 6EN, Distance: 60 minutes

**West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village:** <https://www.weststow.org>

Outdoor heritage museum and archaeological site with huts reconstructed on the location of a 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon village. The site hosts kids' digs, archery lessons, and living history exhibits throughout the year.

Post code: IP28 6HG, Distance: 15 minutes

**Wimpole Estate (NT):** <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wimpole-estate>

This working estate includes an impressive mansion, a rare breeds animal farm, extensive 18<sup>th</sup>-century gardens, and an adventure playground for kids.

Post code: SG8 0BW, Distance: 45 minutes



## FARMS (4)

### **Church Farm Stow Bardolph:** <http://www.churchfarmstowbardolph.co.uk>

Rare breeds farm open year round with horse, sheep, pigs, chickens, and rabbits. Also offers an indoor play area, adventure playground, and tractor rides.

Post code: PE34 3HT, Distance: 40 minutes

### **Hollow Trees Farm:** <http://www.hollowtrees.co.uk/farm-trail.htm>

140-acre "mixed" farm. Its farm trail is open year round and includes sheep, goats, chicken, rabbits, alpacas, and cattle with kid-friendly activities such as rope swings, climbing poles, and slides interspersed.

Post code: IP7 6HX, Distance: 55 minutes

### **Jimmy's Farm:** <http://jimmysfarm.com>

Rare breeds farm park and shop open year round. Animals include pigs, emus, goats, reindeer, alpacas, cows, donkeys, and horses. There's also a butterfly house and several children's play areas.

Post code: IP9 2AR, Distance: 55 minutes

### **Snettisham Park:** <http://www.snettishampark.co.uk>

Working farm open year round that offers deer safari rides, bottle-feeding orphaned lambs, pony rides, egg collecting, small animal petting zoo, walking trails, and children's play areas.

Post code: PE31 7NG, Distance: 70 minutes

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## FORESTS & ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS (5)

### **Abbey Playground:** <http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/leisure/Parks/abbey-gardens.cfm>

Tucked away at the back of the gardens and ruins of the Abbey at Bury St. Edmunds are three outdoor play areas. There's a traditional playground, a sand play area, and a small tree house for older kids.

Post code: IP33 1XL, Distance: 20 minutes

### **Bewilderwood:** <http://www.bewilderwood.co.uk>

Huge forest treehouse adventure park with rope bridges, slides, zip lines, a maze, rides, and more. Designed for children ages 2-12 and their families.

Post code: NR12 8JW, Distance: 70 minutes

### **Lackford Lakes:** <http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/lackfordlakes>

Sprawling wildlife oasis along the River Lark with lakes, meadows, and woodlands.

Post code: IP28 6HX, Distance: 15 minutes

### **Mildenhall Woods:** <http://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=So2Qpinbjnl>

Adventure play area in Mildenhall woods consisting of an obstacle course, climbing boulder, and spider web climber. Multiple trails to explore as well.

Post code: IP28 7SG, Distance: 7 minutes

### **Thetford Forest High Lodge:** <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge>

This extensive outdoor recreation facility in Thetford Forest is the largest man-made lowland forest in the UK.

Tons of walking and biking trails, playgrounds, tree houses, and a high ropes course.

Post code: IP27 0AF, Distance: 20 minutes

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## OTHER ACTIVITIES (10)

### **Code-breaking at Bletchley Park:** <https://www.bletchleypark.org.uk>

The base for Britain's code-breaking efforts during WWII is now a popular heritage attraction for all ages.

Post code: MK3 6EB, Distance: 90 minutes

### **Crooked Houses of Lavenham (NT):** <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lavenham-guildhall>

Considered to be one of England's best preserved medieval towns, many of Lavenham's crooked buildings date back to the 1300s.

Post code: CO10 9QZ, Distance: 45 minutes

### **Experience Nottingham\*:** <http://www.experiencenottinghamshire.com/explore>

Check out Nottingham Castle and its incredible cave tour, then grab a pint of ale at England's famed oldest inn, Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem. And if you've got time, head to Robin Hood's old stomping ground, Sherwood Forest!

Post code: NG1 6EL, Distance: 2 hours, 15 minutes

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**Hitchin Lavender:** <http://www.hitchinlavender.com>

Rows of lavender that stretch for 25 miles. Walk through the fields, pick flowers, and take plenty of photos. Best time to visit is July when the flowers are in full bloom.

Post code: SG5 3UA, Distance: 75 minutes

**Horse Races in Newmarket:** <http://newmarket.thejockeyclub.co.uk>

Home to horse races attended by royalty since at least the 17th century, the sport of racing is still very much alive at this course over 350 years later. Check out their events for upcoming family fun days and races.

Post code: CB8 0TF, Distance: 25 minutes

**Imperial War Museum Duxford:** <http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford>

This historic airfield is the home of Britain's largest aviation museum with over 200 aircraft and military vehicles. The museum hosts annual air shows and hangars used in the Battle of Britain are still in use and can be toured.

Post code: CB22 4QR, Distance: 35 minutes

**Punting in Cambridge:** <http://www.visitcambridge.org/things-to-do/punting-bus-and-bike-tours>

Explore historic Cambridge by boat on the River Cam. Punting guides give a concise history of the University's colleges and interesting residents while you relax and take in the scenic views along the river.

Post code: CB2 1RS, Distance: 40 minutes

**Red Lodge Karting:** <http://www.redlodgekarting.com>

Karting and go-karting track in Red Lodge. Minimum age to ride is seven for their slower carts (and meet height requirements).

Post code: IP13 9BP, Distance: 15 minutes

**Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon\*:** <http://www.discover-stratford.com/shakespeare.cfm>

Birthplace of Shakespeare and location of five major Shakespeare heritage sites (his birth home, his final home, his wife's childhood cottage, etc). The scenic town along the River Avon is an excellent way to spend a day out.

Post code: CV37 6GW, Distance: 2 hours, 20 minutes

**Seal Watching at Blakeney Point or Horsey Beach:**

Blakeney Point is a nature reserve on the north coast of Norfolk and popular start point for seal sighting boat trips. Seals can be found birthing/nursing their pups along Horsey Beach in winter and molting in early spring.

Post code: NR25 7NQ (Blakeney) and NR29 4EF (Horsey), Distance: 90 minutes

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## ZOOS/SAFARI PARKS (4)

**Banham Zoo:** <http://www.banhamzoo.co.uk>

50-acre zoo with over 2000 animals including giraffes, lemurs, snow leopards, zebras, Siberian tigers, cheetahs, meerkats, and red pandas.

Post code: NR16 2HE, Distance: 35 minutes

**Colchester Zoo:** <http://www.colchester-zoo.com>

Widely considered one of the best zoos in the UK, it sits on 60-acres of land with over 270 species of animals in a large array of themed habitat zones. If you visit only one "local" zoo, it should be this one.

Post code: CO3 0SL, Distance: 65 minutes

**Linton Zoo:** <http://www.lintonzoo.com>

Small, 18-acre zoo with an emphasis on education and conservation. Species include lions, kangaroos, tigers, snow leopards, zebras, porcupines, and lemurs.

Post code: CB21 4NT, Distance: 30 minutes

**Woburn Safari Park:** <http://www.woburnsafari.co.uk>

360-acre safari park where visitors drive their cars through large animal exhibits to see free roaming animals including elephants, rhinos, black bears, giraffes, camels, and lions. There is also a walkthrough zoo, indoor and outdoor play areas, and a high ropes course.

Post code: MK17 9QN, Distance: 75 minutes

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*Places marked with an asterisk (\*) are slightly further, but still considered worthy of the list. Nothing in London is included on this list. 'NT' denotes a National Trust site, 'EH' denotes English Heritage sites.*

*For a comprehensive list of kid-friendly activities in the local area and across Great Britain, check out [dayoutwiththekids.co.uk](http://dayoutwiththekids.co.uk)! Still looking for inspiration? Check out [National Trust](#) or [English Heritage](#) properties near you!*

