

## **Combs Parkland Circular Walk**

This 1.2 mile walk takes about 25 minutes and follows the perimeter of the parkland to the eastern side of the village between Park Road and Tannery Road. The walk is along quiet roads and footpaths.

As there is no convenient central parking point in the village this description starts at the bus shelter on Park Road but the route can be picked up at any point. If you are coming into the village by car please park carefully.

Across the road from the bus shelter is one of Combs lost pubs. It is now Bay Tree House but until 1989 it was the Live and Let Live, a busy Greene King hostelry. Go right along Park Road, cross Jack's Lane on the right, and you will come to several cottages bearing the lettering L. W. C 1873. These were built by Lankester Webb the owner of Combs Tannery and more of his influence will be seen later in the walk. If you need to post a letter, there's a post box surrounded by the front hedge.

Continue along Park Road to the junction with Bildeston Road and Mill Lane. Pause here to look at the village sign erected in 1998 and depicting Model Farm, the park and the church. The sign is dedicated to Joan Saunders, Councillor and Parish Chairman 1973-1994.

Cross the road into Mill Lane. Combs once had three mills and it is intriguing to look up and to the right and imagine in your mind's eye the mills turning in the wind grinding flour from locally farmed grain. After the entrance to the Old Rectory, bear left down a footpath bounded by a drainage ditch on the left and a wire fence on the right. This short walkway opens up onto a splendid view across the valley towards Moats Tye and Little London and at the right time of year you may see a golden expanse of wheat or barley under a big Suffolk sky.

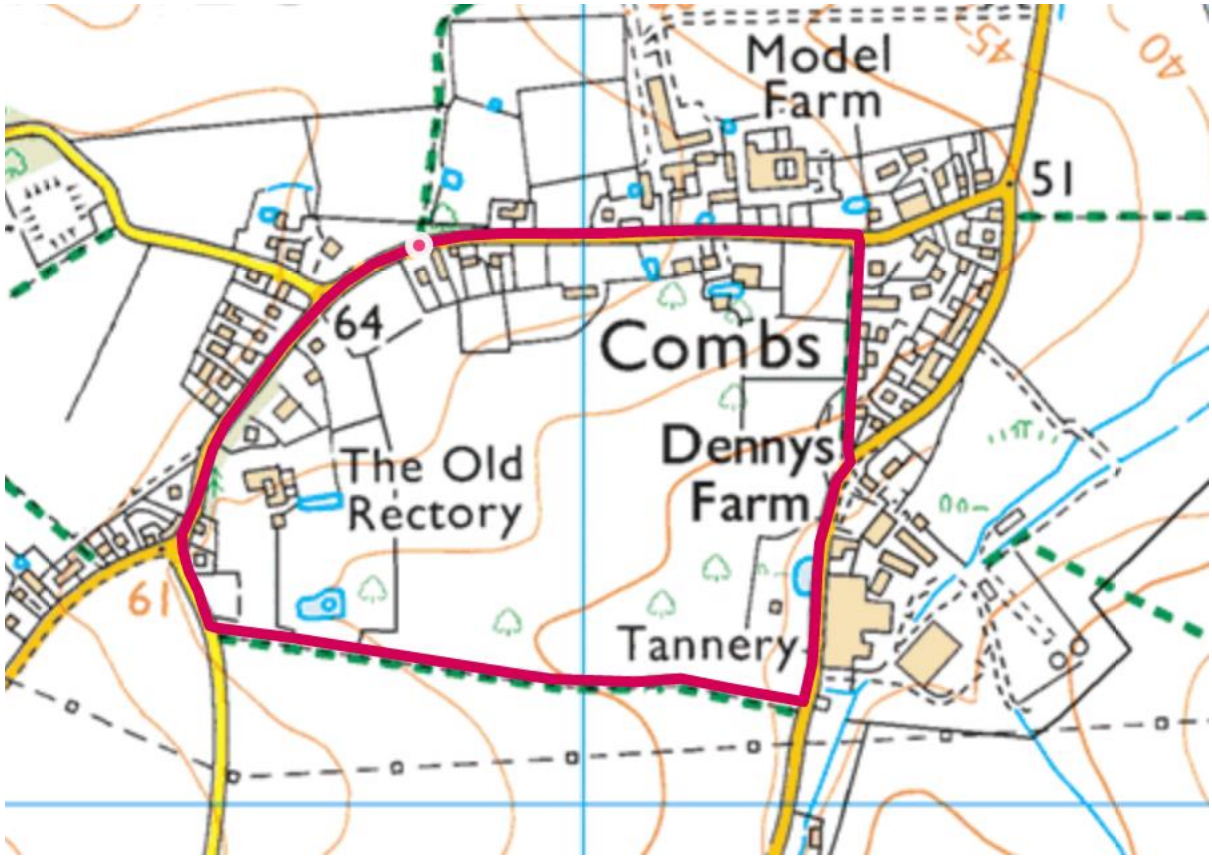
The hedge on the left is full of blossom in Spring and berry in Autumn; haws, hips, blackthorn, elder. Across the hedge are splendid views of the expansive parkland; grazing sheep (with lambs in the springtime) and a selection of varied trees, some very old.

Continue down the path and exit left onto Tannery Road. Walk up the hill with the Tannery buildings on your right and a pond on your left - you may see ducks or moorhens – and the Virginia creeper-covered office buildings which are glorious in the Autumn. See also the enormous redwood tree at the back of the lawn past the pond, estimated to have been planted in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and still growing!

On reaching Webb's Close, take the path on the right which cuts the bend in the road. This path – part of the Charcoal and Churches Walk which can be found on the Parish website – was originally made to allow easy access for the Tannery's resident fire tender to the old Combs School which dates from 1857 and closed in 1970. It was known as the Tan Path as it used to be laid over with the bark from the tanning process.

Continue to the end of the path (the fields on the left are often home to new-born lambs in the Spring) and enter back on Park Road, crossing it and turning left. On the right is Model Farm, erected by Lankester Webb in 1867 and is one of Combs's 51 listed buildings. See if you can spot the electric light fitting now embedded into one of the trees at the entrance. Continue along Park Road to complete the circuit.

*Walk planned and written by Tony Kitson building on earlier work by Bill Baldry. We thank the Combs History Club for checking historical facts. For more walks visit: [www.combvillage.org.uk/walks.html](http://www.combvillage.org.uk/walks.html)*



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