



The Countryside Code

From a gentle stroll or relaxing picnic to a long-distance walk or heart-pumping adventure, the countryside provides every opportunity for enjoyment and relaxation.



If you follow the Countryside Code wherever you go, you'll get the best enjoyment possible and you'll help to protect the countryside now and for future generations.

Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs

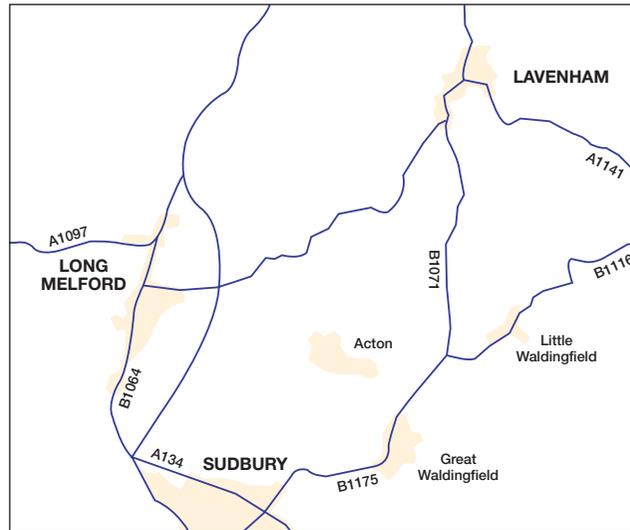
Leave gates and property as you find them

Protect plants and animals, take your litter home

Keep dogs under close control

Consider other people

We encourage the use of sustainable transport for you to access the walk. Please call the Suffolk County Council Traveline for more information.



The Melford Walk is managed by Long Melford Parish Council. For further information about the Walk, please contact

Long Melford Parish Council

The Parish Offices
Cordell Road
Long Melford
Suffolk CO10 9EH

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www.longmelford-pc.gov.uk/



Explore The Melford Walk



Which site will you discover next?

Long Melford
Parish Council



The Melford Walk

The Melford Walk follows a section of the disused railway line that once linked Sudbury to Bury St Edmunds. The Walk is now managed by Long Melford Parish Council as a recreational path and wildlife conservation area. The Walk skirts the eastern edge of Long Melford for 1 1/4 miles (1.96km) dividing the settlement from open countryside. Two other countryside walks - The Melford Walk and the Valley Walk also follow parts of this line and all three can be used as part of a longer walk between Sudbury and Lavenham.

It can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders and can be accessed at numerous points along its length from Southgate Street (Sudbury Road) to Kings Lane. The last short section to Bull Lane has been left and is now covered with dense scrub, ideal for nesting birds and small mammals but not for human access!

The Railway

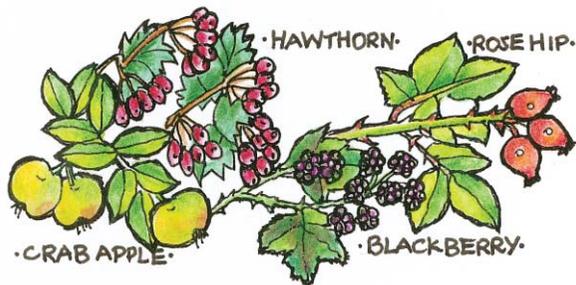
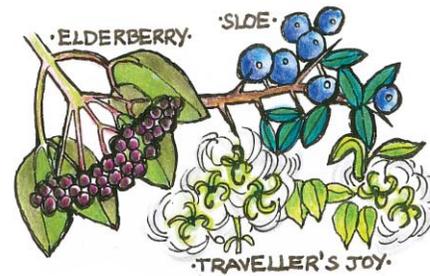
At Long Melford, just past the old railway station, the railway line from Sudbury divided, to take you on your way to Cambridge and the London line or to Bury St Edmunds at a steady average speed of 32mph. The Melford Walk follows the line that was in use to Bury St Edmunds from 1865 to 1961, closing 6 years before the Sudbury to Cambridge lines. Both being the victims of the improving road system.

The construction of the railways in Victorian Britain changed the landscape through which the trains puffed, but luckily did not affect the important historical scene that makes up Long Melford, one of the best preserved linear villages in England. Its very broad thoroughfare is lined with a fascinating blend of buildings dating back to the Middle Ages.

The Life of the Railway

As a passenger on the train along this stretch of railway, you would have clear views out over the surrounding countryside, and some of the magnificent buildings could be viewed in the distance. The track would have been kept clear of trees and vegetation for the trains. Now only intriguing glimpses of the historical village can be seen through the trees and new houses. But this track is an important semi-natural linear habitat in an agricultural landscape providing an abundant store of food for birds, insects and mammals.

The mood of the walk varies along its length and provides an escape into a secretive, hidden world that surrounds you with natural scents, colours, sounds and tastes – especially rich for wildlife throughout the year and for walkers in the autumn months with blackberries, elderberries, damsons and crab apples. The blackberries, of course, to be eaten before the devil spits on them on the 29th September! This lore has a basis in wisdom as the frost makes the fruit rather mushy and tasteless.



The birds, butterflies and dragonflies, attracted by the abundance of food, add to the colour of the numerous plants, which included Danewort, a rare plant in Suffolk. It grows on the southern entrance to the walk and is said to flourish where Danish blood was spilled – the creamy flowers being tinged with purple! The “chirping” of the grasshoppers and crickets joins the pleasant mix of birdsong, and despite the numerous walkers along this track, the shy and secretive badger finds sanctuary here.

