

Orford, Suffolk

Starts at Orford car park (TM425496)

7 hours 30 minutes | 16.1miles 25.8km | Moderate



ID: 0.8747 | Developed by: Fiona Barltrop |

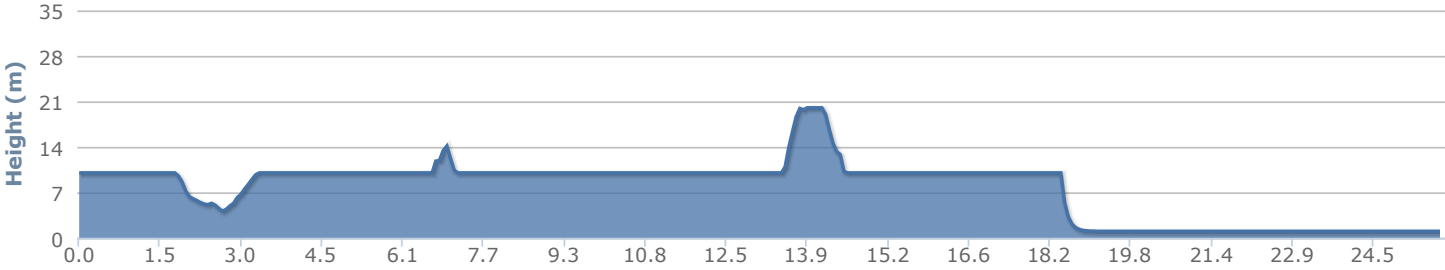
Circular walk from Orford via Chillesford and Iken, out along an inland section of the waymarked Suffolk Coast Path and back along the riverbank of the Alde. Though long, most of the route is on the level.



— Main Route — Alternative Route **H** Point of Interest **4** Waypoint

Distance: 25.77km Ascent: 20m Descent: 29m

Route Profile



*move mouse over graph to see points on route

A selection of Routemaster Walking Guides as featured in Walk: the Magazine of the Ramblers.

Starts at

Orford car park (TM425496)

Ends at

Orford car park (TM425496)

Getting there

By bus: *Limited bus service 71/72 between Ipswich and Sudbourne via Woodbridge (0345 6066171, suffolkonboard.com).*

Route instructions

[1] Although this walk starts from Orford (pay & display car park, TM425496), a good alternative – especially at weekends in summer when Orford can be very busy – is the free car park at Iken Cliff picnic site (TM399562), close to waypoint 4. Turn right out of the car park and walk up the road to the fine church of St Bartholomew, with its attached Norman ruins. Go through the churchyard and turn left to exit. Keep ahead to reach the castle, which dates from the 12th century. What you see today is one of the best preserved castle keeps in the country. Retrace your steps a short distance and turn left to the junction with the B1084.

A museum is housed in Orford Castle; for opening times, see english-heritage.org.uk.

[2] Fork left here, noting the footpath signpost with the blue Suffolk Coast Path waymark. Although not marked on the OS map, this stretch of the Suffolk Coast Path – which runs inland here because of the Alde-Ore estuary – is an alternative route (via Orford and the Butley Ferry). From here, until you reach the River Alde at waypoint 4, you follow the waymarked Suffolk Coast Path route all the way. This first stretch leads through Sudbourne Park to the B1084 and Chillesford.

[3] Turn left then right and continue northwards along the Suffolk Coast Path, which goes through Tunstall Forest, crossing a couple of roads on the way. The route then takes you past fields of pigs. Turn right at a minor road, then left and right down to the River Alde.

[4] Turn right alongside the river estuary passing below Iken Barns (a good accommodation option). At high tide, this stretch may be flooded – in which case, just walk back up to and along the lane instead. When you reach the road again, turn left and left again to visit the old part-thatched St Botolph's Church.

Iken Barns are beautifully converted self-catering barns in an idyllic situation (01728 688899, www.ikenbarns.com).

[5] Retrace steps to road junction and go left. Ignore next right turn and further on, when the road bends right, keep ahead along the no through road, signed for Stanny House Farm. Maintain direction along the footpath to the River Alde.

[6] Turn right and follow the riverbank path back to Orford. You'll notice relics of Orford Ness's past use as a secret military testing ground during the two World Wars and Cold War. Now owned by the National Trust, Orford Ness – Europe's largest vegetated shingle spit – is an internationally important nature conservation site.

Acknowledgements

Developed by: *Fiona Barltrop*

*This route first appeared in the autumn 2016 issue of **walk** magazine.*



View from Iken Barns (Iken Cliff) across River Alde
towards St Botolph's Church
Photo taken by: Fiona Barltrop

