

Welcome

Welcome to the Gainsborough Trail named after Thomas Gainsborough, the portrait and landscape artist born and educated in Sudbury who walked, sketched and painted some of the natural landscapes you will see on this walk.

The Gainsborough Trail is a series of three circular walks which will encircle all of Sudbury, Great Cornard and Chilton:

The Meadow Walk explores Sudbury's historic water meadows; The Great Cornard Walk discovers Great Cornard; and the final circuit will be The Chilton Walk.

This leaflet covers the Great Cornard Walk, 7 miles of varied landscapes from riverside paths, open glades and woodlands to viewpoints overlooking the landscape that inspired Thomas Gainsborough. Discover historic Bakers Mill beside the meandering Stour, ancient Danes Hole where Boudicca's army defeated the Romans (possibly!), and chalk cliffs that gave rise to Sudbury's brick-making industry.

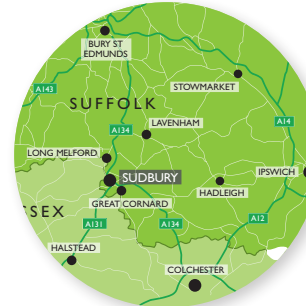


DIRECTIONS: Sudbury lies on the Suffolk-Essex border roughly equidistant (15 miles) north of Colchester, south of Bury St Edmunds and west of Ipswich.

PARKING: Pay and Display at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre (CO10 2SU).

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: Sudbury is very well served by bus. Sudbury train station is a lovely short journey on the branch line from Marks Tey, off the main London-Ipswich rail line.

Visit www.suffolkonboard.com for timetables and to plan your journey.



Produced by: The Gainsborough Trail Group and Suffolk County Council.



Seven miles of riverside paths, open glades, woodlands and great views over the countryside.





GREAT CORNARD WALK

DISTANCE: 7 miles (11km)

DURATION: 3 hours

TERRAIN: Surfaced paths, natural grassy paths, quiet lanes and pavements.



START A:

With the Kingfisher Leisure Centre behind you and Waitrose on your right, walk to the far left corner of the car park to enter the Valley Trail, a former railway line that once ran from Sudbury to Bury St Edmunds. Follow the trail for approx. 50m, turn left over a metal bridge into Friars Meadow, then simply follow the red Great Cornard Walk waymarkers.



GAINSBOROUGH TRAIL
Great Cornard Walk



1 The Stour is used by the Sudbury Rowing Club with rowers often training. There are ducks and wildfowl here and look out for the blue flash of a kingfisher!

Just before crossing the Peter Berry Bridge into the Dove House Meadow development, is a view of the 15th century St Andrew's Church. The church is typical of medieval Stour Valley churches and is where Gainsborough's parents were married. Some people believe that this church is the subject of his painting "Cornard Wood".

Great Cornard Lock is one of a number of working locks on the Stour operated by the River Stour Trust.

2 Historic Baker's Mill was a working water mill at the time of the Domesday Book in 1085. The milling has moved on, but the Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre occupies one of the refurbished buildings opposite the mill pond.

3 This recreational area was once Moors Farm and today comprises of the Thomas Gainsborough school playing field, the Sudbury Rugby Club, the Cornard United Football Club and the Blackhouse Lane playing field. At weekends there are football and rugby matches, with the Cornard Park Run on Saturday mornings and the Children's Park Run on Sunday mornings.

8 The descent from Newton Road to Cornard Road passes allotments and a substantial wooded area known as Armes Wood. This land is managed by the Eden-Rose Coppice Trust and is voluntarily managed by Graham Lucas. In 2019, volunteers planted 700 trees including Hazel, Oak, Hornbeam, Silver Birch, Wild Cherry and Rowan.

7 The descent to the Maldon Grey Public House in Cats Lane is very steep due to the fact that this was the site of 18th century chalk mines. Geological conditions here were ideal for the extraction of chalk of high purity, an essential ingredient for brick making. Just before the pub, a short detour to the right leads to the chalk cliff face rising above housing.

6 Shawlands Wood is a nature reserve of woodland glades where invertebrates flourish. It is owned by Great Cornard Parish Council and managed by the Sudbury Common Lands Charity and its existence owes much to the hard work of local conservationist George Millins.

5 The Pot Kilns was once the site of 19th century potteries producing coarse earthenware. The Water Tower is the highest point of the trail with views across Great Cornard and Sudbury.

4 It is a source of pride that the Parish Council established Great Cornard Country Park in 1986. It was opened by naturalist David Bellamy.

The Park offers a wide variety of flora in a landscape of plantations, ancient hedgerows, badger setts and ancient woodland. Bluebells are prolific in spring!

Danes' Hole was once an arable field but has been returned to a natural state with a wide variety of plants including Bee and Pyramidal Orchids. It is home to Common Lizards and at dusk Barn Owls can be seen.

Danes Hole is believed to be the site of Boudicca's defeat of the Romans in 60AD as well as the scene of a 9th Century battle between Saxons and Danes. You look down onto the battle sites from the higher part of the Park.



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