








Keyhaven Marshes

Walk via the Solent Way through a nature reserve rich in wildlife.

Key:

-  Trail Starting Point
-  Trail
-  Point of Interest
-  Car Park
-  Public House
-  Public Toilets
-  Trail Steps

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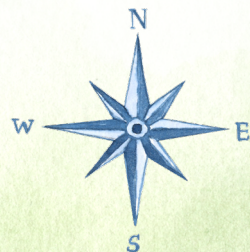
The Gun Inn 

Keyhaven

  Keyhaven Amenity Car Park

Coastal Marshes 

Salterns 



Keyhaven Marshes

Along this route there are views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight and the Needles and opportunities to watch the ever-changing bird life of Keyhaven Marshes.

The path then cuts inland to follow an ancient highway behind the reserve before returning to Keyhaven.



Outside the sea wall the mudflats and saltmarsh are rich feeding and roosting grounds for many bird species. These form part of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Lymington and Keyhaven Marshes reserve. The winter is when the largest number of wading birds can be seen visiting, including wigeon, redshanks and curlews.

In the summer, the salt marshes are important breeding grounds for birds such as terns and gulls. In spring and autumn look out for spoonbills, large white wading birds. You'll know when you see one – the clue is in the name!



Trail Overview

Start/finish: Keyhaven green bus stop, SO41 0TG.
Grid reference SZ 306 914
what3words.com/tenure.mimes.paraded

Ordnance Survey map: Explorer OL 22 New Forest.

Distance: 3.5 miles (5.6 km) – 1-2 hours.

Local facilities: Keyhaven public car park, toilets and Gun Inn.

Accessibility: Easy walk along level ground. Two gates with accessible latches.

Directions

- 1 The Gun Inn / Keyhaven Amenity Car Park**
Starting from outside The Gun Inn, facing the harbour, walk left for 10 yards then turn right down Lower Pennington Lane (a no through road). Pass Keyhaven public car park and toilets on your right and follow alongside the harbour wall to cross the mouth of Avon Water. Turn right at a waymarker post signed 'Solent Way Lymington' and through the gate
- 2 Information panel**
Go past an information panel and follow the gravel path along the top of the sea wall. Be aware that cyclists also share this footpath. At this point there are good views across the saltmarsh to Hurst Spit, and Hurst Castle and lighthouse
- 3 Follow the sea wall**
Continue following the Solent Way along the sea wall. Please keep dogs under close control and stay on the footpath to reduce disturbance to wildlife, in particular nesting, roosting and feeding birds
- 4 Bird nesting island**
Continue along the sea wall from which there are good views of the Isle of Wight and the Needles, the site of many a wrecked ship. On your left is Fishtail Lagoon with a large bird nesting island in the middle. A grassy track drops down on your left to an information panel and a gate to access the edge of this lagoon. This is a good point to watch birds and then continue on the upper gravel track
- 5 Viewpoint on sea wall**
Continue ahead alongside Fishtail Lagoon. At the end of this lagoon there is a path leading off to your left down steps following alongside a wide-cut channel. Ignore this path and continue following the path ahead which bends to your right. Where the path turns left there is grassy area on top of the steep sea wall where you can rest and admire the views
- 6 Walk towards jetty**
Continue walking alongside the lagoon towards the pipe line and jetty
- 7 Continue along the footpath**
Turn left opposite the jetty and follow along a wide gravel track, taking the upper path when the track splits, which takes you inland across the reserve to a small car park at the end of Lower Pennington Lane. This track goes through grassland and scrub on a reclaimed landfill site. Go through the wooden gate, beside an information panel, and turn left through the car park and past a wide gate to continue along the footpath
- 8 Efford Landfill Site**
Follow an ancient highway alongside Efford Landfill Site. This site has now been reclaimed and landscaped with a large lake. The path goes between two hedgerows, which act as a natural screen to watch wildlife. In early summer listen for stonechats, often seen perched on gorse, which make a loud 'tchack' alarm call like the sound of two pebbles being knocked together
- 9 Join a single track road**
Ignore two paths on your right and go past a wide wooden gate to join a single track road. Follow along the road to the walk start and retrace your steps back past the Gun Inn and to the bus stop.

