

Bures Walks 9: King & Dragon; Moat & Monkey – about 5k



Start at the junction between Nayland Road and Claypits Avenue, and walk up the hill ahead leaving the houses of Claypits Avenue and Tawney's Ride to your left. Where the upper road bears left a track continues ahead, uphill. Follow this up to Windwhistle Ridge.

It might be tempting to continue ahead beyond the ridge track, as this would cut off a corner of the walk, but there is no right-of-way that way, so turn left, and just beyond where you join the road at the top of Cuckoo Hill turn right to follow a track through Fysh House Farm and beyond. Stay on this track until it veers right towards St Stephen's Chapel. A short deviation here, leaving the chapel to your left, brings you to the best point from which to view the Bures Dragon, and the chapel itself has an interesting history, as mentioned in the accompanying notes.

Return to where the track veered, and continue in your original direction, down a field edge with the hedge to your right. At the bottom of the hill cross a stile and footbridge, and beyond it a further stile.

Don't take the path ahead, which rises towards Arger Fen (and is part of another walk in the series), but turn left along the field edge, hedge on left. This soon brings you to historic Moat Farm, once just known as The Moat, and the site of a watermill. Perhaps the surviving pond once formed part of the moat itself.

Turn left, leaving Moat Farm to your right, and proceed uphill along a track. Where a footpath sign leads off to the left you could divert to the kissing gate to see what I believe might have been the site of the early wooden church of Edmund's coronation in 855, on the little flat-topped hillock to you left.

Returning to the track, head on up to the road, and turn right onto it. Just past a small wood to you left turn left into St Edmund's Lane, so called, I believe, because it led pilgrims to this place associated with Edmund. If the original church had been where the 13th century chapel stands they would surely have approached up Cuckoo Hill.

Anyway, descend to the village along this quiet lane. At its foot carefully cross Sudbury Road, which you follow to the right for a few yards before turning left into an unmade road leading on down to The Croft. Here turn left to emerge in the High Street opposite the offices of W. A. Church

(the building shown in the picture above). Do you see the beautifully carved and painted bressumer adorning their building? What on earth is that monkey doing?

If you find any of these directions inaccurate, or encounter any problems, please let me know at hughturner447@gmail.com. Thank you.