

Skirt the grounds of Denston Hall

This is a shorter walk than normal and has the added advantages of being local and has no stiles. Total distance is 3 miles and at gentle pace it is unlikely to take longer than 2 hours. Maybe an outing for a summer's evening?

Since the walk was first written in 2007 there has been a change to the circuit in that a permissive path has been abandoned and the route is now the same as that shown on [Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 210 Newmarket and Haverhill](#).

Park at [Denston village hall](#). (From Wickhambrook, carefully cross the main road at the Plumbers Arms and on reaching Denston turn first right across the bridge and immediately left. If coming from further afield Denston is midway between Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill just off the A143 in a south easterly direction.)

Having parked walk back across the bridge and turn right up lower Denston 'High Street'. Pass the Gospel Hall and after a short distance you will find a kissing gate and footpath sign up a bank to your right. Go through and you have a choice of two paths.

*(PLEASE NOTE that on a few occasions you may find cattle in this meadow. If you have a dog or this causes concern return to the village hall and then continue uphill along the road to upper Denston. At the war memorial turn left and head towards the imposing gates of Denston Hall. Just before reaching them veer right to follow the path behind the hedge and pick up the circuit ^{*1} There may be sheep in the main park but it is unusual to find cattle).*

Take the one on the right (ignore the faint path that runs beside the garden hedge on the right. This is not a right of way). The correct path leads diagonally down to the valley bottom, over a bridge and through a five-bar gate and into park land.



Figure 1: View over park land

¹ If you are using this diversion, pick up the route at * on page 2.



Figure 2: View of Denston Hall

Continue ahead climbing gently uphill. You will soon reach the lake and good views of Denston Hall.

At the lake fence turn 90 degrees to the right and follow a faint path (pass a fading Chestnut and a couple of Oaks) to reach another valley bottom.

There is a gate in the wooden fence and a bridge. Cross this and then the drive *² to reach another metal gate in the corner of a large field. Stick to the left hand edge until just before the far side when you veer right to reach another narrow metal gate and narrow bridge. Enter the next field and follow the headland to the right. Stay with this around two left hand corners (there is an electricity pole in the second) and a gentle right curve until you reach the next corner. Cross a low sleeper bridge in a narrow copse. This was well hidden on an earlier walk. Follow the post and rail fence ahead. At the corner turn right and left over a bridge (waymark), go through a gate and reach the road in the village at Stradishall. Cross and go left making use of the pavement until you spot, just past the Old School House, a finger post pointing between paddocks. Take this grassy rise until you reach the top (good views of Denston to the left) then continue in much the same direction (waymark) into the next field. The path follows the ditch and hedge on the right and leads to yet another cross-ditch bridge, this time with the luxury of handrails and a waymark. Turn left for a short distance then drop down and up a shallow ditch. Go through a metal gate (possible trip hazard?) and turn right. Stick close to the hedge and trees on the right and enter the next field through a wide metal gate. Continue in the same direction and head for a dark gate in the wooden fence facing you and, you've guessed it, another wooden bridge. Cross this, turn left and stay with this headland path down to and around a narrow wood and eventually into the grounds of Denston Hall.

² If you used the diversion in italics on page 1, pick up the route from here

Go through the metal gate and continue in the same direction heading to the left of a group of 5 mature trees (ash and oak for any tree experts) and then to the righthand side of a fenced lake with accompanying vegetation. This is a pleasant stretch dropping gently downhill through parkland with good views of the hall and buildings.

At the corner of the lake follow the waymark ahead to repeat the section you have covered before. Having gone through the gate and crossed the bridge turn right on reaching the main drive and dodge beside the iron gates to pick up the road into the village of Denston.



Figure 3: View across green to War Memorial

If the weather is fair and you could do with a 'breather' there is a bench outside the church. This overlooks the houses around the green. Many of the buildings have stood for over 400 years; over 20 are listed. Denston was an estate village owned by the Robinsons at Denston Hall, from the early 1600s to 1988 when part of the estate was sold. Drinking water for the Top Green came from a well on the green, close to where the pump now stands. The village had four pubs, including the Plumbers Arms, two shops, a clockmaker, a cooper, carriers, a vet, a harness maker, a carpenter and a poorhouse (thought to be Brookside in Lower Green where the unfortunate folk who lived there used to carry out jobs like sewing shrouds). Now all are private houses.

When sufficiently recovered rejoin the road and head downhill (left if you are rising from the bench; right if you have reached the top of the drive to the Hall). The village hall is at the bottom on the right.

Reviewed January 2026.