

Dedham has a history stretching back many centuries. The high street is lined by beautiful buildings and the surrounding countryside inspired the artist **John Constable** to create some of his most famous paintings.



Highlights

1 Dedham became a focal point for visitors to Dedham Vale from the late 1900s. Before the village was a magnet for visitors, it was a prosperous wool town, and then a centre for local trade. After the woollen industry declined in the 1500s, Dedham remained a centre for local trade, as well as a centre for education - the Grammar School was granted a charter by Elizabeth I in 1575. This encouraged wealthy local families to settle in the community. In the 1800s, the old timber framed buildings were re-fronted in brick, giving the high street the appearance it has today.

2 St. Mary the Virgin has one of the tallest towers in the area. Profits from the local woollen industry helped to fund this imposing building, which was completed in 1492. In the summer, the tower is open and the views from the top reach to the sea at Harwich. Inside the church, you can see Constable's painting, *The Ascension*.

3 Castle House was the home of the celebrated artist Sir Alfred Munnings from 1919 until his death in 1959. Munnings is most famous for his equestrian paintings. Castle House, which Munnings described as "the house of my dreams", was turned into a museum by his widow, Violet. Visitors today can enjoy looking at Munnings' paintings in the elegant interior of the house.



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4 The River Stour is a peaceful waterway today, but 200 years ago, it was the main trade route into north Essex and Suffolk. Cargo, such as coal and bricks, was unloaded from sea going vessels at the estuary port of Mistley and transported 25 miles by barge to the inland port of Sudbury. Local goods, including grain and wool, were exported in the same way.

5 Fen Bridge is an historic crossing point across the river Stour. Although the bridge is a modern replacement, the young John Constable would have known the route well in the late 1700s. He walked along Fen Lane each day from where he lived in East Bergholt, to school in Dedham. Fen Lane inspired some of John Constable's most famous paintings, including *The Cornfield*. A little further along the path, as you cross a sluice, you will pass the view which inspired his painting *The Leaping Horse*.



The Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley

Picturesque villages, rolling farmland, rivers, meadows, ancient woodlands and a wide variety of local wildlife combine to create what many describe as the traditional English lowland landscape on the Suffolk-Essex border.

The National Landscape conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area through landscape restoration, creating habitats for wildlife, volunteering activities such as hedge planting, and providing funding for community projects.



Scan the QR code to find out more about the Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley or you can visit dedhamvale-NL.org.uk. Get in touch on **01394 445225**.

Key to map

- National Landscape
- Stour Valley Project Area
- ⋯ Stour Valley Path
- 🌳 Country Parks and Picnic sites
- 🚣 Public canoe launching locations. Craft must have an appropriate licence www.riverstourtrust.org

Visiting Dedham

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No. 196: Sudbury, Hadleigh and the Dedham Vale

Car: Dedham can be reached by following the B1029 from the A12 (junction 30)

Parking: Dedham Mill car park - CO7 6DH

Bus: traveline.info or suffolkonboard.com

Train: The nearest train station is Manningtree Station, approx. 4 miles from Dedham. Train timetable at nationalrail.co.uk

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Dedham Explorer Guide

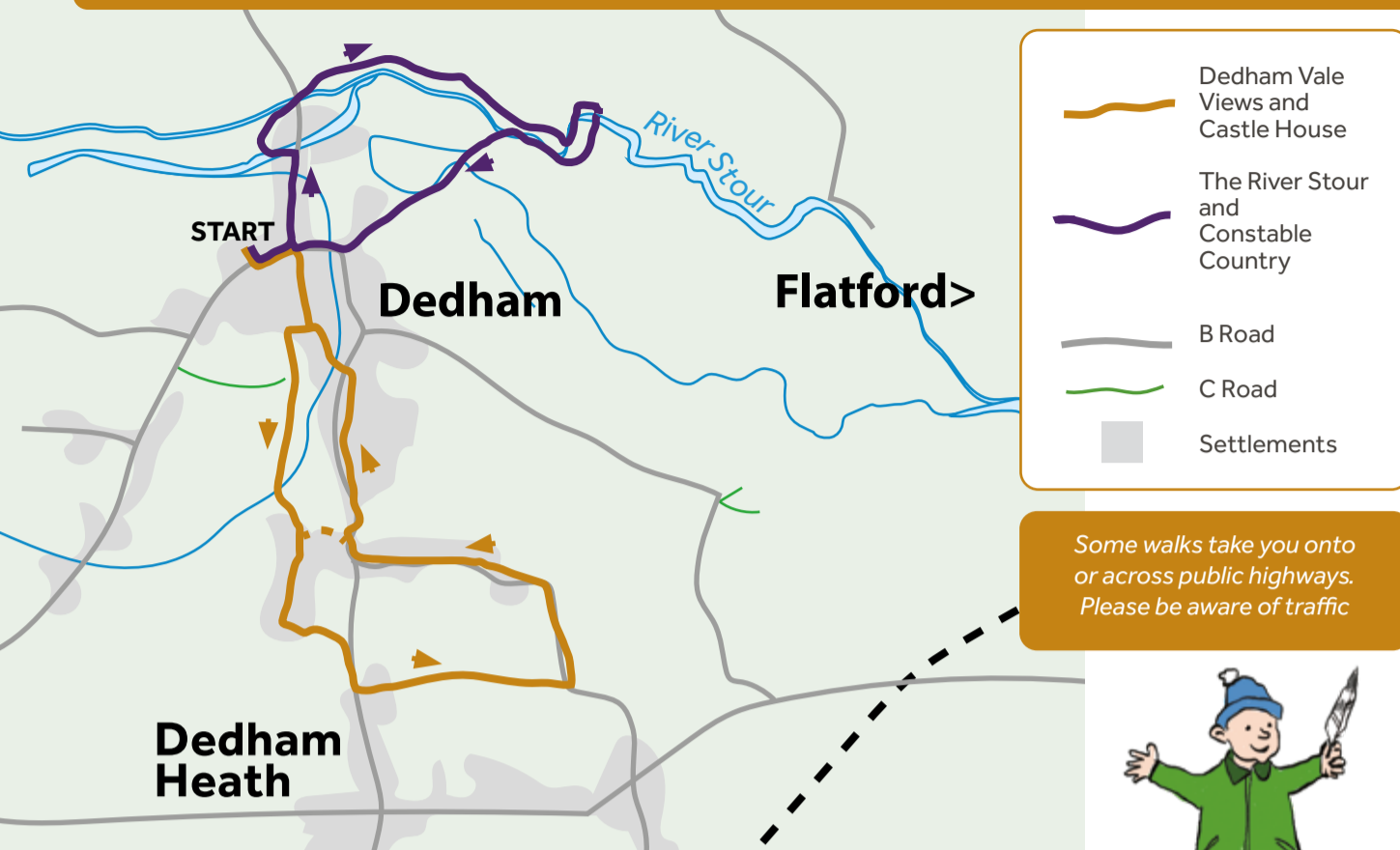


Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley



Discover the historic village of **Dedham** and the surrounding countryside

Dedham Explorer Guide



Some walks take you onto or across public highways. Please be aware of traffic



Please note this map is illustrative and does not show all roads and features

Countryside Code

The Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley has a network of footpaths and bridleways. To protect you, other people, wildlife, and the landscape, please make sure you:

- Stick to marked footpaths
- Leave things as you find them
- Do not light fires or BBQs
- Take all litter home with you
- Please keep dogs under close control at all times and on lead as advised



Scan the QR code to find more advice and visitor guides, or visit

dedhamvale-nl.org.uk/visiting



Dedham Vale Views and Castle House

Terrain:

Paths and tracks, some minor roads and village roads. Route can be very muddy in places and flooded after heavy rain. Take care near areas of deep water.

Distance:
2.6 miles (4.2 km)

Time:
1 hour

Starting from War Memorial in Royal Square, follow path that leads away from High Street, signposted Munnings Museum. Continue on path across recreation ground until far side, then turn right behind pavilion. Walk beside boundary of ground and then take footpath exit through gate on left. Follow path across meadows. After fourth kissing gate by stream, continue straight and then left across meadow. Cross another stream and then continue straight, beside hedge and buildings. Turn right behind cottage and join driveway of Park Farm. Keeping to right side of driveway, continue until T junction with lane and then turn right (turn left here for a short cut to Munnings Museum and return route).

Continue on lane until Hunters Moon Cottage on left, then bear left up gravel driveway of The Orchard. Follow footpath as it turns left in front of house, keeping close to fence. Continue as path turns right beside house. Follow path, eventually climbing steps to field. Go straight across field to reach road. Turn right along far pavement. Take next left into Anchor Lane and follow Essex Way (an 82 mile long distance path between Harwich and Epping) between fields. When lane reached, turn left and follow lane back to junction with main road. Castle House (Munnings Museum) is on the left at the junction (entry fee applies, limited opening times).

Turn right on pavement and follow road into Dedham. After some distance, cross road and turn left into Southfields. Follow lane as it bends to right to re-join route across recreation ground. Continue straight to Dedham High Street.



The River Stour and Constable Country

Terrain:

Paths and tracks, some minor roads and village roads. Route can be very muddy in places and flooded after heavy rain. Take care near areas of deep water.

Distance:
1.9 miles (3 km)

Time:
45 minutes

Starting from War Memorial in Royal Square, carefully cross Dedham High Street and follow Mill Lane which leads between Essex Rose Tea Room and Marlborough Head Inn. Keep to left pavement and follow road. Shortly after Dedham Mill apartments, as road bends to left, cross small bridge and immediately take path sharp left. Follow path behind mill across sluice and lock.

Turn right on Stour Valley Path along river bank to reach road. Cross road and bridge and continue on path opposite across meadows, keeping parallel with river. Bear right when path splits. At path junction at Fen Bridge, turn sharp right across bridge. Option - at this point you can continue walking to Flatford (allow 40 mins extra) or return to Dedham.



On far side, turn sharp right and continue beside river. Follow river around right bend and continue through gates and across small weir. Immediately bear left across field. Follow path through tunnel of hedgerows. At path junction, bear right and then straight. Bear left at entrance to business centre. Follow left verge of track to reach Dedham High Street.

