



**Title: Elmdon**

**Distance:** 11 miles

**Time taken:** 4½ hours

**Location:** Elmdon, nr. Saffron Walden

**OS Explorer Map:** 194

**Grid Ref.:** TL 488 384

**Parking:** [Limited] Littlebury Green, CB11 4XB (one car only)

**Bus:** No regular service

**Train:** No service

**Refreshment:** Chrishall - The Red Cow, SG8 8RN

**PEAR Rating:** 

## **Walk Description**

Tucked away in the north west of the county is this beautiful and remote rural area. The route is quite hilly, for Essex, which means there are some amazing views to be enjoyed along the way. The walk also takes you through some of Essex's more secluded villages, several of which seem to have hardly changed for the last hundred years!

Right from the start, as you emerge into the fields south of Littlebury Green, you have a wonderful panoramic view right along the valley in front of you. You stroll downhill into this valley, then up the other side with the valley now on your right so you can continue to take in the views. Then it's over the hill into Duddenhoe End with its proliferation of thatched cottages. Next the path goes through fields and along an old Roman road to Langley, where you can sit on an enormous wooden bench overlooking the village cricket green. After this, you wander through meadows to the highest point in the county before sweeping slowly down into the valley, this time with extensive views over Chiswick Hall and Chrishall Church.

From the valley floor the path climbs gently up through the churchyard and then through Chrishall village itself before taking you off to walk along the Ickneild Way to Elmdon. In Elmdon, the village itself which has a pleasant, timeless feel. Finally, you walk along Freewood Lane with lovely views across the countryside on either side, then through the farmyard and across fields to the parking spot. What better way to spend a few hours exploring Essex!

## Directions

**A.** From the limited roadside parking in Littlebury Green (P), which is usually only sufficient for a single car, walk in a southerly direction down a driveway to the right of the letterbox. After a few yards, bear right to follow a track skirting a pond on your right, and carry on to the field edge.

Take a moment to enjoy the view, before turning right for about 50 yards then turn left (1) to walk down into the valley with the hedge on your right (2).

**B.** At the bottom of the hill the track turns left alongside a brook. Follow this along until, after a few yards, you come to the roadside by Bounds Bridge, where the road crosses the brook (3). At this point, turn right on to the road (B1039), walk over the bridge and continue up the road for about 250 yards.

**C.** At New Farm, turn left to walk up the farm track, to the left of the farm buildings. Once past the buildings, continue up the hill turning right at the T junction, then following the track as it snakes up the hill towards Rockell's Wood (4).

**D.** The hedge on the left of the track becomes thicker, more like a long thin copse, but not quite a wood. Just before you get to the actual woods, there is a small path to the left through this copse, so that you walk up to the top of the hill with Rockell's Woods on your right. We saw deer here (5).

**E.** As you start to come down the other side of the hill, still with the woods on the right, follow the field edge around the woods until you come to the hedgerow at the end of the field. There is a gap in the hedge: go through this bearing right and follow the path between paddocks until you come to a gravel track. Turn right on the track until it joins with the main road into Duddenhoe End (6).

**F.** Walk straight ahead along the road opposite into the village of Duddenhoe End. Keep walking through the village for about a third of a mile until, just past the telephone box (7) you come to a side road called Brooksies. Turn left down here, and at the end of the road on the right is a footpath which takes you through a paddock, heading south.

**G.** Cross over the stile at the end of the paddock, and continue walking south. The path goes straight on heading roughly south for about half a mile, across 3 fields and 2 footbridges, before coming out onto a small track known as Lorking's Lane. Turn left here (8), heading roughly south east, then after a few yards you will come to the T Junction with Beard's Lane. Turn right here, to head south west.

**H.** After about a quarter of a mile Beard's Lane becomes a green lane (9). Although it looks so rural, it actually follows the course of an old Roman Road. A quarter of a mile later, you will see a footpath off to the left, then there is a small dip in the lane signifying that this part might be muddy in winter: about 25 yards after this dip, there is another footpath heading off to the right into a field. Turn along here, heading west (10).

**I.** Continue along this path, with a field to your left and the hedge to your right, for about half a mile. This is the Harcamlow Way. At a gap in the hedge, ignore the farm track crossing through it. Stay on the field edge, with the hedge on your right, heading north west.

**J.** At the roadside turn left, towards the village of Langley. After about 100 yards, you will see an un-made-up road on the right leading to a small housing development overlooking the village green (11). Walk up this road, and as you pass the last house you will see a hedge with a 5 barred gate in it in front of you, and a footpath on the right between the hedge and the house. Walk along this path for a few yards then turn left to walk between two hedges (12), then out into a meadow.

**K.** At the far end of the meadow walk through the gap in the hedge and out into the field. Proceed along the field margin with a hedge on your right. When the hedge stops, turn right to head north along the field edge towards some trees, where you turn left continuing around the field. After a few yards the footpath turns right to enter a small wood (13) - this is the highest spot in Essex!

**L.** As you emerge from the woods walking roughly north, you will have a hedge on your left. After a while this disappears leaving you walking on a strip of rough grass between two fields, heading downhill towards Chiswick Hall. The church you can see in the distance is Holy Trinity Church, Chrishall (14).

**M.** As you approach Chiswick Hall turn left in front of the fence. Follow the fence along and turn right onto a gravel track between paddocks on the left and a large black barn on the right (15). Once past the metal 7-barred gate, the path goes between the paddock fence and a line of trees, to emerge on the access road to the Hall. Turn left on this and head downhill to the road.

**N.** At the roadside turn left then almost immediately right over a footbridge, to walk up the hill towards the churchyard (16). Go into the churchyard, heading north-west to pass the church on its left. As you pass the church building continue in the same direction, and as you approach the churchyard boundary hedge, you will come to a stile.

**O.** Once over the stile, follow the fence diagonally across the next field, still heading roughly north-west. When you reach the hedge go through the gap, and carry on across the next small grassy area before emerging onto a lane. Cross the lane to the footpath opposite. This takes you between fences to a hedge, then west and then north alongside another hedge in the top corner of a field, before going along an enclosed path to Chalky Lane.

**P.** At Chalky Lane, turn left for a few yards then right by the old pump (17) to walk along the left side of a hedgerow. After a few yards the hedge disappears, but continue along the field boundary as it curves to the left, and another hedge begins. Following this hedge, turn left again to head south-west, and a few yards later in the corner of the hedge you will see a footpath heading north into Chrishall village. This path becomes Hogs Lane.

**Q.** At the end of Hogs Lane turn right onto the High Street. After a few yards you will come to the village war memorial (18). Opposite this you will see a new side road called Loveday Close; walk along this road and find the gap between 2 houses, with a gravel path: although not marked as a footpath when we were there, this is the route onwards to Elmdon (19).

**R.** Continue on this path alongside a garden fence until you enter a field, then walk on with a hedge to your left until you come to a stile, placed where the hedge gives way to a fence. Cross the stile to walk with the fence on your right, towards the woodland you can see ahead. As you get closer to the woods you will see a way in, at about a quarter of the way along the edge of the woods from the left.

**S.** Once in the woods you are on the route of the Icknield Way. Turn right until you come to a crossroads with a barrier across the opposite route (20), then turn left. Keep going until you reach the roadside. Turn right on the road going downhill towards the pretty village of Elmdon. As you pass the Elmdon Dial pub bear right, and follow the road down past several thatched cottages, into the valley and up the other side.

**T.** Keep going up until you are near the crest of the hill and the road, which has been curving to the left, begins to curve to the right. You will see a lane, the access road for Freewood Farm, on your left. Turn along this lane (21).

**U.** As you walk along the lane there are some lovely views to either side. Keep going for about half a mile until you come to the farm then walk between the farm buildings and a cattle stall (the cattle seemed very friendly) (22) and straight on out of the back of the farm.

**V.** Continue on this track, initially with woods to your left then later with a hedge on the left (23), for almost a mile, when the path goes through a sort of dog-leg to the right before continuing in the same direction. Keep going and about a quarter of a mile later, you will come to the roadside opposite the parking place.

### [ROUTE DIRECTIONS at www.essexwalks.com](http://www.essexwalks.com)

The ROUTE MAP and ROUTE PHOTOS **also** need to be downloaded and saved on your computer for printing.



The Route Map PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Description & Map](#)



The Route Photos PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Photos](#)

This route description is not meant to be used in isolation, it is one piece of a three part guide to the walk. The other two pieces are the route map, and the numbered photographs. The walks work best when the description, map and the photos PDF are printed off and used in conjunction with each other.

The numbers in brackets in the description refer to specific points along the route, marked with numbered symbols and these in turn are matched to illustrative photographs which show you the lie of the land.



These symbols are shown at strategic points along the route, overlaid on a 1:50K Ordnance Survey map: [Online OS Map at www.essexwalks.com](#).

The parking facilities available on this walk are not suitable for large walking groups or those arriving in more than one car. Parking cannot be guaranteed. If you are using a car, be considerate with your parking: parking areas in rural communities are primarily for local use: please don't abuse this and spoil it for others. It could result in parking controls being tightened, requiring the withdrawal of the walk route. For more see: [Advice: Courtesy](#)