



## Shalford Church End



Distance: 3.5 miles

Time taken: 1.5 hours

Location: 4 miles North West of Braintree

Parking: Church End Village Hall

OS Explorer Map: 195

Grid Ref.: TL 724 282

Transport: First in Essex Bus 9: hourly to Braintree, from bus stop outside village hall

Refreshment: Church End: Shalford Village Shop (snacks and drinks available)

Shalford: The George

## Walk Description

This is a lovely walk through countryside around the historic village of Shalford. The initial stages of the route take you over the hills with sweeping views across the Essex countryside. Later, you walk past several old farms, complete with black weatherboarded barns dating back many centuries. Something about the age of these farms, and their proximity to each other, creates a charming sense of intimacy along this latter section of the walk. St Andrews Church in Shalford is usually open during the day and is well worth a visit, and The George serves up locally brewed ale. The sections of the walk along the banks of the River Pant (usually a sparkling, meandering, gentle river) are particularly pleasant.

## Directions

**A.** Parking is available in the village hall car park, by kind permission of the committee. To access the car park, turn off the B1053 by the village hall and turn left immediately past a bus shelter, almost opposite the village shop, which could use your custom!. Please park carefully as the car park is small and the hall and recreation grounds are very popular (P).

**B.** From the car park, turn left to walk south west along Church End for a quarter of a mile. Cross the road and fork right along a footpath starting beside the last house on the right and head westwards across the middle of a field towards the brow of the hill (1).

- C.** After a third of a mile, turn right at a waymarker post to walk north along a farm track (2).
- D.** Continue for a quarter of a mile then look for a path bearing right towards the edge of the woods (3). When we were there, the waymarker was missing, but the junction is about 200 yards before the facing hedge.
- E.** Walk around the field edge with Shalford Park woods on your right. As you approach the village of Shalford, take the bridleway to the main road (4). When you reach the roadside, The George is opposite.
- F.** Turn right along The Street for 100 yards to the driveway to St Andrews Church, on your left. There is a memorial to a downed Flying Fortress at the entrance. Walk along the driveway and go through a lychgate into the churchyard.
- G.** Leave St Andrews via a partially concealed path diagonally opposite the lychgate, in the north east corner of the churchyard beside a stream (5).
- H.** Walk along the path, with some fishing lakes on your right. Turn right after you pass the second lake to walk alongside the River Pant towards a bridge (6).
- I.** Cross the bridge and go past a stile into a field, initially walking across the open field then with a fence on your right. Ignore the footpath on the right and continue ahead to the facing hedge, then turn left.
- J.** 250 yards later turn right through a wide gap and walk eastwards with a hedge on your left until you reach a holly tree. There is a slight ridge ahead. Turn left just past the tree and walk northwards across another open field towards the brow of the hill (7).
- K.** After 100 yards you will reach a waymarker. Turn right here to walk alongside a scrappy hedge and shallow ditch towards Valley Farm. You can see Rotten End House on another hillside, in the distance (8).
- L.** When you reach Valley Farm, turn right just past the farmhouse to walk along a concrete access track towards the 7-barred gate under a Scots Pine (9).
- M.** Go past the gate and ahead along the road for 20 yards, then bear right into a field and walk south along the field edge with a hedge and ditch on your left, until you reach a black barn. Turn left immediately past the barn and go through a gap in the facing hedge, on the right of the gates, to the roadside (10).
- N.** Turn right to walk down Water Hall Lane for about 300 yards to a low road bridge over the Pant. Cross over the bridge and turn immediately left to walk along the river bank with the Pant on your left (11). Movie Water Hall Lane.
- O.** Continue along the riverside for a quarter of a mile, then climb over a stile to the site of Iron Bridge. Sadly, neither of the bridges there is actually iron (12).
- P.** Turn right to walk away from the river along a muddy track with the fence and then a hedge on your right. Go past the half-timbered Iron Bridge farmhouse (on your right) to the road.

**Q.** Walk along the road for a few yards then turn right into a field just before the next house (Wade's Gardens). Walk south west with the hedge on your right, then straight across the field towards Nichol's Farm, aiming for the grass path to the left of the 16th century barn and fence (13).

**R.** At the end of the fence, bear right across the mowed grass to a gravel drive. Turn left along the farm access lane (14).

**S.** Follow the lane to the end, then turn right to walk back up the hill into Church End. Turn left at the top of the hill to return to the village hall.

**T.** If you have enjoyed walking in the countryside around Shalford, footpath maps of the area are available from the village shop, along with coffee, soft drinks and a variety of foodstuff including Thai snacks. There is no charge for the maps although a small donation to the hall fund would be appreciated.

### [ROUTE DIRECTIONS at www.essexwalks.com](http://www.essexwalks.com)

The ROUTE MAP and ROUTE PHOTOS **also** need to be downloaded and saved on your computer for printing.



The Route Map PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Description & Map](#)



The Route Photos PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Photos](#)

This route description is not meant to be used in isolation, it is one piece of a three part guide to the walk. The other two pieces are the route map, and the numbered photographs. The walks work best when the description, map and the photos PDF are printed off and used in conjunction with each other.

The numbers in brackets in the description refer to specific points along the route, marked with numbered symbols and these in turn are matched to illustrative photographs which show you the lie of the land.



These symbols are shown at strategic points along the route, overlaid on a 1:50K Ordnance Survey map: [Online OS Map at www.essexwalks.com](#).