

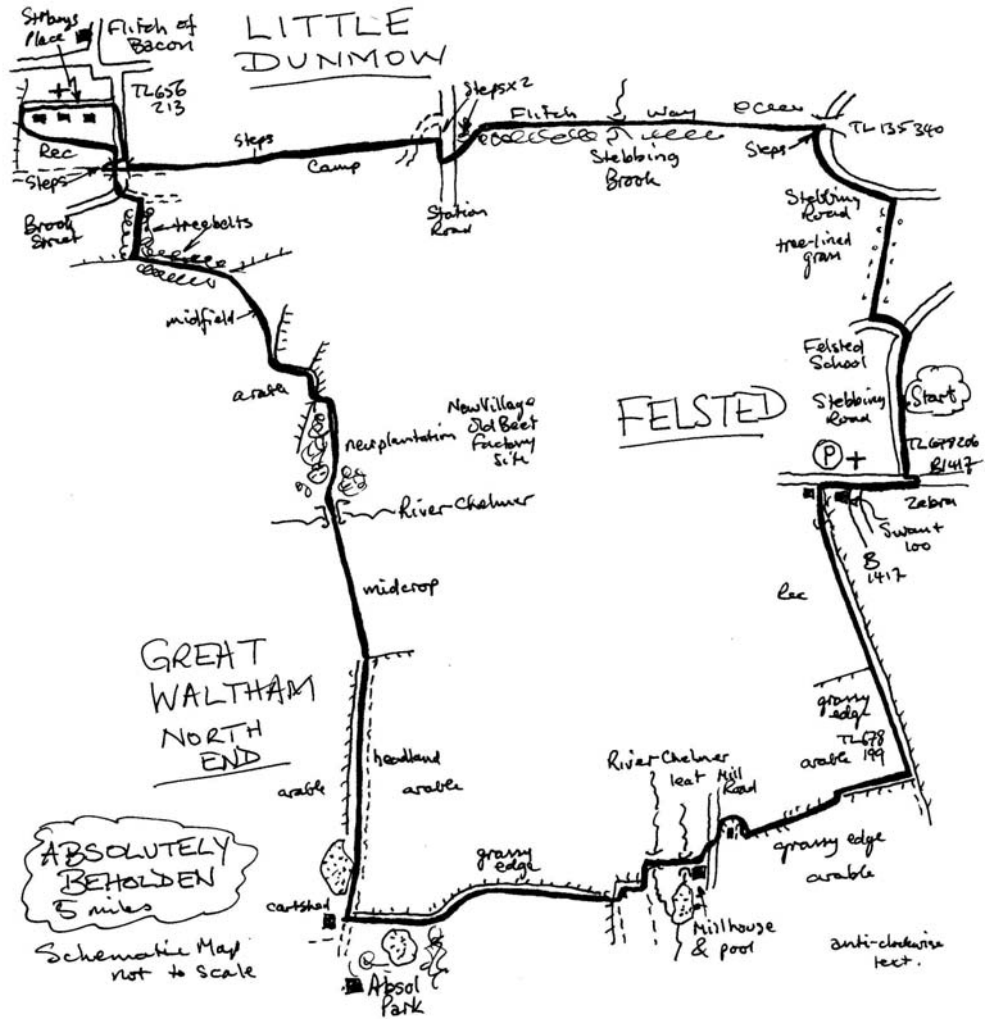
Absolutely Beholden—around Felsted—5 miles

BASE - FELSTED, Stebbing Roadside off B1417 map reference TL 678 206. Get there by car? The A131 road has a roundabout at the S E corner of the Essex Showround in Great Leighs, from whence Bannister Green is signposted through Willows, Pyes, Crix, and French's Greens. The next Green is Watch House where the B1417 road is joined left. Locate the zebra crossing in next 30 mph zone. Drive over it and find Stebbing Road off right. Roadside parking north of Chapel.

FETCH Target is Chelmer Valley Side's T junction of paths TL 678 199. Return to the zebra crossing and do so, turning right towards Felsted Church, and continue across Chelmsford Road at a busy B1417 bend. Loos are situated opposite the Church carpark. Further along is an opening to the allotments. Enter left by a white-boarded house. Steer by the lefthand hedge beyond the allotments and an arable field to find a footbridge at junction of paths.

GATHER Target is Little Dunmow Priory Church TL 656 213. Grandly enter the Chelmer valley, hedge on left. Shuffle left-right at the dung heap to trace the same hedge line downhill. Zig right and zag left around a cottage garden to cross Mill Road to Felsted Millhouse. Respectfully step on the paved garden towards the domestic door and espy the yellow arrow on the gated bridge below a window. Cross the leat and the river-bed via a second bridge to enter Great Waltham, North End. Swivel left by the Millpool, going right in the narrow second field and zigzagging left and right to squeeze by a forlorn stile. Climb the ensuing grassy path westwards to the cartshed of Absol Park at the crest.

Twist right to walk northwards by a large pond and a row of trees in the hedge leftside. Over the valley right is Felsted. Ahead emerges a new settlement on the former sugar factory site. At the end of the track, the land slopes down to the Chelmer. Look for the galvanised railing around a footbridge over the river. Aim for it across crops if some are carelessly growing on the Queen's Highway. Merge into Little Dunmow's tree belt, skirt eastside of the pond and trace the eastern edge of the trees uphill until it almost merges with the western hedge. Another footbridge is located within the hedge by a cable-carrying pole. Pass over and wind by the hedgerow uphill still. Where the hedgerow bends acutely right, head N W midfield for a waymark at the eastern end of a tree-bend against the northern hedge. Swing left by the trees as far as a rightside opening. Through the gateway, revert to a northward bearing through another treebelt and emerge at a triangular junction of track with a road bend. Go uphill along Brook Street over an empty railbridge and enter the recreation ground left. Head for the N W corner exit to get northside of the row of houses and east of The Priory. Admire the Priory Church.



DRIVE Target is Felsted, Stebbing Road Bridge TL 135 340. Get to the eastern end of St Mary's Place. Return down Brook Street to the empty bridge. As the ramp begins over the hump, divert right down some hedge-hidden steps to join the linear parkland beneath the bridge. Stride eastwards left on the trackbed to eventually pass northside of an attempted travellers' settlement on the old marshalling yard of Little Dunmow Station. Across the old forecourt find the staircase to the Station Road below. Use the sidewalk between the buttresses and carefully cross the road to another staircase returning to the embankment's top level. Resume the eastward, hedge-shaded procedure, sloping imperceptibly to cross high over Stebbing Brook, thus re-entering Felsted, and rising gently to the next road bridge.

PENNING Back to the Start TL 678 206. Descend a flight of steps down the SW corner of the bridge and puff southwards up the minor road until a finger post points right across the playing fields of Felsted School. An avenue of trees leads southward to a road within the school's precinct. Share the sidewalk left to re-join Stebbing Road. Its sidewalk leads right to Braintree Road near the B1417 zebra crossing.