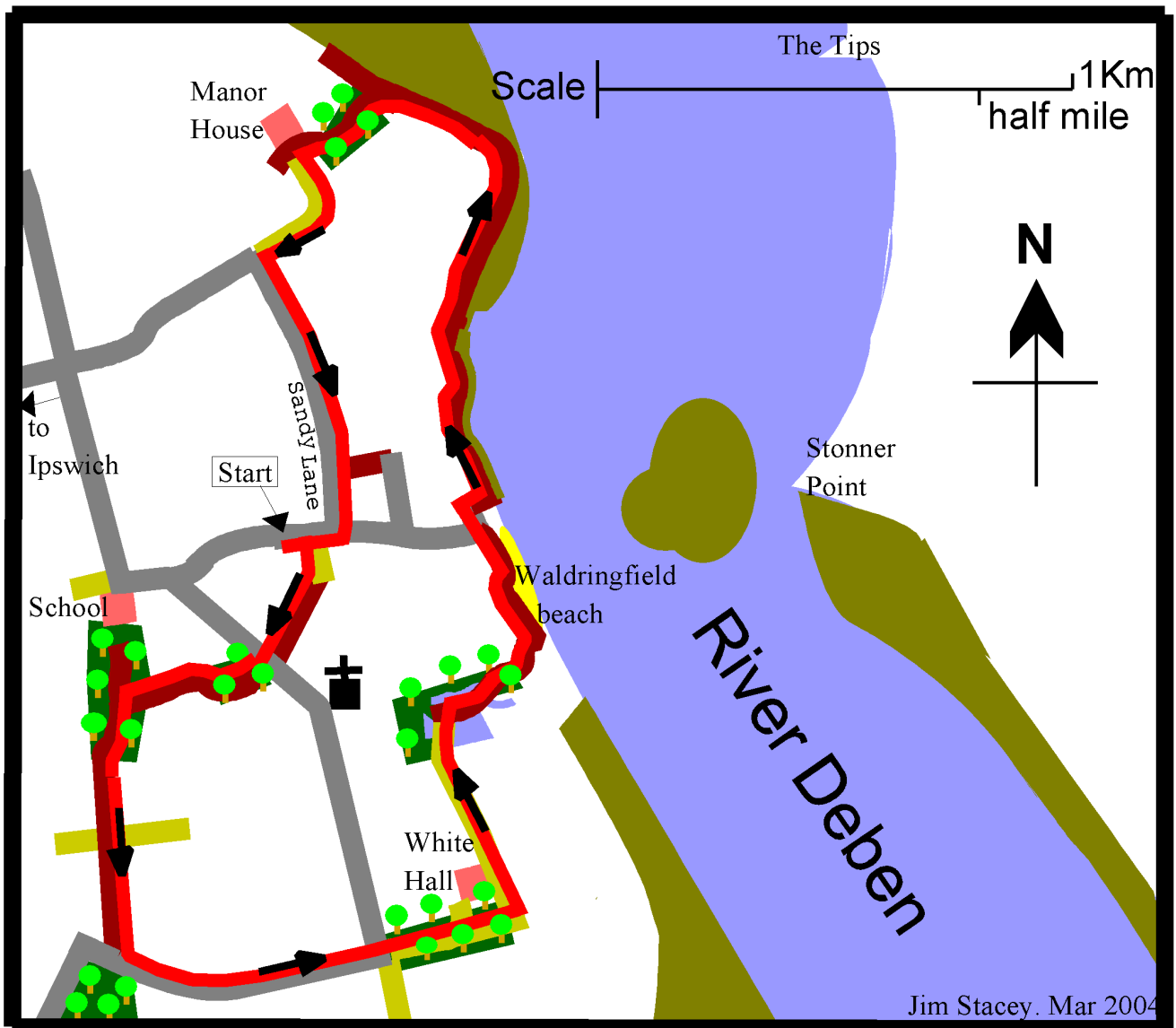


Walk 2 - Waldringfield

A Walk Round Waldringfield by Sue and Jim Stacey.



Start/End: At the lay-by on the road leading down to the river front.

The most convenient way to get to Waldringfield is by car. It is signposted from the first roundabout on the main A12 trunk road as you head towards Woodbridge from the A12/A14 junction north of Felixstowe. Once into Waldringfield continue on the main road which heads to the river. There is a lay-by on the right with a white Waldringfield Parish Council notice board as the road descends towards the river front. This is the start.

There is a bus service that runs from Woodbridge to Felixstowe that calls in at Waldringfield. You will need to get off at the village school and head down Cliff Road towards the river until you come to the lay-by. This will add about a quarter of a mile in each direction to the walk. For bus times, contact Traveline (the number on the notice board is 0870 6082608).

Terrain: mild/easy

The walk is in two parts which can be done separately or as a combined single walk.

Part One has a gradual climb. Although all the walk is possible in trainers or good shoes in dry weather, the gap between the two pools of water that form the reservoir can be a couple of inches deep if there has been recent rain in which case boots or similar footwear should be worn.

Part Two is almost flat but the path along the dyke can be muddy if there has been recent rain in which case boots or stout shoes are recommended.

The Maybush public house at the riverside serves meals. There is a small post office on Sandy Lane, which is almost opposite the lay-by, where a small selection of snacks and soft drinks can be bought. However this is open only from 10.00 to 14.00 each working day except on Fridays when it opens later in the afternoons. It is not open at weekends.

Distance: Total distance 3.4 miles of combined walk.

Part One is 2.1 miles and Part Two is 1.6 miles, starting and ending at the lay-by.

Points of Interest:

Attractive riverside village

Pleasant country and riverside walk

River cruises in summer months (from May onwards during the summer months)

Detail

If you are only doing Part Two, walk down the road to the river front and turn left to pass the boat trip booking offices and boat builders. Then follow the section entitled “Part Two”.

Part One: Outbound

There is a public footpath sign pointing to the right immediately after the lay-by as you head downhill. Follow this sign and walk up an unmade road. Turn right at the end onto a path between the hedges to cross a cultivated field. There are views of the river to the left. Go straight across the road at the other side of the field and follow the signpost along another footpath. Continue until you enter a copse and come to a T-junction. Turn left and follow the winding path through the copse and then continue forward across cultivated fields until you arrive at a sharp bend in a road, noting the many glass houses in the village of Newbourne in the valley to your front right. Turn left down the road. The river and its extensive Spinney Marsh area can be seen straight ahead. You will come to a sharp left turn in the road accompanied by a bridleway coming in from the right and another grassy one going straight ahead, descending between rows of trees. Take this straight ahead route.

To Waldringfield River Front

Continue down the bridleway to pass White Hall on your left and arrive at an open field. Turn left and go alongside White Hall and then straight on across cultivated land, with views of the river on your right, to drop downhill and pass between two areas of water that form a reservoir. At the T-junction turn right to keep the larger pool on your right and an overflow stream on your left. Continue down the path until you emerge into the open. Go forward to pass a wooden hut on your left. Then slightly bear left to reach a signpost. Continue forward towards the river. As soon as it is practical, turn left to walk in front of the huts at the riverside. Continue up three steps and forward along the riverside to pass Waldringfield Sailing Club. In the late 19th century, this area was open to the fields and the beach was used to wash and then load coprolite, a mixture of fossilised animal bones and droppings used to make fertiliser, onto barges to be taken to the Ipswich crushing mills. Over a thousand tons were dug from the hills around Waldringfield.

Continue along the riverside via the beach.

In the late 19th century and up to 1910, tillers moored at this beach to unload horse-muck from the streets of London and then to be heavily laden with mangolds, hay and straw for the return journey. The villagers were understandably not too keen on the smell from the cart-loads of muck passing through the streets.

A cement works existed between 1870 to 1908 where the boatyards are now standing. The barges came from the Thames with chalk and coke and returned with cement. You would have been able to see the kilns as you continue along the beach to pass the Maybush and reach the road.

If you are only doing Part One, turn left up the road back to the lay-by. Otherwise, Continue forward with the boat yard and the boat trip booking offices on your right.

Second Part

At the signpost on your right, go down a narrow path to the riverside and turn left onto the dyke. This is an ideal spot at low tide to see a variety of wading birds such as snipe, oyster catchers, redshank and avocets also a variety of ducks and geese. Continue along the winding dyke path. To the front right on the other side of the river and on the brow of a hill, you can see Methersgate Hall. Just in front of the hill near to a white house with a red roof is the jetty at Methersgate. Much further ahead you can see the town of Woodbridge, highlighted by the tower of St. Mary's church.

You will come to a signpost. It was once possible to go straight on here and walk to Woodbridge, but most unfortunately the dyke has been breached. Turn left to go inland along a bendy path through some trees. You emerge from the path at a broad track with a modern looking bungalow on your right. The Ordnance Survey map has this marked as Manor House. Opposite the entrance to the garden of the bungalow, turn left onto a substantial bridleway and continue until you reach the road.

Turn left down the road. On your left you will pass a house called Novocastria. This site was apparently the place of residence of the Rev. Henry Canham who was the vicar of Ramsholt church from 1862. He was rowed from Waldringfield to Ramsholt each Sunday. The Parish Clerk of Ramsholt would ascend the church tower to watch for the vicar coming and as soon as he saw him, he would ring bell. If the weather was inclement, the vicar would not make the trip so the Parish Clerk would not ring the bell and the congregation would not be summoned to worship.

Continue along the road until you reach a row of houses on your left starting just before a 20 mph zone sign. You now have a choice. If you wish to return to the start, continue along the road to the end and turn right where you will see the lay-by.

If you wish to return to the river front by a more scenic route, take the footpath on the left before the first house. Turn right at the next sign to go up a road to the main road and then turn left down to the river front or turn right to return to the lay-by.

References

Suffolk Estuary. W.G.Arnott. Norman Adlard & Co. Ltd., Ipswich. 1950

The River Deben. Robert Simper. Creekside Publishing, Suffolk. 1992

Ordnance Survey map Explorer 197, Ipswich, Felixstowe & Harwich. 1999