Trail Summary

This walk explores the village of Titchfield, a thriving port and market town in medieval times on account of its abbey. Although a mile or two inland from the Solent, the village was linked to the sea by a navigable channel, thought to be one of the earliest canals in Britain. Away from Titchfield, the coastal path alongside the Solent brings extensive views of the Isle of Wight, as well as the busy sea lanes on the approaches to Southampton.

Alongside the Solent is Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, a well-known birdwatching site. It covers 369 acres of the Lower Meon Valley and contains a variety of wetland habitats, some of which have become rare in lowland Britain. The reserve is managed primarily for birds but it also has rare flora including rarities such as slender bird's-foot-trefoil, frogbit and marsh mallow. It is also home to foxes, deer, dragonflies and butterflies.

Trail Details

1. Walk down Church Street to the Square, turn left into South Street and continue along to a roundabout by the Coach and Horses pub. Turn right up Coach Hill and, in 350 yards, take the third turning on the left called Posbrook Lane. In 600 yards, just before a row of red-brick properties on the right, turn right along an unmetalled lane signposted as a footpath. At a junction in 250 yards, at the end of the field on the left, turn left and follow the path along the whole length of an
arable field. At the far side turn right and follow the field boundary to a gap in the far right corner of the field and an unmetalled road.

2. Turn left and follow this road for 0.75 miles until, by a barn, it bears right to Lower Brownwich Farm. Turn left through a gateway just past the barn, and follow a track for 350 yards down to the shingle shoreline of the Solent. Turn left, and walk along the coast for 0.75 miles to the chalets at Meon Shore. The sea-views from the cliff-top path are, in places, obscured by trees and bushes, you may prefer to walk along the foreshore. Pass to the left of the chalets, the beach here is private, and continue along to the lane that comes down to the coast from Titchfield. Cross this road, pass through a wooden barrier and enter Titchfield Haven Nature Reserve. Turn left, and follow a path for 250 yards to a point where the path bears left to pass through a squeeze stile to join the towpath alongside the remains of the Titchfield Canal.

3. A brief detour to the left will bring you to the Sea Lock. For the main walk, turn right, and follow the canal, situated in the overgrown ditch on the left, for two miles to a road on the edge of Titchfield. Ignore all of the bridges that cross the canal along the way, keeping to the eastern bank of the canal all the while. Cross the road, and continue following the path opposite for 250 yards to a bridge. Cross this bridge, enter the churchyard in Titchfield, and walk around to the front of the church and Church Street.

The Queen's Head
With its handsome black-and-white exterior, the Queen's Head stands proudly on the Square in Titchfield. Named after Catherine of Braganza, who married Charles II in Titchfield Abbey, the Queen's Head is proud of its traditional English pub atmosphere. Old local pictures, window seats, dark beams and a central brick fire place, add to the charm of this historic hostelry. With a menu that features poultry and steak dishes, vegetarian and fish options, as well as an interesting selection of salads, the Queen's Head offers something to delight every taste. There is also a good selection of ever-changing real ales, that might include Greene King or Hop Back.

Titchfield Abbey
Although an impressive ruin, this castellated, fortified manor house bears very little resemblance to the monastery that was founded here in 1232. Notwithstanding its fairly uneventful history, Titchfield Abbey was seen as an important centre, in view of its short distance from Winchester, and its close proximity to the sea at that time.

Portsmouth
Portsmouth, with its great naval traditions, lies just a few miles from Titchfield. As well as HMS Victory, visitors to the city can also explore the remains of the Mary Rose as well as HMS Warrior, the world's first iron-hulled armoured battleship powered by steam as well as sail and constructed of wrought iron. For visitors interested in the history of the city, there is the Portsmouth City Museum, whilst in Old Commercial Road, the city can also boast the birthplace of Charles Dickens. Neighbouring Southsea is home to a Natural
History Museum, as well as Southsea Castle and the D-Day Museum and Overlord Embroidery.

Trail Map
Location Details
The starting point for the trail is Church Street in Titchfield. By car, leave the M27 at junction 9, and follow the A27 in the direction of Fareham. Leave the A27 at the second roundabout and follow the unclassified road signposted to Titchfield. In the Square in the centre of the village, turn into Church Street and park on the roadside. The Queen's Head pub is at the far end of the Square, two minutes walk from Church Street. The nearest train station is Fareham, which is 6 minutes away by bus from Titchfield Square.