

CAR@FREE in Dedham Vale and Stour Valley

Exploring the Stour Valley on foot



ONE OF A SET OF
CAR FREE ITINERARIES
IN THE EAST OF
ENGLAND'S SPECIAL
LANDSCAPES

- Walking options in the Stour Valley
- Based on sections of the Stour Valley Path from Bures to Manningtree
- Includes shorter walks off the main route
- Walks can be accessed by public transport

This itinerary is based on a section of the Stour Valley Path, a 60 mile long regional walking route following the River Stour Valley from Newmarket to its estuary at Cattawade. This itinerary picks up the path at Bures and describes the highlights of this beautiful lowland landscape best enjoyed on foot.

The route passes through scenic countryside and the historic malting and weaving villages which can be found dotted along the valley. You can follow in the footsteps of famous artists such as John Constable who captured this area in many of his paintings. There are additional circular walks from Bures and Leavenheath which can be completed in an afternoon.

Whether you would like a 2 or 3 day walking break or just a day out walking in the countryside, the Dedham Vale has something for you.



The River Stour



Stour Valley Path



Tranquil landscape

CONTENTS

- THE ITINERARY – Details of the routes that you can follow and places you can visit
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THE ITINERARY

This itinerary is based on the Stour Valley Path. To complete the walks it is recommended that walkers first obtain a copy of the Stour Valley Path information pack. This is available from the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project team on 01473 264263 and costs £3.50. Local Visitor Information Centres also stock copies.

The Stour Valley Path is also marked on the OS map Explorer 196. The route is waymarked with circular plastic disks displaying this logo.



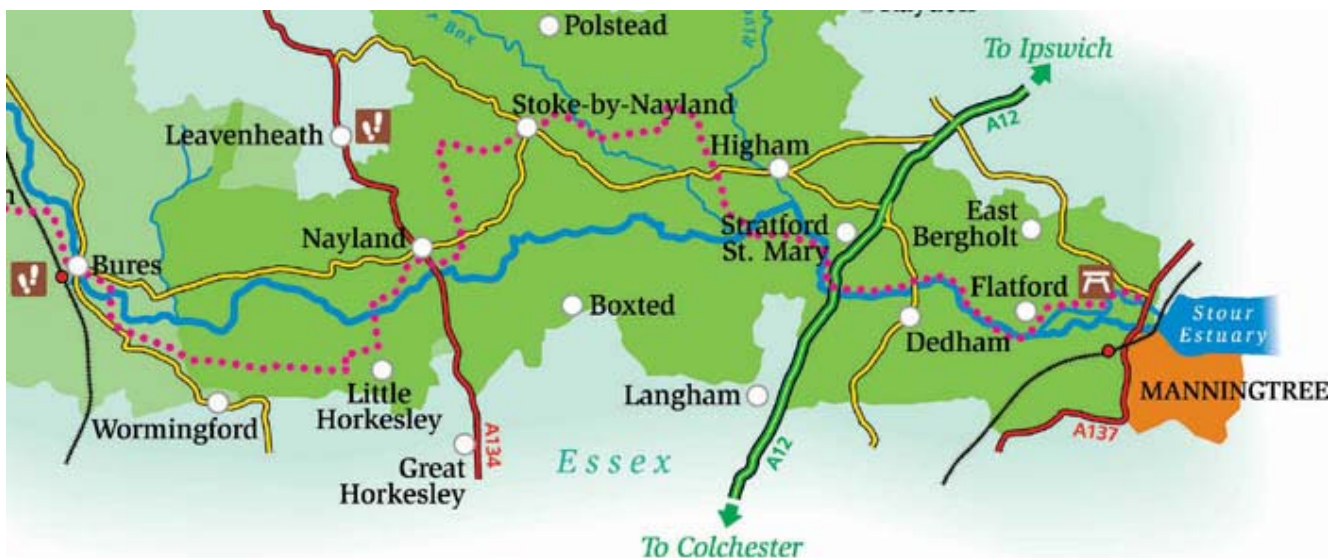
The Bures and Arger Fen and Leavenheath and Nayland circular walks are downloadable from the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project website: www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org.

Towards the end of the itinerary section there are details of places to visit on the route and information on refreshments, activities and accommodation.

Overview of the walks

There are 3 walks included in this itinerary:

- **WALK 1. The Stour Valley from Bures to Manningtree** – A 19.5 mile route that can be completed in one day but would take at least 6 ½ hours (not including stops). This route is suitable for experienced long distance walkers. The route can be shortened by picking up bus routes to Colchester at Stoke-by-Nayland (reducing the walk to 8.5 miles) or Stratford St Mary (reducing the walk to 14 miles). Why not make a 2 or 3 day break of it and stay overnight on route (note, baggage transfer is not available so travel light). The route is marked in pink dots on the map below.
- **WALK 2. Bures and Arger Fen** – A short circular walk (2, 3 or 4 miles) through lowland farmland on paths and quiet lanes. The walk begins at Bures on the River Stour and is way marked with 'circular walk' discs.
- **WALK 3. Leavenheath and Nayland** – A circular walk (5 or 7 miles) that begins at Leavenheath and continues down to the River Stour at Nayland with panoramic views of the valley and orchards. It is possible to pick up the route at Nayland or Stoke-by-Nayland.



THE ITINERARY

Walk details and highlights

WALK 1. The Stour Valley Path from Bures to Manningtree

The information below is presented in sections that relate to the individual route cards from the Stour Valley Path pack. The walk from Bures to Manningtree covers route sections 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Section 7. Bures to Wormingford

The train station at Bures is an ideal starting point for this walk. Bures is approximately half way through section 7 of the Stour Valley Path pack.

Formally a major malting centre, many of the buildings in Bures date from the 16th and 17th Century. There are a number of public houses to visit for food and refreshments.

The route leaves Bures and crosses the River Stour before heading across fields to the ancient hill top village of Wormingford.

The artist John Nash was buried in Wormingford at St Andrew's Church. He painted many scenes from this area and one is depicted on Route Card 8. Wormingford has a Grade II listed country inn (The Crown) for refreshments.

Malting in Bures

In the 19th Century there were 6 maltings in Bures that together produced ten tons of malt per day. They supplied local pubs and breweries and some was even exported.



Bures footbridge

Section 8. Wormingford to Stoke-by-Nayland

The route from Wormingford winds its way across farmland before turning towards the River Stour. It then follows close to the river until it reaches Nayland, an attractive former weaving centre on the Suffolk / Essex border.

This is a well served village where you can stock up on picnic provisions and enjoy a rest down by the river or visit one of the village pubs.

The path then leaves the river and heads up the hill towards Stoke-by-Nayland.

Stour navigation

From the 18th Century horse drawn barges known as 'Stour Lighters' used the river to transport materials too and from the areas' farms, mills and villages. Locks were constructed that still exist to this day.

Section 9. Stoke-by-Nayland to Stratford St. Mary

Stoke-by-Nayland is set on a ridge between the Stour and Box valleys and is a pretty village with traditional cottages and medieval timber framed houses. The village is dominated by the 120 feet high tower of the Church of St Mary, depicted in many of Constable's landscapes. There are places to stop here for food and refreshments before setting off out of the village and heading towards the River Box.

THE ITINERARY

From Stoke-by-Nayland the route drops down to the River Stour once again. Section 9 comes to an end in Stratford St Mary, once a busy wool town and an important coaching stop between Ipswich and London. There are still attractive timber framed houses and three inns for visitors to enjoy; The Anchor Inn, The Black Horse and The Swan.

Section 10. Stratford St Mary to Cattawade (and Manningtree)

This final section of the walk follows the River Stour closely from Stratford St Mary down to Cattawade marshes passing the historic village of Dedham and the hamlet of Flatford.

On reaching the River Stour, take a short detour by turning right up Mill Lane to visit Dedham, a thriving village with beautiful listed houses, interesting shops and an excellent selection of places to eat or stock up on picnic goods. Places to visit include the Art & Craft Centre and the church of St Mary the Virgin. The church welcomes visitors and is open every day; look out for the Constable painting inside.

From Dedham, pick the Stour Valley Path up again from the Mill Lane bridge over the River Stour and follow the riverside footpath to Flatford. At Fen Bridge, the path crosses over the river and continues to Flatford.

Constable Country

John Constable was born close to the route in East Bergholt and painted many of his famous paintings in the area. Many of the scenes such as those at Flatford Mill are virtually unchanged to this day.

On reaching Flatford you will see Bridge Cottage, owned by the National Trust and home to an exhibition about John Constable. You can pick up information at the cottage to navigate yourself around some of the most famous sites of Constable's paintings, all set within a very small area at Flatford. Guided tours are also available with the National Trust. The Visitor Information Centre at Flatford can provide details of nearby places to visit and accommodation.

The last part of the walk passes Cattawade Marshes before finishing close to Brantham. Cattawade is where the freshwater of the Stour meets the tidal estuary. The protected marshes are home to waterfowl and waders and are mostly managed by the RSPB. There is also a picnic site at Cattawade. To visit Manningtree, turn right on reaching the main A137 road, cross over the river and turn immediately left to follow the riverside footpath which leads into the town centre (approximately 1 mile). There are plenty of pubs, places to eat and shop in Manningtree.

For the train station continue alongside the A137, passing under the railway bridge. The station can be seen ahead to the right of the main road.



Cattawade Marshes

Shorter route options

There are two places where public transport enables the route to be shortened. These are Stoke-by-Nayland and Stratford St Mary.

- The route from Bures to Stoke-by-Nayland is 8.5 miles which would take about 4-5 hours without stops. It is then possible to get a number 84 bus from Stoke-by-Nayland (at the Village Hall) to Colchester or Sudbury. There are no direct public transport links back to Bures, but it is possible to return to Bures via Sudbury, either by train (Monday to Sunday, 7 minute journey time) or by bus (service 753 from Sudbury Bus Station to Bures, Monday to Saturday, 20 minute journey time). Similarly, it is possible to return to Bures via Colchester using the 753 bus service (Monday – Saturday, 20-30 minute journey time) from Colchester Bus Station or Rail Station.

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- For a longer walk, Bures to Stratford St Mary is approximately 14 miles and takes about 6 hours without stops. The number 93 bus links Stratford St Mary (opposite The Anchor PH) to Colchester (Monday to Sunday, 10 minute journey). Links back to Bures from Colchester are detailed above.

If you are planning to pick up either of these two bus routes, check timetables first by calling Traveline on 0870 608 2 608.

WALK 2. Bures and Arger Fen – circular walk

This walk makes a relaxed stroll from Bures through the gentle lowland pasture of the Stour Valley to Arger Fen.

The route is circular with two short cuts marked to shorten the walk further.

The walk climbs quickly out of the valley on an ancient cart track and you will soon have panoramic views of the Stour Valley.

After a section of open farmland the route arrives at Arger Fen, a remnant of the ancient woodland that once covered Suffolk and now designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Local Nature Reserve. It is one of only two woodlands in the east of England to have a large number of wild cherry trees. A variety of birds and mammals frequent the woods throughout the year and on sunny summer days, look out for butterflies. Arger Fen is a good place to stop for a picnic before heading back in the direction of Bures.

The route then follows a stream down hill and past a reservoir before then turning back towards Bures St Mary.

Bures Hamlet or Bures St Mary?

The River Stour divides Bures between the counties of Suffolk (Bures St Mary) and Essex (Bures Hamlet). The two are commonly referred to as Bures.

WALK 3. Leavenheath and Nayland – circular walk

This route begins at Leavenheath but can also be accessed from Nayland or Stoke-by-Nayland (both on the Stour Valley Path).

The walk passes through orchards and then follows an ancient lane where you can see a variety of native trees and shrubs including Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Elder and Holly. You will also be able to spot some large Oak trees on the route, up to 6 metres in girth.

From the walk you will see views of the 120 foot tower of Stoke-by-Nayland church in the distance. The route then heads down into the valley to the River Stour at Nayland. There are pubs in Nayland where you can stop for refreshments and there are seats by the river where you can enjoy a picnic. St James' Church in Nayland is well worth a visit to see the Constable altarpiece painting of Christ.

The route then heads across fields and through a wood before returning back to Leavenheath through orchards. On the way back to Leavenheath, the route passes close by the tea rooms at Rose Hill Farm, Honey Tye.

ITINERARY LISTINGS

Visitor Information Centres

- **Flatford Visitor Information Centre** – Flatford Lane, Flatford, East Bergholt, Colchester, CO7 6UL. Tel: 01206 299460. Email: flatfordvic@babergh.gov.uk. Website: www.visit-suffolk.org.uk
- **Sudbury Visitor Information Centre** – Town Hall, Market Hill, Sudbury. Tel: 01787 881320. Email: sudburytic@babergh.gov.uk. Website: www.visit-suffolk.org.uk
- **Colchester Visitor Information Centre** – 1 Queen Street, Colchester, CO1 2PG. Tel: 01206 282920. Email: vic@colchester.gov.uk. Website: www.visitcolchester.co.uk.

Things to see and do

- **National Trust Bridge Cottage** – Flatford, East Bergholt, Colchester, CO7 6UL. Tel: 01206 298260. Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk (search under Bridge Cottage). The tiny hamlet of Flatford is the famous location for a number of John Constable's idyllic pastoral paintings. Bridge Cottage houses an exhibition on the artist and a variety of walks can be enjoyed along the River Stour from here. Opening hours for 2006 (for Bridge Cottage and the tea rooms) – 1st May to 30th September open every day 10.30am – 5.30pm, open every day in October from 11am – 4pm, 1st November – 17th December open on Wednesday through to Sunday from 11am – 3.30pm. Call for 2007 opening arrangements.
- **Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum** – Castle House, corner of East Lane and Castle Hill, Dedham, Colchester, CO7 6AZ. Tel: 01206 322127. Website: www.siralfredmunnings.co.uk. The home, studio and gardens of Sir Alfred Munnings. Open Easter Sunday until the 1st Sunday in October on Wednesdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays from 2pm – 5pm. Also open on Thursdays and Saturdays during August from 2pm – 5pm.
- **Field Studies Council** – Flatford Mill, Flatford, CO7 6UL. The FSC offer a range of environmental and art based professional and leisure courses for children, adults and families. For a full programme, call 0845 3307368 or visit www.field-studies-council.org/flatford.
- **RSPB Stour Estuary (Cattawade Marshes) reserve** – 01473 328006. Call for details of guided walks or visit the website: www.rspb.org.uk

Local produce

- **Scotland Place Farm, Stoke-by-Nayland** – Home-grown produce for sale at farm gate. Scotland Place Farm, Scotland Street, Stoke-by-Nayland.
- **Hall Farm Shop, Stratford St Mary** - Farm Shop offering home produced & local meats, fruit & vegetables, delicatessen, fresh bread daily. Open 10.00 – 17.30 Monday – Saturday (16.00 on Sundays). New cafe restaurant opening July 2006. Address: Hall Farm, Stratford St Mary, Colchester, Suffolk, CO7 6LS. Tel: 01206 322572. Website: www.hallfarmshop.co.uk.
- **The Dedham Gourmet, Dedham** – Delicatessen and stockist of local produce and a wide variety of cheese, olives and interesting wines. Address: High Street Dedham, Colchester, Essex, CO7 6HA. Tel: 01206 323623. Website: www.dedham-gourmet.co.uk.

Where to eat and drink

- **The Crown, Wormingford** – Main Road, Wormingford, CO6 3AB. Tel: 01787 227 405. Email: info@thecrownwormingford.co.uk. Website: www.thecrownwormingford.co.uk
- **The Crown, Stoke by Nayland** – Stoke by Nayland, CO6 4SE. Tel: 01206 262001. Email: thecrown@eoinns.co.uk.
- **The White Hart Inn, Nayland** - High Street, Nayland, CO6 4JF. Tel: 01206 263382. Email: reservations@whitehart-nayland.co.uk. Website: www.whitehart-nayland.co.uk.
- **Rose Hill Farm Tea Rooms** – Honey Tye, Leavenheath, CO6 4NX. Tel: 01206 262262
- **The Boathouse, Dedham** – Mill Lane, Dedham, Colchester, Essex, CO6 7DH. Email: dedhamboathouse@aol.com. Website: www.dedhamboathouse.com
- **The Anchor Inn, Stratford St Mary** - Upper Street, Stratford St Mary, CO7 6LW. Tel: 01206 322143.
- **The Sun Inn, Dedham** - High Street, Dedham, CO7 6DF Tel 01206 323351. Email: enquiries@thesuninndedham.com. Website: www.TheSunInnDedham.com

Where to stay

- **Queens House bed and breakfast, Bures** - ETC 4 Diamonds. Church Square, Bures St. Mary, Sudbury, CO8 5AB. Tel: 01787 227760. Email: queens-house@btconnect.com. Website: www.queens-house.com
- **Mays Barn bed and breakfast, Dedham** - ETC 4 diamonds. Jean Freeman, May's Lane (off Long Road West), Dedham, Colchester, CO7 6EW. Tel: 01206 323191. www.btinternet.com/~mays.barn/
- **Stratford House bed & breakfast, Holton St Mary** – ETC 4 diamonds. Mrs Anne Selleck, Stratford House, Holton St Mary, Suffolk, CO7 6NT. Tel: 01206 298246. Email: fselleck@uwclub.net. Website: www.accomsuffolk.co.uk.
- **Milsom Hotels and Restaurants, Dedham** – 2 hotels (ETC 3 star) Group website: www.milsom-hotels.co.uk. Email: milsoms@milsomhotels.com. Tel: 01206 322795.
- **Gladwins Farm, Nayland bed & breakfast** - ETC 4 diamonds & self catering cottages – ETC 5 stars – Mr & Mrs Dosser, Gladwins Farm, Harper's Hill, Nayland, CO6 4NU. Tel: 01206 262262. Email: gladwinsfarm@aol.com. Website: www.gladwinsfarm.co.uk.
- **The Steam Mill House bed & breakfast** – ETC 4 star. Brenda Assing, 1 Fen Street, Nayland, CO6 4HT. Tel: 01206 262818. Email: brendaassing@tiscali.co.uk. Website: www.thesteammillhouse.com.

ADDITIONAL LISTINGS

Other useful leaflets and information booklets available include:

- **Constable Country 'Keep it Special'** visitor guide – available free at Visitor Information Centres. The leaflet can also be downloaded via the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project website: www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org
- **The Painters' Trail** – A 69 mile circular cycle route through the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley. The map and guide is available for £3.50 from the East of England Tourist Board on 0870 2254852. There is also an itinerary available entitled 'Days out cycling on the Painters' Trail' which is available free from The Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project, call 01473 264263 or download an itinerary from: www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org

HOW TO GET THERE

By train

Bures station is on the Marks Tey to Sudbury branch line (off the main London Liverpool Street to Norwich line) linking to the major railway network to all parts of the UK. The journey time on One Railway services between London Liverpool Street and Marks Tey is just over an hour. The journey from Marks Tey to Bures takes just 12 minutes. To ensure you make the connections available between Marks Tey and Bures, check train times before you leave.

Manningtree is on the London Liverpool Street to Norwich line. The journey time on One Railway services between London Liverpool Street and Manningtree take approximately 1 hour. Local train connections from Colchester, Ipswich and Harwich run regularly.

For timetable information see the One Railway website: www.onerailway.com or telephone the One Railway Customer Service Centre on 0845 600 7245.

National Express Coaches

National Express operate services to Colchester, Harwich and Ipswich. Contact National Express on 08705 80 80 80 or visit www.nationalexpress.com for more information. From these destinations, local bus and train services connect to Manningtree and Bures.

Local bus services from Colchester

Colchester to Bures (via Wormingford)

Service **753** on Mondays to Saturdays from Colchester Bus Station or Train Station to Bures. ½ hour journey time.

Colchester to Nayland and Stoke by Nayland

Service **84** on Mondays to Saturdays from Colchester Bus Station or Train Station to Nayland (Doctor's Surgery and the Forge) 25 minute journey and Stoke-by-Nayland (Village Hall), ½ hour journey. Frequent service during the day.

Service **900** on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays from Colchester Rail Station to Nayland (A134). Infrequent - only 1 morning service out from Colchester and 1 evening return to Colchester.

Service **755/756** on Mondays to Saturdays from Colchester Bus Station to Stoke-by-Nayland (via Stratford St. Mary and Higham), 50 minute journey time. This service continues to Polstead and Hadleigh on leaving Stoke-by-Nayland. Infrequent service - 3 times throughout the day.

Colchester to Leavenheath

Service **84** on Mondays to Saturdays from Colchester Bus Station or Rail Station to Leavenheath (hare & Hounds, High Road or Elm Tree Lane), journey time 45 minutes. Frequent service during the day.

Local bus services from Sudbury

Sudbury to Bures

Service **753** on Mondays to Saturdays from Sudbury Bus Station to Bures (Church). 20 minute journey time. Frequent service during the day. Also serves Wormingford.

Note: One Rail operate an hourly service every day between Sudbury and Bures (last train from Sudbury on Mondays to Saturdays is at 22.00, Sundays at 21.40). 7 minute journey time between Sudbury and Bures.

Sudbury to Colchester via Assington (for Arger Fen), Leavenheath, Stoke-by-Nayland, Nayland, Great Horkesley and Colchester

Service **84** on Mondays to Saturdays from Sudbury Bus Station to Colchester Bus Station and Rail Station. Frequent service during the day.

THE CAR@FREE PROJECT:

The *CAR@FREE* itineraries are designed to encourage visitors to explore and enjoy the special landscapes of the East of England with minimal impact on the environment, while generating positive benefits for local people. The itineraries give visitors exciting ideas about what to do in the area, by leaving their car at home or at their accommodation, and exploring the area by bike, boat, bus, horse or train.

The itineraries for each area can be found at the following websites:

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CAR FREE ITINERARIES
IN THE EAST OF
ENGLAND'S SPECIAL
LANDSCAPES

The Brecks

www.brecks.org

- Enjoy living on a working farm
- Horse riding breaks in and around Thetford Forest
- Biking and Brewing in Thetford Forest

The Broads

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

- Canoe Safaris
- Great ideas for discovering the best of the Broads by cycle
- Walks and sights of the Broads by train and bus

The Chilterns AONB

www.chilternsaonb.org

- Grand Union Canal and Tring Reservoirs
- North Chilterns Villages by Bicycle
- Walking and Cycling in the Northern Chilterns and Hitchin

Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley

www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org

- A day walking through Constable Country
- Days out cycling on the Painters' Trail
- Exploring the Stour Valley on foot

Norfolk Coast AONB

www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk

- Exploring the Norfolk Coast Cycleway
- See the wildlife wonders of North Norfolk by bus
- Great ideas for making the most of the area by bus and train

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org

- A car free break in Southwold
- Exploring the Stour Estuary
- Woodbridge, Sutton Hoo and the Deben Estuary

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY: If you are business in the one of these areas and would like to write your own itinerary to show visitors how to enjoy the area near you without using their car to get around, please contact us for further information:



For further information contact:

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