

THE SUDBURY BRANCH WALKS 1-4

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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 2

Sudbury Station to Bures Station: 6-7 miles

This is the area which gave both Gainsborough and Constable their inspiration, but the history of the valley you traverse has its roots much deeper in history than this, as evinced by the Anglo-Saxon place names themselves: Sudbury – South Fort, Cornard – Corn Land, Lamarsh – Lambs Marsh, Alphamstone – Aelfhelms Farm, Bures – cottages.

Out of Sudbury station turn immediately to your left and then left again to follow a track running parallel to the railway line. Follow the pathway until you reach the level crossing and turn right into the track leading towards the meadow (Cornard Riverside Walk). Keep straight on alongside an arm of the river until you reach the Stour itself. Turn left over the concrete bridge, and follow the bank through the willow woods. Follow the main track left into the trees and head towards the houses.

Cross the railway by a gated crossing and climb a track by a nursing home into the main street of Cornard village. Turn right and after about three quarters of a mile, turn left into Head Lane immediately past the King's Head public house. By a school sign turn right onto a footpath running alongside number 38. Pass the school on your left to reach the recreation ground. On reaching the ground, turn right down a footpath, then left, heading for the floodlights of Cornard FC. On reaching the perimeter of the recreation ground, turn left and follow the boundary until you pass through a fence close to the basketball courts about two thirds of the way along

the bottom of the sports field, heading towards a red brick building (Cornard Dynamos FC). [Note that this is not a footpath, but it is evidently used as such, and you may need to take a slight detour if there is a football game in progress.] Pass the brick building and cross the adjacent car park into Backhouse Lane.

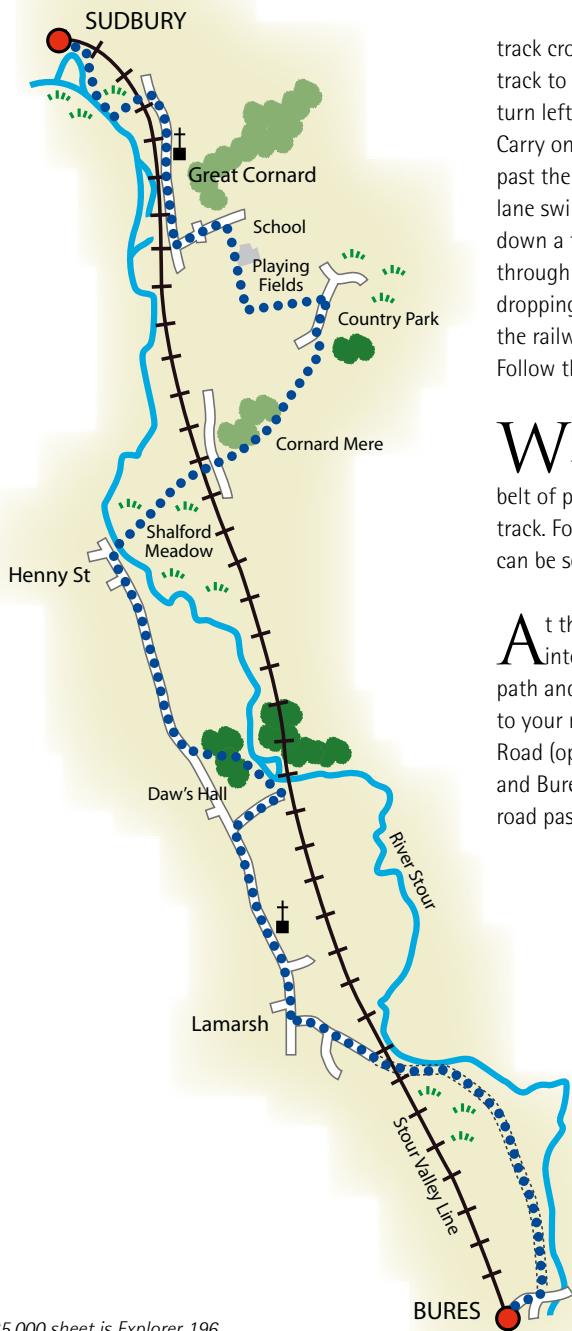
Turn right and follow the lane past the country park sign. Then on the bend, turn left following a way-marked path into the park. Where the path turns to the left, fork right over a wooden bridge, and proceed through the path on the field towards Cornard Mere. Follow the way-marked signs round the left of the mere to the main road. Cross over the road and pass under a small railway bridge directly ahead across a small meadow. 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.

For those requiring refreshment the Swan Inn is approximately 50 yards down the road to the right.

Turn left onto the road and keep straight on, passing through a particularly beautiful part of the Stour Valley dotted with isolated thatched cottages.

Pass under the power lines and just before the sign for Lamarsh, turn left into a signposted footpath. Keep to the left hand edge of the field by the ditch. Follow the path and power lines across a small meadow, keeping to the grassy track. Keep straight on, keeping the ditch to your left.

Head towards the railway bridge running over the Stour, and turn right along a trail paralleling the railway line through a wood. At the



track crossing the railway, turn right and head up the track to the end of it. When the track joins the road, turn left and follow the road past Lamarsh church. Carry on up the road, bearing left in Lamarsh, then past the Lamarsh Lion public house, and where the lane swings sharply right uphill, go straight ahead down a trail signposted 'private road'. Follow this through a farm whence it becomes a grassy track dropping to cross the railway line via stiles. Go over the railway and into a meadow bordering the Stour. Follow the hedge, keeping the Stour to your left.

When the hedge almost reaches the river bank, turn right over the stile and into a shelter belt of pine trees. Follow the path until it joins a track. Follow this straight ahead towards Bures which can be seen in the distance.

At the edge of the village the track swings right into a farm yard. Fork left here onto a small path and follow this, keeping the high red brick wall to your right into the village. Emerging onto Station Road (opposite The Swan public house), turn right and Bures station is located to the left just before the road passes under the railway bridge.

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