

Danbury

Words and pictures by Laurie Page of the Public Rights of Way team at Essex County Council.

An undulating walk from Danbury village to the bluebells at the National Trust property of Blakes Wood.



Distance: 3.9 miles. 6.3km

Starting point: Car park south of The Cricketers Arms pub in Penny Royal Road, Danbury. CM3 4ED

How to get there: Danbury lies on the A 414 between Chelmsford and Maldon. Take the turning off the A414 into Mayes Lane (which becomes Penny Royal Road), just east of Danbury Church. There is a car parking area just past the pub on the left.

Map: OS Explorer 183 Chelmsford & The Rodings.

Refreshment: The Cricketers pub near the car park where you start. There is also The Griffin pub on the A414 near the end of the walk.

Tourist Information Centre: 8 Dukes Walk , Duke Street , Chelmsford
Tel: 01245 283400

Place of interest nearby: A few miles to the west lies the City and county town of Chelmsford. It has a busy shopping centre, a cathedral, the interesting Essex Regiment Museum in the grounds of Oaklands Park and just outside is Hylands Park where they hold the V festival each summer and is also the location of Hylands House, an 18th century restored Georgian House.

The Walk

- 1.** From the car park walk up Penny Royal Road past the Cricketers pub and just after the pub take the footpath on the left. Follow this uphill towards the radio mast. At the mast go through a kissing gate and continue past the water tower and the churchyard. Go around the church and if you leave by the main gate, bear right along the concrete path to the main road.



Turn right and walk along the pavement. Soon after turn left onto a footpath along Moores Bridge Lane, descending steeply. Follow

the path through the trees and continue on between 2 houses. Where the fence ends, bear slightly left going steeply uphill. At the top by the seat and way-marker post go left following the blue bridleway arrow.

- 2.** Continue straight on at the next bridleway junction. After some distance you reach another way-marker post in the trees. Here you turn right, leaving the bridleway and following a footpath uphill. Proceed straight on at the next path crossroads. At the end you reach a T-junction where you turn left onto a wide stony path through the trees. It ends at a gate by the road. Turn left along the lane but watch out for the traffic. Just before a cottage on the left turn right into the parking area and go through the wooden gate at the back of the car park. This is Blakes Wood.



- 3.** Take the footpath on the left. At the next fork soon after keep left again. Follow the main track until you reach a path junction by a bench. Turn left and proceed to where the footpath turns sharp right following the footpath way-marker. Continue on and when you reach a tree stump in the middle of the path, at the way-marker post immediately after, do not go ahead but turn left onto a narrow country park path through the trees. This meanders up

and down. At the fence around Graces Farm, the path follows the fence line, descending steeply then back up again. A blue hut is below you to the right. At the corner of the farm go left between fences past the Country Park Wildlife sign and continue to the road. Turn left and almost immediately on your right, ascend the steps onto a footpath.

4. This path runs parallel with the road and at the corner it bends sharp right away from the road. Keep to the right along by the fence, passing Riffhams Farm. When you reach the trees follow the wide track through the trees. Get over a stile and into a large meadow and at the other side cross over another stile to the road. Take Elm Green Lane opposite. Continue all the way to the end where there is the Danbury War Memorial. Turn left along the pavement on the Road (A414). Opposite the Asian restaurant turn right onto a footpath. This is a wide track. Continue to the junction where you turn left taking you past the parish church. At the t-junction at the end, turn right and re-trace your steps back down past the Cricketers pub to the car park.



