

## RODENT WRIGGLE

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**Abbreviations:** **BL** - Bear Left, **BR** - Bear Right, **BW** - Bridleway, **BWS** - Bridleway sign, **CP** - CheckPoint, **FB** - Foot Bridge, **FL** – Fork Left, **FP** – Footpath, **FPS** - Footpath Sign, **FR** – Fork Right, **GW** – Gateway, **Immed** - Immediately, **KG** - kissing-gate (walkers gate), **L** - Left, **LHS** - Left Hand Side, **MRd** - Major A or B Road, **R** - Right, **Rd** - (minor) Road, **RHS** - Right Hand Side, **Tk** - Track, **TL** - Turn Left, **TR** - Turn Right, **WMP** - Waymark Post, **WMS** - Waymark Sign, **yds** - yards.

The route is covered by the Ordnance Survey maps Explorer 211 and Landranger 155.

**Make sure that you have entry number recorded at EVERY checkpoint on your course. Please note checkpoint opening and closing times. If you arrive before the checkpoint is due to open, you will be asked to wait. If you arrive after the checkpoint closing time, you should retire from the course at that point.**

### CROSS ROADS WITH CARE

**From Start at Needham Market Community Centre (IP6 8BB, TM 089548) to CP1 at Badley Church**

Start	<b>Needham Market Community Centre (IP6 8BB, TM 089548) Start: Walkers 8.00; Runners on Long &amp; Medium routes 9.00; Runners on Short route 9.30. ALL TO FINISH BY 7:15 PM.</b>
1	<b>TR</b> on School St and after 80 yds <b>TL</b> to follow <b>FP</b> between brick wall and fence to car park for <b>The Swan</b> pub. Continue to Rd.
2	<b>TL</b> and cross Rd at bollards ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ). <b>TR</b> and after 20 yds <b>TL</b> into Station Yard (opposite The Swan pub). Stay to left and follow pavement, bearing L past end of shops to low cattle tunnel under railway. Go through tunnel under railway ( <b>MIND YOUR HEAD</b> ) and <b>TR</b> along <b>FP</b> , then continue alongside Needham Lake (lake on L), and round end of lake to <b>BR</b> over <b>FB</b> by wooden sculpture ( <b>LOOK OUT FOR MEMBERS OF THE MODEL BOAT CLUB CROSSING THE PATH WITH THEIR BOATS AT THE END OF THE CAR PARK BEFORE THE FB</b> ).
3	Cross <b>FB</b> and follow <b>FP</b> to <b>L</b> (Gipping Valley River Path) keeping river on L, ignoring <b>FPS</b> to R and <b>FB</b> over river on L, for 0.6 mile. Continue on metalled path to point where <b>FP</b> forks off to L just before Rd bridge.
4	Take <b>L</b> fork under Rd bridge. Continue on <b>FP</b> , over <b>FB</b> , past old lock, across weir ( <b>FB</b> ), then approx. 260 yds to <b>FP</b> on R.
5	<b>TR</b> and follow <b>FP</b> , then across <b>FB</b> and ahead to Rd. Cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to pavement and <b>TL</b> along Rd to T-junction with Jack's Green Rd. Cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to pavement and <b>TR</b> . Continue on pavement on L side of Rd as it bears <b>L</b> at junction with centre triangle, then over dual carriageway (A14), to turning on R.
6	<b>TR</b> on Rd (Creeting Hills) 100 yds to <b>FP</b> on L.
7	<b>TL</b> onto <b>FP</b> . Follow <b>FP</b> , initially across field (views of Creeting St Mary church to L), over <b>FB</b> , then trees on L and fence on R, then enclosed <b>FP</b> to T-junction with <b>BW</b> .
8	<b>TL</b> and continue on <b>BW</b> to Rd, ignoring <b>FP</b> on R.
9	<b>TR</b> on Rd. Go past Church Close and school on R. Continue on Rd ( <b>BEWARE ONCOMING TRAFFIC</b> ) until shortly after 20 mph speed limit sign, to The Old Forge on L (house name plate on red brick wall). At end of brick wall <b>TL</b> onto <b>FP</b> .
10	Follow <b>FP</b> between houses and fences, then along edge of field (hedge on R) to Rd, with views of <b>Creeting St Mary</b> church on L.

11	Continue across Rd onto enclosed FP, across FB and along boardwalk ( <b>CAUTION: MISSING BOARDS</b> ) and continue to Rd passing through Osier bed.
12	<b>CAUTION: TR</b> onto Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ). After 80 yds <b>TL</b> on FP (FPS) along field edge (hedge on R), and ahead through gap in hedge to cross FB. <b>TL</b> and follow field edge (hedge on L). After end of hedge, at next field corner, continue across field aiming for end of another hedge. Continue (hedge on R) to corner of field, and across next field towards large tree and group of houses. Onto grass Tk towards houses, ignoring FP on L, and continue to back of houses (now with hedge and power lines on L).
13	Ahead to Rd (ignoring FP to R), then <b>TL</b> at junction and follow Rd across bridge over dual carriageway (A14).
14	<b>TL</b> on FP (FPS) immed after Rd bridge. Follow FP (hedge on L), then R (enclosed FP). <b>TL</b> on narrow enclosed FP approx. 20 yds before path emerges onto open field, to <b>Creting St Peter</b> church (TM 081577). <b>WALK, DON'T RUN, THROUGH THE CHURCHYARD</b> (to show respect).
15	<b>TR</b> in front of church and exit through gate. <b>TR</b> through trees and along field edge (hedge on R), then down steps to Rd ( <b>CAUTION: STEPS UNEVEN</b> ). <b>TL</b> on Rd to T-junction. <b>TR</b> on Rd, and after 120 yds <b>TL</b> (Creting Hall Farm).
16	Continue on farm drive to layby on R. <b>TR</b> onto grass Tk. At end of fields <b>TR</b> and almost immed. <b>TL</b> through gap in trees and across FB and stile. Ahead across meadow to river (head for wooden gates, then to metal gate).
17	Cross river Gipping through KG over cattle bridge and follow FP round edge of meadow. Through gate and across old millrun (mill pond and Badley Mill on R) and follow FP through KG to gravel Tk. <b>TL</b> and follow Tk underneath railway to <b>MRd</b> (B1113).
18	<b>TL</b> on MRd, keep to FP (pavement) for 260 yds. Cross MRd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) at point with Bus Stop sign and Post Box on the other side. Join FP (Badley Walk) and follow FP for 0.7 miles to <b>Badley</b> church and CP1.
<b>CP1</b>	<b>BADLEY CHURCH (CP1, 7.1 miles, TM 062559).</b> <b>Opens 9.45 am. Closes 6.15 pm</b> <b>Don't forget to get your entry number recorded!</b>
19	Leave CP1 and go round church anti-clockwise, cross culvert ( <b>BIG HOLE ON LEFT, BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU STEP</b> ) and then <b>BR</b> onto FP through gap in hedge (almost directly behind the church) and over FB. Follow FP across field, then along field edge (hedge on R), and through small copse to FP T-junction (FPS).
20	<b>TL</b> and then at corner of field <b>TR</b> (before gap in hedge, ignore FP going ahead). Follow path, initially with hedge on L, then across fields and alongside wood to entrance into wood on R (information sign).
21	<b>TR</b> into <b>Combs Wood</b> (ancient woodland) and after approx. 30 yds <b>TL</b> on first FP. Look out for Oxlips and Wood Anemones depending on time of year. Exit the wood through KG. <b>NOTE: Dogs MUST be kept on leads through Combs Wood.</b>
22	Ahead across field. Cross stile and downhill, through GW, and <b>BR</b> to cross another stile to <b>Combs</b> church (TM 051569). <b>WALK, DON'T RUN, THROUGH THE CHURCHYARD</b> (to show respect).
23	Leave church down drive. Where drive turns L, continue ahead approx. 60 yds across church meadow (fence on L) towards wooden field gates. <b>TL</b> at first opportunity and follow FP between fence on L and hedge on R to steps up onto Rd.
24	<b>TR</b> onto Rd, then <b>TL</b> onto FP (no sign) just before bridge (post and metal rail fences on either side of Rd). Follow FP around field edge with trees on R to FB on R (ignore large gap in hedge with pylons to R).

**Long and Medium routes continue from step 25 on page 3.**

**SHORT ROUTE ONLY (back to Badley church)**

S25	Do NOT cross FB. Instead, continue around field edge with trees on R, and uphill. Continue along enclosed FP, then with fence on L. Cross farm track to FP along other side.
S26	<b>TR</b> and follow field edge with trees an R to gap in hedge. Through gap in hedge to Rd.
S27	<b>TL</b> on Rd, then Tk, and through gate. Continue to FP gate on L (FP and Private Property signs on L, just after pond on R). <b>TL</b> through gate and along edge of meadow (hedge on L). Through another gate and <b>TL</b> on enclosed Tk. <b>FL</b> along enclosed lane where main Tk bears R. Past gate towards <b>Badley church</b> and CP5.
<b>CP5</b>	<b>BADLEY CHURCH (CP5, 10.1 miles, TM 062559). Opens 9.45 am. Closes 6.15 pm Don't forget to get your entry number recorded!</b>

Rejoin main route from step 52 on page 6.

**LONG & MEDIUM ROUTES (to CP2 at Great Finborough)**

25	<b>TR</b> to cross FB then follow path with electricity poles uphill to Rd. Cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to pavement, <b>TR</b> to junction, then cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) again and <b>TL</b> to follow pavement 0.4 miles to Rd junction. <b>TR</b> and follow Rd (Jack's Lane) 0.4 miles to dip at bottom of hill with FP's to L & R.
26	<b>TR</b> onto FP and follow field edge (hedge on R), under pylons, 0.3 miles to FP junction 130 yds after pylon.
27	<b>TL</b> , initially across narrow field, then continue uphill on grass Tk at field edge, then <b>BL</b> on grass Tk between fields (farm buildings ahead initially) to concrete track. (First views of Great Finborough church spire ahead to R.) <b>TR</b> and follow concrete Tk 0.4 miles between farm buildings and past Boyton Hall on L to FP on L, just before red-brick house on L (partially obscured FPS in hedge).
28	<b>TL</b> onto FP between fields. <b>TL</b> at FP T-junction at edge of wood (FPS). Follow FP around edge of wood and through gap in hedge (white bench on R). <b>TR</b> and continue around edge of wood. Follow FP to <b>L</b> just before gap in hedge. At bottom of hill <b>TL</b> at FP T-junction and follow field edges along valley to FP junction (FPS). <b>TR</b> and cross FB. Continue to Rd. <b>TR</b> on Rd to CP2 in Petteward Hall (entrance on R just before T-junction).
<b>CP2</b>	<b>PETTIWARD HALL, GREAT FINBOROUGH (CP2, 12.3 miles, TM 015577) Opens 10.30 am. Closes 1.30 pm. Don't forget to get your entry number recorded! NOTE: Long route walkers arriving after 12.30pm will be required to switch to the medium route.</b>

Long route continues from step 29 on page 4.

**MEDIUM ROUTE ONLY (from CP2 to Buxhall church)**

M29	Leave CP and cross <b>MRd</b> (B1115) ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) then ahead to <b>Great Finborough</b> church (TM 014579). Take FP to L of church instead of going through church grounds.
M30	Follow FP in front of church (low wall on R) and go around stile to enter enclosed FP. At junction of FP's, <b>TL</b> and immed <b>TL</b> again (keeping laurel hedge on L). Follow FP through trees (wire fence on L). At FP junction (FPS) at end of trees <b>TR</b> and follow FP downhill across field to field edge.
M31	Cross FB and <b>BR</b> across field. <b>TL</b> at FP junction (in middle of field) to electricity pole and on to field edge. Through gap in hedge, across lawn and through gate to Rd ( <b>CARE: traffic coming from your right</b> ).
M32	<b>TR</b> onto Rd to junction on L. <b>TL</b> on Mill Rd, then after 120 yds <b>TL</b> onto enclosed FP with views of church ahead. Follow FP, through 2 gates to <b>Buxhall</b> church (TM 003576). <b>WALK, DON'T RUN, THROUGH THE CHURCHYARD</b> (to show respect).

Re-join main route from step 45 on page 5.

**LONG ROUTE ONLY (from CP2 to Buxhall church)**

29	Leave CP and cross <b>MRd</b> (B1115) ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) then ahead to <b>Great Finborough</b> church (TM 014579). Take FP to L of church instead of going through church grounds.
30	Follow FP in front of church (low wall on R) and go around stile to enter enclosed FP. At junction of FP's, <b>TR</b> and follow FP around edge of church and on to <b>Stowmarket Golf Club</b> . Continue on FP around edge of golf club, keeping hedge on R, to join gravel Tk to FP T-junction. <b>TL</b> and follow Tk across golf course ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) (ignoring FP to R and L) and across bridge over the River Rat.
31	Enter wood and shortly <b>TR</b> at FP junction. Follow main path ignoring side paths to L and private entrance to R. With edge of wood on R, keep ahead to gate and Rd, ignoring paths to L. Cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to FP. Pass ponds on R and immed <b>TR</b> on Tk (FPS) to take you to <b>Onehouse</b> church (TM 017593).
32	Continue on track (row of trees on L) to Rd. <b>TR</b> onto Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to junction on L 30 yds after Onehouse sign and immed before buildings (signposted to Glebe Farm Business Units).
33	<b>TL</b> then <b>FR</b> at FPS, keeping houses on R. Through KG to enter <b>Northfield Wood</b> and follow path to L. After 30 yds <b>FL</b> (sheds on L). Stay on main path ignoring branch to R. <b>TR</b> at FP junction at start of wire fence and wire mesh gate on L. <b>TL</b> at junction onto wide grass Tk (ignore board walk ahead). Leave woods through KG and ahead to Tk. <b>TL</b> on Tk around field edge (hedge on R) 0.4 miles to Rd. (View of Harleston church emerging over top of field.) <b>TL</b> onto road for 60 yds and then <b>TL</b> again through metal gate ( <b>FINGER HAZARD</b> ) and along drive to <b>Harleston</b> church (TM 018604).
34	Continue past church along edge of meadow to cross FB. Follow FP between hedges and across FB. Follow field edge (hedge on L), then continue ahead across gap (approx. 60 yds) to follow laurel hedge on R. Through gap in hedge on R, crossing earth bridge and immed <b>L</b> (paddock rails on R) to Rd.
35	<b>TR</b> and follow Rd round bend to R ( <b>WITH CARE, SUGGEST CROSSING TO LHS TO GO ROUND BLIND RIGHT-HAND BEND</b> ). <b>TL</b> onto FP just before Rd turns to L ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ). Follow FP (hedge on R) and <b>TR</b> at old Nissen hut. <b>TL</b> onto Tk round edge of green, and follow Tk to Rd. <b>TL</b> on Rd to BW on R.
36	<b>TR</b> onto BW (opposite New Farm) and follow main path (fenced paddock on L), ignoring fork to R. Continue onto minor RD and shortly <b>TL</b> (before village sign) to <b>Shelland</b> church (TM 003602).

37	Follow enclosed FP to R of church. Ignore FP to L and continue ahead to Rd ( <b>BUSY ROAD</b> ). <b>TR</b> on Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) and after 30 yds <b>TL</b> onto enclosed byway. Follow byway 0.6 miles to junction with Tk (ignoring FPs to L and R). <b>TR</b> onto Tk to gate where main Tk turns to L.
38	Ahead past gate and follow farm drive curving uphill past Clopton Hall on the L, then past a pink and flint house, 20 yds <b>TL</b> on FP. Through wide hedge then FB, continue past derelict farm buildings on L to small wood. <b>L</b> around edge of wood. At end of wood <b>R</b> on grass track to next wood, <b>L</b> around edge of wood and soon take grass track on <b>R</b> towards pylon.
39	Just before Rd <b>TL</b> and follow field edge downhill with views of Rattlesden to front, over FB to Rd junction at bottom.
40	<b>TR</b> on Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ). Ignore Rd immed to R heading back up the hill. Take <b>R</b> fork on Rd, passing village sign on L, to <b>Rattlesden</b> church (TL 978590).
41	Continue past church to the Five Bells pub. <b>TL</b> to side of pub and down hill to cross the river Rat (only a baby now). <b>TL</b> and cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to CP3 at Rattlesden Village Hall.
<b>CP3</b>	<b>RATTLESDEN VILLAGE HALL (CP3, 19.5 miles, TL 978589). Opens 11.30 am. Closes 3.00 pm Don't forget to get your entry number recorded!</b>
42	Leave CP and <b>TR</b> to follow Rd. Where main Rd turns L, <b>TR</b> onto smaller Rd (Birds Green). Follow Rd to R and uphill (out of village) to FP on L just before black barn. <b>TL</b> onto FP, then <b>TR</b> onto FP passing under Mobile phone mast (hedge on R). At end of hedge <b>TL</b> on Tk across field. Ahead through hedge and across FB. Ignore FP to R and continue ahead (hedge on L). At field corner <b>L</b> through opening, then immed. <b>R</b> through further opening and <b>R</b> following field edge Tk (hedge on R).
43	Keep ahead, past end of hedge, through opening on R then immed sharp <b>L</b> (buildings and hedge on L), to concrete drive. <b>TR</b> and, where track bends to L, keep ahead across fields to wooden gates. <b>TR</b> on enclosed FP then follow field edge (hedge on R). At hedge corner go through hedge, across field then meadows onto track (hedge on R) to Rd (ignoring FP to R).
44	<b>TL</b> on Rd, past pub, for 0.4 mile (ignore FPs to L and R until past Old Guildhall Cottage, pink thatched house on L). After 30 yds (opposite end of wooden railings) <b>TR</b> onto enclosed FP with views of church ahead (if you reach a T-junction on Rd you have gone too far). Follow FP, through 2 gates to <b>Buxhall</b> church (TM 003576). <b>WALK, DON'T RUN, THROUGH THE CHURCHYARD</b> (to show respect).

### LONG & MEDIUM ROUTES (from Buxhall church back to Badley church)

45	Exit church along drive to Rd (T-junction). Cross Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) and continue ahead downhill (Valley Lane) for 0.7 miles to Byway on L just before house on L (Byway sign). (Ignore slightly earlier FP across field on L.)
46	<b>TL</b> onto Byway. Follow Byway for 0.9 miles, ignoring FP's branching off to L & R, and round sharp turn to L. At end of shallow sunken section (no hedges) with hedge apex to front, <b>BR</b> to follow Byway (hedge now on L) and continue to <b>MRd</b> (B1115). <b>TR</b> onto <b>MRd (WITH CARE, SUGGEST CROSSING TO FAR SIDE IMMEDIATELY)</b> then after 70 yds <b>TL</b> onto City Lane. Follow City Lane past buildings and down hill. When lane bears L at No Vehicles sign, instead continue downhill on Byway. Ahead on Byway for 1 mile up hill (hedge and trees on R) and then between hedges to back of house.
47	<b>TR</b> alongside fence at back of house. Follow edge of field around to <b>L</b> and then <b>R</b> alongside Rd to start of houses. (Depending on time of year there may be Bee Orchids along this stretch.) Join Rd opposite beet pad and continue <b>R</b> on Rd to <b>Punch Bowl Inn</b> . Continue 0.25 miles on Rd to CP4 in car park on <b>L</b> .

<b>CP4</b>	<b>CAR PARK, BATTISFORD FREE CHURCH (CP4, Long: 25.7 miles, Medium: 17 miles, TM 028541)</b> <b>Opens 11.30 am. Closes 5.15 pm.</b> <b>NOTE: From 11:30 am. to 12.30 pm. the CP will be located in the layby shortly before the car park. No toilet facilities before 12:30 pm.</b> <b>Don't forget to get your entry number recorded!</b>
48	Leave CP and <b>TL</b> on Rd, past end of houses and field on L, to FP gate and red dog bin on <b>L</b> (entrance to village green). Through gate and trees and across playing field to metal gate and dog bin. Across small car park to minor Rd.
49	<b>TL</b> and follow minor Rd for 0.9 miles (ignore minor Rd to L at junction with centre triangle) and continue to junction with larger Rd. Ahead along Rd ( <b>WITH CARE</b> ) to turning on R (signposted Little London) where main Rd bears L. <b>TR</b> onto minor Rd and continue 0.3 miles to junction on R, just after notice board and postbox.
50	<b>TR</b> and follow gravel drive, then enclosed path. Ahead on Tk, then BW (BWS) (ignore FP to R) through trees and gate, and continue along field edges (hedge on R) onto Tk to T-junction (FPS).
51	<b>TR</b> on Tk, and through gate. Continue to FP gate on L (FP and Private Property signs on L, just after pond on R). <b>TL</b> through gate and along edge of meadow (hedge on L). Through another gate and <b>TL</b> on enclosed Tk. <b>FL</b> along enclosed lane (continuing ahead) where main Tk bears R. Past gate towards <b>Badley</b> church and CP5.
<b>CP5</b>	<b>BADLEY CHURCH (CP5, Long: 28.4 miles, Medium: 20.0 miles, TM 062559)</b> <b>Opens 9.45 am. Closes 6.15 pm</b> <b>Don't forget to get your entry number recorded!</b>

#### **ALL ROUTES (from Badley church to finish at Needham Market Community Centre)**

52	Leave CP and retrace route to gap in hedge on L with wooden posts. <b>TL</b> between wooden posts onto FP downhill along field edges (Ignore FP to L). At corner of 2nd field continue ahead to enter trees. Cross FB ( <b>MIND YOUR HEAD</b> ), continue on FP through the bushes to field, and <b>TR</b> to follow field edges and main Tk, past 2 "Private" signs on L. Ignore FP sign (in trees on R) and follow gravel Tk to R. Where gravel Tk continues ahead past another "Private" sign, <b>TL</b> to follow field edge (permissive path), and later alongside pylons. At small field on R, continue past pylon towards tiled barn. At field corner in front of barn and gate, follow field edge to R (FPS) and after 30 yds <b>TL</b> to follow edge of meadow to gate and Rd.
53	<b>TL</b> onto Rd. <b>FL</b> onto enclosed FP (FPS). After FP climbs up onto field (FPS), follow field edges to join Tk (hedge on L). Continue past metal barn on R. After a further 0.1 mile, and just past end of trees on L, <b>TR</b> to follow edge of field with hedge on L for 0.3 miles to junction of FP and lane. <b>TL</b> at FPS on FP alongside fence and through caravan park onto Rd. Follow Rd to FP on R where Rd starts to rise uphill (FPS).
54	<b>TR</b> and follow FP around RH edge of meadow. Where main path goes through gap to next meadow, <b>BL</b> through gap in trees to enclosed FP. <b>TL</b> onto FP to Rd. Cross Rd and continue on path past barriers. <b>TR</b> after second set of barriers (after sign for "The Causeway") and follow FP with wooden fence on L, then through trees to metallised FP. <b>TL</b> and follow tarmac path downhill to Rd. <b>TL</b> onto School St, and after 80 yds <b>TL</b> to finish.

**Congratulations On Completing The Rodent Wriggle!**

## **Rodent Wriggle - some facts along the way.**

### **Needham Market**

A small town primarily built along the main street, its early prosperity was derived from the wool combing industry. A rapid decline in its fortunes occurred between 1663 & 1665 when it was hit by a terrible plague. The town was chained either end to prevent the spread of disease. Sadly two thirds of the population perished. The canalisation of the River Gipping and later the railway helped with regaining its former prosperity. The church has an outstanding double hammer beam roof.

Under the railway via the cow tunnel.

This leads onto the Camping ground, not for pitching a tent but for playing Campball or Camping. A former popular game in Norfolk & Suffolk thought to have Anglo-Saxon origins. Played with a small cricket sized ball with the objective of placing it within your own goal. Village and town teams normally of 12 to 15 men competed furiously. Thought of as a noble sport with no holds barred, you needed to be a good wrestler, boxer and runner. A violent and brutal game where many an old score was settled; injury and even death were not uncommon. A notable game in the 1830s, referred to as a fighting camp as much boxing was practiced, was Suffolk against Norfolk with 300 men aside on Diss Common. Played in the hardest way, the game resulted in 9 men losing their lives. After 14 hours Suffolk were declared victors. Shortly after this the more sedate games of cricket, football and rugby took over.

### **The River Gipping**

The River Gipping rises in the heart of the Mid Suffolk clay lands at Mendlesham. The river Rat is its main feed and is named after the village of Rattlesden. The Gipping was canalised in 1793 with 15 locks between Ipswich & Stowmarket, taking barges approximately 7 hours a round trip. It has been closed to navigation for over 90 years.

### **Creeting St Mary Church**

The church stands on high ground like most Suffolk villages. These high places were formerly where ritual fire dance festivals would take place. By the 9<sup>th</sup> century the shrine of All Saints had been established leading to the building of two churches. All Saints stood just yards from the present Creeting St Mary Church. A further church, St Olaves, also stood within the present parish making Creeting St Mary a very religious place.

### **Osier Bed**

After leaving Creeting St Mary Church the route shortly enters an Osier bed. This is where historically willows were planted and coppiced for withies for basket making, fish traps and other purposes.

### **Creeting St Peter**

St Peters Church, is not easily seen as it is surrounded by trees and isolated from the village after the construction of the A14. Within it there is an early wall painting of St Christopher. A Church was recorded in 1086, the meaning of Creeting is Craeta's people.

### **Badley Water Mill**

A fine 19<sup>th</sup> century red brick corn mill, one of numerous mills recorded along the 17 miles of the canalised River Gipping.

### **Badley Church**

St Mary's has a wonderful isolated rural setting with just Badley Hall for company. A redundant church it is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. The interior has been mainly untouched for over 300 years, with 17<sup>th</sup> century box pews and memorials to the Pooley family. The South porch door shows musket ball marks left by Cromwell's soldiers.

### **Combs wood**

Looked after by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Combs Wood is an ancient coppiced wood recorded in the Domesday book as a wood for 16 swine. This botanically rich reserve is known for its spectacular spring flowers including displays of Purple Orchid and rare Oxlips.

### **Combs Church**

St Mary's is a fine example of a Suffolk medieval church with elegant clerestory windows and large tower.

### **Boyton Hall, Bog Race**

Since 1897 each Easter Monday two teams of six men from Haughley and Finborough raced a mile across boggy fields from Boyton Hall to the Chestnut pub in Great Finborough. The origin of the race comes from when a group of men working at Boyton Hall faced being sacked from their jobs for drunkenness and replaced by a rival group of workers from Haughley. The farmer at Boyton Hall is believed to have thrown the contract into the air with the winning team being the first to get to the pub with the contract and thus securing their employment.

### **Great Finborough Church**

St Andrews Church with its magnificent spire nearly 300ft tall rises dramatically over the rolling landscape. The church was extensively rebuilt in 1875 and is a fine example of Victorian architecture. The side chapel is filled with monuments to the Wollaston family. Notable people buried in the churchyard are John Peel the radio broadcaster and ancestors of Charlie Chaplin.

### **Onehouse Church**

St John the Baptist is one of 38 round tower churches in Suffolk and shows signs of having a Saxon built tower.

### **Harleston Church**

St Augustine, of Norman origin, a small quaint thatched church with a wooden bell turret. Surrounded by pretty countryside it stands alone on a slightly elevated position. A lovely church in a tranquil location.

### **Shelland Church**

Dedicated to King Charles 1<sup>st</sup> The Martyr, one of only five in England. A brave thing to have done by the local landowner in a staunch Cromwell area. Shelland means Shelfland as it sits on a shelf overlooking Buxhall.



### **Rattlesden Church**

St Nicholas, a fabulous church, with a wonderful restored 15<sup>th</sup> century angel roof. The setting is idyllic with the church standing on a hill above a picturesque timber-framed cottage, with the river Rat flowing below.

### **Rattlesden Village**

The name comes from it having been an encampment for the Danes in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. (Ratesdana). The source of the river Rat rises close by before flowing through the pretty village centre with its many listed buildings. In the year 860 reputedly the Danes sailed up the river establishing a base to attack the English stronghold of Haughley castle. Today the river is a merely a small stream, but in the past it was navigable for flat bottomed boats bringing Caen stone up the river for the construction of the great Abbey at Bury St Edmunds.

### **Buxhall Church**

St Marys with its massive tower sits beside a splendid manor house, the home of the Copinger-Hill families. Sir William Coppinger was Lord Mayor of London.

### **Battisford Village**

The Punch Bowl was the first public house in Suffolk to be managed by the community, serving thirsty travellers. Battisford was also home in the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the knights of the hospital of St John and provided care for pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land. They were also known as the Knights of Malta. The Knights Templar were a similar group and were the founders of the St John Ambulance brigade. Oak timbers were sourced from Battisford by Sir Thomas Gresham to build London's Royal trading exchange, completed in 1571.