

BURES CIRCULAR WALKS AND CYCLE TRAILS

General and Coronavirus Notes



Thank you for requesting copies of these circular walks and trails, which have been written to meet the needs of Bures residents to wish to walk or cycle from home as their daily permitted exercise outing during Coronavirus restrictions.

The walking routes may include sections of road, byway, and bridleway, but all are based mainly on footpaths, on which cycling or horse-riding is not permitted, so please **only follow the walking routes on foot**. I will provide at least one 10k cycle trail suggestion, and maybe more later.

On any route please be very aware of the required “social distancing”, and keep at least two metres away from anyone who is not from your own household. This may mean waiting at a proper distance while others cross stiles or bridges or pass through gates or narrow sections of path. For all our sakes please be patient and sensible.

Please also be aware of others who may wish to walk (or run) faster than you. If someone seems to be catching you up, please wait in the next appropriate space and let them pass. If people are approaching from the other direction, keep as far to one side of the path as you can so they can pass on the other. Stopping to pass the time of day is probably fine, but at a sensible distance!

Do be aware that any surface may harbour the virus, so try not to touch gates, stiles, hand-rails, benches etc. with your bare hands. Either wear gloves, or use your covered forearm. If you do have to touch such surfaces with your hands be sure to wash them thoroughly as soon as you return home.

It now appears that pets can become infected with the virus, so avoid petting other people’s animals, and, if you are walking a dog, be sure to keep your pet under close control so that it cannot approach other walkers. Thank you

I prefer paper maps and find this one really useful for local walking: **OS Explorer 196 Sudbury, Hadleigh & Dedham Vale**, but OS maps can also be downloaded as a phone app. However, the directions I provide should be sufficient in themselves, without the need for a map. Just bear in mind that they have been written by a left-handed dyslexic!

Some supplementary notes – the prickly issues!

The response to my offer of guides has been almost overwhelming – we’re heading for a hundred and fifty sets being sent! Of course, there’s always a bit of bounce-back on any project. With this one the most general concerns have been about dogs.

I’m sure most of you are following all the guidelines, but for those who have not, perhaps, thought about the potential ramifications...

- **Leads:** The first grumble I received was about free-running dogs entering a garden, and while preparing these guides I have seen dogs running free through fields, beyond their owner’s sight, where they can be a risk to livestock, game and wildlife. Some landowners may ask you to keep dogs on leads. This might be because of livestock in the fields, or for other reasons. Generally this is a reasonable request and should be respected. However, while there is no general obligation to keep dogs on leads in the countryside, it is obligatory to keep dogs “under close control”, which means in sight, and knowing that your dog(s) will come to heel when called. Of course some dogs just aren’t that obedient, never mind how hard you’ve tried to train them, so in their case being on leads is best.
- **Approaching other people:** It can be very frightening to have a dog you don’t know rushing towards you, and distressing to have a muddy-pawed mutt soiling your clothes. You may know that your dog has never bitten anyone, but the person around whom it is running, barking, or snapping at heels doesn’t. And now that it is suspected that pets can carry Coronavirus it is all the more important to ensure dogs are kept clear of other walkers.
- **Poo:** Sad that I even have to mention it, but it is obviously wrong to leave your dog’s poo where others may tread in it. A notice near Smallbridge Hall also reminds us of the risk dog faeces can pose to farm animals. Please pick up the poo – most people use a bag. However, that bag must then be disposed of appropriately, not thrown in a hedge or ditch, or left by the path for the dog poo fairy to collect. I really should need to write this, but those abandoned bags of poo are everywhere! Once bagged in plastic, that poo will lie around littering the countryside for years. There is another way though. If you really can’t be bothered to pick up and dispose of the poo, please, at very least, “kick or flick” - using the toe of your wellie, or a long stick, flick the offending pile into the undergrowth where it won’t be trodden on. Unwrapped, it will decompose in days. However, this is obviously not an acceptable alternative in livestock fields.



The whole point of these guides is to help people, particularly those who may not be regular walkers, or may not know where they can and cannot walk, to access the fresh air and our beautiful countryside for the healthy exercise we are currently permitted

Unfortunately, while we've been walking the paths to compile the guides during the last few days we have seen a number of walkers wandering on private land, away from public rights-of-way. Some may feel that wherever there is a track, or path, a broad field headland or a grassy meadow, they may walk there, but in England this is not the case. Many tracks are only for residential or agricultural access; paths likewise may have specific non-recreational purposes such as for game feeding. Many headlands and meadows are set aside as wildlife reserves where threatened species of plants and animals can thrive, and ground-nesting birds find safe haven. Walkers, particularly with dogs, can seriously damage these habitats. Please, only walk on rights-of-way and authorised permissive paths.

Some of our local landowners have a generous attitude towards walkers, providing permissive paths to add to our already substantial network. Most, though sadly not all, do their best to maintain rights-of-way across their land, and to reinstate them after surface disturbance. In gratitude to these considerate landowners we too must show consideration, and only walk (or ride or cycle) where we have a right to do so. We have plenty of options – we don't need to trespass.

By the time my set of guides is complete it will cover every right-of-way that is directly accessible from Bures, and all these are shown on local OS maps. If you more need advice about where you can, or should not, walk please feel free to ask me, by email hughturner447@gmail.com , or contact the Parish Councils for their advice. Thank you, Hugh

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