

CYCLE GROUP EXPEDITION TO SOUTHWOLD



Inspired by a couple of our members we decided embark on a three day ride from Sevenoaks to Southwold. Six of us took part. Wishing to stick to country roads and to keep as far away from motorways and the A12 as possible our first obstacle was the Thames. Not everyone knows that a little ferry runs from Gravesend to Tilbury every half hour! We just about squeezed our bikes on and it cost nothing for those with bus passes!

Essex and Suffolk were relatively flat, the scenery improving rapidly once we left the rather barren wastelands of South Essex. Our first night was in Chelmsford where we enjoyed looking round the Old Town in the evening before a good meal in a local restaurant.

The second night was just north of Ipswich, and the final day took us through some of the finest countryside of Suffolk passing through delightful old villages looking as though they hadn't changed for centuries. Finally we took a detour across the Dunwich marshes, sadly rather spoilt by a sea mist which chose that moment to envelop us all!

Arrival at Gun Hill was closely followed by tea and cakes in a beach hut owned by one of the party. Then it was to local pubs for Adnams ale and a celebratory meal! reinforced as the audience itself became part of the performance, clapping along with these exotic rhythms or even trying out some of the instruments used. Instruments like the clave (pronounced clarvay), cowbells, maracas or the pandeiro (a versatile tambourine from Brazil) emerged from drummer Marc Cecils treasure chest for use by willing volunteers and rising to the occasion the audience as a whole was eventually drawn into the vocal refrain of The Chant, a standard Cuban number by the great Latin American performer Sergio Mendes. The afternoon came to a satisfying conclusion with a rendition of Derek Nashs musical impression of dawn over Rio de Janeiro in a number called Busy Bio.



Patrick Pascall