

Sutton Bonington, The River Soar and Devil's Elbow

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Fourteen Family Walks around Charnwood
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This is an easy walk along a rural riverside pathway and through an interesting village. You will see wildfowl, farm animals, and canal barges during the summer. There are plenty of places for picnics and for children to explore. The walk starts at Pasture Lane in Sutton Bonington. There is a bus stop nearby and cars can be parked at the start of Pasture Lane or at St Michael's Church car park.

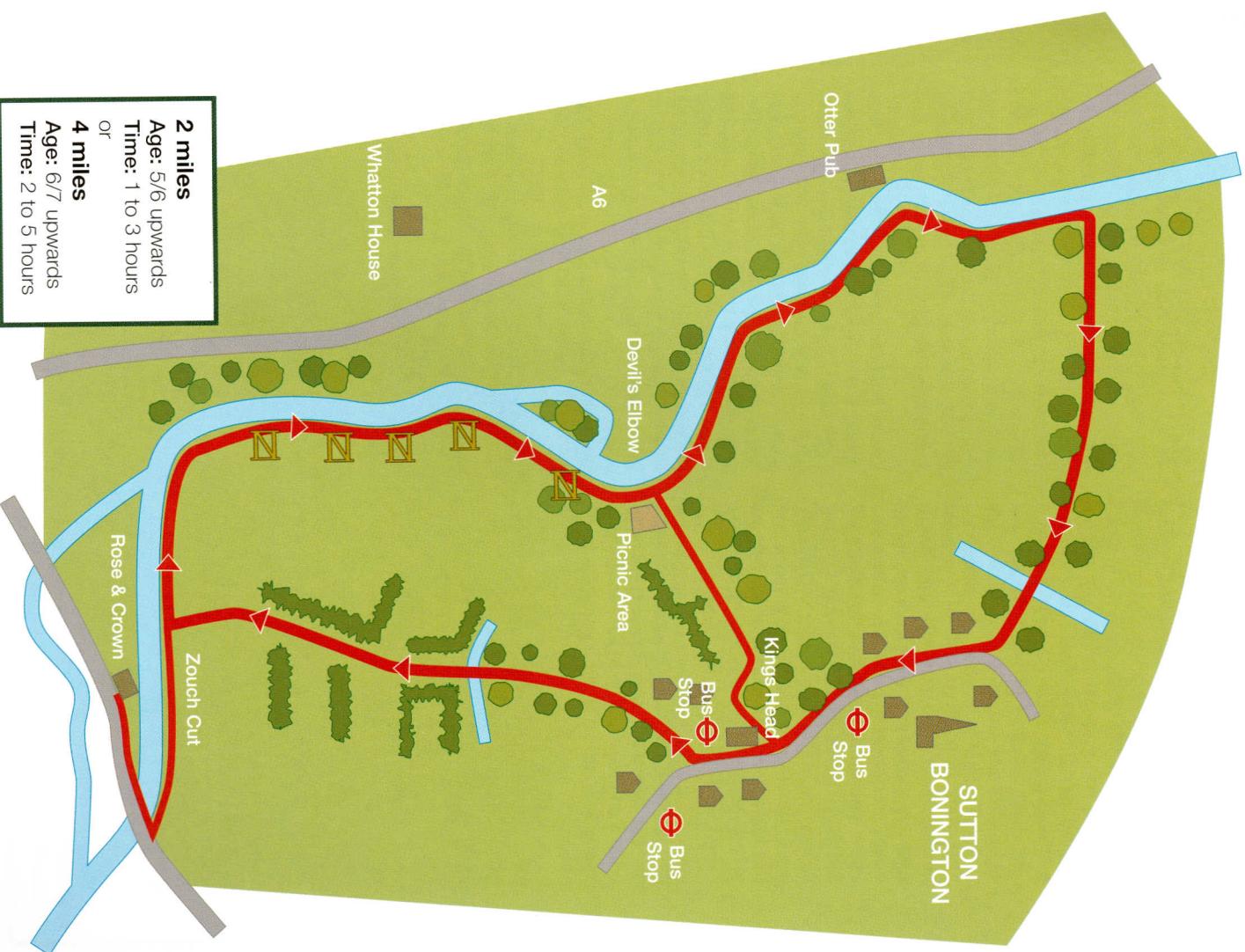
You walk along Pasture Lane, past the houses and then into the countryside. The lane becomes a track, which crosses three fields. You then reach a place where the track turns right into a field and your path goes to the left of the signpost along a path with a hedge on its right hand side. This path leads to a bridge over the canal. Children might like to stand on this bridge for a while. A short detour at this point will take you to a riverside pub at Zouch; to take this detour turn left here to go along the canal and retrace your steps after the visit.

To continue the walk you turn right to go along the towpath of a canal section known as the 'Zouch Cut'. The lock you soon reach is just before the place where this canal section joins the River Soar. Your walk then continues for about two miles along the riverside pathway. At this first stage the opposite bank is covered by woodland and makes a very pleasant aspect. This could well be a very pleasant aspect. This could well be a very pleasant aspect. In this section there are several stiles to cross. When the woodland stops Whaddon House can be seen on the left on the other side of the river and the A6.

The next point to look for is a place where a branch of the river forks to the left. Soon afterwards this branch rejoins the river so forming an island. It is this branch of the river which is known as the 'Devil's Elbow' because it contains a sharp bend. At the point where this branch rejoins the river you cross a stile and the pathway changes to being restricted between a hedge and the riverside. Shortly after this the hedge changes to a low wall and after passing a pathway sign you reach a picnic site behind the wall. From the back of this site there is a clearly marked path through playing fields back to Sutton Bonington if you want to shorten the walk.

Continuing along the river you soon see the Otter public house on the other side of the river. This is a home for many riverboats and makes a point of interest. Shortly after this you pass a footpath sign indicating another path going to Sutton Bonington. This path goes across fields and can be rough walking. The route suggested for our route is along Soar Lane, which is a little further along. This lane provides very easy walking and soon brings you back to the village.

Where Soar Lane enters the village you should look out for the old houses including one dated 1661. The village is stretched out along the road, but has the church and several interesting houses and gardens to see. The Kings Head pub next to Pasture Lane has a garden suitable for children. There are also two shops that sell drinks and ice cream.



2 miles
 Age: 5/6 upwards
 Time: 1 to 3 hours
 OR
4 miles
 Age: 6/7 upwards
 Time: 2 to 5 hours