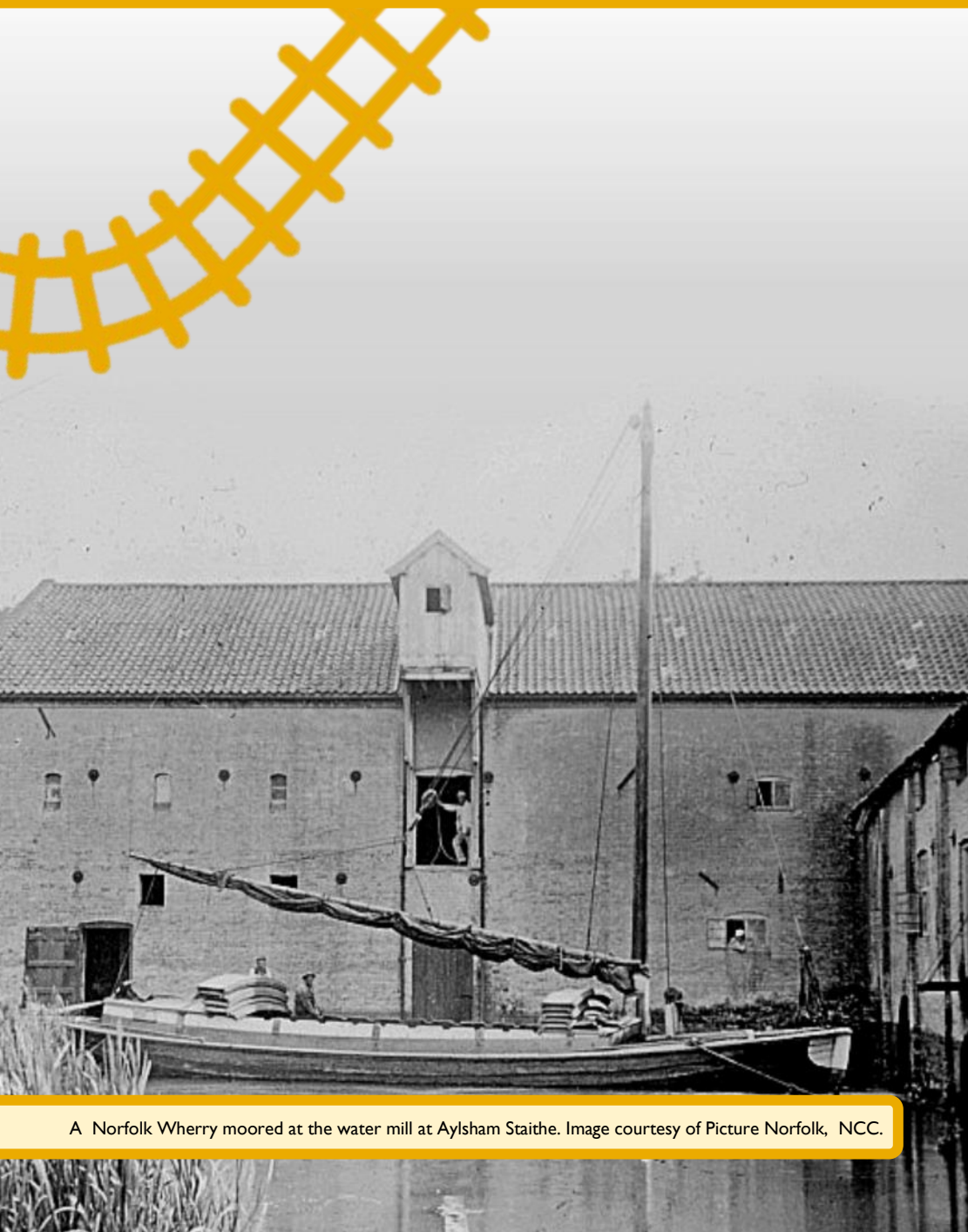


AYLSHAM TOWN



A Norfolk Wherry moored at the water mill at Aylsham Staithe. Image courtesy of Picture Norfolk, NCC.

Aylsham is full of historic interest. The bustling market town bristles with charming features, including the John Soame Memorial Pump and The Black Boys coaching Inn, welcoming visitors today as it has for centuries.

Humphry Repton (1752-1818), the famous landscape gardener, chose Aylsham as his final resting place. Sheringham Park, which Repton described as his '*most favourite work*', is managed by The National Trust who are, coincidentally, Lords of the Manor of Aylsham and own Aylsham Market Place.

You'll pass Aylsham Staithe; opened in 1779 it was once the main artery to Aylsham's agricultural industry. At its peak it carried over 1000 boats annually; mainly Norfolk wherries. The junction of river and roads, plus later railways, are crucial to the situation and importance of the town.

Aylsham North, a Great Eastern Railway station, opened in 1883 only a short distance from the staithe. It quickly out-competed wherries for transporting freight. Devastating floods in 1912 destroyed bridges and locks, causing Aylsham Staithe's final demise. The flood caused problems on the railway too. Over 200 people were stranded overnight after a train from Great Yarmouth was trapped at Aylsham North following multiple bridge collapses.

Spa Lane, to the south of Aylsham, is named after the spa that existed there in the early 1700s. The mineral rich waters were considered good for health. Spa Lane can become muddy in winter. The alternative route shown, using another section along Marriott's Way, offers a shorter, but drier, walk.

AYLSHAM TOWN



Square: a view of the former Anchor Inn, Millgate, Aylsham. Circle: acorns.

Occupied since prehistoric times, with Roman and Saxon archaeology, Aylsham boomed in the Middle Ages thanks to the wool trade. It remains a thriving market town with a handsome Georgian centre and many amenities. Numerous historic buildings line the route from the Market Place to Aylsham Staithe.



Good to Know: This walk starts in central Aylsham, at the Market Square and Penfold Street (NR11 6HT). Aylsham has plenty of parking and is served by regular buses from neighbouring towns. With varied walking surfaces, expect some muddy sections at Spa Lane following rain. An alternative route along the Marriott's Way, bypassing Spa Lane, is highlighted on the map.

Aylsham has many eateries and independent shops to enjoy.

