

# HEYBRIDGE BASIN & GOLDHANGER

## COASTAL WALK



### CIRCULAR WALK

Long walk with uneven or muddy ground. Walking boots recommended.



START  
HEYBRIDGE  
BASIN



2 HOURS  
53 MINS



8.5  
MILES



### OVERVIEW

Although this is a fairly long walk, it has so much to offer in terms of scenery and interest it comes highly recommended. There are no gradients to contend with, so the walking is easy throughout. You will explore the charming nautical bustle of Heybridge Basin, with its two attractive pubs and tearoom. The little-known Chigborough Lakes are a tranquil spot to see along the way, before you reach the historic fishing village of Goldhanger. The return leg to Heybridge Basin will be the highlight of the walk for many, as the route goes along the seawall, with great views of Osea and Northey islands and the River Blackwater.

### HOW TO GET HERE

#### Location for the start of the walk:

Heybridge Basin

#### OS Explorer Map No:

176 (Blackwater Estuary)

#### OS Grid Reference: TL 870 069

#### Parking:

Daisy Meadow Car Park (free), off Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, CM9 4RP.

#### Public Transport:

Buses No. 73 and No. 95 from Maldon. Monday to Saturday service only, no service on Sundays.

Tell us what you think of the walk & send us your photos:



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### CHIGBOROUGH LAKES

Chigborough Lakes are a series of worked out flooded gravel pits. Many of these are now owned by Chigborough Fisheries and used by anglers to catch species such as bream, carp, tench and roach. The Essex Wildlife Trust also has a 48 hectare reserve covering the northernmost lakes.

### SALTMARSH

The sea walls on Northey Island have been breached to create an area of saltmarsh, combining farming and nature conservation. It is managed by the National Trust. Northey House, with its distinctive tower, is available for holiday lets. The land to the south of the tidal causeway to Northey Island is recognised as the likeliest site of the Battle of Maldon 991.



### OSEA ISLAND

Osea Island was once owned by Frederick Charrington of the famous brewing family, who established a retreat for wealthy alcoholics on the island in the early 20th century. One famous patient is reputed to have been the avant-garde artist, Walker Sickert. From 2005 to 2010, the Causeway Retreat specialised in the treatment of addiction problems and mental health. Now, it is available as an exclusive holiday location; the island has also featured on the cinema screen and television.



### SMUGGLERS

Goldhanger was once a well-used smugglers' haunt. The village was sufficiently distant from Maldon to escape the attentions of all but the most diligent officers stationed there. A favourite trick of the Goldhanger smugglers was to float rafts of tubs containing gin, brandy and tobacco down the Blackwater, and land them at Mill Beach (opposite Northey Island).

### USEFUL WEBSITES

NATIONAL TRUST

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

[www.ebws.org.uk](http://www.ebws.org.uk)

M A L D O N D I S T R I C T



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This walk was developed by Maldon District Council & Chris Harvey.  
Photographers - Adrian Day & Chris Harvey.



## REFRESHMENTS

**CHEQUERS**, The Square, Goldhanger,  
CM9 8AS - Tel: 01621 788203

**CRICKETERS**, 33 Church Street,  
Goldhanger, CM9 8AR - Tel: 01621 788468

**JOLLY SAILOR**, Basin Road, Heybridge  
Basin, CM9 4RS - Tel: 01621 854210

**OLD SHIP**, Lock Hill, Heybridge Basin,  
CM9 4RX - Tel: 01621 854150

**THE LOCK TEA ROOM**, Basin Road,  
Heybridge Basin, CM9 4RS - Tel: 01621 854466

**CHIGBOROUGH BARN TEAROOMS**,  
Chigborough Road, Heybridge, CM9 4RE  
Tel: 07563 252902

**RUBINO KITCHEN**, Chigborough Farm,  
Chigborough Rd, Heybridge, CM9 4RE  
Tel: 01621 855579

**THE VIEW RIVER CAFE**, Osea Leisure Park,  
Goldhanger Road, Heybridge, Essex, CM9 4SA  
Tel: 01621 855122

## WALK ROUTE

**1.** From the car park, go up the steps onto the towpath of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, passing the Old Ship pub and Heybridge Sea Lock in 250 yards. Turn left here to ascend the seawall, very shortly passing the Jolly Sailor pub on your left and The Lock Tea Room on your right. Continue ahead on the seawall for 1.2 miles, passing the Blackwater Sailing Club and the Saltcote Maltings (now residential). On reaching the Mill Beach pub (currently derelict) please take care to go through the pub's car park to reach Goldhanger Road.

**2.** Turn left to walk along Goldhanger Road (B1026) for nearly 400 yards. **NB: please take care - this road is usually very busy and there is no pavement.** Turn right at a footpath sign (directly opposite the entrance to the Happy Days caravan park) to enter a car parking area for Chigborough Lakes. Continue ahead on a wide track, ignoring the track leading off to the left. There are some attractive views to the left over May Water. After 250 yards, turn right at a fork to follow the arrow on a permissive footpath sign.

**3.** In 15 yards, turn right again at a T-junction to follow the wide track which skirts around the northern edge of Home Water (ignore the path which forks off ahead after 120 yards). Go past a large log cabin on your left; soon you will reach a fisherman's hut and barrier at the entrance to the lakes, at Chigborough Road.

**4.** Turn left onto Chigborough Road, soon passing The Barn at Chigborough. After 250 yards on the road, turn right onto a gravel track just in front of Rook Hall Cottages. The track takes a left hand bend after 200 yards; go ahead past Rook Hall Farm house on your right and on through Rook Hall farmyard, until you reach an open space with a large storage shed ahead of you. Turn right here to take a path (look for a footpath arrow on the side of a nearby barn); the path soon becomes a grassy track with a hedge to the left and fence to the right, with a large meadow and lake off to the right. After ½ mile, the track comes out onto Wash Lane.

**5.** Turn left onto the lane; this soon bends round to the right, after you pass a pretty thatched cottage. After 400 yards on the lane, where it takes a left hand bend, look out for a footpath sign on the right. Take this footpath, soon crossing a footbridge and then head along the path which crosses the middle of two large fields. After nearly ½ mile, where this path reaches Blind Lane, cross the footbridge. Then turn right along the lane for 220 yards, until you reach a footpath heading off to the right, just before a row of houses. Follow this path, which runs along the left hand edge of a large field. On reaching Maldon Road (B1026), cross over and proceed along Head Street for ½ mile to reach the Chequers at the junction of Head Street and Church Street.

**6.** Turn right here and walk along Fish Street, which has many attractive houses and cottages of varying antiquity. After 300 yards, turn left onto the tree-lined path, passing a children's playground and village playing fields on your right. When the path emerges from the trees, ascend the steps up onto the seawall turning right to head back towards Heybridge Basin.

**7.** Continue along the seawall for 4 ½ miles. Along the way you will pass Goldhanger Creek, have good views of Osea Island and its causeway (if the tide is right), Northey Island and the large caravan parks alongside Mill Beach. On reaching the Mill Beach pub, continue ahead along the seawall, retracing your earlier route which heads back to Heybridge Basin and the starting point of the walk at Daisy Meadows car park.