
Favourite Nature Rambles Around Chichester

by David & Lynda Thornley

Northney Ramble



This is a pleasant ramble around the northern part of Hayling Island that includes some splendid views and varied terrain. It's about five miles, fairly flat, so it's easy going but a bit tricky in places as some of the paths are not well marked.

The start is in the little car park, just past the bridge on the right hand side opposite the petrol station. From here there's a lovely panorama stretching from the bridge to the east to the remains of the Hayling Billy railway line to the west; in summer there are plenty of yachts moored to add to the interest. The walk starts by taking the well marked path to the old railway line and following it south past the West Hayling Nature reserve.



It's not difficult to imagine what the line was like before it's closure in 1963. Linking the main line at Havant to the seaside it would have been busy during the summer, full of excited holiday

makers. Little tank engines pulled four coaches at a time across Bridge Lake chuffing away, blowing out clouds of steam.

Like all railway walks it's straight and easy to follow. When you reach another car park turn left, cross the main road (carefully, it's busy!) to take the track that's heading east. At the end of the houses there's a footpath, head right for a short distance then continue east through fields until you reach Northney. Don't go as far as the graveyard, keep to the right and the main road just south of the church.



Turn right for a short while until you reach St Peter's Avenue on the left, take this road and follow it up to the Riding stables at the end. Here there's a gap in the hedge which you can take that leads down to the harbour and the Emsworth Channel. You may not find this marked on your OS map to take care, it's relatively new. Unfortunately there's only a short stretch of path that's accessible to walk along the sea wall but the views south, over Gutner Marsh and north, up to Emsworth make up for it.



Wooden railings across the path clearly mark how far you can venture, go right up to these, cross the stream and then follow the path between fields that leads back to the Main Street. Here you have a choice, either go through the church yard to follow a footpath back as shown on the map or take the road which gives you the opportunity to visit Northney Farm where you can get a cup of tea amongst other things.

Where the footpath meets the road there's a pond which usually has a few Mallard on it, take the track here



Where the footpath meets the road there's a pond which usually has a few Mallard on it, take the track here that goes west from the road and continues on as a footpath. This leads past the back of another riding stables (popular on Hayling!) then heads north up to the Garage, by the bridge, at the start of the walk.
