



THE SUDBURY BRANCH WALKS 5-8

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From Sudbury to Marks Tey

"The gentle declivities, the luxuriant meadow flats sprinkled with flocks and herds ... the sound of water escaping from the mill dams, often rotten planks, slimy moss and brickwork"

John Constable RA

Whether you're a visitor to the area for your holiday, or a local looking for a special place for a day trip, the Stour Valley offers a wealth of different opportunities. The characteristic lowland English landscape made famous worldwide by artists such as Constable and Gainsborough is still recognisable today. The charm of the villages, fascinating local attractions and beauty of the surrounding countryside mean there's no shortage of places to go and things to see.

"Take the Landscape round here at Wormingford...some would find it pretty tame. There are no hills worth speaking of, yet there is a subtlety about this landscape which I feel and see, but which remains very difficult to define. I never look for more than reality, the farming, the trees, the river"

John Nash in John Nash at Wormingford by Ronald Blythe.

The Dedham Vale and Stour Valley embraces one of our most cherished landscapes. Picturesque villages, rolling farmland, rivers, meadows, ancient woodlands and a wide variety of local wildlife combine to create what many describe as the quintessential traditional English lowland landscape. The area has a rich history and has been the inspiration to many writers and artists. The Dedham Vale was immortalised by John Constable in his paintings over 200 years ago

"The Vale stands apart from other lowland river valleys because of its intricate mixture of features: The River Stour, valley slopes, scattered woodland, water meadows, hedgerows, tributary valleys, sunken rural lanes and beautiful villages"

John Constable RA

Visitors can have an impact on the landscape, so to help you get the best out of your visit to Constable Country we suggest that you consider arriving in the area by train and enjoying some healthy walks around the area. When arriving at Manningtree, locations such as Flatford, Dedham and East Bergholt are all only a healthy half hour walk away.

When walking in the countryside it is very important to follow The Countryside Code. The five sections of the code are dedicated to helping members of the public respect, protect and enjoy the countryside:

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
Leave gates and property as you find them
Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
Keep dogs under close control
Consider other people



RAMBLE NUMBER 8

Bures Station to Sudbury Station: 8-9 miles

This walk follows the heights bordering the eastern side of the Stour Valley through a countryside unspoilt by factory farming. It starts off on quiet Suffolk roads, and crosses the Stour at Henny where it continues via the picturesque hamlet of Middleton and its surroundings before reaching Sudbury via the beautiful water meadows bordering the River Stour.

From Bures Station forecourt turn left and on reaching the main road turn right past the Swan Inn, then left at the junction to cross the bridge over the River Stour before passing St Mary's church. Follow the road as it turns sharp left past the bus garages and continue through the village. There are many ancient timber framed houses to admire, some of which still sport traces of their original decoration.

Follow this road as it turns sharp left to leave the village and then turn right up St Edmunds Lane. Where this joins a minor road turn left through Bures Green. Carry on past Great Ropers and Roper's Hall Farm. The road follows a ridge overlooking both the Stour Valley and the ancient woodland of Arger Fen and Tiger Hill before reaching a T junction by a thatched cottage.

Turn left here along a lane signposted Workhouse Green and Great Cornard, and pass the impressive Cornard TV mast before reaching Yorley Farm. Turn right down the side of the furthest barn by the nursery school. Pass between the turkey

sheds and a barn onto a concrete track and follow this downhill until it ends at a field. Carry straight on to the far hedge where it meets the corner of Mumford's Wood. Pass through the hedge and follow the edge of the wood (wood on right). Where the wood boundary turns right pass through a hedge and continue straight on with the hedge to your left until reaching a pond (which is a bit hidden and may be dry!).

Turn left onto a waymarked path through a small copse, then turn right and cross a headland to find a grassy track commencing at the left hand side of the hedge facing you. Follow this downhill, bearing left heading towards the church in the distance, into a meadow. Where the track passes through the hedge, continue following the hedge, keeping it to your left, towards an orchard. Enter the orchard, shortly turning right along the perimeter track.

Follow this straight on between two barns to find All Saints church across a small meadow to your right. Turn right into the church approach road, go through the wicket gate and follow the path through the churchyard around the back of the church and through another wicket gate between two holly trees. There was a belief in Suffolk that these trees ward off evil and throughout this walk you will note that even where the hedgerows have been grubbed out the holly trees have survived.

Follow the path to a lane. Turn left into this lane, which offers panoramic views of the Valley and Sudbury, and follow it until it reaches the main Bures to Sudbury road in the Stour Valley. Turn right until reaching footpath signs. Turn left into a small meadow and walk through a cattle creep (underpass) under the Stour Valley Line. Walk straight on down the right hand side of the sewage works perimeter fence and cross a bridge onto Shalfords meadows. Pass diagonally left across the meadows towards

the village of Great Henny on the far side. Cross the River Stour by a footbridge. Cross the lane and walk straight up the metalled farm track ahead.

For those requiring refreshment the Henny Swan is approximately 50 yards down the road to the right. Where a bridleway is signposted to the right turn into it. It leads into a small lane. Turn left along this lane, admiring the views across the valley, until reaching the village of Middleton. Turn right at the road junction in the village and then after 10 to 15 yards turn left onto a signposted footpath leading towards the church. Turn right into a field following a well marked path across the middle and through a folly arch.

Continue past a paddock into Middleton Hall Farm. Turn left then immediately right and pass along a concrete track straight on through the farm keeping the House and its moat to your left. At the end of the concrete track at the edge of the farm continue straight across a small field to the main road. Turn left downhill and enter Ballingdon. Note that halfway down the hill the road crosses the course of the canal from the River Stour to Allens brickyards. Most of the bricks required to build Liverpool Street Station and the Albert Hall passed under your feet.

Where the road approaches a row of cottages to the right pass right through a gateway into the meadows (Kone Vale), and follow a well marked pathway straight ahead. Climb the side of the embankment marking the course of the old railway line from Sudbury to Cambridge, and turn right along the track-bed across the River Stour and Friars Meadows until reaching a car park adjacent to the Kingfisher Leisure Centre. Cross the car park to pass along the side of the centre and turn right into Sudbury station.

