

## Pagham Church - Beating the Bounds 2-6<sup>th</sup> May with Alison Blenkinsop

Day 5 - From the harbour entrance along the beach, then to Pagham Church (walked 2<sup>nd</sup> May)

A YouTube video made in early June shows this area of the beach:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzXOuGiJLw4>



Looking west (left) and east (right) from a raised part.



The cliff is crumbling as the channel wears away the edge! Much of the old fencing near the old, small lagoon has collapsed.

A view west from this raised part is to the right. The dark area shows the exposed sea defences (see below).



The photos above show part of local sea defences from the 2<sup>nd</sup> war, long hidden underground but uncovered in recent months as the shoreline changed. The photo on the right shows how these defences, which lined the south coast, looked during the war.

This video shows the growth of the Church Norton spit, and subsequent destruction of beach from 1998 to 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH4dmVhJpUc>

The harbour mouth has retreated westwards again in the last three years (R).

A group was set up to help address these changes which threaten our village. Robin Henderson, one of our Church family, has been hard at work for years with various organisations on this important matter. This site gives more information, but further work has been done since. <https://www.savepaghambeach.org/>

How the issues have developed to 2018:

<https://abpmer.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=09eeec4720514a249e503bf570059068>. While all coastlines change over time, these rapid developments are thought to be caused by climate breakdown. We can all help reduce the risk of further damage.



Continuing our walk eastwards, we see the most westerly houses in Pagham at the end of Harbour Road. The view from them is magnificent, but for some time these dwellings were threatened by the loss of beach because of strong currents, which developed as the Church Norton spit grew. Now nature (and its Creator!) has intervened, and a new lagoon developed. However, it is now filling up with shingle (below right). Who knows what will happen next?



The beach is adorned throughout the summer with beautiful flowers: valerian (pictured), poppies, viper's-bugloss and wild (scentless) sweet peas, as well as gorse and many green plants. These all help to hold the stones together, but the force of the sea can pull away the beach dramatically. Unfortunately, the beach also gets marred by litter all year round, and especially during warm weather. The sea is now full of macro- and micro-plastics! We need to be aware of the risks of our dependence on things like man-made packaging, and avoid single-use plastic and polystyrene items as much as possible.



Before we get to the Yacht Club, where we began our journey, we cut through the back roads to a footpath leading across the lagoon, and through Church Farm Holiday Park. This photo of me on the lagoon bridge was taken in early May 2019.



We end our Beating of the Bounds at the church of St Thomas a Becket, with its wonderful new roof. The website gives a lot of fascinating information about its history, and also about the Church – about us, the Body of Christ in Pagham.

God has called us to be Christ's hands, feet, ears and heart to our neighbours. We also have a responsibility as Christians to care for the Earth, reducing our carbon footprint as much as possible. Let's pray for grace to live in this wonderful place in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that God's kingdom may come more and more in this special place.

