

A cheeky night away in Constable's Country, Suffolk May 13th 2017

Ruby the campervan is parked up alongside 4 caravans on a very pleasant Camping and Caravan Certified site, The Briar, just south of Ipswich. The main draw for us to visit this area, is Alton Water, a man made reservoir complete with cycle path around the circumference.



The Briar is a lovely grassy CL situated in the small village of Bentley, and offers EHU, a loo and emptying and filling points. It's very re-

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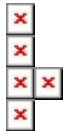
laxed and at only £15 for the night, and less than an hour's drive for us it's perfect location for a one nighter. The owners are lovely and made a point of coming to say hello once we were set up. They'd kindly let us arrive before lunch to enable us to enjoy an afternoon of cycling. They were fascinated with Ruby and were keen to have a nosey, as they are thinking about getting their own Ruby in the near future.



We enjoyed a quick cheese and ham toastie before we unloaded the bikes and hit the road, less than 3 miles to Alton Water. The weather was cloudy, but not raining, and there were lots of families out and about around and on the water which was lovely to see. The track around Alton water was kept

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well and our bikes coped well - I was so impressed, despite some steep bits we managed to cycle non stop with no getting off and pushing! We stopped every now and again to find some geocaches and take some pictures, and didn't rush, the circuit took about 2 hours to complete. There was a lovely wildflower meadow that we passed- It was lovely.



We cycled back to the campsite, via the local strawberry seller (check out the size of those  and promptly had a longish nap! I love Ruby naps! Good for the soul!

 We'd decided we were going to be brave and risk an outdoor BBQ for dinner, despite

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the weather forecast being a bit so so, you can imagine our delight when just as Keefy sparked up, the weather gods took care of the lingering dull skies and the sunshine and warmth we've missed recently came out to say hello! It was glorious, we even took our jumpers off and had short sleeves!



Keefy cooked a blinder of a feast for us; local burgers, pork and apple sausages and chicken, cooked to perfection on our new gas BBQ that we were gifted from May and Bernard, whilst I served couscous, coleslaw and jacket potatoes, which were an experiment done in the slow cooker, but they were fantastic! It really was a lovely evening, and as the sun went down we decided to have a walk to the local for a couple of pints which was really

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nice.

Sunday dawned wet unfortunately, so we made the most of a lie in, partly as someone, ahem, had a little bit of a headache. A bottle of red wine followed by two pints of aspall will do that Lydia, when will I learn! By the time I was ready to surface the rain had gone, and so we cracked the bacon and eggs out and I was soon feeling 100% again. We also tried some toast (done in the toastie maker, worked well!) topped with John, the camp-site owners Saville Marmalade, which was delicious.



He caught us mid marmalade sampling as he came to check we'd had a nice evening and was thrilled we were enjoying the mar-

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malade. He also wanted to tell us that having been in Ruby yesterday, his wife had dragged him to Marquis to view two yesterday afternoon!! We had another nice chat before packing up and waving goodbye. The sun had decided to reappear so we pointed Ruby's wheels in the direction of National Trust Flatford Mill, 3 miles away. Flatford Mill is well known as being the view behind the painter John Constable's paintings.



It was a picture perfect day, so we enjoyed a 5 mile circular walk from Flatford through the Depdale Valley. I can't think of anywhere that is more English- with green meadows, a perfect river running through, rowing boats, ducks and ducklings, a tea shop, and 16th century buildings to peruse.

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 We enjoyed a lovely cream tea overlooking the bridge and then a local ice cream before heading home feeling refreshed and ready to tackle the week ahead.

What a lovely bit of escapism- and now it's less than two weeks til our next trip- one of our favourites, Scotland.

Until next time

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