

**Distance:** 6 miles (9.9km), 10½ miles (16.8km) doing all optional diversions or 4 miles using short-cut

**Ascent:** 20m

**Time:** 3-6 hours

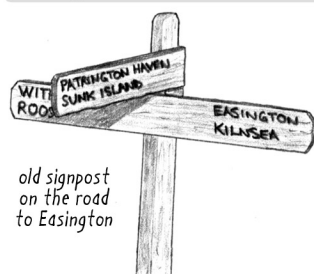
**Public Transport:** Patrington is served by the regular 75, 76 & 77 buses from Hull.

**Parking:** Free car parks in Patrington on B1445 by St Patrick's Church and the beacon pan.

**Refreshments:** Food available on the route at Burns Head Inn in Patrington Haven and Guy's Bar and Restaurant in the leisure park (opening times for both vary seasonally). There are plenty of cafés, tea shops and pubs in Patrington though, as well as public toilets on Northside.

**Character:** A straightforward walk around beautiful Patrington village and the surrounding landscape. As well as Hughes's digs in the village and the impressive church, this route takes in the saltmarshes of the Humber Estuary and various sites associated with the military base at Patrington Haven where Hughes was stationed for his National Service.

Patrington is named after St. Patrick, and St Patrick's Church is the only Anglican church in England with a historic dedication to him. The Gothic church was built from local limestone in the 13th and 14th centuries. Also known as the 'Queen of Holderness', the church's tower is the 'remote spire' Hughes refers to in his poem *The Road to Easington*. John Betjeman called this church 'one of the great buildings of England', and it was also a favourite spot of Philip Larkin.



old signpost on the road to Easington

⑤ Return to the road and follow it left for a mile into Patrington as it climbs very gently over Beacon Hill and past the former windmill at Mill House. At the village, turn left along Humber Lane to its end, then right along the main road. The left fork in the middle of the village is Northside and the second house on the right (2 Northside) is where Hughes lodged for most of his time in Patrington. A close friend lodged a little further on at Cromwell Lodge, opposite which you turn right on Pump Row. Turn left at the next junction to return to the car park by St Patrick's Church.

#### Patrington Haven

Patrington Haven Leisure Park (former Haven Side camp) pool  
Patrington Haven  
The Happidrome Operations Centre (former)  
Barr House (site)  
Bleak House Farm Cottages  
North Channel Clogh  
Burns Head Inn  
war memorial  
sign  
short-cut  
Eastgrowths Farm  
Pant  
gap  
Drain  
Oxlands Hill  
Winestead Drain  
River Humber  
Welfare Saltmarsh  
Winestead Outstrays Pumping Station  
new saltmarsh

#### Sunk Island

④ Continue to the T-junction at the end of Outstray Road. A quarter of a mile to the left here you can see the derelict brick Operations Buildings of the Happidrome. You can turn left for a closer look, but the route turns right along the road away from Happidrome to Patrington Haven. There is now no sign of the port alongside this road that gave the hamlet its name. Beyond the Burns Head Inn you can turn left to have a look at Patrington Haven Leisure Park, where several of the buildings were originally part of the Haven Side domestic camp that was constructed during Hughes's time here.

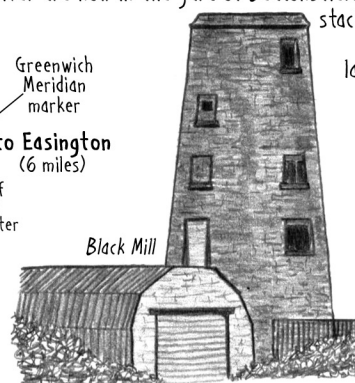
Although Hughes's role as a Ground Wireless Mechanic was a responsible one, it was not particularly demanding, and it left him with plenty of spare time. His letters refer to relatively frequent leaves, during which he variously returned to South Yorkshire, visited his extended family in Mytholmroyd, and once went on a two-week camping expedition to Devon and Cornwall. He made use of Patrington's former railway station, located near the Station Hotel, and often visited Hull, where he was a member of the library. Hughes also explored the Holderness landscape on foot and by bicycle, visiting Stone Creek, the beach at Holmpton and courting local girls in the dancehalls of Withersea. Hughes once told an interviewer that all he did in Patrington was 'read and re-read Shakespeare and watch the grass grow', but his National Service years played an important role in Hughes's poetic formation. The scholar James Underwood regards Hughes's national service years as a kind of poetic incubation period that enabled him to keep 'the kaleidoscope of his poetic imagination turning before helping him to settle on styles, themes and ideas' that would characterise and inform much of his mature work.

## PATRINGTON

Station Hotel  
to Hull (14 miles)  
A1033  
2 Northside  
Cromwell Lodge  
Northside  
Holderness Inn  
steps  
St Patrick's Church  
village hall  
gap  
seat  
locked gate  
school  
beacon pan  
B1445  
to Easington (6 miles)  
Black Mill  
Greenwich Meridian marker  
heap of ruined transmitter  
Saltmarsh Lane  
Salt Marsh  
trig  
sign  
gap  
Drain  
Oxlands Hill  
Winestead Drain  
River Humber  
Welfare Saltmarsh  
Winestead Outstrays Pumping Station  
new saltmarsh

**Short-cut:** The route can be shorted simply by turning right past East Growths Farm and following the track straight into Patrington Haven.

church itself, which is well worth a look. A path continues round the right side of the church to Church Lane. Follow this right past the village hall, then turn left on Greenshaw Lane. At the junction with Southside, a locked gate opposite marks Hughes's route to the VHF transmitter building where he served most of his working time, but you need to follow the road left for 100m to a gap on the right before the school. A short diversion to the end of the hedge-line to the right provides a view across the field to the patch of rough grass that reveals the location of the transmitter building (the foundations of the receiver are now in the yard of Beaconsfield Farm, generally buried under stacks of haylage). It is a possible viewpoint for the Humber landscape described in Hughes's poem *Mayday on Holderness*.



Hughes spent plenty of time in Cromwell Lodge, where his friends George Gallagher-Daggit and Johnny Oliver lodged with the Wilkinson family. Gallagher-Daggit and Hughes alternated shifts in 'the VHF' and were particularly close friends.

② Retrace your steps to Southside and continue along the road to rejoin the B1445 by the modern beacon pan - this was Hughes's 'Road to Easington'. Opposite the former windmill at Black Mill (and shortly before the Greenwich Meridian marker), turn right along the track of Saltmarsh Lane, aiming towards the distant Grimsby Dock Tower on the opposite side of the Humber Estuary. To the left of the track, after about 200m, there is a heap of brick and concrete rubble that comprises the remains of the old transmitter building. Continue along the track as it becomes muddier and descends gently to the saltmarsh that once covered all the low-lying ground here. Keep straight on along the left edge of a field, then turn left at a junction of tracks near Eastgrowths Farm. At its end, continue straight on through a gap in the fence and follow a path through the stand of trees parallel to Pant Drain. Carry straight on at a junction with a larger farm track, then turn right 150m beyond to join a path along the drain towards Outstray Road, reached via a bridge over Winestead Drain.

Patrington Haven was once a renowned harbour, but by the late 18th century its natural creek had largely silted up and was suitable only for smaller boats.

Sunk Island, the area to the south-west of Winestead Drain, was reclaimed from the Humber in a process that began in the late 18th century and was not complete until the early 20th century. However, the Environment Agency is now reversing this process and breaching some of the banks to allow saltmarsh (and all the wildlife that flourishes on it) to return.

③ The onward route turns right along Outstray Road, following Winestead Drain for over a mile, but if you have time it is worth diverting out to the saltmarshes along the drain to the Humber foreshore. For this, follow the road left to the small car park by the Black Hut Monument, then head through the gate here and follow a track out alongside Winestead Drain past the newly-extended saltmarsh. It is nearly a mile to its end by Winestead Outstrays Pumping Station, where there are great views across the Humber Estuary towards Spurn Head and Grimsby. Return by the same route to Outstray Road.