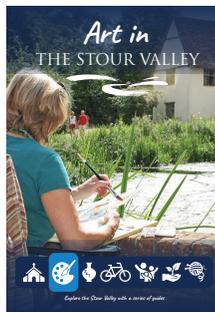
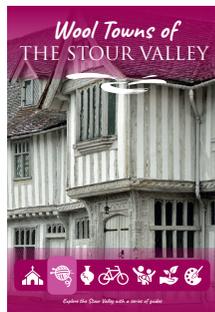
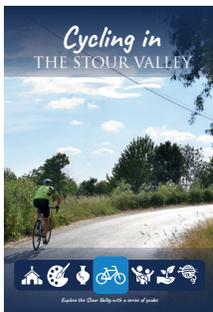
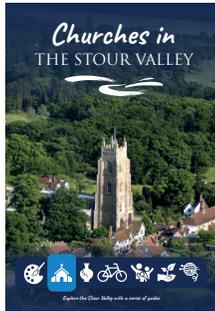
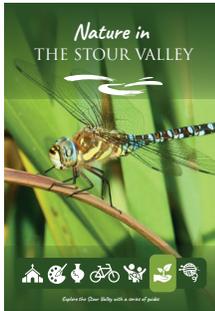
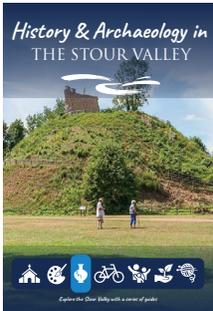


## For more information...

The following leaflets will help you explore these themes in more detail. Download for free from: [www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting)



These webpages also feature podcasts and short films about the various themes and attractions for visitors to the Stour Valley, as well as information about cycle and walking routes, transport, and visiting responsibly.

# VISITING THE STOUR VALLEY

The Stour Valley, which includes the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), is one of Britain's finest and most cherished landscapes. The area boasts a whole host of things to explore and enjoy, from art heritage to nature and wildlife reserves, and from archaeological history to culinary delights from local food producers. Whether you're a visitor to the area or more local, if you are looking for a special place for a day trip or longer stay, the Stour Valley offers a wealth of opportunities to satisfy many different interests. There's no shortage of places to visit and things to see.

[www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting)

## VISITING THE STOUR VALLEY



Please consider travelling sustainably where possible. There are good links to the Stour Valley on the Gainsborough rail line between Marks Tey and Sudbury, and there are bus routes throughout the area. For up to date local public transport timetables, contact Traveline on: [www.traveline.info](http://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 (Braintree and Saffron Walden).

Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Stour Valley  
Tel: 01394 445225  
Email: [dedhamvale.project@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:dedhamvale.project@suffolk.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org)

Improving the Stour Valley for Visitors 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



Leaflet produced November 2020

# Visiting THE STOUR VALLEY



Explore the Stour Valley with a series of guides

# VISITING *The Stour Valley*

For more information and recommended itineraries:  
[www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting)

## *Art Heritage in the Stour Valley*

The Stour Valley has a unique and inspirational art heritage - with many opportunities to see and experience work by artists both past and present, inspired by this special landscape. From famous artists of the past who painted the landscape, such as John Constable, Thomas Gainsborough, Paul Nash and Alfred Munnings, to contemporary artists working, teaching and displaying their works in galleries today, the Stour Valley is a unique and exciting destination for those with an interest in art.



## *Food and Local Produce in the Stour Valley*

The Stour Valley provides the perfect grazing landscape for farming, and supports many highclass local farms and “field to fork” establishments. Visitors can discover lots of edible delights throughout the valley, and endless opportunities to enjoy delicious and seasonal local produce. There are three Stour Valley Food Trails which explore the area, from farm shops to cafes, markets to producer businesses.



## *Wool Towns and Cloth Heritage in the Stour Valley*

The Stour Valley is nationally significant for cloth and wool heritage. Our quintessentially English medieval market towns and villages are steeped in rich heritage and culture, such as at Clare, Hadleigh, Lavenham, Long Melford and Sudbury. These Wool Towns are some of the best-preserved historic towns and prettiest villages in the region, and exploring them can feel like stepping back in time to the 15th century, when the wool trade was at its peak, and these Wool Towns were among the richest places in the country.



## *History and Archaeology in the Stour Valley*

Travelling through the Stour Valley offers visitors a window into the past, offering days of exploration as it reveals its hidden treasures one by one. The landscape has been shaped by underlying geology and human development, and there are examples of prehistory at several locations along the river valley. The area has long been of interest to archaeologists, and several digs have been undertaken - the findings of which can be found at heritage centres and museums in the Stour Valley.



## *Historical Churches in the Stour Valley*

The Stour Valley is a nationally significant area for historic churches, and each has a unique story to tell. Soaring ‘wool churches’ dominate the valley landscape - strong faith and great prosperity built exceptionally large and magnificent churches with lavish architecture. Visiting these impressive buildings provides inspiration to anyone with an interest in historical architecture and the heritage of these rural communities.



## *Cycling and Walking in the Stour Valley*

The best way to enjoy the stunning scenery of the Stour Valley is to get out there and walk or cycle in it. The network of footpaths, quiet roads, sunken lanes, well-surfaced tracks and cycle paths, in a gently rolling landscape, mean it's easy and accessible to explore the beauty of the Stour Valley by bicycle or on foot. There are a wide variety of walking and cycle routes across the Stour Valley, varying in distance and physical activity levels, and the Stour Valley Path is stile free.



## *Nature and Wildlife in the Stour Valley*

The open landscape of the Stour Valley provides a home for over 1,500 plant species, 175 bird and almost 1,000 moth species. The area has a network of designated wildlife sites and protected areas, including several Sites of Special Scientific Interest, as well as the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which all support numerous wildlife conservation initiatives. Nest boxes for barn owls and creation of habitat corridors for Dormouse mean that visitors can catch a glimpse of this diverse wildlife.