

Lock of Ages—Heybridge and its Basin—5 Miles

BASE HEYBRIDGE BASIN, Daisy Meadow free carpark off Goldhanger Road B1026 map referenced TL 870 070. Get there by car? The A 414, B1018, B1019, and B1022 roads converge on Heybridge. From the B1022-B1026 roundabout near the recreation ground head southwards along Goldhanger Road. Basin Road is the first right, and the carpark is waymarked off right near the terminus.

FETCH Target is The Lock on Blackwater Estuary's seawall TL 871 069. An embankment adorns the western edge of Daisy Meadow to restrain the waters of Heybridge Canal. Climb to the towpath, and walk left alongside craft moored on The Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation Company's property. Round the corner by The Olde Ship, preferring to maintain the higher level of the seawall rather than sloping down to The Jolly Sailor. Poised on a pier at the latter's roof-level is The Lock Tearoom.

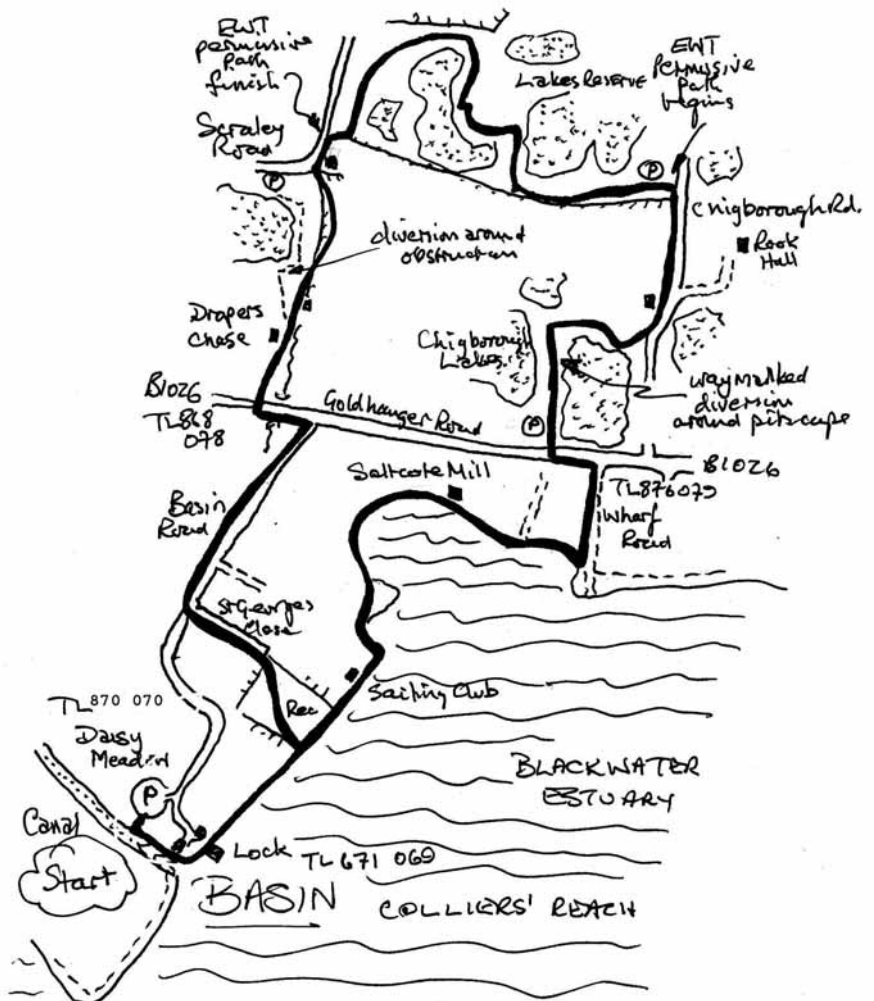
GATHER Target is Mill Beach: Wharf Rd junction with B1026 Rd TL 876 079 Walk on northwards along the elevated footway which leads on to affront a Sailing Club's slipway and wind around some saltings to pass Saltcote Mill Conversions and so reach the seagates atop the ramps of Wharf Road's crossing of the seawall. If anyone can give permission to walk the short road, seek such a favour before sharing a few paces on the tarmac to reach Goldhanger Road.

DRIVE Target is Drapers Chase junction with B1026 Rd TL 868 078 Twist left on the greensward for ninety metres and, when safe, cross to the track with a footpath finger-post. Old gravel workings are now pleasant Chigborough angling lakes and the path has been diverted by waymarks to avoid the depths suggested by the map. Head northwards across the anglers' carpark and follow the banks of the rightside water feature all the way around to the Chigborough Road exit by the old farmhouse. Resume the northward mode along the minor road, passing Rook Hall's drive to locate a footpath off right farther on. On the left side of the road is the carpark and entrance to Essex Wildlife Trust's Chigborough Lakes Reserve.

The delightful paths within it are happily available for permissive usage. Hug the southern boundary path until the waters of Gadwall and Pochard Lakes allow a northwards turn to get westside of an anglers' lake. The pathway hereabouts is judiciously cut through banks of blackthorn with planks used to span small moisture-collecting hollows. Stay within the path tunnelled through the vegetation around Teal Lake's north side, continuing through open glades to bend south adjacent to Scraley Road. Where the path bend left to return eastwards to the Trust's carpark, go right instead and join Scraley Road. Carefully negotiate the bend left and look for the footpath heading southward. In recent years it has been out of service; local usage being diverted unofficially on to neighbouring anglers' paths. Around the bend is another anglers' carpark. Chamfer left across it to a well-worn path passing anglers' bays alongside the great converted pitscape. At the S E corner of the water feature, bend right to reach the edge of a playing field and skirt the eastern edge of the cut grasses to re-join the right-of-way near the buildings of Drapers Farm. Share Drapers Chase with sports ground vehicles southward the B1026.

PENNING Back to The Lock TL 872 069 Go eastwards on the sidewalk of Goldhanger Road, cross Catchpole Brook, and turn right on Basin Road. Take St George's Close left and enter the recreational area at the far end. Steps in the S W corner allow the seawall to be re-joined. March off right to The Lock, a couple of seafaring pubs and Daisy Meadow.

HEYBRIDGE



Schematic Map Not to Scale
LOCK OF AGES Smiles
 Text anti clockwise.