



A Breath of Fresh Air - Walking in the Great Outdoors

Explore the Stour Valley at walking pace – you'll see, hear and smell so much more than whizzing by enclosed in the bubble of a car. The endorphins flow and you're in tune with the environment: altogether a greener getaway!

Here's a revitalising break based on two days' ramble from Canterbury to Sandwich, following the Stour Valley Walk and with nature and wildlife highlights along the River Great Stour. Spend some time exploring Sandwich Bay before returning to Canterbury by river on day three. You will need to carry whatever belongings you require for two nights' accommodation en route, and there are plenty of places to rest and eat.

Littlebourne Mill



©Brian Macted



Littlebourne Green

©Brian Macted

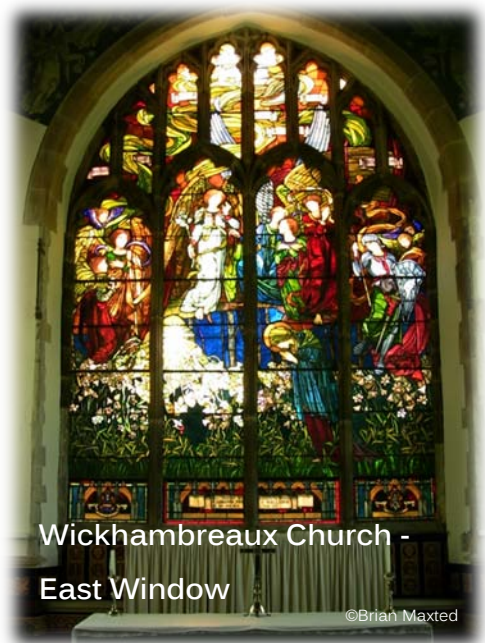
Day One – The Bourne Walk

In the morning take the train to **Bekesbourne** and follow the **Bourne Walk** (one of the Kentish Stour Countryside Project's Train Rides to Ramble). This passes through the delightful villages of Bekesbourne, Littlebourne, Wickhambreaux, Ickham and Patrixbourne, and takes in five churches, as many pubs and a number of converted water mills. It also features orchards and watercourses.

We recommend you do half of the circular route so that you can detour via Howletts Wild Animal Park. Stop off for lunch at Mama Feelgoods at Chalk Pit Farm or at the Unicorn near the railway station. (The Unicorn is a popular pub for walkers and can point you in the right direction!)

From here, rejoin the walk and continue on through **Littlebourne**, where you can stop for a drink at the Anchor Inn, or the Evenhill, before continuing on through **Ickham** and/or **Wickhambreaux**.

Accommodation is available at these two villages (See listings pages)



Wickhambreaux Church -
East Window

©Brian Macted

As an alternative to following the Bourne Walk from Bekesbourne, you could step out along the Stour Valley Walk from Canterbury to Upstreet. This will take four-five hours. At Upstreet, turn down to Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve and explore the wonderful area of open water, reed beds and marsh. Then check in at the Grove Ferry and enjoy a well-earned dinner.



©David Young

View from the Grove Ferry

Sandwich

Day Two – Join the Stour Valley Walk

If you stayed overnight in Littlebourne, Wickhambreaux or Ickham: after breakfast, trace the public footpaths through orchards and soft fruit farms to Stodmarsh. Amble through the Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve to Grove where you can join the Stour Valley Walk. Depending on the time of day you started out, you might arrive in time for lunch at the Grove Ferry.

The scenic Stour Valley Walk from Grove Ferry to Sandwich then takes up to five hours, so plan your journey times accordingly.

The beautifully preserved medieval town of Sandwich and the neighbouring village of **Worth** have numerous comfy hotels, b&bs and inns where you can stay, as well as a wide variety of places to eat. Hang up your boots for the evening and relax!



Stodmarsh
National
Nature
Reserve



Day Three – Return to Canterbury

The very last leg of the Stour Valley Walk is from Sandwich to Shell Ness, where the River Stour joins the Strait of Dover.

From Sandwich Quay, the river takes a lonely course across the 'salts', doubling back on itself by Stonar Cut. The cut, between the river at Richborough and Sandwich Haven, was constructed in 1776 to control the flow of the river and act as a flood relief mechanism. The Stour Valley Walk picks a way across the salts between the two golf courses – Royal St Georges and Princes – then continues alongside the Sandwich Flats to reach the headland of Shell Ness. From here you can look right across to the sweep of Pegwell Bay.

Depending on your speed, this section of the walk will take around 1.5 hours so you could while away some time exploring Sandwich Bay: check for activities or events being organised by the Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Field Centre. You might also want to look around the town.

It is possible to return to Canterbury by bus, or by train (changing at Ramsgate).

Attraction	Telephone	Web address	Opening Times	Address
Howletts Wild Animal Park	+44 (0) 1227 721286	http://www.totallywild.net/howletts	Summer 10:00-18:00 (last admission 16.30) Winter 10:00-17:00pm (last admission 15.30)	Howletts Wild Animal Park, Bekesbourne, Nr. Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5EL
Mama Feelgoods	+44 (0) 1227 830830	http://mamafeelgoods.com/	Monday to Saturday 9:30 to 17:00, Sunday 10:30 to 16:00	Chalkpit Farm, School Lane, Bekesbourne, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5EU
The Anchor Inn	+44 (0) 1227 721207	http://www.the-anchorinn.com/	Check website alternatively phone	The Anchor Inn, Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1UY
The Evenhill	+44 (0) 1227 728 073	http://www.evenhillcanterbury.co.uk/	Check website alternatively phone	The Evenhill 62 The Hill, Littlebourne, Kent, CT3 1TA
The Grove Ferry	+44 (0) 1227 860302	http://www.thegroveferry.co.uk/home.html	Monday-Thursday 10:00 - 23:00, Friday & Saturday 9:00-00:00, Sunday 9:00- 22:30	The Grove Ferry, Upstreet, Nr. Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4BP
Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust	+44 (0) 1304 617341	http://www.sbbot.co.uk/index.asp	Check website alternatively phone	SBBOT, Guilford Road, Sandwich Bay, Sandwich, Kent, CT13 9PF