

'LOOMPIT LAKE LOOP'

Distance 3.9 miles/6.23km

Start: Trimley St Martin Village Sign which is on the green where the High Road meets St Martins Green. It is visible from the High Road

Buses and bus stop: Felixstowe Flyer buses numbers 75 and 77 from Felixstowe and Ipswich Cattle Market stop very close to the Village Sign.

Eateries: The Hand in Hand, Trimley St Martin and The Mariners, Trimley St Mary (both pubs). Goslings Farm Shop has a café serving breakfasts, lunches and snacks.

This is a fairly strenuous walk, involving one steep hill and certain paths could be slippery after wet weather. We would advise sturdy footwear for this walk. You will use pavements, field tracks, bridleways and woodland paths. This walk takes you to the River Orwell shores with picturesque views and would be an excellent walk for bird lovers as so many can be spotted at Loompit Lake.

① From the **village sign**, take the High Road north. Go past **Trimley Memorial Hall** and The Trimley Sports and Social Club on your left. Then pass High Hall Close and the **Hand in Hand** pub on your right. A little further on, also on your right is **Trimley Methodist Church** on the corner of **Mill Lane**. On your left are two wooden houses, reported to be the some of the oldest in the village. A few metres from these is **Grimston Lane**.

② Turn left here. The second cottage on the right is Owl Cottage, another old property. Where the pavement ends is a STOP sign.

③ Bear right to the level crossing. The road is signed as **Thorpe Lane**. Go over the level crossing.

④ Take the footpath on your immediate right which runs alongside the railway line. In early summer there are numerous colourful wildflowers including foxgloves. About 100 metres along the path you will come to a waymark finger post.

⑤ Take this public footpath on your left which goes towards a copse. Follow the path over the field and you will come to an area known as Fisherman's Lakes, which is private. Continue along this path which goes past a field on your right with animals often grazing in it. The footpath eventually rejoins Thorpe Lane.

⑥ Bear right into Thorpe Lane and around a metal gate. The lane now becomes a bridleway called **Goslings Track**. This is named after **Goslings Farm** on your left. As you walk along the track you will have lovely views of the River Orwell over to your right.

⑦ You will come to a sign saying 'The Trinity Estate. Bridleway only'. Continue straight ahead on this bridleway which goes steadily downhill past fields and then woods. You may be lucky enough to hear nightingales in the woods in spring and early summer. The path eventually comes to the shores of the River Orwell.

⑧ Take the footpath to your right. On your right is **Loompit Lake**, with swans, ducks and geese, a bird lovers paradise. The shore opposite you on the river is the Shotley Peninsular. Ahead you will see **Levington Marina**. Continue following the footpath which eventually bends round the lake to your right. At this point you will have a closer view of the birds on the island in the lake. Then the path goes around to your left towards a wood.

⑨ Continue on the footpath through the wood. There are two parallel paths through some of the wood, as the lower path can get quite muddy. They will merge together so it doesn't matter which you take. As you go through the woods, you will see Suffolk Yacht Harbour or Levington Marina as most people call it on your left. The official path continues through the wood until it joins a tarmac road.

⑩ Turn away from the marina and right up the tarmac road.

⑪ About half a mile up the road is a post with an RSPB Farmland bird sign. (If you have walked to the end of a wood on your left up the tarmac road you have gone too far.) Turn right into the farm track here which goes through fields.

⑫ At the brow of the hill, Fire Hill, there is a finger post sign showing the public footpath directly ahead. The path, known as Morston Hall Track goes into a dip with a steep rise the other side (slippery in wet weather). The track goes past a wood on your right and then emerges through farm buildings of **Morston Hall**. Keep following the clear public footpath signs through the farm buildings until you get to a metal gate. Walk around this and the track eventually emerges on to Morston Hall Lane .

⑬ Turn right into Hill Cottage Track and walk along this tarmac road.

⑭ When the road bends to the left there is a **WW2 Pill Box** in the field to your right with a lovely view over to the River Orwell. When the road reaches some cottages called Hill Cottages on your left, continue along the gravel track downhill on your right.

⑮ At the bottom of the track, it goes over a stream and in front of you is a house converted from an **old pumping station**. Turn left here along a narrow track alongside the property and small woodland. You can see fishing lakes on your left as you walk up the track which can be wet after heavy rain. The footpath emerges into Thorpe Lane. Turn left and walk a short distance until you come to a footpath to your left..

⑯ Either retrace your steps along the footpath beside the fishing lakes to ⑤ then turn right along the path by the railway and make your way to ④. This is the safest route. Alternatively continue right along Thorpe Lane, taking great care of traffic as you go round the corner.

⑰ At the next corner is a cul-de-sac to your right, One of these cottages is known locally as the **Plague Cottage**. The road bends to the left. Continue along Thorpe Lane until you reach ④ and then retrace your steps over the level crossing and on to Grimstone Lane at ③. Continue to the end of the road and at ② turn right on to the High Road and cross over and make your way back to the village sign.

Detour to Trimley Marshes Nature Reserve 2.6miles /4.22 kl

At point ⑧ you may wish to take a detour to look at Trimley Marshes Nature Reserve. To do this turn left here and walk up the bridleway through trees and through hedgerows which would be attractive in autumn. The path goes down again and then opens out to where there is a bench and a lovely view of the River Orwell with good views over the countryside on your left hand side. The hill on your left is called **Sleighton Hill**. At 440 metres from Loompit Lake, the path forks.

Ⓐ At this point you can take the higher path along the embankment where you will have excellent views over the river but will be exposed to the wind. Alternatively the lower path (a bridleway) will be more sheltered and will be easier to get to the first hide. However this could be quite muddy after rain. Both paths are parallel to each other and from which you will see the cranes of **Felixstowe Port** ahead. Both paths then bend round to the right around a bay. If you are on the embankment you will have a good view over to your right of Shotley Point. Continue straight on the path you have chosen until the path bends sharply to the left.

Ⓑ At this point on the upper path there is a large sign which says Trimley Marshes and Nature Reserve. If you would like to visit the first hide you come to, and you are on the embankment, we strongly advise you come down to the lower path as access to the hide is much easier from

here. The first hide is about 400 metres on your left. It should be open.

Ⓒ This is called Benson Hide and you will be able to sit and have a good view of the wildlife on the inland lakes. There are plenty of posters to help you identify the birds. If you wanted to spend more time here there are 4 more hides and a Visitor Centre. For further details please check www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org. However we have only given details of the walk to the first hide.

At this point return to Loompit Lake and continue the walk from Point ⑧.

N.B. The words that are emboldened can be found in a separate Gazetteer also found in this section of the website.