

Bright and beautiful

Keen photographer Mark Staples presents some of Suffolk's most picturesque villages in the late spring sunshine



Keen photographer Mark Staples has lived in Suffolk since 1994 and is passionate about exploring the county on sunny days. A full-time modern languages teacher at Bury St Edmunds County Upper School, he describes himself as a “hobby photographer.”

“I particularly enjoy photographing monuments, landmarks and landscapes, where architecture is a prominent feature, and the challenge is to find an interesting point of view or composition,” he says. “We are certainly not short of such views in Suffolk; I tend to favour bold, vibrant colours, which have become a trademark of my work.”

The county’s villages provide him with an abundance of subject matter, from beautiful churches to the chocolate box cottages bordering the village green: “As I consider myself to be more of a ‘postcard photographer,’ I tend to capture bright and cheery village scenes, rather than the dramatic, moody landscapes and seascapes favoured by many photographers,” he admits.

Chelsworth and Kersey are among his favourite villages. “I would strongly recommend Kersey, famed for the ford that runs through it. Visitors from overseas are always amazed at just how ‘English’ it is, with its timbered, thatched or brick-built cottages. It is like stepping back in time. However, Kersey, Monks Eleigh, Long Melford and Cavendish are all fairly close to each other so it would be a shame not to check out the others while in the area.”

As the weather improves, Mark will now spend many weekends exploring the county, refreshing and renewing his Suffolk photos.

“As my photography is a hobby, I don’t have any fixed projects – I simply go where my mood takes me.” ■

To view more of Mark’s photographs visit www.markstaples.co.uk

Poster front:

Chelsworth

“Springtime in the village of Chelsworth, where the main winding road is lined with 60 or so thatched cottages and beautiful houses. It is located in the Brett Valley, just 15 miles west of Ipswich.”



Kersey

“This village is famed for its ‘water splash’ and for Kersey cloth to which the village owes its prosperity.”



Polstead

“While notorious for the legendary Red Barn Murder, back in 1827, the village of Polstead, with its beautiful pond, is well worth a visit.”



Cavendish

“Many Suffolk buildings, including some of the cottages in Cavendish, are still painted in a variant of Suffolk pink.”



Monks Eleigh

“Cottages, some of which date back to the 16th century, edge the green at Monks Eleigh, where there is also an example of Suffolk’s colourful village signs.”



Fornham All Saints

“Historic Bury St Edmunds is surrounded by picturesque villages, like Fornham All Saints, just two miles north of the town.”



Long Melford

“Holy Trinity Church in Long Melford is such an extravagant and sizeable ‘wool church’ that it is often mistaken for a cathedral.”