

THE GAINSBOROUGH TRAIL

Welcome to the Meadow Walk, the first section of the Gainsborough Trail, named after the famous Painter Thomas Gainsborough (overleaf), an approximate 12.4 mile continuous walkable route will eventually encompass the whole of the Sudbury area, giving access to the best of the countryside in Sudbury, Great Cornard, Chilton and beyond.

THE MEADOW WALK

The 3.5 mile (5 km) Meadow Walk features Sudbury's ancient water meadows, which, having never been ploughed to grow arable crops or treated with chemical fertilisers, are a rich source of biodiversity for a wide variety of wild flowers, insects, birds and mammals. The meadows are carefully managed by the Sudbury Common Lands Charity who continue the old tradition of summer cattle grazing. Along the route you will also discover remnants of Sudbury's industrial heritage and stunning views that vary throughout the seasons.

SUDBURY AND THE STOUR VALLEY

The Meadow Walk provides a great introduction to the history of Sudbury and the Stour Valley. For 200 years bricks made from local clays were transported down the river by lighters (barges) to London. Much of your route is along the old railway track that used to run from Sudbury to Cambridge.



TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

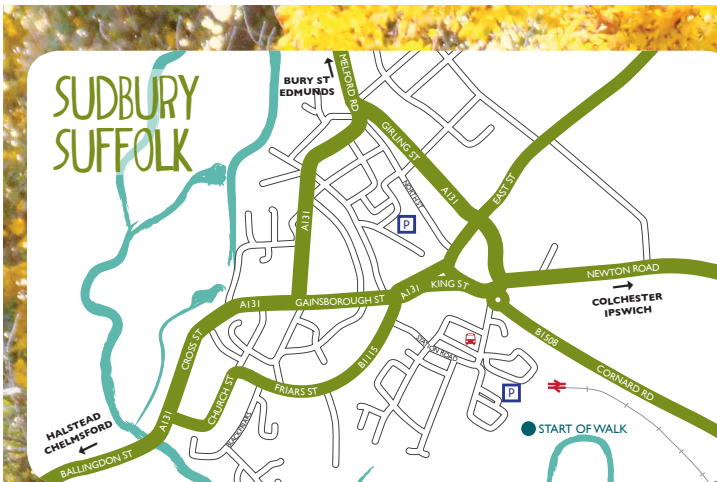
Sudbury Tourist Information Centre, on the Market Hill, can provide further information about where to stay, eat and shop and other places of interest to visit in the town and the local area. The Gainsborough Trail is complimented by the Talbot Trail, a town centre walk through Sudbury's history, and the Gainsborough House museum and art gallery.

Sudbury Tourist Information Centre

Tel: 01787 881320

Email: sudburytic@sudburytowncouncil.co.uk

Website: www.sudburysuffolk.co.uk



DIRECTIONS

Sudbury, Suffolk lies on the River Stour near the Essex border, 60 miles north-east of London. It is approached from the South on the A131 running through Braintree and Halstead and from the East and North by the A134 which runs from Colchester to Bury St. Edmunds.

WHERE TO PARK

The Meadow Walk can be accessed from a number of points but the main entrance is from the car park at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre and adjacent to Waitrose Supermarket, just off the Great Eastern Road/Station Road junction. Follow signs to the Kingfisher Leisure Centre. At the time of publication parking is free for the first 3 hours if a ticket is displayed but please check display boards for the latest charges and information.

ARRIVING BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The main Meadow Walk entrance is just across the road from both the Railway Station and the Bus Station – follow signs to the Kingfisher Leisure Centre and then head for the far south-east corner of the car park. By Train: Sudbury is just 1 hour 20 minutes from Liverpool Street Station, changing at Marks Tey and accessible from all stations on the London to Norwich east coast routes. By Bus: Regular services run to Sudbury from Bury St. Edmunds, Colchester, Halstead, Haverhill and Ipswich.

For further information on Sudbury go to:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudbury,_Suffolk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gainsborough Trail Working Group would like to thank the following sponsors for their help and support: Sudbury Town Council, Chilton and Great Cornard Parish Councils, Babergh District Council, Suffolk County Councillors Colin Spence and John Sayers, Sudbury Market Town Partnership, Sudbury Common Lands Charity and Waitrose. Especial thanks to David Falk and Jackie Gillis of Suffolk County Council Rights of Way. Design by the Mackman Group. Photo credits: Adrian Walters, Peter Clifford and Wikimedia.

For more information visit us online at
www.gainsboroughtrail.org



GAINSBOROUGH TRAIL

Meadow Walk



Enjoy the unique landscape of
Sudbury's ancient water meadows

STAGE ONE OF THE MEADOW WALK

Starting in the south-east corner of the Kingfisher Leisure Centre car park, follow the old railway track, formerly a section of the Stour Valley Line from Sudbury to Cambridge. Look out for the Quay Basin on your right (now the home of the Quay Theatre and Sudbury Rowing Club) as you pass over a railway bridge, from where locally made bricks were transported down the river and then on by sea to London.



Painted Lady
(*Vanessa Cardui*)

STAGE TWO

Just after crossing another old railway bridge over busy Ballingdon Street, turn right and take the ramp down to the red-brick pumping station below you. Look out for the high flood water marks on the wall. Passing through the gate bear right across the meadows to the footbridge and after crossing, go directly ahead towards the Mill Hotel and mill pool. Watch out for Kingfishers. Turn left at the mill, walk along by the mill stream and follow the path to the floodgates and beyond it to the Croft.



Deptford Pink
(*Dianthus Armeria*)

STAGE THREE

From the Croft junction continue along the path until very shortly you reach the old bathing pool, where you cross the bridge to your right and follow the riverside. Continue along by the river, passing the Salmon Leap Weir and a WW2 Pillbox on the opposite bank. Watch out for harmless grass snakes and water voles.

When you reach a fence bear right until you meet a wrought iron bridge across the stream, and then bear left diagonally (10 o'clock) across the meadows until you arrive at Brundon Mill Lane on the far side. Turn left here and walk to Brundon mill with its numerous swans. Over the bridge and just past the mill turn sharp right and then as the road bears left, go straight ahead into the Conservation Area. Follow the path to the next information board.

STAGE FOUR

Turn left where the Meadow Walk once again reconnects with the Valley Trail, the old railway track and another longer walk to Melford Country Park. Heading down towards a cutting with steep sides, look out for a fenced area to your left, which is managed to protect the nationally rare flower, the Deptford Pink and further along Twayblade orchids on the right-hand side as you pass beneath two very fine Victorian brick built bridges.

As the path moves up to higher ground, you will be treated to views of the water meadows and the town beyond on your left and the AFC ground, the home of Sudbury's football club, on your right. Continue along the track, passing by the ramp to the pumping station on your left, and on past Friars Meadow (suitable for picnics) on the right, until you return to the car park where your walk began.

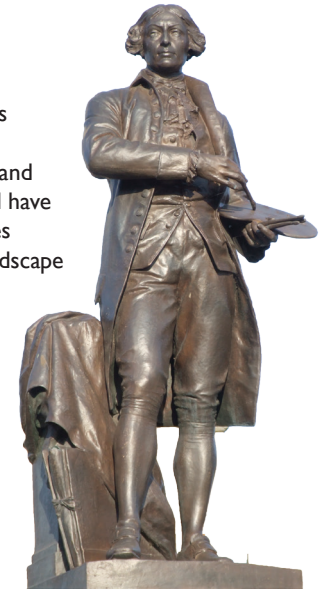


Water Vole
(*Arvicola Terristris*)



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH (1727 to 1788)

This Trail is named after Thomas Gainsborough, the portrait and landscape artist who was born and educated in Sudbury and would have walked, sketched and sometimes painted much of the natural landscape you will see on your journey.



KEY

- Meadow Walk
- Information Boards
- Bus Station
- Railway Station
- Parking
- Sudbury Tourist Information Centre
- Gainsborough House
- Town Hall
- Public Toilets
- River Stour

FOLLOW THE KINGFISHER WAYMARKERS

- Meadow walk – circular, 3.5 Miles (5 km) in total.
- The walk is accessible for suitable wheelchairs and pushchairs depending on weather conditions.
- The cattle are used to walkers but please leave them in peace and keep your dogs under control.
- Please close gates behind you.
- We recommend wearing good walking footwear or wellies, especially if there has been heavy rainfall.



For more information visit us online at
www.gainsboroughtrail.org