

Beeston Regis Pillbox on Britons Lane.

A World War One pillbox is located in the trees here. It is round, was built between 1916 and 1918 and is visible on aerial photographs taken in 1946.

It is located to the west of the road, in amongst trees (near to the entrance of the quarry). The NGR is TG1678 4164. Pillbox previously recorded as part of the Norfolk Defensive Structures Survey (Survey No. D3-5).



**Pillboxes** or blockhouses were miniature forts developed by the German army to give their trench lines extra strength. The term **pillbox** was used by the British soldiers because the reinforced concrete construction was the same shape as the boxes in which chemists supplied tablets during the war.

At the beginning of the First World War, just as in the Second World War, there was a very real fear of German invasion. Prompted by these fears, many Victorian coastal forts were modernised. On the threatened east coast new defences were added, for example the 9-inch battery at Spurn Point, East Yorkshire - a site now being lost to coastal erosion.

Lines of defence works, including the first concrete pillboxes in England, were established at likely invasion points in Norfolk, Essex and North Kent and bicycle battalions were created to provide a mobile force capable of reacting quickly.

The areas between London and the coast were given fixed defensive lines of trenches with gun positions. To the north and east were three lines, including the Maidstone-Swale Line where 8 miles of anti-invasion trenches were dug by Royal Engineers.

In 1940 a network of defences was hastily built all over the British Isles to prevent an anticipated German invasion. The most common of these defences were called "pillboxes", squat concrete forts that were sited at road junctions, canals and other strategic points.

With the passage of time it is estimated that less than 6,000 of a total of 28,000 pillboxes built still survive. They remain as permanent monuments and a silent tribute to the courage and tenacity of the British people during the dark days of 1940 when Britain stood alone against Nazi Germany.