



Hayling Billy Line

This walk starts at the amenity car park at the southern end of Hayling Bridge. To reach it from Emsworth, drive west onto the A27 then come off immediately onto the A3023 towards Hayling Island.

After passing over the bridge there is a small turning on the right which leads into the car park. If the car park is full, you can park the other side of the bridge in the car park adjacent to the Ship Inn.

From the southern entrance to the car park, follow the footpath west along the foreshore until you reach the line of the old railway, where you turn left.

Just before turning left, if you look north you can see the piers of the old railway bridge and in the middle of the channel, the remains of a swingbridge.

The Hayling Billy line was used primarily to take holidaymakers from Havant to Hayling Island. It opened for passengers in 1867. It closed in 1962, primarily because the cost of replacing the swing bridge was too high, but it was also victim of the Beeching report, which deemed it uneconomic to develop.

Head south down the path, which is shared by cyclists, so be aware.

After about 150 metres, look on the right hand side of the path for signs to the new nature reserve, and take this path.

The path runs adjacent to old oyster beds. Fishermen used to trawl small oysters called 'spats' in the English Channel, sometimes as far off as France. They would bring them back and place them in oyster beds to grow. After a couple of years they were large enough to harvest and sell.

Stick to the foreshore and follow the nature trail round to a small car park, frequently used by windsurfers at high water on Langstone Harbour.

Langstone is the middle harbour of three; Chichester, Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours. In some ways it is the poor relation of the other two harbours, having no significant port facilities, and little leisure boating activity. This does, however, make it very quiet for the birdlife, and a wealth of seabirds and waders can be seen along its edge.

Rejoin the Hayling Billy trail and follow it right to its end, where you will find the old station has now been converted in a theatre.

If you want a break before returning, there are a few pubs if you turn left up Station Road.

Returning up the trail, walk past the wooded section on the left, then a large field boundary on the left. At the end of this field you follow a small footpath that heads west and takes you round the top of this field and down to the foreshore.

Turn right at the foreshore and follow the footpath until it once again joins the Hayling Billy trail.

Follow the trail right back to the bridge, and retrace the footpath along the foreshore and back to the car park.