

WALKING FROM BUCKLER'S HARD TO BEAULIEU

Beaulieu village contains a variety of shops including a grocery store, art gallery, gift shops, tea rooms, coffee shops, chocolate studio, garden centre, florist and hairdresser.

The 2¼ mile footpath between Buckler's Hard and Beaulieu forms part of the Solent Way and runs along the border of the North Solent Nature Reserve. This fragile environment, with a gradual transition from woodland through tidal river-edge grassland into saltmarsh, is rare in England and supports a wide range of plant and bird species, particularly wintering waders and wildfowl.

The riverside walk in Keeping Copse is currently closed to give the ground a chance to recover from years of soil compaction and the trampling of vegetation by walkers and unauthorised cyclists. Please respect this fragile environment and help its recovery by staying on the main footpath.

1 Duke's Bath House

This small thatched cottage was built by George, Duke of Montagu, c1760 for his son who suffered from arthritis. Salt water was considered beneficial for sufferers of arthritis so a pond in the garden was filled with river water in which people could bathe. The cottage is now a holiday let and can be booked through www.holidaycottages.co.uk.

2 Beaulieu River Boatyard

Hub of boating activity on the river of today.

3 Keeping Marsh

An open expanse of various salt tolerant plants. This mud bank is the holding area for dredgings from the river but is quickly being colonised by indigenous plant and animal life, notably shelduck, Canada geese, mallard, oystercatchers, redshank and curlew. A public bird hide is also located here, accessible from the footpath and suitable for wheelchair users. Please be aware that extreme tides may flood this part of the footpath. Equinox tides will be on 29-31 March, 27-29 April, 26-27 May, 7-9 October, 5-7 November and 4-6 December.

4 Burnt Oak Copse

The trees here are predominantly oak dating from the early 19th century. They were later supplemented by wild service, hazel, scots pine and beech with common privet, butcher's broom, holly and hawthorn providing shelter and food for game birds. Note the stunted tree growth at the river's edge, caused by poor drainage and the salt water from the river.

5 Bailey's Hard

The tall red brick chimney is that of the old estate brickworks which drew on the local deposits of clay. Built in 1790, it last produced bricks in 1935 and is now a private residence. It was here that Salisbury, the first naval vessel to be built on the river, was completed in 1698.

6 Curtle Meadows

It was here that scenes for the film *A Man for All Seasons* were shot in 1966, as the unspoilt river looked as the Thames might have done in the 16th century.

