

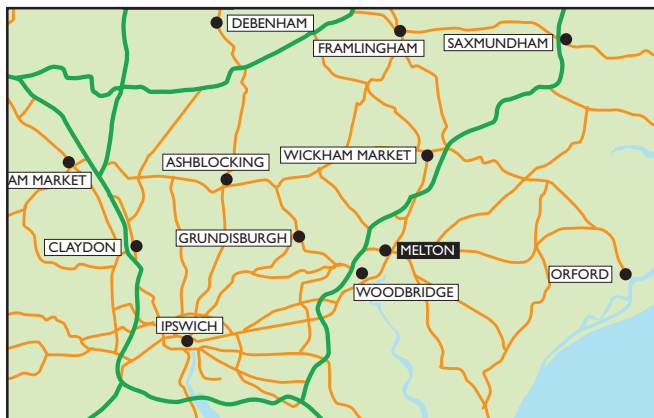
Circular Walks

Melton Circular Walks

Historic Melton, Woodlands and
Riverside



Location



Directions

Melton is located approximately 1 mile north-east of Woodbridge, accessed off the A12 along Woods Lane (A1152). All walks start and finish at the Recreation Ground free car park on Melton Road (IP12 1PF) **A**. Free parking is also available at Melton Riverside Car Park, Wilford Bridge Road (IP12 1LR) **B**.

Public Transport

Visit www.eastsuffolklines.co.uk or www.suffolkonboard.com for timetables and to plan your journey.

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Welcome

Melton is an historic settlement with remnants of Roman and Medieval pottery and evidence of Prehistoric occupation in the area.

The Domesday Book (1086) records the village as "Meltuna".



Melton became an important administrative centre during the medieval period with its own gaol and coroner. As the population grew, the parish built the larger church of St Andrew in the main part of the village. It had no room for burials and so Melton Old Church was used as the burial ground (meltonoldchurch.co.uk).

In the 18th century, Melton was an important stop on the coach routes that crisscrossed the county. One of its two coaching inns, the Coach and Horses, still survives whilst the other, the Horse and Groom, became two houses: The Toll Rest and Thomas Churchyard House.

Yarmouth Road runs through the village and is the old road between Great Yarmouth and London. It was turnpiked in 1785 and in 1859 the East Suffolk railway line from Ipswich to Lowestoft opened and provided an alternative means of travel.

Today, Melton is a village of contrasts with some curious and Listed Buildings. The village high street still retains a rural feel and the spectacular riverside, with a wide range of birdlife, is easily accessible.

Melton Riverside and Village Loop



DISTANCE: 2 miles (3 km)

DURATION: 1 hour

TERRAIN: Gentle footpaths, pavements and river wall walk. No stiles but some uneven and narrow paths

From the Recreation Ground Car Park **A** turn right. Cross over Melton Road to join the footpath on Daines Lane **1** and continue.

Note the Osier barn on the right to which local willow would have been taken.

The lane narrows to a footpath and then a private road passing the Bowls Club on the right to reach Dock Lane. Turn right and continue, crossing over the level crossing with care, and go through Melton Boatyard **2**. Here you can choose to turn left, keeping the river on your right, and follow the path along the river wall, or if you would like to visit the Deben Café on HMS Vale, turn right and continue a short distance.



HMS Vale, a former Swedish Navy Hugin class missile attack craft arrived in Melton Boatyard in July 2018 after its final decommission. It quickly became a landmark on the River Deben.



Riverside extension to Melton and back (3 miles return)

You can also explore more of the riverside with views towards Sutton Hoo across the river by continuing past the Deben Café, towards Woodbridge Train Station **C**. Either retrace your steps back to **2** or catch the train back to Melton to rejoin the walk at **4**.

Depending on the tide levels a wide range of birds can be spotted including avocets, curlews and oystercatchers, feeding amongst several wrecked boats.

Continue along the footpath until you reach Wilford Bridge Road **3**.

Turn left, the Wilford Bridge Inn is on the right. Cross over the level crossing, then cross the road by the railway station **4**. Continue past East Suffolk Council Offices at Riduna Park on the right.

Bear right on to Station Road. Continue, switching pavements where necessary, to reach St Andrew's Church on the right **5**.

The historic village core begins here and continues into Yarmouth Road to the right and The Street to the left. Most of the buildings on the corner with The Street are Listed Buildings. The modest old forge with adjoining timber house on the left stands almost opposite the impressive Victorian St. Andrew's Church, which is built,



unusually, of Kentish ragstone.

Inside the church's dimly lit interior and long low north aisle, is one of Suffolk's 13 seven sacrament fonts, one of only ten with surviving imagery. The late medieval font, brought from Melton Old Church, has a unique 8th panel showing the martyrdom of St Andrew. There are five stained glass windows, including one depicting St. Andrew and another depicting St Etheldreda holding Ely Cathedral. St Audry is the medieval contraction of St Etheldreda, and historically St Audry is considered the foundress of Ely Cathedral. The word tawdry is derived from her name and is a reference to cheap goods sold at fairs on her feast day (23rd June).

Church to Church extension (2.5 miles return)

To visit Melton Old Church **D**, turn right onto the footpath just before St Andrew's Church and continue. Turn right on to the bridleway, then left at the next junction of paths. Continue ahead to reach the green triangle at Decoy Farm. Turn right onto the road, passing Ufford Golf Course on the left to reach the former church.

A former mortuary chapel this old church is kept locked, opened only several times a year for regular events including an annual carol service. Inside, there is also a rare triple brass in the Nave, which depicts a priest in academic dress with his parents, dated 1436.

The array of WWI crosses remembering those who died on the battlefield, is an important collection in East Anglia. Originally used as temporary markers to mark the places where the dead lay, many such crosses later ended up in parish churches. The nine crosses are all different, some are painted, and some have stamped aluminium tags.

Retrace your steps back to **5**.



Continue straight ahead to reach the junction of The Street and Yarmouth Road **6**.

At the junction, is the Toll Rest, part of the former Horse and Groom coaching inn. According to folklore written in 1893, East Anglia's legendary phantom devil dog 'Black Shuck' – a shaggy animal of immense size with fiery eyes – once terrifyingly struck here. The story told to Mr. Redstone by Mr. Fisher, then aged 70, and the son of the Innkeeper goes as follows:

"In Melton stands the 'Horse & Groom' inn, in the days of toll-bar gates occupied by one Master Fisher. It was a dark night when Goodman Kemp of Woodbridge entered the inn in a hurried frightened manner and asked for the loan of a gun to shoot a 'Shuck', which hung upon the toll-gate bars. It was a 'thing' with a donkey's head and a smooth velvet hide. Kemp, somewhat emboldened by the support of companions, sought to grab the creature and take it to the inn to examine it. As he seized it, it turned suddenly round, snapped at Kemp's hand and vanished. Kemp bore the mark of the Shuck's bite upon his thumb to his dying day."

Just up Yarmouth Road on the right is the curious Tower End House, a mid-19th century house built in the Baronial style. Further along Yarmouth Road is St Audry's Park Road where once stood Melton's workhouse. In 1829 the workhouse was turned into the Suffolk County Asylum for Pauper Lunatics, later named St Audry's Hospital after the daughter of the 7th century King Anna of East Anglia.

In the opposite direction is The Street where there are many cottages built using local red bricks.



Follow The Street past Melton Fish Bar on the left and continue towards the traffic lights. The village sign, on the left, depicts the old and new churches with the Wilford Bridge in its centre. The wheatsheaf links Melton back to its agricultural past. There are a pair of wooden benches next to the village

sign. Continue past the Burness Parish Rooms on the left and the Old School on the right.

Originally called the Parish Rooms, the Rooms were built in 1904 for community use using funds from James Burness, a local philanthropist. Built of red brick, the Burness Rooms and Old School, are both finished with crow stepped gables.

The 16th century Melton House on the left just before the traffic lights is the last surviving building from the old gaol.

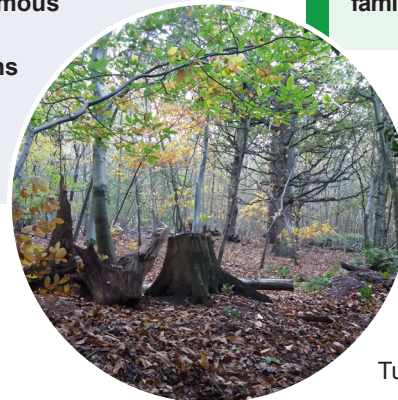
Melton is the birthplace of Edwin Lankester (1814-1874), a mid-19th century doctor and naturalist. Born of 'poor but clever parents', according to his son, this social scientist recognised a correlation between poor water supply and the London cholera epidemics of the 1850s, regarded as one of the most significant medical discoveries of the 19th century. Lankester's discovery led to the complete eradication of the disease and his standard test for the purity of drinking water is still used today.

As a Coroner, he was the first to insist doctors issued medical certificates for each death which was howled down in Parliament on the grounds of cost, but today is standard practice.

Lankester also contributed greatly to our knowledge on the social problem of infanticide in 19th century Britain by producing a series of 'statistically detailed Annual Reports' on the phenomenon.

Amongst his friends were the famous physician Sir William Jenner, Charles Darwin and John Stevens Henslow, Darwin's tutor. Edwin Lankester is buried in Hampstead.

Cross over the traffic lights and continue onto Melton Road, passing the primary school and The Coach and Horses inn on the left. Cross the road and return to **A**.



The Woodland Loop

DISTANCE: 1 mile (1.6 km)

DURATION: 1 hour

TERRAIN: Woodland trails, unmade paths and grass. Some steps.



From **A** walk diagonally across the playing field and enter Burkes Wood, one of the best used recreation areas in Melton.

Burkes Wood, together with the playing fields, were gifted to Melton Parish Council in 1952 by Sir Roland and Lady Burke who lived at Melton Mead.

Burkes Wood has many beautiful trees including mature oak, sweet chestnut, scots pine and beech. The understorey consists of young sycamore, sweet chestnut and birch. Grey squirrels abound, and there are foxes and muntjac deer. Numerous birds can be spotted including tawny owls, great spotted woodpeckers and occasionally nightingales.

The playing field replaced the original Garrod Memorial Playing Field in Dock Lane. The Garrod family had houses in both London and Melton (Wilford Lodge). Sir Archibald Garrod (1857 – 1936), a pioneering physician, set up the Garrod Memorial Trust in memory of his two sons killed in the Great War. Tragically, his third son died in 1919 during the great Spanish Flu pandemic that swept across Europe. Dorothy Garrod, Sir Archibald's daughter became a brilliant archaeologist. There are memorials to the Garrod family in St. Andrew's Church and Melton Old Church.

Bear right along the path and gently ascend a small incline. Turn left at the end of the path **1**. Continue over the brow of the hill. On the descent, at the crossroad of footpaths, turn right **2**. Follow the path on the left. Continue along the path to descend several steps, turn right and walk up the set of winding steps to the top. Turn right **3**. Follow the path keeping a fence on the left, descend and turn right at the crossroads, and continue. Turn right again and walk down the slope to reach Turnpike Lane **4**. Turn left and return to **A**.

Melton Circular Walks

Historic Melton, Woodlands and Riverside



KEY TO MAP

- Melton Riverside and Village Loop
- Melton Riverside and Nature Reserve (with Foxburrow Farm extension)
- The Woodland Loop
- - - Public Footpath
- - - Bridleway
- - - Byway

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Melton Riverside and Nature Reserve (with Foxburrow Farm extension)

DISTANCE: 4.5 miles (7.5 km)

DURATION: 2 hours

TERRAIN: Footpaths and roads



Follow the blue walk to ❸.

Cross Wilford Bridge Road with care to join the bridleway opposite (Brick Kiln Lane). Continue past fishing lakes on the right crossing the level crossing.

Continue straight ahead until the road narrows to a footpath. Bear left on to the footpath (Waterhead Lane) ❶.



At this fork are the remains of the Melton Spring, a rare survivor of a Suffolk Holy (healing) Spring. The water from the spring is said to be good for rheumatism and will give long life.

There is evidence suggesting this area was the site of a prehistoric and later medieval, settlement. Waterhead Lane is believed to be an old drovers' road.

Continue along the footpath as it gently inclines, through the wooded path, bearing right at the fork to reach Yarmouth Road ❷. Over the road on the right is Tollgate Cottage.

Cross the road with care, and continue along St Audry's Lane opposite, to reach Lodge Farm Lane ❸.

Melton Park, formerly known as St Audry's, can be seen on the right.

St Audry's was once a House of Industry (workhouse) whose inmates first arrived in July 1768, until its disincorporation in 1826. It then became the Suffolk County Asylum for Pauper Lunatics and housed over 1,000 patients. Dr Kirkman

was its first Medical Superintendent (1832-1876) and as a leading reformer he changed the way patients were treated, preferring 'watchfulness, activity and gentleness' over the use of personal restraint.

Renamed St Audry's Hospital in 1917, the asylum was regarded as progressive. The number of patients gradually declined, and the hospital closed in the early 1990s. Its buildings have since been converted into residential accommodation including a housing estate, golf club and some small business premises.

At this point you can take a detour which will reduce the walk by approximately 1.5 miles.

Turn left and continue down Lodge Farm Lane. At the junction with Saddlemaker's Lane turn right and walk up the hill passing houses on the right and left. Turn left onto the bridleway opposite the Foxburrow Farm sign to rejoin the walk at ❹.

Cross the road and take the footpath directly opposite. The old red brick Water Tower can be seen over the field on the right in the distance. Follow the footpath between the fields until you reach the A12 ❺.

Turn left on to a Permissive Path along the field edge. With the hedge on your right, continue to reach the bridleway ❻. This Permissive Path is kindly provided by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Turn left and continue past Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Foxburrow Farm Nature Reserve www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/foxburrowfarm, to reach New Road ❻.

Foxburrow Farm Nature Reserve is a mosaic of farmland and wildlife habitats, and a good example of how modern agriculture and wildlife can thrive



side by side. The arable land is managed by a tenant farmer using wildlife friendly farming practices, whilst the meadows are grazed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Sandling sheep flock. Coppiced and replanted hedges provide a great source of winter food and act as wildlife corridors allowing insects, birds and mammals to travel from place to place without having to cross open farmland.

Wandering around the reserve you may spot a little owl in daylight, see skylarks overhead and spotted flycatchers on the wing, or hear garden warblers and whitethroats, see soaring buzzards, and watch broad-bodied chasers!

Trails include a wheelchair and pushchair accessible trail, and there are laminated trail guides available in the car park.

The reserve is always open, but the best times to visit are March-August. Entry is free.

Cross over the road and take the footpath directly opposite. Follow the footpath down the gentle slope to reach Valley Farm Road.

Turn right and follow the road to reach Woods Lane ❷. Turn right and walk approximately 50 metres along the pavement ❸. Cross over the road with care, to join the footpath down Leeks Hill. As the road bends to the right turn left into the woods ❹. Take the first footpath on the left. Keeping to the fence line on the left, descend through the woods, and cross the playing fields to reach A ❺.

Please follow the Countryside Code:

- ✓ Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
- ✓ Leave gates and property as you would find them and follow paths.
- ✓ Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home.
- ✓ Keep dogs under effective control.
- ✓ Plan ahead and be prepared.
- ✓ Follow advice and local signs.

