

Short Walks

in the Braintree District



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healthy
living



NHS
Central Essex
Community Services



Foreword

I hope you will enjoy our Heart & Sole Booklet of Short Walks which has been put together by our Volunteer Walk Leaders in the Braintree District.

Heart & Sole walks are free and take place every weekday from a different location and each walk lasts about 30 – 40 minutes. We invite everyone to join us. Each walk is led by trained volunteers who will ensure that everybody is safe and comfortable with the pace. (Our regular programme gives the meeting places and times or you can visit our website www.braintree.gov.uk or call us on **01376 552525**).

Research shows that regular walking is good for people who have high blood pressure and high cholesterol, diabetes, coronary heart disease, stress, depression, asthma, recently had a stroke or surgery or have excess weight. Walkers should feel a little warmer, feel their heart beating a little faster but not so much so that they cannot carry on a conversation.

Heart & Sole encourage you to walk regularly in order to improve your health. Walking is known to be the most cost effective and easily accessible form of exercise that directly influences how we feel both physically and mentally and makes you feel good about yourself when socializing with like-minded people.

We hope our booklet will encourage you to venture out on walks with your friends in the fresh air and local natural environment. Some of the walks you may have done with your Walk Leaders.

Finally I would like to thank our Volunteer Walk Leaders for pre-walking and planning the walks in our Booklet and I hope you will enjoy them.

Myrna Ling

Health Walks Co-ordinator



Guidelines for Walkers

All the route maps accompanying each walk are freehand drawings and cannot be scaled. However, the distance actually quoted in each walk heading has been measured and can be taken as being reasonably accurate.

To the best of the knowledge of the Walk Leaders all of the information given in the walks descriptions was correct at the time they were walked prior to publication.

Changes, however, can occur as time passes by and no responsibility can be accepted for any difficulties that may be encountered.

Remember to wear sturdy footwear with a good tread when out walking.

Key

-  Start Point
-  Walk route
-  Bridleway



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Start	The Bull PH		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 737 310	Distance	2.5 miles 4.2km
Features	This walk takes you through leafy byways		

The Walk

Leave the Public House car park following the FP sign around the edge of the field.

On reaching the lane, turn right along Brick Kiln Lane for approx. 250 yards until you reach the bridleway on your right, where there is a signpost and an old water pump.

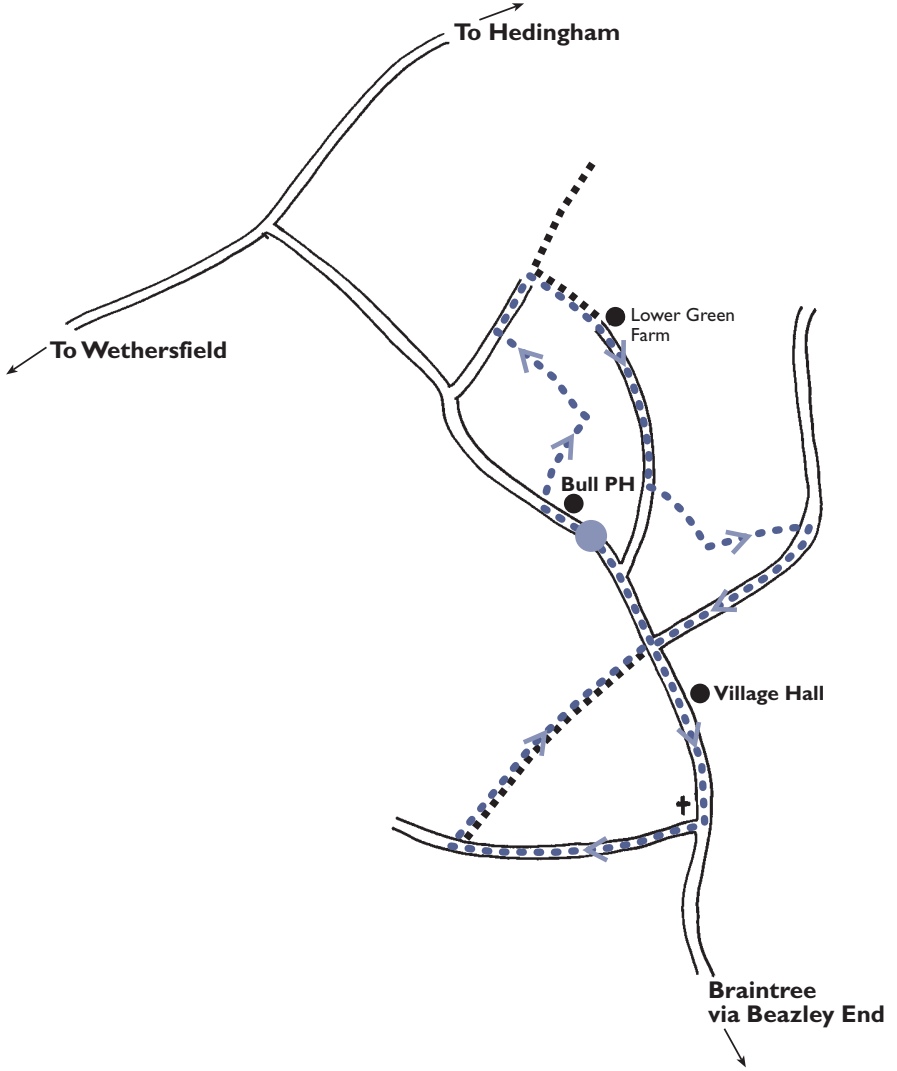
Turn right down bridleway passing Lower Green Farm on your left. Then after about 600 yards take the footpath on your left through a gate (FP sign at gate)

Follow the footpath until you reach the next lane where you turn right and walk back into Blackmore End (A).

On reaching the main road, turn left passing the Village Hall on your left until you come to the old church.

Turn right at the church along the lane passing Summers Hall, for about 500 yards, until you reach High Thatch. Take the bridleway to the right, which brings you back to the main road where you turn left to walk back to the Bull.

To shorten the walk by 1 mile, turn right at Point A and return to the car park at the Bull.



Start	Convent Lane off Broad Lane		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 763 244	Distance	1.75 miles 2.8km
Features	Partly along the River Blackwater		

The Walk

Walk up Convent Lane and along the track taking the right fork at the triangle with the River on your right.

After 100 yards, turn right over the bridge and turn right on the path keeping the river on your right.

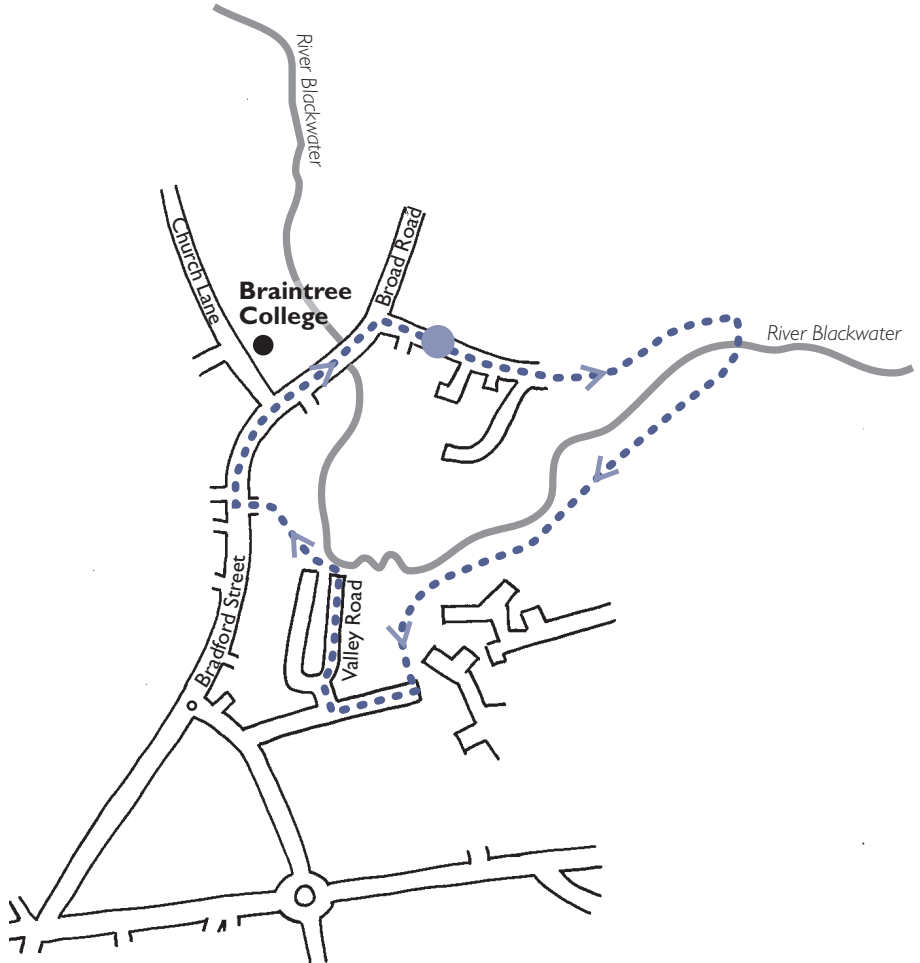
Follow the path on a good surface, and it will lead between the houses.

At the end, by railings, turn right on the unmade road keeping the recreational ground on your left.

At Valley Road bear right and take the right fork along the unmade road.

Go over the stile at the end and going left follow the path towards the houses, cross the road and take the pathway between the houses on the right. This leads to Bradford Street.

Turn right, go over the bridge and you will be back to Convent Lane.



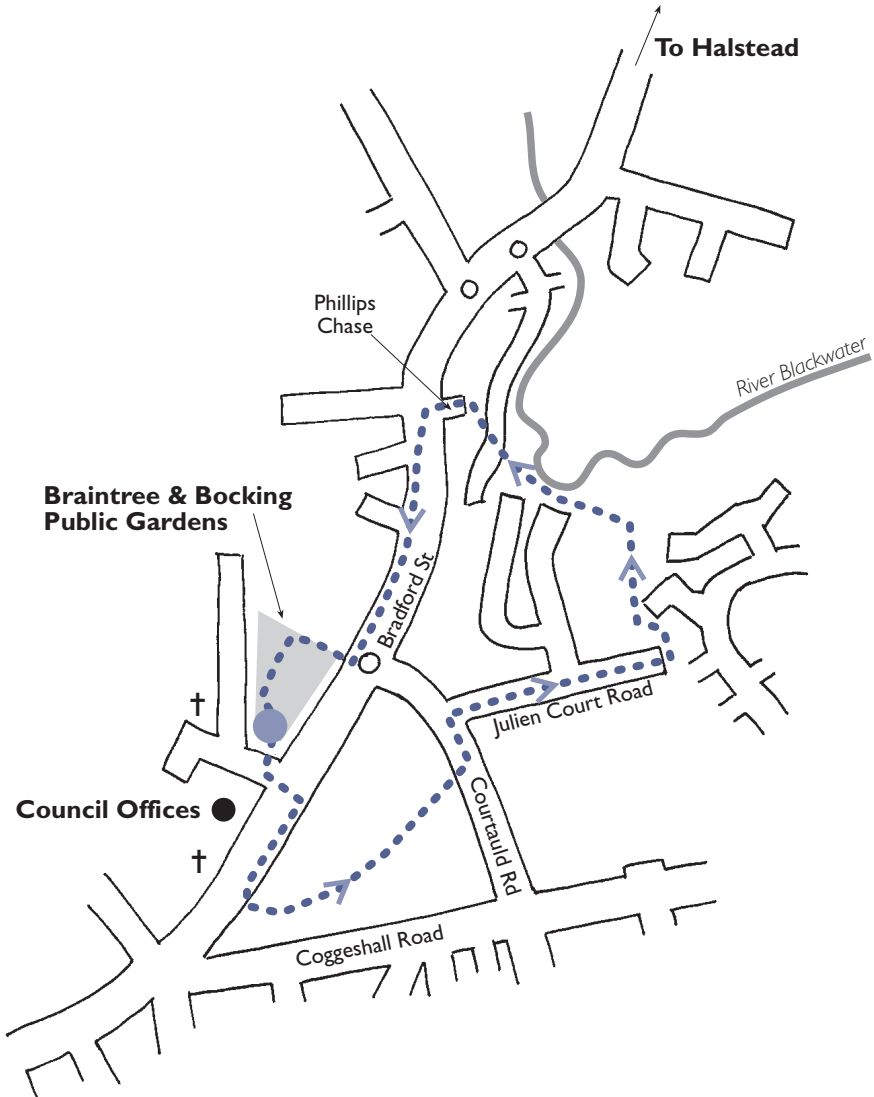
Start	Entrance to Braintree and Bocking Gardens		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 759 235	Distance	1.25 miles 2km
Features	A pleasant walk to include the Bocking Blackwater Local Nature Reserve, the historic Bradford Street and the Public Gardens opened in 1888		

The Walk

Leave the Gardens, crossing into Weavers Park opposite the Council Offices, bear left down to Courtauld Rd, turn left and right into Julien Court Road passing the playing fields on your right.

As the road bends to the left, keep straight on down the track, keeping the fields on your right. At the railings, turn left into the alleyway. As it opens up to a grassy area, take the path, sharp left by a wooden post, off the concrete path, down a grassy or muddy slope and, keeping left through the Bocking Blackwater Local Nature Reserve. Turn right at the tarmac path to the roadway. Directly opposite is an alleyway between the houses. Follow this path. It will become Phillips Chase.

At the end is Bradford Street. Cross this turning left and walk uphill to a mini roundabout. On your right will be a gate to the Public Gardens, through which you may stroll to the start of your walk at the top entrance.

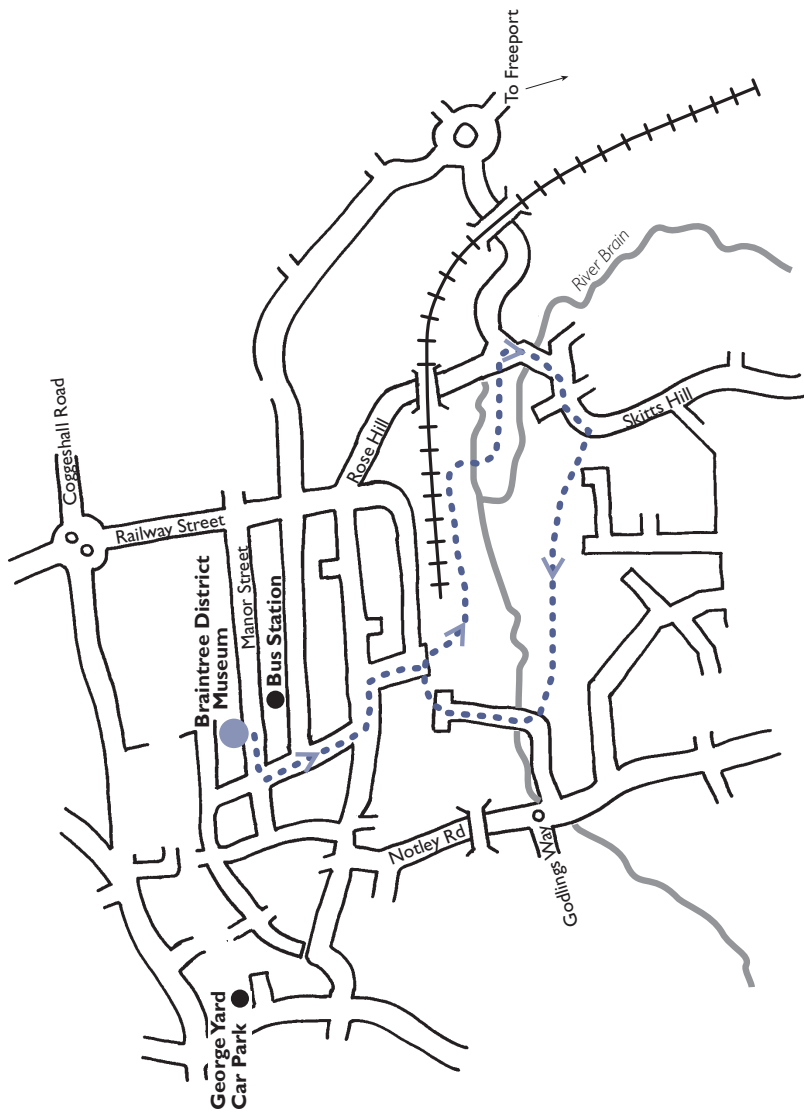


Start	The Braintree Museum, Manor Street		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 759 231	Distance	1.5 miles 2.5km
Features	An interesting walk incorporating the busy town centre and the contrasting peacefulness along the River Brain. Some paths may be very muddy.		

The Walk

From the Museum, cross the road, turning right, towards the Town Hall. Follow the road left, down Fairfield Road to its end, at a T junction, by the old Police Station. Take the pedestrian crossing to Station Approach, keeping right down Station Road to the Flitch Way.

At the totems, turn left and take the path between the hedge and the allotments, down to the river. Cross over the bridge and immediately turn left, following the river; over another bridge and continue onto Rose Hill. Turn right and then up Skitts Hill, past Alpha Close and right again at the next unmade road. Pass the footpath sign to the recreation area. Proceed across this on high ground, keeping the river valley on your right, to a road bridge over the river. Cross this back up to the totems, Station Approach and the start of the walk at the Museum.



Start	A circular walk can start at either the public car park in the village or at the Dutch Nursery where there is a large car park		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 850 226	Distance	2.4 miles 4km
Features	Walk through the historic village and enjoy part of the Essex Way		

The Walk

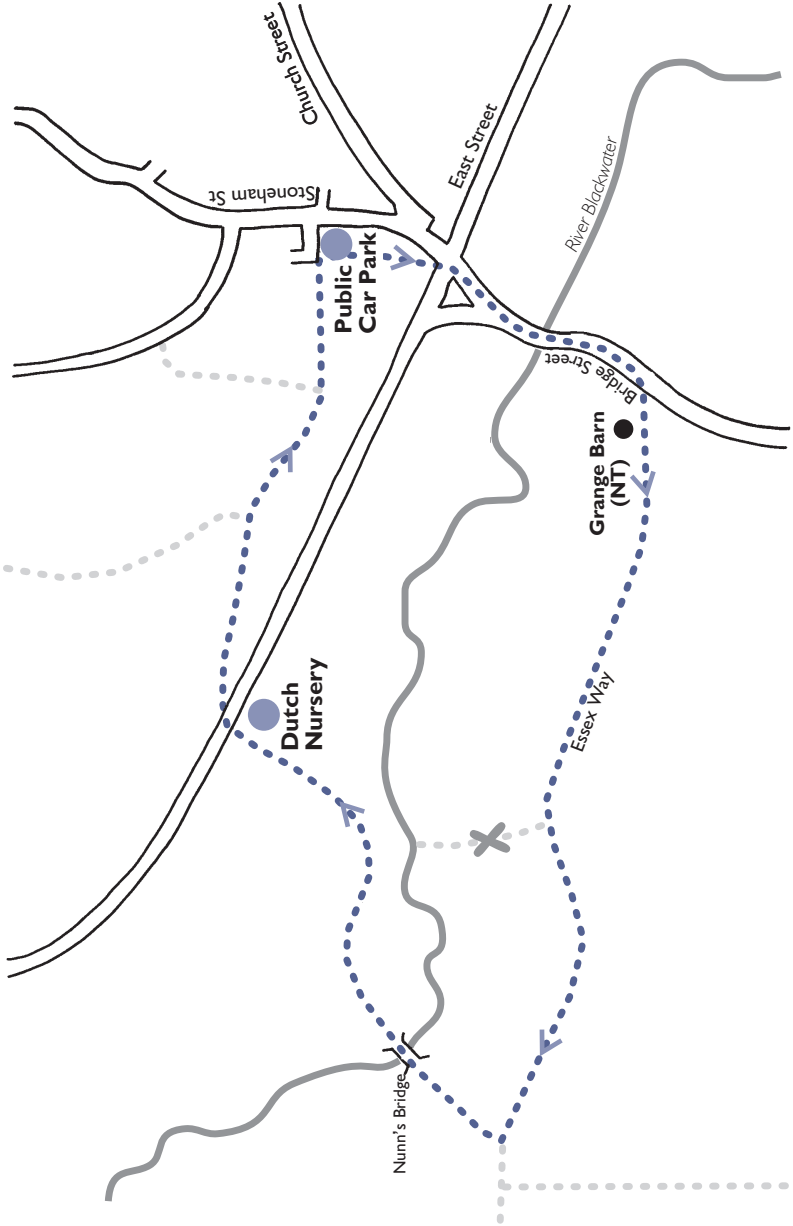
The car park in Coggeshall is well sign posted off Stoneham Street.

Leave the car park at the lower end, around the back of the Co-op and cross the road to the White Hart Hotel. Turn left and walk up Bridge Street until you see Grange Barn on your right. Take the footpath by the side of the Barn (part of the Essex Way) and follow this to the first footpath on the right. DO NOT take the first path as it is just a forestry path.

Follow the footpath down to Nunn's Bridge – a humped bridge with step-over bars at either end. Cross the bridge and turn right along the River Blackwater. You eventually turn left by the side of a football pitch.

On reaching the road cross over to take the footpath opposite passing a grove of olive trees to your left. Continue along this path, across a farm road, and then across a 'cross-field' path. Down a shallow dip and turn right following the footpath back to the car park.

If you wish, you can break your journey by turning right along the road and enjoy a drink at the Nursery



Start	The Three Tuns PH		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 687 328	Distance	1.75 miles 2.79km
Features	Enjoy the variety of farm animals and wildlife along the attractive Finchingfield Brook and the undulating scenery across to the village.		

The Walk

Take Vicarage lane on the left, then turn right on the byroad (The Pightle) which runs round the church. Turn left down a path marked with concrete posts and proceed to cross the river. At the bridge turn left along a narrow pathway. Follow the pathway along the Brook, passing many fields on your right.

CARE there are several very narrow bridges and protruding tree roots.

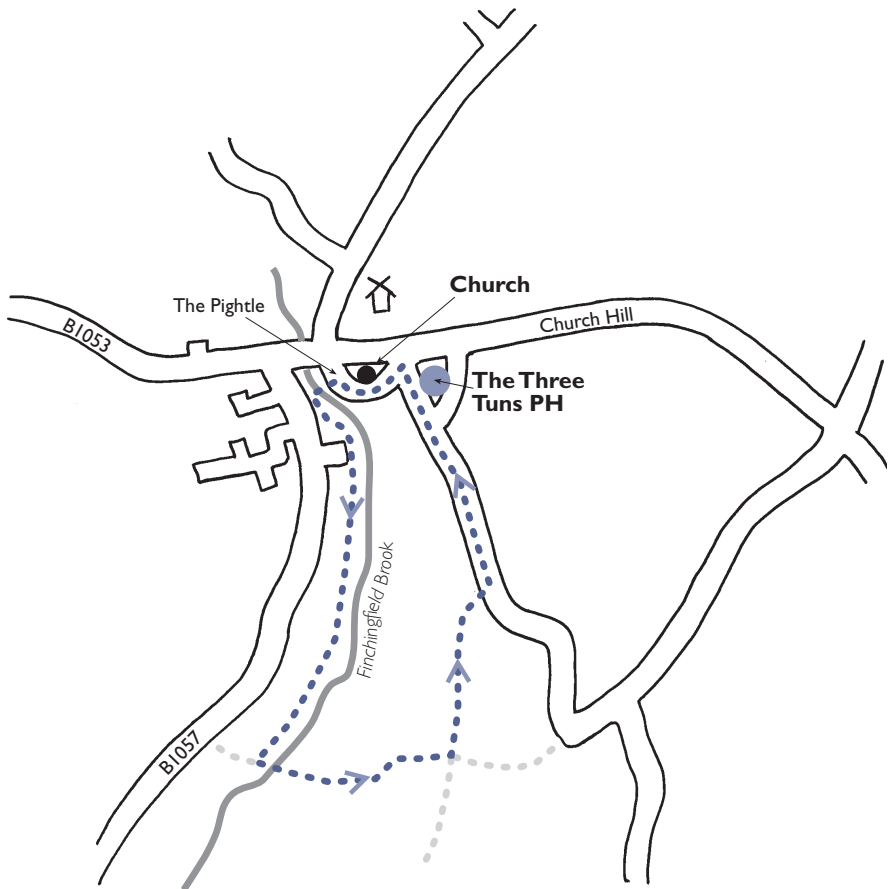
Cross over, left, at the first footbridge, note there is a tall step down. Turn left and follow the edge of the field, keeping the hedge on your left. At the top of the hill cross over a tall stile. Follow the footpath to the right, between two fields, until you reach where two footpaths cross. (See alternative route below)

At the footpath crossroad turn left across the field heading for the large white house. Another stile.

Follow the footpath, over another stile. At the road, turn left and proceed back into the village. Keeping the church on your left bear right and the Three Tuns is at the T junction with the B1053.

Alternative

To avoid the two stiles, proceed straight ahead to the end of this path, joining an un-adopted road. Follow the road to the left. At the junction, turn left and head back toward the village.



Start	The Three Tuns PH		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 687 328	Distance	2.2 miles 3.49km
Features	You will not visit a prettier village than Finchingfield and this walk offers scenic views of the quaint cottages overlooking the duck pond. At selected times you can visit the historic windmill.		

The Walk

From the Public House, cross over the road to the Freshwell Health centre and follow Church Hill away from the village for approx 300 yards.

For a shorter route, turn left into Valley View, and at the end use the footpath, straight ahead, to cross the field. Turn left to join the route.

Then after the end of the houses, turn left down a wide track, and after a short while, turn right to follow the rear gardens. When you reach the wooded area, follow the footpath sign to the left, and continue along the edge of the field. The above alternative joins this path.

Continue to the road, then turn left over a small bridge. Head towards the village by this footpath until you reach the sign directing you up to the Windmill.

Now re-trace your steps, but turn left up the road signed for Spains Hall. There are two footpaths, about 500 yards apart, taking you left across the fields. Take the second path, a few yards after 3-4 Mill End Cottage and follow the hedge, keeping it on your left. At the end of the field, continue down, but now the hedge will be on your right. Proceed over a small bridge, crossing through a small meadow, and up the hill.

CARE This path can be slippery

At the Road, turn left, back into the village. Cross the Village Green heading for the metal bridge, taking you south of the Pond.

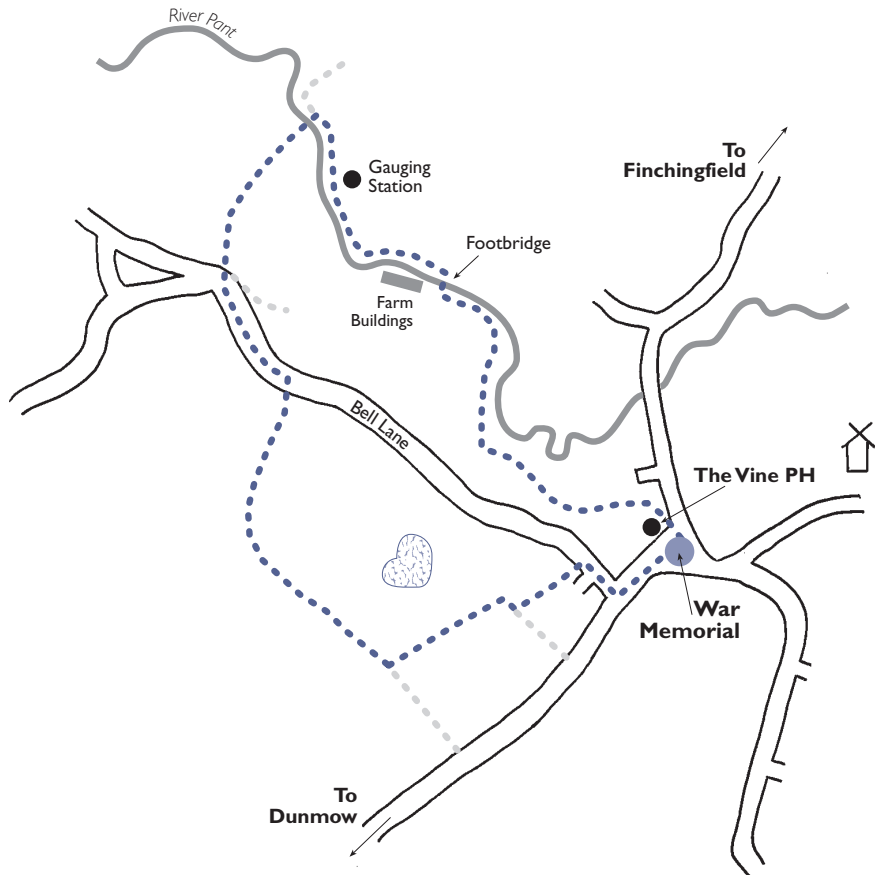
Continue up the hill, and turn right, the Pightle, which will take you behind the Church. Keeping the Church on your left, follow the road back to the Three Tuns Pub.

Start	War Memorial		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 675 305	Distance	1.6 miles 2.56km
Features	Mostly well trodden grassy paths		

The Walk

Take the pathway to the right of the Vine PH, go through the metal gate and follow the arrow diagonally left. Cross the bridge and simply follow the well used footpath and the track between the fences. Then take the right fork and follow the path round until you see a bridge on your right, just before the farm buildings

Cross the bridge, turn left and follow the field bearing to the right where you will see a small brick built Gauging Station alongside the River Pant and a stile. Over the stile and keep going until you see a bridge on your left. Cross and go straight ahead until you reach the road. Caution here. Turn left and walk along the road until you reach the FP sign and track on the right, just after the cottages. Go along here and then take the footpath on the left with the wood on the right. Continue straight on with the reservoir on your left and turn left by a telegraph pole. Follow this to the end and to the right and then turn left along an alleyway. This leads out to Bell Lane. Turn right and continue to the junction with the Dunmow Road where you will see the War Memorial.



Start	Great Notley Surgery		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 739 206	Distance	1.75 miles 2.82km
Features	A pleasant suburban walk with historic connections		

The Walk

Leave surgery and cross road, continuing around the cricket green to the junction with Tufted Close. Turn left and follow the path past the playground to a junction with another path by a ditch. Turn right to follow this path to London Road, which follows the route of the Roman Road from Braintree to Little Waltham.

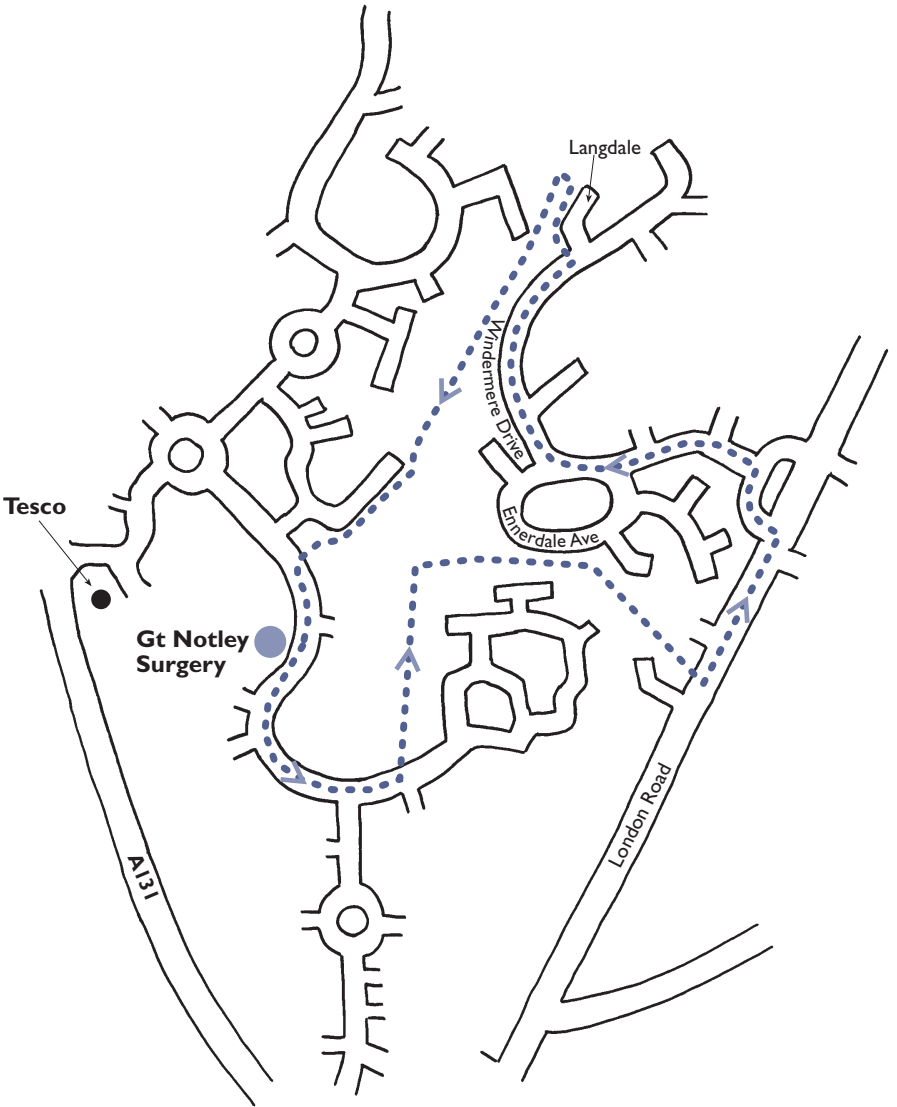
Turn left to the entrance of White Court. Past the bus stop, to your right, you will see the memorial to the United States Air Force hospital, which occupied the site during World War II. Continue to your left along Windermere Drive, crossing both ends of Ennerdale Avenue.

CARE - CROSSING ROAD.

Stay on the left hand side of Windermere Drive until you reach Langdale. Enter Langdale and just after No 21, take the path next to the garages. This leads to a wider path on Great Notley. At the junction, turn left, continuing past the play park to the Essex Cricketers.

CARE - CROSSING ROAD.

Cross road and return to the surgery.



Start	Great Notley Surgery		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 739 206	Distance	2 miles 3.22km
Features	Some rural tracks which get very muddy in wet weather. Not suitable for buggies		

The Walk

Leave surgery and cross road turning right and continue around the cricket green to junction with Tufted Close

Turn left and follow path past the playground to junction with another path at a ditch

Turn right and follow this path to the London Road

Turn left and continue to entrance of White Court. Follow the footpath and cross Windermere Drive following the path round the road junction to the crossing on London Road.

CARE – Crossing road

Cross the London Road and turn right then left into Pickpocket Lane to a path leading to the left. **CARE** - Track and path are rutted and narrow in places.

Turn left and follow path to Ludham Hall. The path bears to the left along Ludham Hall Lane. Walk up to the London Road and turn left returning to the crossing.

CARE – Crossing road

Cross London Road and retrace path to Windermere Drive. Cross road when safe and turn right into White Court Estate keeping to the left hand side of Windermere Drive until you get to Ennerdale Avenue.

Turn left into Ennerdale Avenue and follow it round taking the path on the left just before the school, following this to the junction.

Turn right and follow the path to the road. Turn left, walking past the Cricketers, and cross the road carefully to the surgery.



Start	Great Notley Surgery		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 739 206	Distance	1.75 miles 2.82km
Features	Leafy footpaths along level ground		

The Walk

Leave surgery and cross road turning left towards the Cricketers. Cross the road leading to the Community Centre and past the path

Continue straight ahead and follow the path to the playground and turn left

CARE – Crossing Road

Follow the left hand path crossing Cuckoo Way and Hidcote Way. Proceed along this path and before the path dips for the underpass, take the path on the right marked by a very large tree stump. **CARE** – Crossing Road

Follow this path across Ridings Avenue bearing slightly left and right until you reach Grantham Avenue.

CARE – Crossing Road

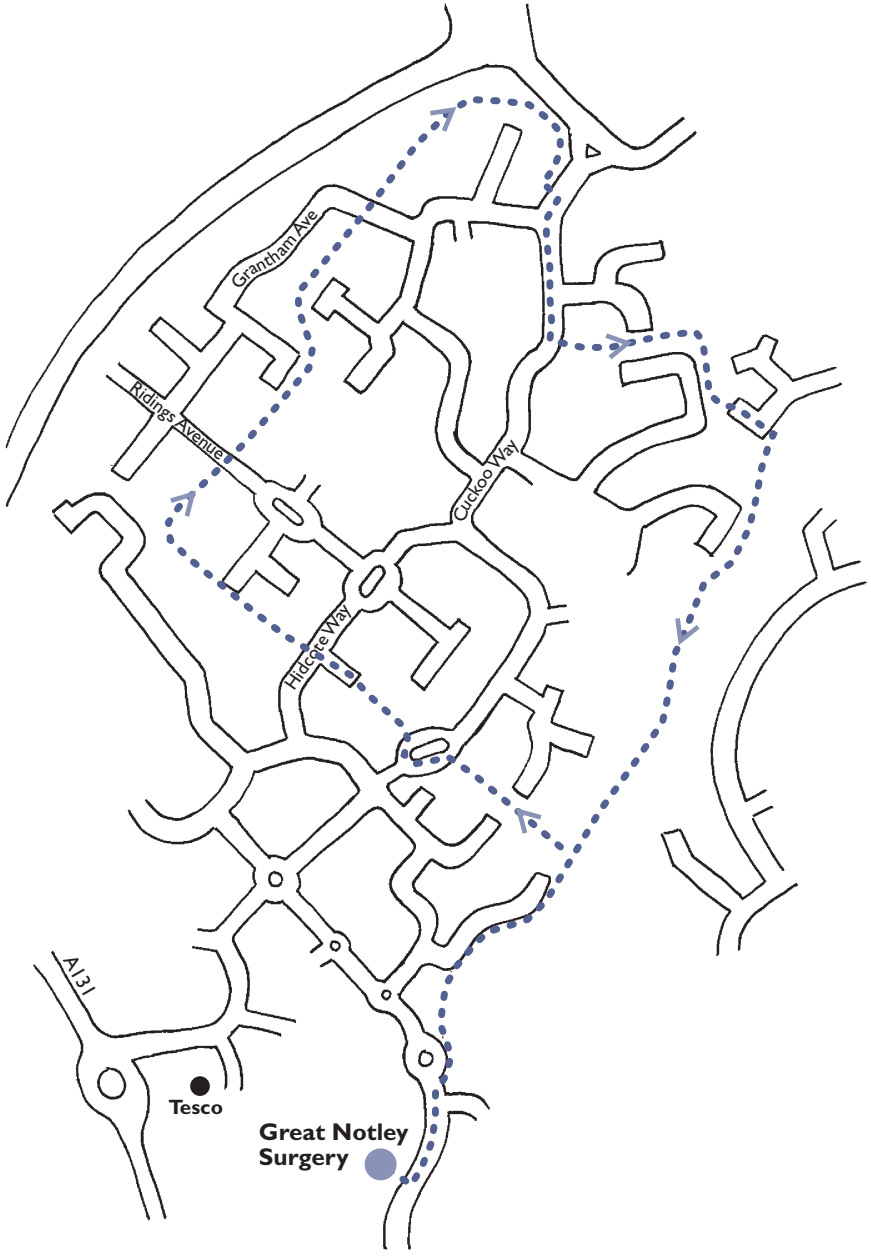
Cross Grantham Avenue and continue along path to end (near Panners Farm Roundabout). Turn right and enter Cuckoo way, crossing over before the mini roundabout. Keep walking along Cuckoo way, past Sheringham Drive until a crossroad of paths is reached.

Turn left and at the next path junction turn right until a main path is reached.

Turn right and continue along this path, past the play park to the Cricketers.

CARE – Crossing Road

Cross road when safe and return to Surgery



Start	Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery, Factory Lane West		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 812 303	Distance	2.3 miles 3.7km
Features	Explore Halstead and enjoy the tranquil nature reserve at Coggeshall Pieces		

The Walk

Cross over at the Pedestrian Crossing in front of Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery. Turn right and follow the pavement to Mill Bridge. With Solar Car Park on your left carefully cross the road and bear right, through the gap, to join Factory Lane East. Follow the path between the two sections of Richard de Clare School until you meet Parsonage Street.

Turn left up Parsonage Street, cross the road and continue to Weavers Row. At the further end of Weavers Row bear left into Middlefield.

CARE - Middlefield is an unmade-up road, seen at this junction.

At Colchester Road cross over using the Pedestrian Crossing and follow the footpath which starts almost opposite the end of Middlefield. Make a right turn and then left onto the wider path which leads to Colne Road.

Cross over Colne Road and take the footpath which is a little to the right. This leads to Hawthorn Close. Follow the perimeter fence of the playing field and turn left into the main part of Hawthorn Close. Where the road bends to the left, stop to explore Coggeshall Pieces Nature Reserve. See the extension below.

CARE - The board-walk and paths may be slippery.

Take the path between the houses leading from the end of Hawthorn Close into Winston Way. Turn right and then left into Churchill Avenue. Walk to Sudbury Road and turn left.

Walk along Sudbury Road, crossing carefully where suitable and enter Mill Chase.

Once in Mill Chase look for Bois Field Terrace and follow this path to Hedingham Road. Cross the road, go left, then turn right into Elizabeth Way and enter Upper Chapel Street to your right. Follow this stony track and continue down to the river bridge.

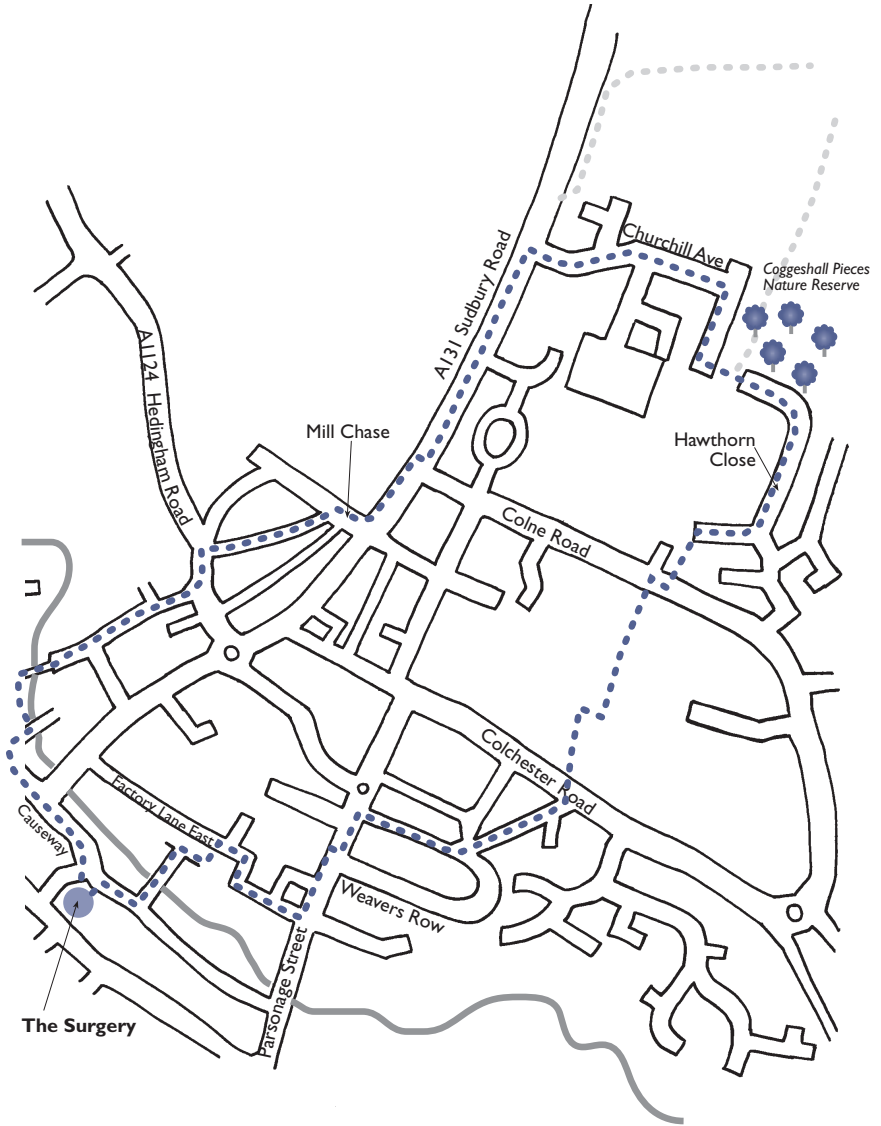
CARE - Upper Chapel Street is steep and very uneven underfoot.

Cross the bridge and turn immediately left to follow the River Path past Riverside Court and out onto Bridge Street.

Cross over at the Pedestrian Crossing, turn left and walk past the Bull Hotel along the Causeway, turning right to Factory Lane West. The Surgery is in front of you.

Extension To make the walk longer leave the Nature Reserve behind the back gardens of Winston Way, passing through a gate. Follow the footpath north over the field to Star Stile Road. Walk a few metres to the left along the road, keeping a lookout for traffic. Re-enter the field at the footpath sign. The path leads you around the perimeter of the Cricket Ground to Sudbury Road. Continue as Instruction 6.

CARE - The field paths may be muddy and slippery. - Star Stile Road has no pedestrian pavement.



Start	Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery, Factory Lane West		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 812 303	Distance	2 miles 3.3km
Features	Enjoy views of Halstead while walking to the Flood Defence on the River Colne		

The Walk

Leave the Car Park of Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery and turn left. Cross carefully over Kings Road. Turn to the right and follow the pavement, entering the Public Gardens by the first gate. Make your way diagonally across the park, leaving by the gate at the end of New Street. Cross New Street with care and walk towards the Pedestrian Crossing in Trinity Street.

Cross over and take the walled path at the side of the Churchyard. Follow this narrow path between the grounds of Holy Trinity School and the walled property on the right. Cross over the school drive and continue along the shady path. Cross the road leading into Pippins and follow the path until it reaches the bottom of Chapel Hill.

CARE – Path may be uneven and slippery when damp.

Turn to the right, cross over Beridge Road and walk up Sloe Hill on the right-hand pavement to the bend at the top. Take the footpath immediately to the left of the last house. The footpath sign is hidden in the hedge. Follow the path down to the lower field and at the FP markers go right then left, continuing down along the wide grass path towards the bottom hedge marked on this map.

CARE – The footpath is narrow, uneven, weedy and slippery if wet.

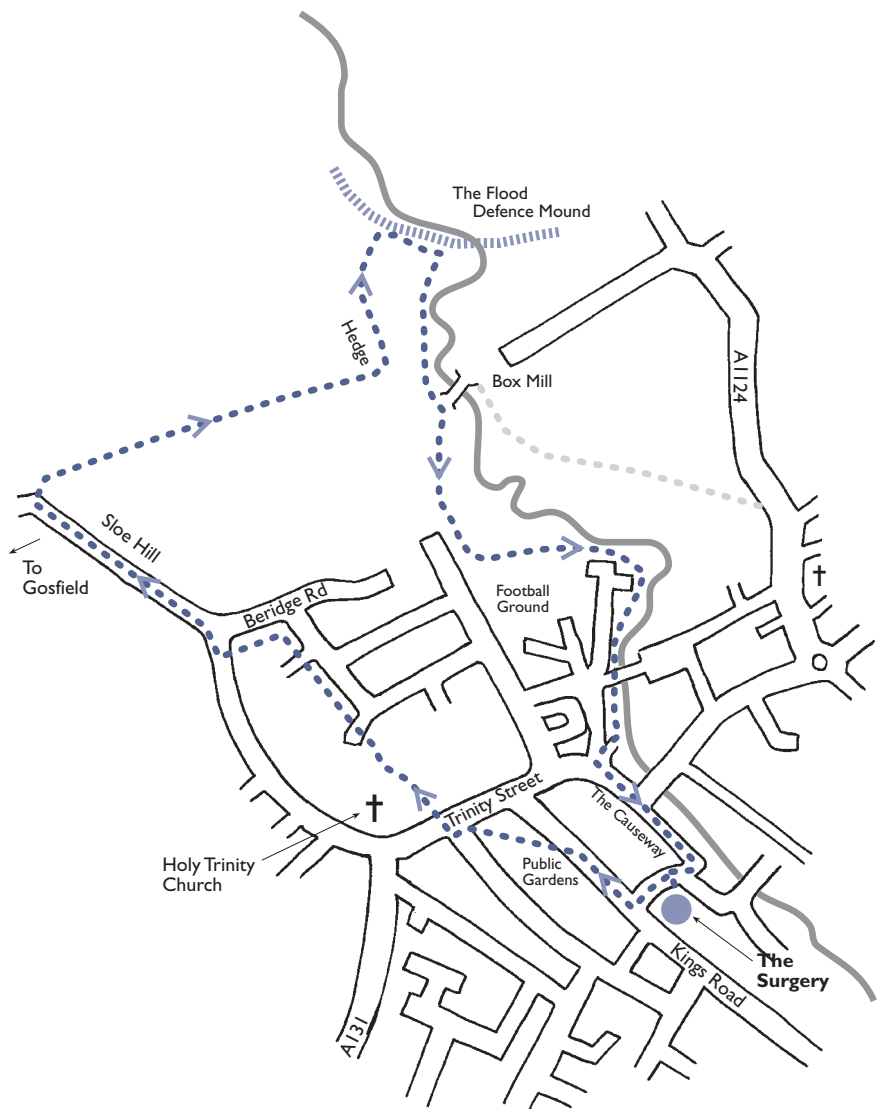
Go through the hedge by the narrow, brambly footpath. Once out in the open meadow follow the path to the left and round the field edge to the top of the Flood Defence.

Follow one of the well-trodden paths to the bridge at Box Mill.* Do not cross the bridge, but follow the well-trodden path to the perimeter of the Football Ground. At the fence turn left, keeping the football pitch on your right and join the River Path (West). Follow this path by the River Colne and cross the road at the bridge which is closed to traffic. Take the River Path to its end and make your way onto Bridge Street.

**Cross over the Pedestrian Crossing and turn left. Walk in front of the Bull Hotel to the Causeway. At the end of the Causeway turn right and cross over the road to the Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery.

***Extension** To make the walk longer walk over the bridge at Box Mill. Immediately turn right and follow the footpath along the edge of the field and up the right-hand side of the allotments to Hedingham Road. Turn right and walk along the pavement to Upper Chapel Street. Walk down the stony lane and continue as far as the river. Join the River Path to Bridge Street. Continue from **

CARE – Upper Chapel Street is steep and very uneven underfoot.



Start	Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery, Factory Lane West		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 812 303	Distance	2 miles 3.2km
Features	Take a peaceful walk along the side of the River Colne, but can be slippery in wet weather.		

The Walk

Take the footpath from Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery Car Park to Kings Road and turn left. Walk to the junction with Mitchell Avenue and cross to the right-hand side (wider pavement). Just before the mini-roundabouts cross to the left and turn into Parsonage Street.

Cross carefully to the Fire Station side and continue over the River Colne. Turn right into the River Path by the allotments.†

CARE – This path may be muddy and slippery further on. See Alternative below.

Follow the winding path between the river and the housing estate until you reach the very end of all the houses in Chaffinch Way.

Take the short path ahead and join the track. Turn left towards Colchester Road.* Once in Colchester Road keep to the left-hand pavement, carefully crossing the entrance to Nether Court, and turn left into Middlefield.*

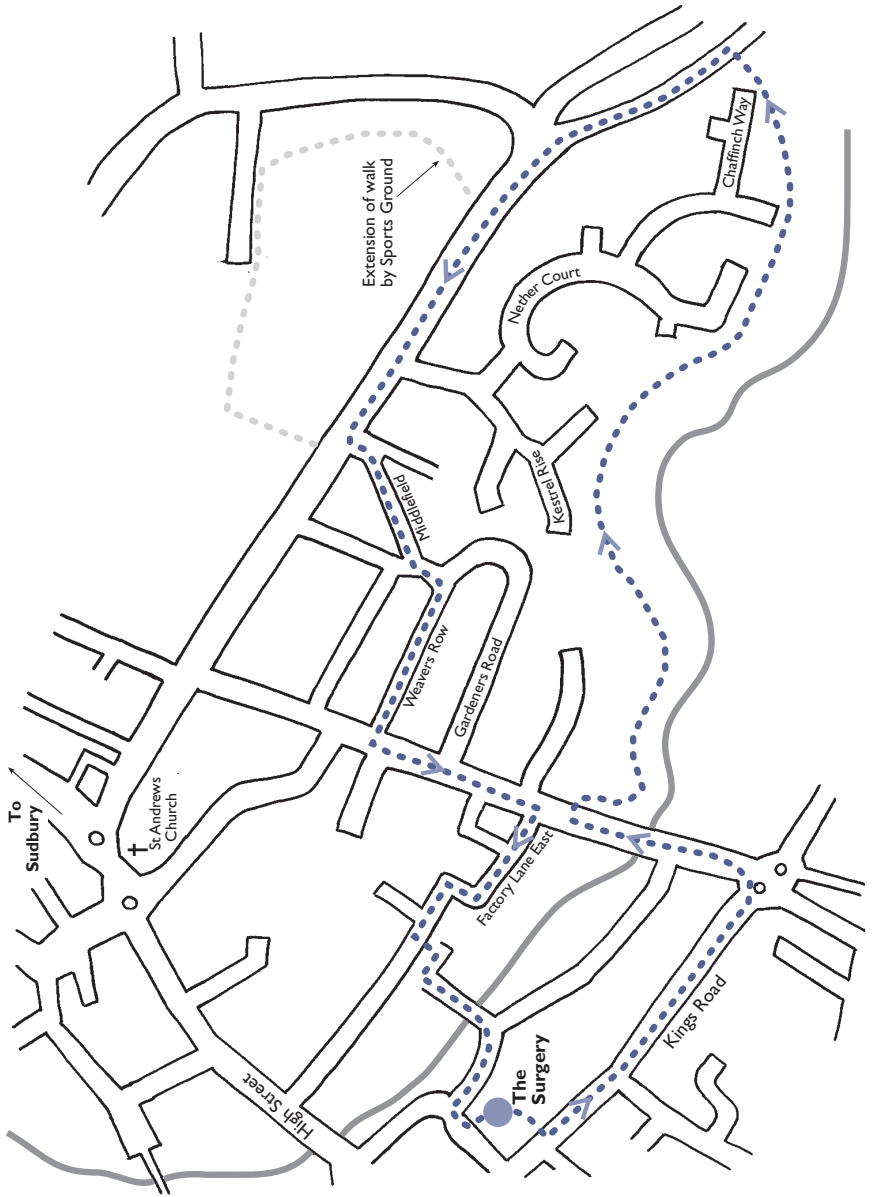
CARE – Middlefield is an un-surfaced road.

At the end of Middlefield branch right into Weavers Row and proceed to Parsonage Street. Turn left, crossing the road when convenient, and take the path on the right next to No 130. Follow this between the two sections of Richard de Clare School and continue to Vicarage Meadows.

Turn left alongside Solar car park to Mill Bridge. Branch right and follow the pavement to the Pedestrian Crossing. Cross over to Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery.

† **Alternative** To avoid the River Path in poor weather, leave Parsonage Street at Gardeners Road instead of turning into the River Path. Proceed until the road bears left. At this point take the footpath to Kestrel Rise and follow the road through Nether Court to the end of Chaffinch Way.

***Extension** In order to make the walk longer cross Colchester Road when you are opposite Courtauld Sports Ground. Follow the footpath which leads around the outside of the perimeter fence of Courtauld Sports Ground in an anticlockwise direction. Proceed left when you join Upper Fenn Road. Regain the footpath and keep to the perimeter of Priory Hall. When you reach Colchester Road cross over by the Pedestrian Crossing, turn right and walk to Middlefield.



Start	George Public House		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 722 292	Distance	1.86 miles 3km
Features	Walk along the River Pant and enjoy some good views		

The Walk

Leave the George public house car park turning left towards Braintree. Pass the entrance to Shalford Hall Farm. At the drive entrance to the Parish Church, notice the USAF Memorial.

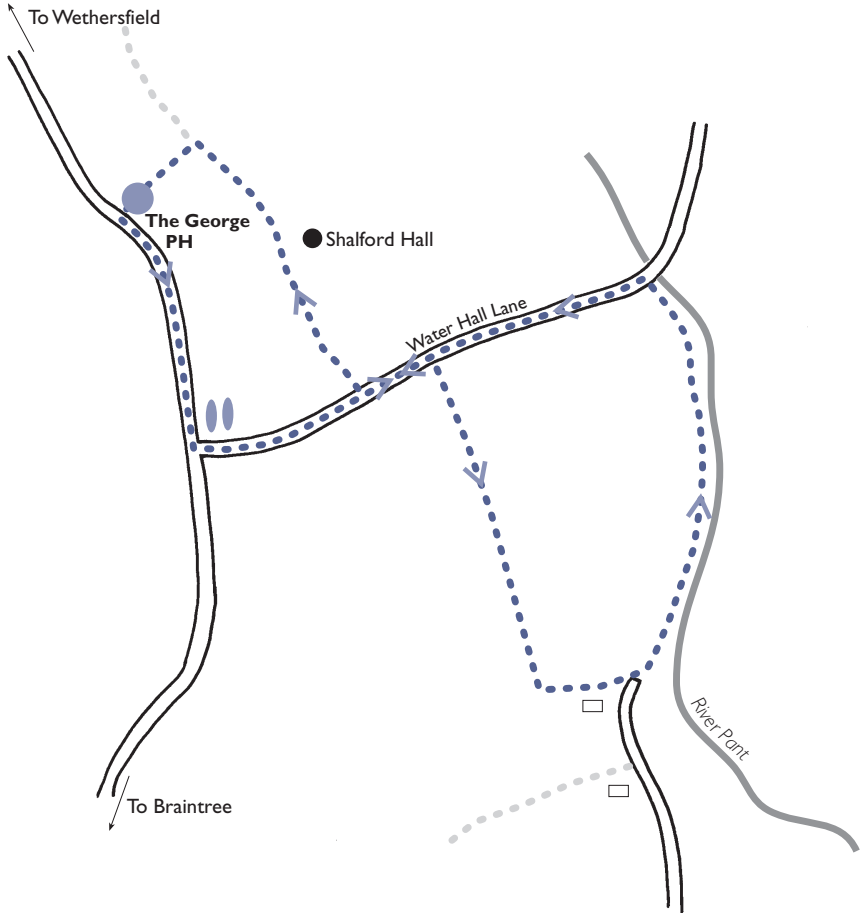
Turn left down Water Hall Lane, past picturesque cottages and scenery. At the ford, where the River Pant crosses the road, turn right following the footpath alongside the river. Pass the bridge on your left, (this footpath is towards Codham Hall) go through the gate, and continue to the end of the path. Here you will find a gate and a country lane.

(If you wish, you can stroll down this lane with its lovely cottages, but at the main road, retrace your steps to the gate.)

Turn right along a drive keeping Iron Bridge on your left to the next footpath leading off to the right. Follow this path, go through the gate following the waymarker across the field. Turn left up the lane. Take the first footpath on your right. This will take you through more pleasant scenery with views over the River Pant.

Follow the walls of Shalford Hall and into the farmyard of Shalford Hall Farm. Cross the farmyard to the gate into the Churchyard of Shalford Parish Church. Keeping the Church on your right, you will enter the cemetery area. Keep to the left boundary and you will come to a gateway.

Leave the churchyard via this gate and turn right along the tarmac path. Immediately turn left on the path along the side of the stream. The footpath ends at the front door of the George Inn.



Start	Western Arms PH		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 183 813 193	Distance	1.25 miles 2.1km
Features	A pleasant walk around the lakes		

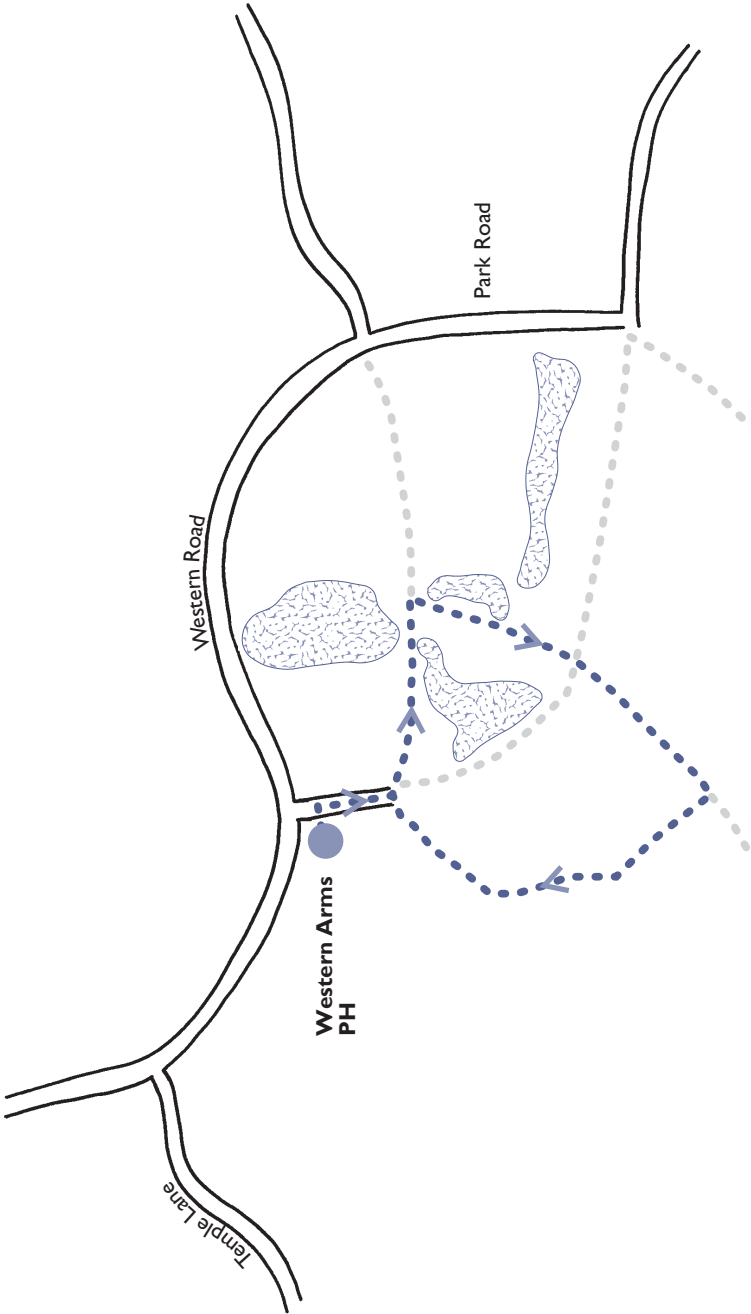
The Walk

Walk along the lane next to the Western Arms. Turn left along a footpath opposite house No 8.

As you reach the lake follow the path to the left and keep the lake on your right (can be muddy). Ignore the first footpath on your right and go on until you reach the second footpath on your right. Turn right along the path with the horses in the field on your right.

Follow the path, walk over the bridge crossing the stream and continue diagonally right across the meadow.

Follow the waymarker across and go through the iron gate, go across the field to a waymarker and go straight on. After 100 yards, turn right and follow the path to the next waymarker and turn right leading back to the original lane.



Start	Bramston Sports Centre		
OS Grid Ref	OS EXP 195 817 141	Distance	2.9 miles 4.6km
Features	Explore an undiscovered part of Witham		

The Walk

Leave the car park and cross the road by the pedestrian lights. Follow the river walk path until a humped backed bridge is reached, cross the bridge and turn right along a relatively new path. You emerge in River View. At the main road turn right and look for a gap in the hedge on your left, near the bridge.

DO NOT walk down Blackwater Lane.

Cross the main road carefully and follow the well worn footpath, onto a concrete road and then continue to your right, until you reach a bark footpath on the right. This will follow the River Brain once more and emerges at the concrete road under the A12.

Turn right under the A12 and you are now in the Whetmead Nature Reserve.

Walk anti-clockwise around the Reserve following the well mown footpaths. When you reach a set of steps, climb these, and enjoy the view looking south to Wickham Bishops. There is a seat here.

Continue in the same direction until once again you return to the bridge of the A12. Walk up the concrete road past the Water Works and look for a set of steps on your right. These will take you onto the old railway. Follow this path until you reach the road into the industrial estate. Turn left here and at the roundabout left again to cross at the pedestrian crossing. At the end of the road turn right and cross the main road just before the little shop, to walk between a private house and a Day Nursery. You will see the gates to the park in front of you.

Walk through the park keeping the children's playground on your right and continue around to the left, to walk down to the humped backed bridge once again. Over the bridge, turn right and retrace your footsteps back to the Sports Centre car park.

IF YOU WISH to spend more time at the Nature Reserve, walk from Tesco in a clockwise direction and along the bark path to the reserve.



