

St Mary the Virgin Bocking

Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee Walks series, circular walks around Bocking.

Walk No3 Pant Valley to Codham Mill

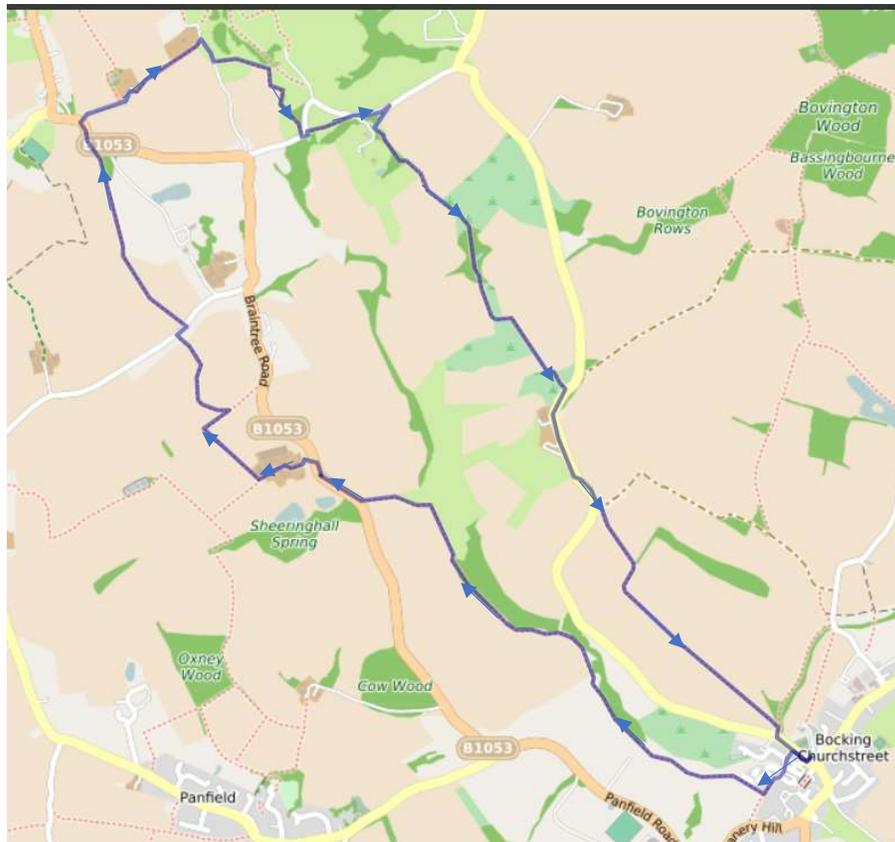
Description:

Distance 7 miles, 2 ½ -3 hours of comfortable easy-going walking, a few sections of road walking, will be wet and muddy after rain.

Description: Countryside walk on footpaths, tracks and short sections of main road. Footpaths can be muddy, wear clothing and footwear suitable for the weather. Follow the countryside code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code>), stay on the paths and keep dogs on a lead, as you may encounter livestock and some of the abundant wildlife. Beware of deep water as this walk involves stretches close to the river.

Start and finish at St Mary the Virgin Bocking. The Church is normally open and is well worth a look inside. Any donations help to preserve the fabric and character of this wonderful building. Refreshments can be found at the Retreat public house and in the Coop in Church Street. Toilets are available in the church hall if open, or in the Retreat if you are a customer. Public transport is the 38 bus which stops by the church and links with Braintree town centre and for the nearby railway station, also Halstead.

Sights: Farm land, woods, the river Pant and water meadows with abundant wildlife (see Bocking and beyond on Facebook for some wonderful pictures), Codham Hall Mill, and at distance Great Codham hall.



http://umap.openstreetmap.fr/en/map/untitled-map_726373#14/51.9197/0.5413

Start: St Mary's church, at the church gates facing the Church Hall turn left and cross Bovingdon Road, turn right and walk past the Church with its Castellated wall, turn 2nd on the left into Dyers Mead, into Samuel Courtauld Avenue, cross the river by the bridge and walk along Samuel Courtauld Avenue



a short distance to a path on the right, take this path between the housing and Care Home, based in the grounds of the original Deanery for St Mary's. Turn sharp right along the back of the housing and you emerge into countryside. Head towards a gap in the hedge line to find the riverside walk.



You have just walked through the area of the Old Courtaulds Bocking Mill which ceased production in 1980. Courtaulds' were famous for the manufacture of mourning crepe popularised by Queen Victoria. Bocking and Braintree have many buildings etc endowed by the Courtauld family. St Mary's benefited both from the Church Hall which was the workers Canteen building, and from endowment of the East Window, Rood screen and Reredos panelling.



Church, Courtaulds Mill and the Pant Valley 1937



Follow the field edge and riverside path for some considerable distance. For more information on the river, the webpages <http://creeksailor.blogspot.com/2011/08/river-pant.html> and <http://essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/walkovers/rivers-blackwater-and-pant-walkovers> give a good overview.



The path follows the river for quite a distance and finally leaves the river turning left toward the B1053 Shalford Road.



At the Shalford Road turn right to road walk a short distance to Sheering Hall Farm



cross the road to take the footpath through Sheering Hall farm buildings.



Immediately after leaving the farm buildings there is a path on the right, take this path, which after some distance turns 90 degrees right. After a short distance take the turn to the path on left. Following this curving path through the fields. The path straightens as it nears Water Lane.



Looking back along path from Water Lane.

Turn right at Water Lane and walk a few metres to find a path on the left.



Take this path, cross the small bridge, to follow the hedge line to a gap in the hedge then across a field to meet the edge of the grounds of Abbots Hall. The Path meets the B1053 just outside Church End Shalford.



Gap in the Hedge where path meets road.

Cross the road, to walk a short distance towards Shalford.



(refreshments can be found at the village shop a short distance into Shalford), you will need to re-trace your steps if you visit the shop.



Walking towards Shalford at the next left-hand bend in the road, take the track on the right of this bend back towards the river.



Walk along the track towards Nichol's Farm, ignore the fingerpost on the left as you approach the farm, a fingerpost on the right hand side points the way to a field edge path, take this path.



, around the buildings to across a field to where the path meets Iron Bridge Lane.



Deer in the field towards Iron Bridge Farm.

At Iron Bridge Farm, turn right on meeting Iron Bridge lane and walk a short distance to meet a path on the left



path past this interesting structure.

which runs down to the river. Follow the riverside



, through a field boundary over a small footbridge, renewed with the help of the <https://www.friends-of-the-flitch-way.org.uk/>



marker indicating path to Codham Mill, take this path.



Cross the bridge over the river to follow the mill run to
Codham Mill.



Codham Mill in 1951

Pass the Mill on the road and find the path on the right, on the left hand bend in the road.



cross the stile and follow the field edge up the

hill to meet the lane again at a stile. Road walk past the first entrance to Great Codham Hall. As this is private



Great Codham Hall is 14th century with many alterations. Road walk a short distance then on the right take the second entrance toward the Hall, which doubles back on the road.



After a short distance you'll see the fingerpost to a path on the left.



Follow the path with good views of the Hall on the right and open barn of the left. As you leave the farm buildings and Hall grounds the fields open out with views across the Pant valley. Follow the path on this high undulating ridge.



The path leads to a small wood straight ahead. Take the path through the woodland.



The path, well indicated, heads through the woodland and emerges into open farmland, following the hedge line immediately beyond the wood, find the path on the left which leaves the hedge line to angle across the field to follow the edge a large area of newish woodland. Keep to the field edge path do not enter the woodland. The path then straightens to head towards the more distant hedge following a roughly straight line toward Bovington Hall farm buildings .



Find the gap in the hedge (not well indicated) it is just to the left of the path you are on and the left of this large oak tree. Go through the gap and cross the field



to meet the Bovingdon Road.

Turn right at the road and road walk past Bovingdon Hall, take care as this road can be busy with lorries. Road walk a short way beyond Bovingdon Hall to see a path and track on the left-hand side of the road as the road bends to the right.



Take the path and almost immediately take the field entrance on the right.



Follow the field edge path, which follows on in much the same direction as Bovingdon road. The path curves slightly away from the road, then straightens as it gently drops down towards St Mary's Church



Go across the bridge into the next field, with a view of St Mary's Church and you will see the path then crosses this field at an angle.



The path ends at Bovingdon Road just beyond the Church, cross the road and walk the pavement back to St Mary's and the finish.

