

CYCLE ROUTES IN THE STOUR VALLEY

Cycling through a Masterpiece

provides a number of interesting routes through the Stour Valley which take you to numerous locations of historical importance and past enchanting views.

There are 14 routes altogether, ranging from 6 miles to 19 miles. The circular routes start and finish in Clare, Hartest Green, Long Melford, Bures, Stoke by Nayland and Dedham. At each location, there is an option for a longer 'touring route' and a shorter route. The routes are also designed to enable the keen cyclist to link them together easily to create a truly challenging ride. A summary of the routes, along with their starting and finishing points, is given on the map overleaf. For more detailed route instructions, you can download the full 'Cycling through a Masterpiece' guidebook from:

www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

Many of the points of interest are open to the public and we strongly recommend that you check for opening times before you set out in order to get the most out of your ride.

The Painters' Trail

The landscape of Dedham Vale and the Stour Valley has inspired many great artists, including Thomas Gainsborough, Alfred Munnings, and John Constable, whose deep connection with the area lends it its other name: Constable Country. The Painters' Trail is a long distance circular route that takes you through this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, stopping off at major artistic landmarks on the way and cycling through the scenery that

inspired some of the world's greatest landscape painters. One particular highlight of art heritage cyclists will see on the route, is Flatford Mill and the stretch of the Stour where Constable painted 'The Haywain', one of the best-known pastoral scenes ever committed to canvas.



The ride rarely strays far from the River Stour, which forms the border between Essex and Suffolk, and flows gently from west to east where its estuary eventually joins the North Sea. The surrounding countryside is picturebook England, with lush green riverbanks and meadows, rolling farmland, and many thatched roofs, not to mention an abundance of pretty weatherboard and half-timbered houses.

The full route of The Painters Trail is 69 miles through rolling Essex and Suffolk country lanes, but the route can very easily be shortened or broken up into a multi-day ride. The lack of major hills and abundance of quiet roads, apart from a few short stretches of A-road, make the route suitable for most fitness and confidence levels.

The starting point for The Painters' Trail is in Manningtree, although Sudbury is

another recommended alternative. Both are easily accessible by train.

Travel tip

Travel by train! Manningtree station is on the main line from London (Liverpool Street) with frequent services to Colchester, Ipswich and Norwich. From Marks Tey, just south of Colchester, you can take the picturesque Gainsborough Line for a relaxed journey to Sudbury. Both stations and routes are served by Greater Anglia, and you can bring your bike onboard. Check the Greater Anglia website for details of its cycle policy:

www.greateranglia.co.uk/travel-information/your-journey/cycling

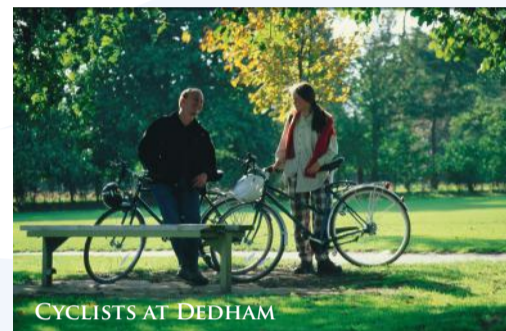
You can download full route instructions and find information about facilities and highlights along the route at www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides



CYCLING ON QUIET LANES



CYCLISTS AT EAST BERGHOLT



CYCLISTS AT DEDHAM

Cycle Safety

- Ensure your bike is in good working order before you set off on your trip.
- Go well equipped. Take a mobile phone, a puncture repair kit and pump, a first aid kit and refreshments.
- Be seen, wear high visibility clothing.
- Ride in single file on busy roads.
- Be aware of, and follow the Highway Code
- Wear a cycle helmet.
- Let other road users know your intentions – give clear hand signals.
- Listen out for other traffic and be considerate of other road users, pedestrians and horses.

CYCLING IN THE STOUR VALLEY

The Stour Valley is an exciting and beautiful landscape that has captured people's imagination for centuries. A quintessential English landscape with rolling farmland, ancient woodland, meadows, hedgerows and meandering river, the valley is predominately used for arable farming but dotted throughout the Stour Valley are historic, picturesque towns and villages, many of which have church towers that can be seen across the landscape. At the heart of the valley is the River Stour which creates a natural border between Suffolk and Essex.

The network of quiet roads, sunken lanes, well-surfaced tracks and cycle paths mean it's easy and accessible to explore this beauty by bicycle. This leaflet will signpost you to cycle routes and services (including bike sales, repairs and organised cycle break and tour providers) in and around the Stour Valley, and help inspire you to get out and discover this special landscape on two wheels.

VISITING THE STOUR VALLEY



Please consider travelling sustainably where possible. For up to date local public transport timetables, contact traveline on: www.traveline.info or 0871 200 22 33.

For detailed maps of the area, use Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No's. 196 (Sudbury, Hadleigh and the Dedham Vale), 210 (Newmarket and Haverhill), 211 (Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket) and 195 (Bintree and Saffron Walden)

Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project
Tel: 01394 445225

Email: dedhamvale.project@suffolk.gov.uk
Web: www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org

Improving the Stour Valley for Visitors Project is a business development project to support high quality visitor products and services, funded by:

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



Explore the Stour Valley with a series of guides

Cycling in THE STOUR VALLEY



CYCLING in The Stour Valley

■ Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

■ Stour Valley and surrounding Wool Towns

●●● Stour Valley Path - long distance footpath for walkers

● Wool Towns

🚴 Cycle Routes

🛒 Bike Sales and/or Repairs

🚲 Bicycle Hire and Cycle Excursions

CYCLE CLINIC
Unit 5 Clockhouse Farm, Cavendish Lane,
Glemsford, CO10 7PZ
Offers bike repairs, servicing, and wheel
building, along with sales of cycling accessories
and bicycle parts.
www.thecycleclinic.co.uk
07415 783944

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Hartest and Glemsford
TOURING ROUTE 9.4 miles (moderate)
SHORT ROUTE 6 miles (moderate)
START / FINISH POINT Hartest Green This is a rural route
which takes you through villages in High Suffolk overlooking
the Glem Valley and past some notable houses. Both routes are
moderate and take in a few hills, but there are excellent views
across the Suffolk countryside.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Long Melford
TOURING ROUTE 12.6 miles (easy to moderate)
SHORT ROUTE 8.5 miles (easy to moderate)
START / FINISH POINT Long Melford Country Park
This is a lovely route that takes in some beautiful villages in
North Essex and the medieval wool town of Long Melford. Its
wide, tree lined village street is the country's longest. Both
routes have hills that are easy to moderate.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

**STOUR VALLEY
ADVENTURE CENTRE**
43 Cross Street, Sudbury,
CO10 2DL
Offering bicycle hire for
weekends or whole weeks, as well
as cycle breaks and cycle tours.
www.stourvalleyadventurecentre.com/cycling-adventures
01206 700707

TORQUE BIKES
70 Cross Street, Sudbury,
CO10 2DJ
An independent cycle shop,
selling bikes and cycling
accessories. Also offers bike
repairs, services, and builds.
www.torquebikes.co.uk
01787 379406

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Bures and Sudbury
TOURING ROUTE 19.1 miles (moderate to hard)
SHORT ROUTE 9.8 miles (moderate to hard)
START / FINISH POINT Bures railway station
A scenic route along the river Stour with the touring route passing through
Sudbury. There are some steep hills which may test you, but the route
takes you through unspoilt villages with beautiful views of the valley.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Clare
TOURING ROUTE 12.8 miles (moderate)
SHORT ROUTE 8.9 miles (moderate)
START / FINISH POINT: Clare Castle Country Park. This
picturesque route takes in a number of villages that are
steeped in religious history. Both the short and touring routes
have moderate hills, but these are worth it for the beautiful
views over the Stour valley.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Bures
TOURING ROUTE 13.3 miles (easy to moderate)
SHORT ROUTE 7.7 miles (easy to moderate)
START / FINISH POINT Bures village hall car park
This is a charming route past a lot of history that takes you
along the lower part of the river valley with easy to moderate
hills.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

STOUR VALLEY CYCLES
15 Heycroft Way, Nayland, CO6 4LN
Bicycle repair shop offering basic, intermediate
and full services as well as general repair work.
www.stour-valley-cycles.ueniweb.com
07401 350416

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Stoke by Nayland
TOURING ROUTE 14.6 miles (moderate to hard)
SHORT ROUTE 6.7 miles (moderate)
START / FINISH POINT Scotland Street, Stoke by Nayland An
attractive route that takes in some quaint villages and hamlets.
There are a number of hills that are moderate to hard, but with
some great places along the route to rest and enjoy the views
over the Stour Valley.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

CYCLING THROUGH A MASTERPIECE ROUTES
Dedham
TOURING ROUTE 13.9 miles (easy)
SHORT ROUTE 8.4 miles (easy)
START / FINISH POINT Corner of Mill Lane / High Street,
Dedham. A delightful route that gives you a real sense of being
in Constable Country. This easy going route incorporates the
charming village of Dedham and the surrounding countryside
that features in a number of John Constable's paintings.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

**START AND FINISH OF THE
PAINTERS' TRAIL CYCLE ROUTE**
Manningtree
Manningtree train station is the
recommended starting point for the 69 mile
'Painters' Trail' cycle route, that explores
the beautiful landscape made famous by
many artists. More information overleaf.
www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/visitor-guides/cycle-guides

