

• Distance 19½km/12 miles • Time 6hrs • Type Riverside



1 NAVIGATION
LEVEL 1



2 FITNESS
LEVEL 2



Plan your walk



WHERE: Circular walk from Chelmondiston via Shotley Gate.

START/END: Chelmondiston car park (TM204372).

TERRAIN: Mostly easy shoreline and field-edge paths, with some quiet country lanes.

MAPS: OS Explorer 197; Landranger 169.

GETTING THERE: The nearest mainline station is Ipswich, from where bus 202 to Shotley Gate goes via Chelmondiston (© 0800 919390, www.travelineeastanglia.org.uk).

EATING & DRINKING: Butt & Oyster, Pin Mill (© 01473 780764); Pin Mill Gallery café (© 07776 062872). Or in Shotley Gate there's the Shipwreck bar & restaurant (© 01473 788865) and the Bristol Arms pub (© 01473 787200).

SLEEPING: B&Bs include School House, Chelmondiston (© 01473 780726) and Hill House

PHOTOGRAPHY: FIONA BARLTROP



The 67km/42-mile Stour & Orwell Walk – which links up with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Path at Felixstowe – goes around two of the most beautiful estuaries in East Anglia. The Shotley Peninsula separates the Stour and Orwell rivers, which meet at historic Harwich Harbour. Harwich is one of the biggest ports in Europe, and Felixstowe opposite is the largest container port in Britain. You'll have excellent views across to both ports on this walk, which, by contrast, is mostly along stretches of unspoilt shoreline – ideal for bird-watching. The estuaries are renowned for their wildlife, with many thousands of birds spending the winter along the riverbanks. They are also popular with sailors – their boats dwarfed by the enormous container ships – so there's always lots of activity to watch on the water. The last leg of the route, which cuts back across the peninsula, is along quiet country lanes.

1. START From the car park (TM204372) cross the B1456 and go down the lane (Church Road) opposite the church. Continue down the bridleway signed for Pin Mill, which takes you through a meadow. At the bottom, cross a stile and then another and carry on along the edge of this meadow to reach a boatyard at Pin Mill. Go L and then R around the yard. (After the first stile you can also bear R to the car park/road and turn L down to Pin Mill.)

2. Pin Mill is a most attractive spot, with a long history of boat- and barge-building. The setting is used in Arthur Ransome's classic book, *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*. The walk continues east from here through National Trust-owned woodland. At high tides, when the foreshore by the Butt & Oyster pub is under water, you will need to go up the road a short distance and turn L up



Continued...

Farm, Shotley (© 01473 787318). Suffolk Secrets has an excellent selection of self-catering cottages, such as the ideally located Old Church Room (© 01502 722717, www.suffolk-secrets.co.uk).

VISITOR INFORMATION: Ipswich TIC, St Stephen's Lane (© 01473 258070, www.visiteastofengland.com); or visit www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org.
GUIDEBOOKS: *Pathfinder Guide – Suffolk Walks* by John Brooks (£10.95, Crimson, ISBN 9780711715974).

LOCAL RAMBLERS GROUP: Ipswich & District Ramblers (© 01473 412742, www.ipswichramblers.org.uk).

the steps to follow a higher level path. Otherwise, you can follow the lower path through the woodland at the far end of the pub, which joins up with the higher path further on. (Note: if you take the higher path, do not turn R at an NT waymark, which is for a National Trust circular walk.) Eventually you emerge from the woodland and continue beside the River Orwell along the easy shoreline path (with Stour & Orwell Walk waymarks). Before rounding Collimer Point, you'll get your first glimpse of the cranes at Felixstowe port and the vast container ships will soon come into view. It's a fascinating sight: birds, boats and behemoths all juxtaposed.

3. At Shotley Point you arrive at a marina and continue around it to cross a lock gate. There is a wooden plank along it for the benefit of dogs! The gate is

normally closed, but if not, it shouldn't be a long wait. You now have good views across to Harwich. Just past the Bristol Arms the road turns R with a signpost indicating that the Stour & Orwell Walk does, too. But continue ahead along the shoreline of the River Stour, signed as a restricted byway. Before long (at a sign warning you not to walk on the sea defences), turn R uphill to a residential estate and go L. Follow the shoreline path via Erwarton Ness for a couple of miles.

4. Having gone through a large hawthorn hedge, turn R inland along a path, bearing L when you reach a track that leads to a road junction. Turn L and keep ahead to a T-junction, with Harkstead church opposite (worth a look inside). Turn R to return to Chelmondiston.
Route devised by Fiona Barltrop