



Debenham Story Trail



Explore some history of the village with the Alvin family

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Dear Story Trail Explorer,

Debenham is a place full of history.

The Alvin family, who you may know, is both fond of and knowledgeable about this wonderful village and they sometimes give special guided tours for visitors from further afield.

In this story trail you can join them on a tour and if you follow the route on the map, you too will know a lot about Debenham!

In case you don't know the Alvin family, here is a short introduction:

Alvin - dad, who loves DIY



Alice - mum, who loves gardening and flowers



Raz, who loves knitting



Ozzy, who loves gadgets and gaming



Yassandra, who loves painting



Garla, who loves books and history



Baz, who loves sports and the outdoors



Ill Kix, who loves fashion and food



Vix, who loves music



Important information

How to get to Debenham with public transport:

Bus 116 goes from Ipswich to Debenham via Henley, Coddensham, Crowfield, Pettaugh, Stonham Aspell and Mickfield.

Finding your way around Debenham:

In the centre of this booklet is a map of Debenham to help you find your way around.

Where to park:

You can either park at the car park next to the recreation ground or in the car park at Cross Green (see map for locations).

The route and its stations

The route is about 1.4km/0.8 miles. Along it, there are 9 'stations' with various riddles or tasks. Each 'station' is being explained by a bird, which will join the explorer group as the tour progresses.

Where does it start?

The story trail starts at the village sign, which is located on Cross Green. Here Raz will start the tour.

What to bring:

A pencil or pen for writing answers in this booklet.

Remember road safety!

The trail requires crossing busy roads so children should be supervised at all times.



“Welcome to Debenham,” Raz said eagerly. “I am so pleased to meet you!” He waved his wings about and smiled at the visitors.

Then, he pointed at **the village sign** and started the tour. “The name **Debenham** is made up of two parts: **Deben**, which refers to the **river** that runs through the village and **ham**, which means **village**.”

He paused and adjusted his hat before he continued: “The **blue waves** on the sign represent the river, and later on this tour Baz will explain more about that. He loves water!”

(Can you spot the river on the map?)

Raz looked at village sign again. “The next thing you should notice is the **sheep**. This fluffy little chap symbolises that in the 17th Century, Debenham was a busy village producing **woollen items**. Wool – as you may know – comes from sheep, and can be turned into yarn, which you use for knitting!”

Raz was in his element now. He loved knitting. Every time he visited Debenham he would go and see Kelly and buy some yarn.

1. THE VILLAGE SIGN



OVER TO YOU...

Can you guess what Kelly's shop is called?

K L 'S CR FT C RN

If you are not sure, then look out for it when you continue along the route.



“Okey dokey,” Raz said and started walking. “Come with me and we can find Inky, who should be at the next station.”

Crossing the road, Raz lead the way over to the **River Green Café**. He pointed to the right. “That little building over there was once a **firestation** and a **bank** and a **library**! Obviously not at the same time, but over the course of many years. Now it is a lovely **gift shop**.”

2. RIVER GREEN CAFE



Once they reached the café they found Inky, who looked bright and cheerful in a pink scarf and matching pink socks.

“Hello Inky,” Raz said excitedly. “What do you know about this café?”

“Well,” Inky replied. “This place serves lots of different types of food, which is all so yummy!” She licked her beak.

“It was opened in 2017, but before that it was a **butcher’s shop**, which had been trading in Debenham for more than **100 years!**”

“Wow,” said Raz. “That is a long time!”

Inky nodded. “Yes, and the café actually still has **the sign** from when it was a butcher’s shop.”



OVER TO YOU...

Can you find the sign?... And what animals are on it?

Two



Two



One



3. THE PHONEBOX



“Let’s get going and see what Ozzy is up to, I know he will be at **the red phonebox**,” Inky said.

They crossed the road, walked through the churchyard, and turned right down High Street. Once they got to **the four old trees**, they crossed the road again.

“Hey!” Raz shouted as soon as he spotted Ozzy. “These explorers would like to know about this red box!”

“Well, I will certainly be happy to tell them about it!” Ozzy replied in his typical jolly voice.

He explained: “Before people had mobile (and house) phones they would go to a **public telephone box** - like this one - if they needed to make a phone call!”

“But now with most people having their own phones, these public phones aren’t needed anymore. So, some of them have been removed and some have been turned into **mini libraries** - like this one!”

He smiled and then said: “But the very special extra part of this box here is that it now has a telephone where you can dial a number and hear stories from **the past about Debenham!**”

Ozzy loved gadgets and this was no exception.

OVER TO YOU...

On the poster to the right of the phone you can read about how you can listen to stories from the past....



Ozzy checked his story trail map. “Right, the next place we need to go to is a very special shop located opposite **Kelly’s Crafty Corner**. So once you see that we are almost there!”

He started walking, turning his head to make sure that everyone was following him.

4. HENRY ABBOTT HARDWARE



They passed **the butcher** with **the golden cow Gary** (*can you spot him? He might be inside if the shop is closed*), **The Red Lion** (*check out the door knocker!*) and then turned left.

There it was! And standing outside the front was Garla. Garla had a passion for local history, and she was in particular fascinated by the history of this shop.

“Welcome to **Henry Abbott Hardware**,” she said with her croaky voice. “This shop has been a family business here in Debenham for more than 300 years!”

She continued. “It was a shoemaker called **Thomas Abbott**, who first set up a business here. When a great-great-great (and lots more greats than that) of his, **Henry Abbott**, later took over the shop, it got the name that we know today.”

OVER TO YOU...

If you look at the signage outside the shop, can you figure out which year the shop was established?



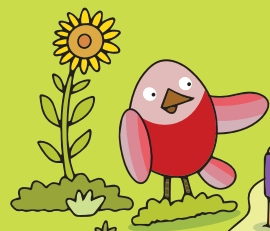


To Stonham Aspoll

Gracechurch Street



The Village Sign



High Street



The Church

To Winston
➔

Cross Green



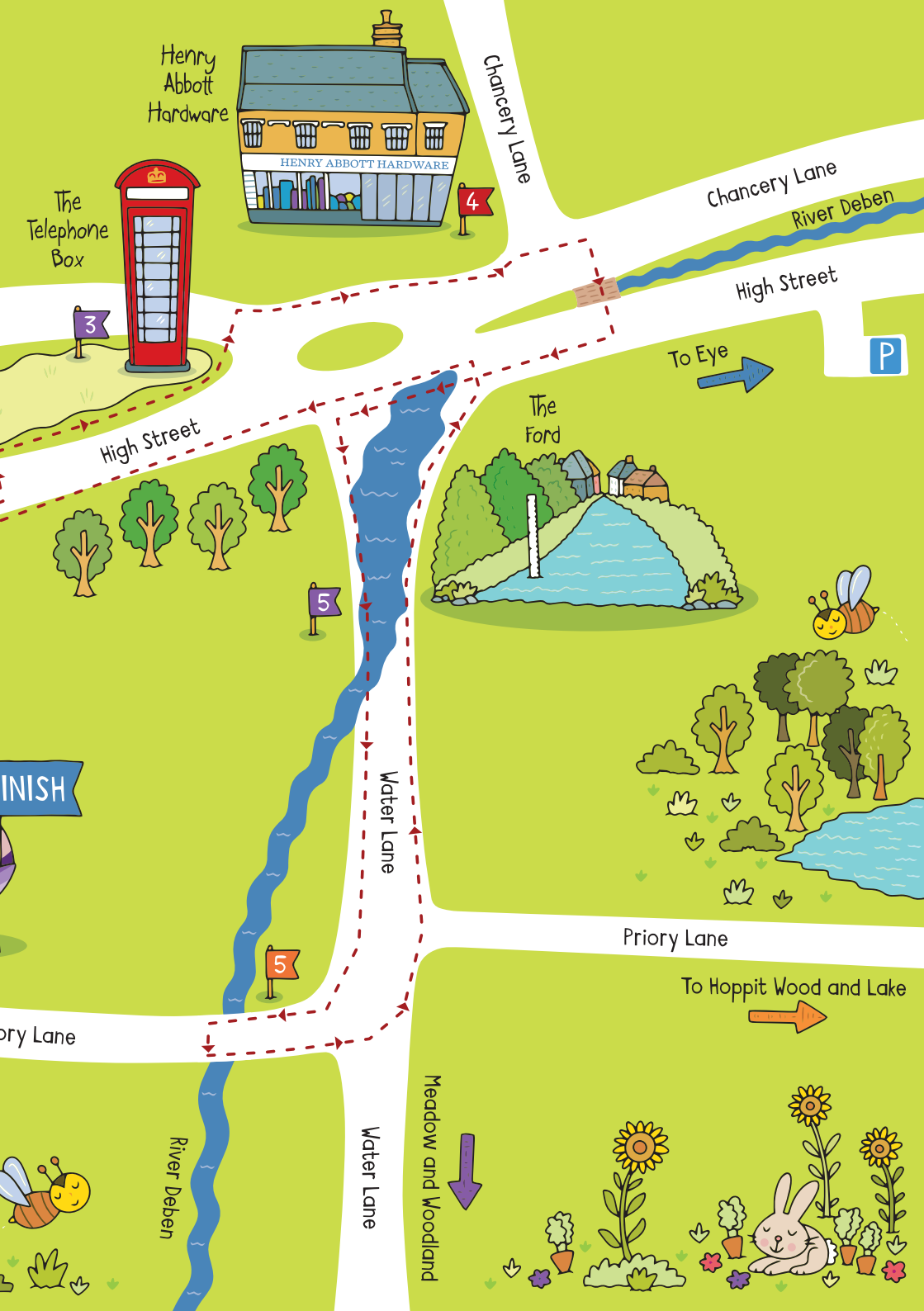
River Green Café

Cross Green

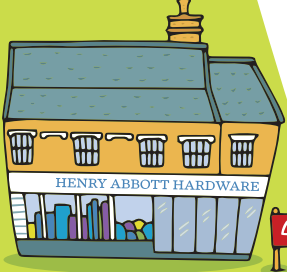
Cross Green



Pric



Henry Abbott Hardware



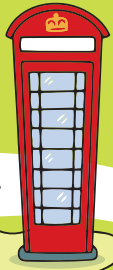
Chancery Lane

Chancery Lane

River Deben

High Street

The Telephone Box



3

4

High Street



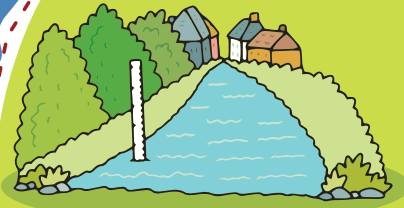
5



Water Lane

5

The Ford



To Eye



P

FINISH

Priory Lane

To Hoppit Wood and Lake



Priory Lane

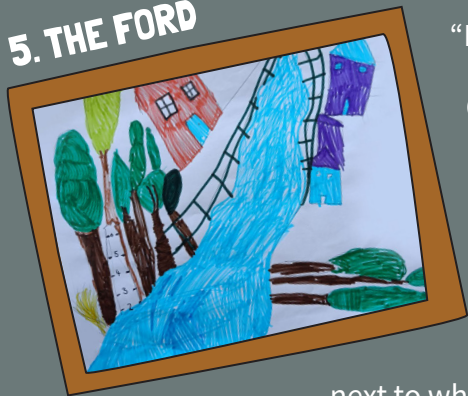
Meadow and Woodland



River Deben



5. THE FORD



“Right,” said Inky “What’s next?”

Ozzy, the one with the trail map, quickly replied: “We now need to go and find **the ford** and **the river Deben!**”

They all started walking again and before they knew it, they reached their next destination. Here, Baz in his bright red rubber boots was standing next to what looked like a **gigantic ruler!**

“What is that?” Inky asked. Baz smiled. “Well, I will explain, but let me first tell you what a ford is.”

“A ford is a shallow place in a body of water, such as a river, where you can cross - by walking or riding on an animal or in a vehicle,” he said. “However, this ford is a bit different, because here you go along the river and not across it. And when the river is flowing, the road simply disappears under the water, which is why it is called Water Lane!”

He added: “The ruler is very useful as it shows travellers how deep the water is. That means it’s up to them to judge whether it is safe to pass...”

Garla chuckled and then had an idea. “It is actually also quite useful when there isn’t water in the ford. Because then we can all measure how tall we are!” They all giggled.

OVER TO YOU...

Can you measure how tall you are by using the ruler?
(Or if there is water on the road, can you see how deep it is?)

Walk down Water Lane (if possible), and discover where the river goes off the road again.
Continue to walk until you get to a bridge. Here you will see the river again. It flows towards Woodbridge.



Ozzy looked at the map again. “Come with me - we need to walk up High Street again.”

They passed a coffee house and the four old trees and soon they were outside the magnificent **St. Mary Magdalene Church**.

Here they met Alice who looked colourful and happy in her usual flowery sunhat.

“Hello everyone! My job today is to tell you about the **Tudor roses**, so here goes.”

“Once upon a time there was a battle* between two royal groups: **the House of Lancaster** and **the House of York**. Each house had a symbol: one had a red rose and one had a white rose.”

Alice continued: “**Henry Tudor (Henry VII)** was from **Lancaster** and when he in 1486 married **Elizabeth of York** the battle between the two royal houses was brought to an end. The two rose symbols were then combined into one symbol called the **Tudor rose**, and that’s when the **Tudor period** started.

6. THE TUDOR ROSES



The red rose of the House of Lancaster



The white rose of the House of York



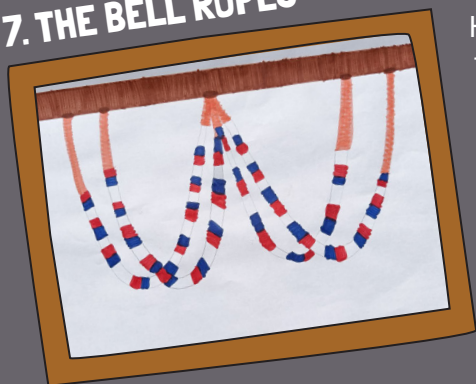
A Tudor rose

OVER TO YOU...

Can you find two Tudor Roses (in grey stone) above a wooden door (outside church wall)?

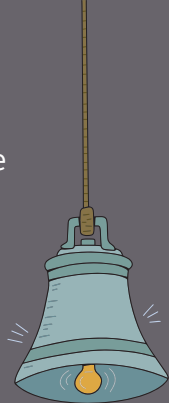
* The Wars of the Roses 1455-1486

7. THE BELL ROPES



Having found the door with the Tudor roses Alice led the way back to the front of the grand building.

They all went inside. The first room they saw was the porch and the next was the base of the tower - or the '**ringing chamber**'. Here they met Vix.



"Vix, what are you going to show us?" Ozzy asked, scratching his head.

"Well," she said. "Look up in the ceiling. Can you see the ropes with the long and colourful fluffy handles?" They all nodded.

Vix continued: "They are connected to the **church bells** in the tower! At certain times, the **bell-ringers** in the village will stand here in a circle and pull the ropes to make the bells ring!"

OVER TO YOU...

The colourful ends of the ropes have a special name – in fact it is a girls name! Can you guess what it is by reshuffling these letters?

Hint: It starts with an S!



L Y L
A S

A S

“One more thing to do in here” said Vix... “If you go into the main part of the church (called the ‘**nave**’ and ‘**aisles**’) you will be able to find Yassandra, who is going to tell you some more interesting things.”

They all went through the doorway and Garla whispered: “We must be quiet in here - or at least only talk with a low tone of voice!”

Yassandra was standing next to an ornament, looking at it with her magnifying glass.

“Oh hello,” she said with a smile. “I suspect you are here to hear about the **dark pink pieces of glass?**”

“Oh yes!” Inky and Raz chorused.

Yassandra explained: “If you look at the big windows with the small diamond-shaped pieces of glass, you will notice that there are a few dark pink pieces among all the light pink ones.”

She continued: “Those dark pink ones are the only remaining original pieces, which most likely date back to the **15th Century!**”

8. THE PINK GLASS



OVER TO YOU...

How many dark pink pieces can you find?



Once they had finished counting, Yassandra pointed towards a table near some bookshelves. “That is your last stop today,” she said and waved to Alvin, who was sitting at the table. They all went over to him.

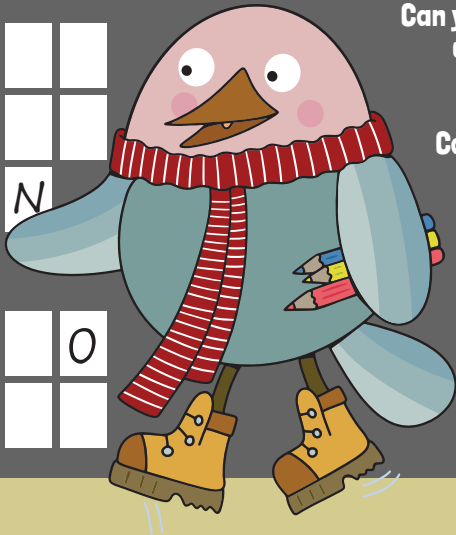
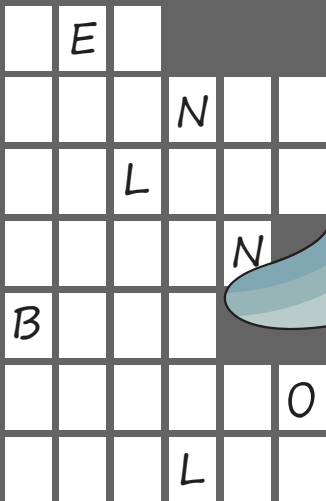
“Hello explorers!” He said with a grin. “And hello Alice and Raz, Ozzy, Yassandra, Garla, Baz, Inky, and Vix!”

He always said their names in the order of the colours of the **rainbow**. Red Raz was first, then the orange Ozzy, all the way to violet Vix.

He continued: “The tour is now finished, but if your legs are a bit tired you can sit at this table and just relax. Maybe you could do some drawings. Perhaps you would like to draw our family tree?”

“As you may know from the book ‘**At the end of the rainbow**’, Alice and I and our seven chicks all live in one big tree. Alice and I have a rainbow-coloured house, while each of the chicks live in a house with a colour from the rainbow.”

9. THE FAMILY TREE



OVER TO YOU...

Can you write the colours of the rainbow in the right order?

Can you draw Alvin and Alice’s family tree?

If you want to see a picture of the tree then find the book on the shelf and look at page 30.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS STORY TRAIL.

This trail was developed by local author Vibeke Flatman with support from the Debenham community. If you would like to know more about the Alvin family you can visit www.alvinsart.co.uk.

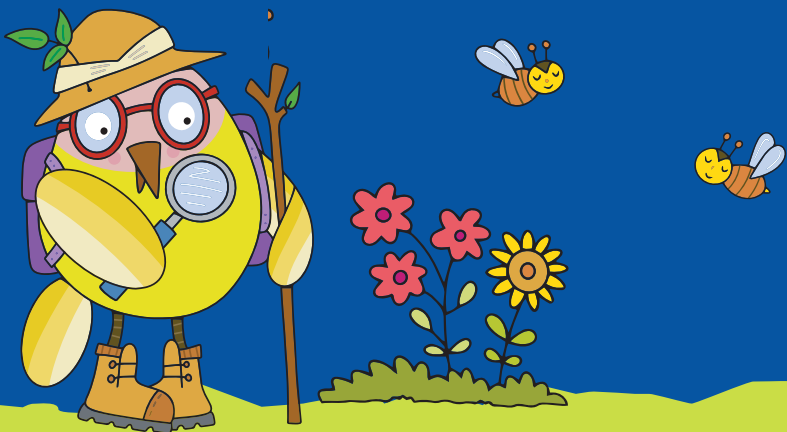
The illustrations of local landmarks were made by **Debenham children**.

All other illustrations for this trail are the work of **Simon Abbott**.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the following groups in Debenham who have also contributed to this trail:

Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School
Debenham Library
Kelly's Crafty Corner
Local businesses in Debenham
Debenham Local History Society
Debenham Monday meet-up group
Get Suffolk Reading Literacy Champions

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