
Favourite Nature Rambles Around Chichester

by David & Lynda Thornley

Bosham Hoe



The start of this walk is the little car park at the end of the delightfully named Smugglers Lane

which traverses the Hoe. It can be as little as 1.7 miles long if you're in a hurry, as the trail on the map shows, or about double that if you extend it by taking Shore Road around the harbour into Bosham village for a cup of tea.

Follow the short but attractive path through the woodland glade down to the harbour. If you carry straight on you'll end up on the bank where the Ichi-boshamferry can be boarded and carry you over to sample the excitement of Ichinor which is clearly visible.

By turning to the right you'll stay in more tranquil parts following a path that winds round the edge of the harbour between the marsh and farmland. Don't try this at high tide unless you've got waders on, the high water mark is well above where you can walk.

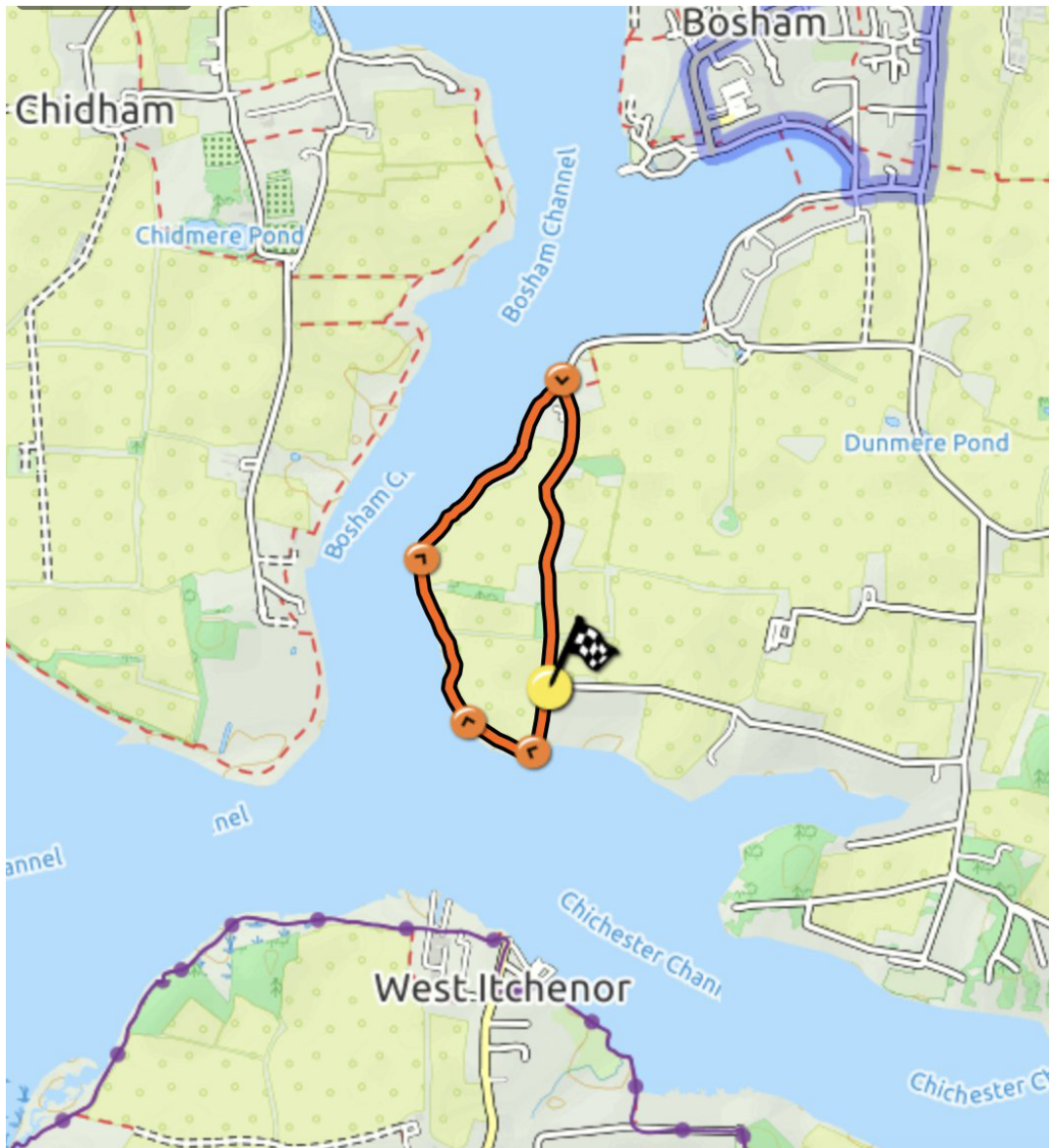


The channel on the other side of the marsh is a haven for wildfowl and waders especially when the tide is reasonably high so you can see more from the path. The winter, naturally, is best with plenty of Brent Geese filling the air with their croaks. The mud usually attracts many Redshank and Oystercatchers together with a few Curlew; if you're fortunate there will be a trip of Dunlin flying around like starlings.



In winter the mud is quite sticky so boots are a sensible precaution especially where small streams flow out from the fields. The views to your left of the Chidham peninsular are particularly attractive if you like boats as you pass the sailing centre and so many moorings in the channel. This is the part of the walk to be savoured rather than rushed, there's plenty of wildlife to see if you take the time to notice it.

After half a mile an old landing stage comes into view leading to Bosham Harbour itself to the north. Here you can expect to see Mallard and Teal with a few Shelduck to liven up the landscape. It's a picture postcard view of the harbour from this side with the church, houses and moorings conveying a classic, timeless feeling.



This is where you can carry on along Shore Road to the village or head back the other way along the road back to Smugglers Lane. Whatever you do don't park on this road if it's anywhere near high Tide. Many have, and found to their cost that the substantial looking road floods, quite deep enough to cause a lot of damage to a car!

Returning along the road is pleasant enough as there's little traffic and the fields are quite interesting. To the left there's a shoot so in the winter months you can clearly see many pheasants lurking in one of several patches of cover crops. To the right are fields where birds pick and poke at whatever food they can find; crows seem to like it here too.

Not one of the longest walks in the harbour but always a good vantage point to see what's happening on the water, whatever your interest.