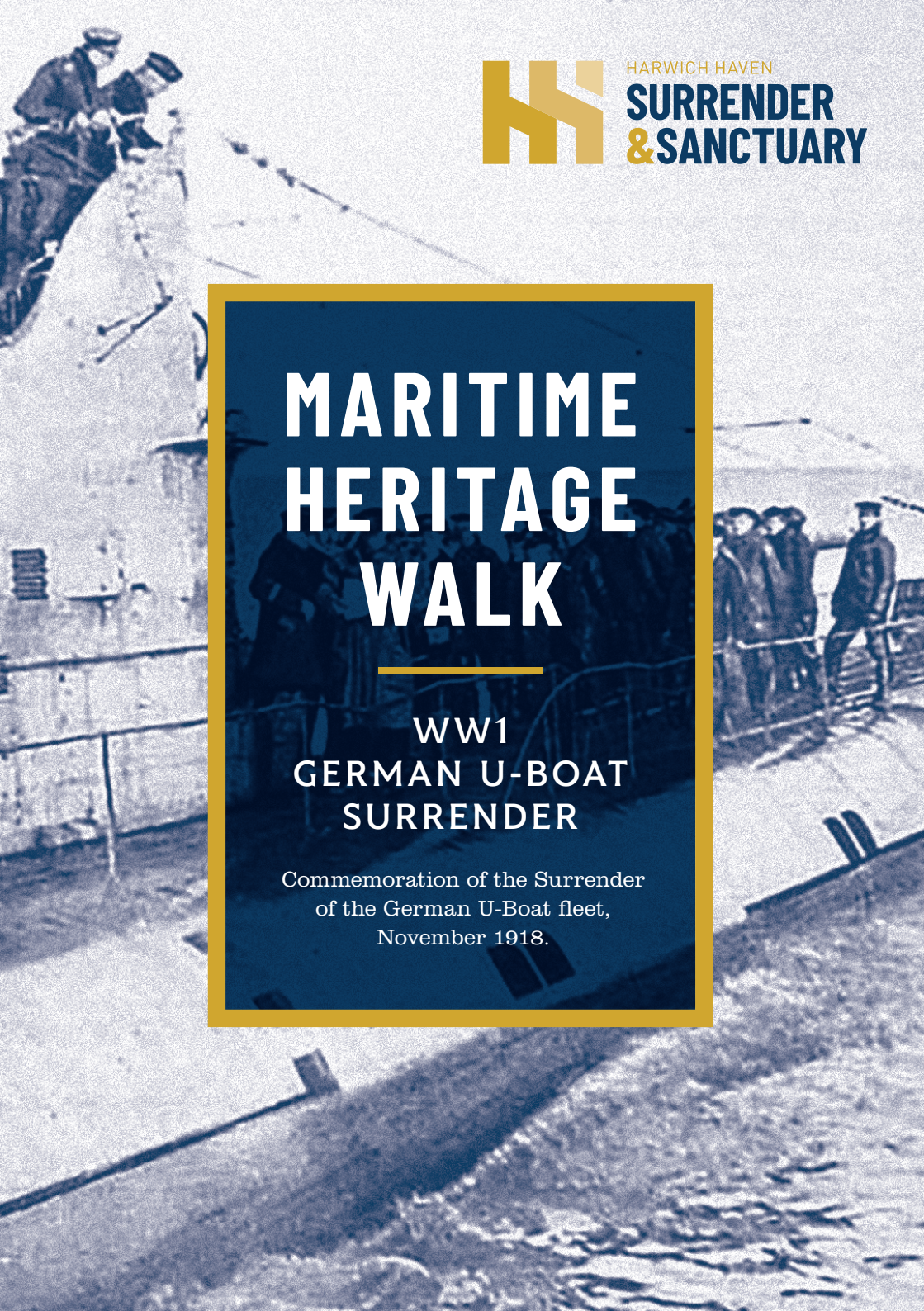

HARWICH HAVEN
SURRENDER & SANCTUARY

MARITIME HERITAGE WALK

WW1 GERMAN U-BOAT SURRENDER

Commemoration of the Surrender of the German U-Boat fleet, November 1918.

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Discover the fascinating naval history of the East Suffolk Coast and Shotley, including HMS Ganges, Shotley Church, and the Submariners Memorial.

TWO ROUTE OPTIONS:

Short Walk: Approx. 1 Hour, 0.5 miles

Long Walk: Approx. 2h 30mins, 5.4 miles

Both walks start and end at HMS Ganges Museum.

Begin at HMS Ganges Museum - which is open every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays from 11am-5pm, from Good Friday until the end of October. Entry is Free but donations welcome. Since the year 1905, RNTE HMS Ganges has been responsible for the training of some 160,000 Naval ratings, many of them involved on active service in the first world war 1914 – 1918. Please do take time to explore the museum if it is open and find out more about the history of the Ganges boys and the site from 1905.

COUNTRYSIDE CODE

The area has a network of footpaths and bridleways. We have shown suggested routes on this map. Here are a few simple tips to help you enjoy the area safely and assist our work in caring for it.

Follow the Countryside Code:

Plan ahead and follow any signs

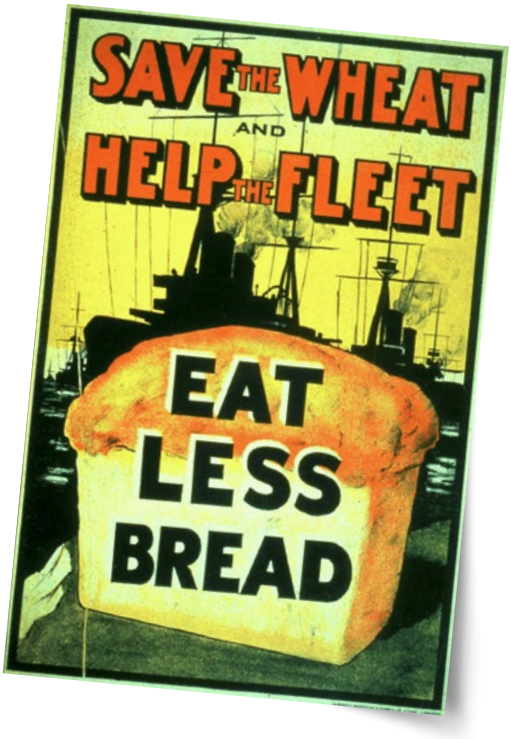
Leave things as you find them

Protect plants and animals, control fires and take your litter home.

Dogs are very welcome, but please keep them under close control at all times and on lead as advised.

Thank you.

Find out more about the Countryside Code: **www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code**



Pictured: British poster, food imports were cut off by submarines in World War One.

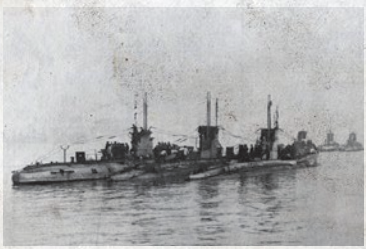
From HMS Ganges Museum, walk South West along the road out of Shotley Marina and stop at the Bristol Hill Picnic Area.

1 Here you can look across the River Stour to Parkeston Quay, Harwich, now the location of Harwich International Port, which still sees passengers travelling between Harwich and the Hook of Holland.

Looking out to the water, this is where 20 German U-Boats (Untersee boots or submarines) and support vessels surrendered on 20th November 1918, just 9 days after the armistice to end World War One. The surrender was calm and quiet, led by Rear Admiral Tyrwhitt, and over the next few months the total would be 168 U-Boats on the Estuary, creating a 'U-Boat Avenue', and an impressive sight. Many people came to see the U-Boats, including the King.

'There were no happier men in Harwich this morning than the British submarine crews detailed to board the surrendered enemy craft outside Harwich and accompany them to their moorings, the German crews, with British offices in command, navigating the boats. Every precaution, of course, was taken by the boarding parties to prevent any unpleasant surprises being sprung on them. ... The fog cleared away in the forenoon and those who were fortunate enough to have the first view of the approaching fleet were much impressed ... No sirens, whistles, or hooters were permitted ... It was a silent entry into captivity.'

'THE SCOTSMAN' newspaper, 21 Nov 1918



Pictured: German Crews being transferred from the U-Boats to British Vessels to be transported

At the Bristol picnic area, turn back to return to the HMS Ganges Museum to end the short walk. For the long walk continue West along the coastal footpath approximately a quarter mile until you reach steps going north up into woodland. Take these steps up and turn left at the top of the slope heading west again. Exit the woodland down a slope and continue along the coastal path to a small cluster of buildings. This is known locally as 'The Brickyards'. Turn right at the brickyards and continue up the farm track (a restricted byway) until you reach the main road in Shotley (B1456).

Whilst walking up the farm track take a moment to pause.

2 The fields on the Shotley Peninsula are very fertile with many growing wheat, barley and other cereal crops to feed the nation. Before 1914 Britain relied heavily on food and materials from overseas. The Merchant Navy was key in ensuring that Britain had the raw materials to feed not only people and troops, but livestock including war horses.

This was the very reason why Germany deployed its fleet of U-Boats to try to cripple the nation's food stocks and almost succeeded

Pictured: British posters emphasising the relationship between food and imports.

Pictured:
St Mary's Church

Turn right, follow the main road for approximately a quarter of a mile, then turn left into 'Old Hall Road'. Continue down Old Hall Road to the end and Shotley St Mary's Church is on your right-hand side.

3 The Church dates from the 14th Century and is mentioned in the Doomsday Book. It has a special place in the community and has stood through the war years for centuries. The Church has two Commonwealth War Cemeteries and a Submariners Cemetery and Memorial.

In 1914, on the day war was declared, the Cruiser HMS Amphion was operating in the North Sea off the coast of Harwich. She was called up to assist two destroyers who had spotted German Vessel Königin Luise laying mines in the Haven Ports area. The British Ships gave chase and sunk the German mine layer, with HMS Amphion rescuing 46 of the 100 German crew.

In a twist of fate, in the early hours of 6th August 1914, HMS Amphion hit a mine. There were casualties but many sailors were rescued, including some of the German mine laying crew. However, a few hours later the Amphion hit another mine and sank, and around 150 more sailors lost their lives. Four of the Sailors from HMS Amphion were buried at Shotley, the bodies of others sent to their hometowns or villages for burial. The fate of HMS Amphion and it's crew is now considered to be the first casualty of WWI. Buried at Shotley there are 201 British casualties (eight unidentified), plus 13 German casualties from WWI.

With your back to Shotley Church door turn left and go down the hill (an unmade roadway known as 'Frogs Alley') and turn right at the bottom. Proceed through the five-bar gate into the field heading towards Felixstowe docks and the River Orwell. Continue on the path straight through the fields. At the bottom of the riverbank climb the short flight of steps and turn right. Follow the footpath along the river wall heading back to Shotley Marina, past Shotley Marshes on the right.

Once at the Marina take the left pathway leading opposite Felixstowe docks and cross the Marina lock gates. The Ganges Museum is located at the opposite end of the building.

4 While on the Shotley Marshes, look East towards Felixstowe. Both Shotley and Felixstowe faced attacks from Zeppelin raids during WW1, but that wasn't the only thing in the air here. Felixstowe was the home of a Seaplane Experimental Station (formerly RNAS Felixstowe) during the war, and vital to spotting German Submarines using a 'spider web' system. You can find out more about this at Felixstowe Museum.

Here it is worth taking a moment to imagine what life was life in war time 100 years ago. Shotley, Felixstowe and Harwich were all key areas on the East Coast that contributed to the Naval war effort and were at the forefront of action. The war would have felt a lot closer to home. The Ganges Boys were involved in World War One too and worked on making anti-submarine nets to help protect the harbour.

FELIXSTOWE MUSEUM HOLDS A FASCINATING DIARY OF A GIRL FROM 1919, WHO WRITES ABOUT VISITING HARWICH TO SEE THE U BOATS:

"August 16th – took a motor boat to U Boat Avenue in Parkeston Harbour, across at Harwich first, simply topping. … Saw captured U-boats and others … Saw porpoises in the harbour."

Pictured: Ganges Boys carrying supplies to make anti-submarine nets.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN OUR HERITAGE WALK

Harwich Haven: Surrender and Sanctuary is a public history project which encourages local people and visitors to explore the unique role of Harwich, Dovercourt, Felixstowe and the Shotley Peninsula in two momentous events in world history during the twentieth century: the surrender of the German U-Boat fleet in November 1918, and the arrival of the first Jewish child refugees on the 'Kindertransport' in December 1938.

Pictured (top):
U-Boats being interned

Pictured (bottom):
A Willow model commemorating the centenary of the surrender of German U-boats during World War One on Harwich beach

HARWICH HAVEN
SURRENDER &SANCTUARY

www.harwichhavenhistory.co.uk

HERITAGE FUND

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