

5. THE HARE WALK

INDEX TO POINTS OF INTEREST (POI)

1 POI 1 Melford Hall was mostly constructed in the sixteenth century. In 1786, it was sold to the Hyde Parker family who still occupy the hall to this day. Beatrix Potter was a cousin of the family and a frequent visitor to the Hall from the 1890s. In 1960 the hall passed into the care of the National Trust.

2 POI 2 The Hospital of the Holy Blessed Trinity was founded by Sir William Cordell in 1573. Cordell was the then lord of the manor of Melford and he lived in nearby Melford Hall, an impressive Elizabethan mansion house. Cordell was a man of national prominence, holding such high offices as Master of the Rolls, High Steward of Ipswich and, in 1558, Speaker of the House of Commons. He had been born and raised in Melford and it was to the poor residents of the town that he gave the almshouses.

3 POI 3 Holy Trinity Church. The church was constructed between 1467 and 1497 and is an impressive example of a Suffolk medieval wool church, founded and financed by wealthy wool merchants as an impressive visual statement of their prosperity. The medieval stained glass windows in the north aisle date from the fifteenth century. They are of national importance and have been described as the best collection of medieval glass in Suffolk.

4 POI 4 Kentwell Hall is a stately home in Long Melford. It includes the hall, outbuildings, a rare-breeds farm and gardens. Most of the current building façade dates from the mid-sixteenth century, but the origins of Kentwell are much earlier, with references to it in the Domesday Book of 1086.

COUNTRY CODE

- Take a map, follow the signs be safe and take water.
- Leave no trace. Take your litter home.
- Leave gates as you find them.
- Respect livestock, keep dogs on leads.
- Always keep dogs under close control and clean up after them.
- Be considerate to other people (smiles are free).
- Be visible. When walking on a road, single file.

SPONSORED BY



A traditional country pub located at the northern end of Long Melford We are passionate about serving up wholesome British food. We use local seasonal produce wherever possible and cook everything on our menu from fresh.

The Hare Inn
High Street
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These circular routes have been designed and created by village residents for your enjoyment. Produced by the Long Melford Parish Council/ Neighbourhood Plan Committee, with the aid of a Locality Budget donation from Suffolk County Council, local sponsorship and fundraising.

Leaflet designed and printed by Indigo Ross
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5. THE HARE WALK



DISTANCE **7 MILES**

APPROX TIME **3 HOURS**

DIFFICULTY **MODERATE**

START POINT **CAR PARK**, adjacent to the Old School (TL 865 462)

5. THE HARE WALK

Leave the car park with the Old School on your right and Melford Hall straight ahead (POI 1). [Note: to the far right on the opposite side of the road lies The Mill, mentioned in the Domesday Book. It was the home of WW1 poet and author, Edmund Blunden who died in Long Melford in 1974.]

Turn left along the path towards the village greens where you will see the church tower in the distance at the top of the hill. On your right, you will see the entrance to Melford Hall with its ornate towers and octagonal banqueting house. On reaching the A1092, cross the road into Church Walk, passing the Black Lion on your left. Continue along Church Walk towards Holy Trinity Church. You will pass the Hospital of the Holy and Blessed Trinity on your right (POI 2) and the Old Rectory on your left.

Enter the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church (POI 3) and bear left past the war memorial. Follow the path to a wooden five-bar gate and go through into the Rectory Gardens. Continue a short way ahead to another small five-bar gate. Pass through the gate onto a footpath between two paddocks. Turn right before the stables through a metal stile and head diagonally right towards the tree line. Pass through another metal stile and a kissing gate and turn right. A few yards along the way, look back towards the church and you will see a smaller staircase tower that extends halfway up the main tower. A ha-ha borders the old cemetery; this is a type of sunken fence that creates a barrier whilst preserving an uninterrupted view of the landscape beyond. Climb the wooden stile and turn right on the Kentwell Hall drive towards the main gates. On passing through the gates, cross the road and walk down the driveway leading to Cherry Lane Garden Centre. As you pass the entrance to the garden centre keep right and head down Hare's Drift to the right of the car park. Follow Hare's Drift until you reach the A134.

Carefully cross the A134 and head straight onto farmland, keeping the hedgerow on your right. At the bottom of the slope turn left and continue straight along the path, you will pass two WW2 pillboxes on your right nestling in the trees. Ignore the two junctions with the St Edmund Way on the left and right of the path. Follow the path and hedgerow until it bears left and you will soon see a wide gap in the hedge on your right. Pass through the gap and follow the path as it bears left before a ford. The path passes through the edge of the Queech Plantation. You pass some newly planted willows on both sides of the path and Chad Brook on your right.



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You may catch a glimpse of the blue flash of a kingfisher. The path opens out and in the distance you can see the rear elevation of Ford Hall. Keeping Chad Brook on your right, you will soon come to a wooden footbridge that crosses the brook. Cross the bridge, turn left at the waymarker and walk along the path with Chad Brook now on your left. When you reach the Lavenham Road turn left across a road bridge over Chad Brook and pass the driveway to Ford Hall.

Cross the A134 with care and head towards Meadow View Cottage and the bus shelter. Keep the garden of the cottage on your left and the bus shelter on your right, follow the footpath sign, and climb the wooden stile into a meadow. At the end of the garden fence turn left, pass through another stile and continue along the edge of the field past some play equipment to a minor road. Cross the road and bear right towards some wooden steps on the left. Take the steps and follow the path for a short distance between hedges. At the waymarker continue straight across farmland. Pass through a gap in the hedge and walk straight ahead towards the single oak tree in the distance. Pass by the oak tree on your right and at the path junction bear right towards Ashen Grove.

Enter Ashen Grove across a sleeper bridge and follow the well-worn path through the Grove. The path bears left halfway through the Grove. Continue on this path, crossing two wide grass tracks and you finally exit onto a wide farm track. Turn right towards Kiln Grove and follow the path until you reach a T-junction. Turn left heading back towards Kentwell Hall. You will reach a metal stile on the right of the track. Pass through the stile and you will soon reach another farm track where you turn left past the grounds of Kentwell Hall on your left (POI 4).

On reaching the main driveway of Kentwell Hall, turn right and head down the right-hand side of the drive until you reach the second wooden stile on your right. Pass over this stile and follow the path towards Holy Trinity Church. Pass through the kissing gate and cross the small meadow, passing through another metal stile to exit the meadow. Turn left and go through the small five-bar gate before turning right towards Westgate Park. Enter a horse paddock on your left through a metal stile and follow the path across the paddock, exiting via another metal stile before turning left. Here the path follows a high yew hedge on your right and circumvents a large building before passing through a yew archway onto the A1092. Cross the road and take the footpath to the right of the last cottage and continue straight ahead along the field edge to the bottom of the field where the car park will be on your left.