

Historic Houses & Heritage of Suffolk.

May 4th-8th 2017.



Thursday- 45 members, family & friends set off quite early - our first stop being at Reading Services for refreshments - before arriving at Beth Chatto Gardens in time for lunch. Since 1960 these gardens have been gradually transformed from overgrown wasteland into an informal garden harmonising with the surrounding countryside.

We then continued to our hotel.

Friday- we were met at the hotel by our Blue Badge Guide, Ian & made our way to Waldringfield Boatyard for our 2 hour cruise along the River Deben

In the afternoon we visited Sutton Hoo- where in 1939 an archaeological excavation revealed the most amazing collection of treasures within an impressive Anglo-Saxon burial ship that had lain undisturbed for over 1300 years

From here we continued to the 16th century fishing village of Aldeburgh where we had time for a stroll along the promenade & refreshments.

Saturday- Ian, our Blue Badge Guide accompanied us again today & our first stop was to Colchester Castle Museum - this has recently been updated & is well worth a visit -before a tour of Colchester.

A short drive took us to Dedham where we were able to have lunch before visiting beautiful Dedham Parish Church. Then on through East Bergholt to Flatford Bridge Cottage at Flatford- we are now in Constable Country ,the inspiration for Constable's iconic paintings.

Sunday- after a 45 minute drive through the rolling countryside we arrived in Lavenham - once again Ian gave us a guided walking tour before we had free time to visit Lavenham Guildhall , the church or local tea rooms.

We continued on to Ickworth House, located in 70 acres of stunning gardens . Dominated by its huge central Rotunda,

Ickworth is home to a fine collection of Old Master paintings, silver & Regency furniture.

Later that afternoon we visited Gainsborough's House at Sudbury- each of the rooms of the house take a theme around the life & art of Thomas Gainsborough.

We bade farewell to our Guide Ian at our hotel - he had been so interesting, full of knowledge & lovely anecdotes.

Monday -after breakfast we checked out of our hotel & after a while arrived at Audley End House & Gardens near Saffron Walden. This was one of the greatest houses of early 17th century England- the house was transformed in the 1760's & Capability Brown remodelled the grounds to create one of England's finest landscaped gardens.

We left here after lunch & with a refreshment stop at Reading Services we arrived safely back at our original pick-up places saying a fond farewell to friends old & new

Hopefully, another successful holiday