

# WELCOME TO THE ESSEX COAST

There are 350 miles of Essex coastline so enjoy your time to get to know it. If you're looking for a day on the beach, walks along coastal paths or tidal riverbanks or activities with your family there are new places and things to do all year round. These ideas will help you visit for the first time but will keep you coming back. And it's closer than you think!



## THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

### Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways is clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to others where it's narrow

### Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit, take all your litter home
- Don't have BBQs or fires
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it



### Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



Remember to plan ahead. Some stretches of the path are remote and liable to flooding. Check tide times at [tidetimes.org.uk](http://tidetimes.org.uk)



### Useful information for your visit:

Water bottle refill: [refill.org.uk/get-the-refill-app/](http://refill.org.uk/get-the-refill-app/)  
 Walks: [gojauntly.com](http://gojauntly.com), [theessexcoast.com](http://theessexcoast.com)  
 Parking: MiPermit Parking App



# VISITING THE ESSEX COAST

Whether you fancy an exciting day on the beach or a peaceful walk by the sea, the 350 miles of the Essex coastline has something for you. To find out more visit [theessexcoast.com](http://theessexcoast.com)

For information on getting there by train visit [greateranglia.co.uk](http://greateranglia.co.uk) and [esscrp.org.uk](http://esscrp.org.uk) or by bus visit [essexbus.info](http://essexbus.info)



## PLEASE

Tag your coastal pictures on social media [#theessexcoast](https://twitter.com/theessexcoast)

Follow signs to keep noise levels low and dogs on leads when walking in areas where birds are nesting. [essexcoast.birdaware.org](http://essexcoast.birdaware.org)



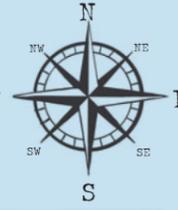
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 Design and illustration: [wearedrab.co.uk](http://wearedrab.co.uk)



With thanks to the Coastal Community Fund

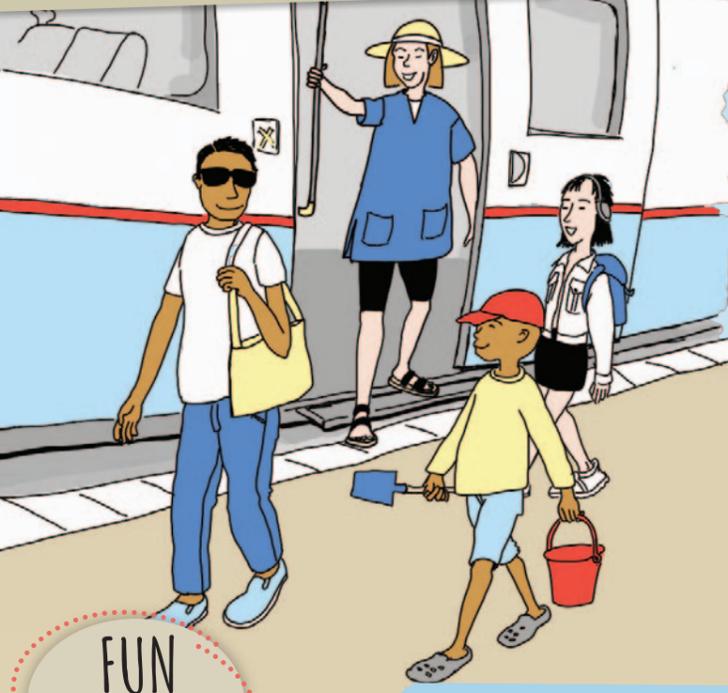


| Key |                   |
|-----|-------------------|
|     | A road            |
|     | B road            |
|     | Railway & station |
|     | Public walks      |



**FACT**  
 Islands are nestled into the estuaries of our largest rivers. You can visit some of them but always follow safety notices.

## 30 THINGS TO DO, SPOT AND DISCOVER ON THE ESSEX COAST



## OTHER WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT

- [VisitEssex.com](http://VisitEssex.com)
- [theessexcoast.com](http://theessexcoast.com)
- [RSPB.org.uk](http://RSPB.org.uk)
- [essexwt.org.uk](http://essexwt.org.uk)
- [NationalTrust.org.uk](http://NationalTrust.org.uk)
- [visitengland.com/destinations/east-england](http://visitengland.com/destinations/east-england)

**FUN**  
 ideas for family & friends

[#THEESSEXCOAST](https://twitter.com/theessexcoast)

## TRY SOMETHING NEW

### 1. Pack light and travel by train

The Mayflower, Sunshine Coast, Southend and Crouch Valley train lines will help get you there.

### 2. Discover a new place

It could be a different beach or riverside town. There's plenty to choose from.

### 3. Walk the coastal path

Take as long as you want, walking at a time and pace that suits you. Walk between train stations or find circular routes that loop back to the station or car park.

### 4. Tempt your taste buds

There are many cafes, pubs and restaurants all along the coast so you'll never be far from refreshments. Why not try some local produce, maybe oysters in Mersea or cockles in Leigh-on-Sea?

### 5. Essex from the sea

Change your view and explore by canoe, paddleboard or windsurfing. Many local sailing clubs hire out leisure boats or check Explore-Essex.com for sailing lessons in Mersea and Bradwell.

### 6. Take a boat trip

From Maldon you can tour the River Blackwater taking in Northey and Osea Islands or take one of the small passenger ferries from Harwich, Wivenhoe or Brightlingsea. Check VisitEssex.com for details before arriving.

### 7. The sea is closer than you think

Pick up Colchester's Town to Sea sculpture trail at the medieval Hythe port and still be on the coastal path [visitcolchester.com/things-to-do/town-to-sea-trail-p1191841](http://visitcolchester.com/things-to-do/town-to-sea-trail-p1191841)

### 8. Walk a canal

The Chelmer and Blackwater navigation has connected Chelmsford with the estuary since 1796. Enjoy a break at Heybridge Basin or half way along the 13-mile canal walk at Paper Mill Lock.

## LOSE YOURSELF ...

### IN BIG SKIES, WIDE BEACHES AND PEACEFUL LANDSCAPES

The paths around the Blackwater and Colne estuaries or Woodham Fen Nature Reserve are perfect for trying some of these ideas.

### 9. Take off your shoes and socks

Whatever the weather feel the grass, sand or water on your feet.

### 10. Look at the clouds



Get to know cumulus from cumulonimbus clouds to predict the weather or maybe just let your imagination go and start to see shapes and faces.

### 11. Take notice

Spend time looking at the different shells on the beach, tracing the patterns of water channels across the mud flats or watching how the wind moves the grasses.

### 12. Let your senses take over



Close your eyes, tune into the sounds closest to you then slowly move your attention to more distant sounds, maybe of birds, insects or the waves.

### 13. Change when you visit

A different time of year will have its own smells and sounds and daybreak or sunset look, feel and sound different.



## FACT

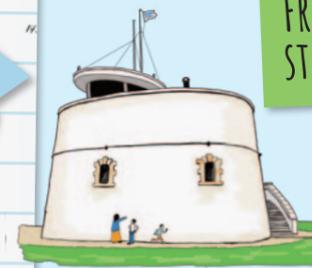
Essex has one of the longest coastlines in England, 350 miles, although as the crow flies it's only around 40 miles from Canvey to Manningtree.

## SO MUCH TO DISCOVER...

### FROM FORTS TO FESTIVALS, SMUGGLING STORIES AND HIGH AND LOW PLACES

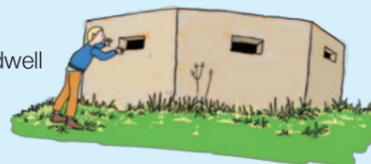
### 14. Visit a Martello tower

A 13-mile walk from Point Clear to Walton-on-the-Naze takes you past the remaining six of these rare circular forts, including Jaywick Martello Tower. (Check ahead for opening times).



### 15. Find an Essex lozenge

The WW2 sea-wall pillboxes near Bradwell and Burnham-on-Crouch are a stretched shape with the modern coastal path running over the top. In Walton-on-the-Naze, a mile-long trail takes you by two pillboxes fallen onto the beach. [tendingcoastalheritage.org.uk/content/trails/walton-naze-second-world-war-trail](http://tendingcoastalheritage.org.uk/content/trails/walton-naze-second-world-war-trail)



### 16. Go to a regatta

From April to September these are a mix of exciting boat races, on-shore activities, food and drink and are perfect for learning about the different boats you can see in the many marinas around Essex.



### 17. Climb to the top of a tower

100 steps gets you to the top of the High Lighthouse in Harwich and 111 steps to the top of Walton's Naze Tower. (Check ahead for opening times).



## WILD ESSEX IS A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE OF MUD FLATS, SALT MARSHES AND GRASSLAND

### 23. Hunt for fossils

With a keen eye you can find sharks' teeth and fossils at Walton, Dovercourt or on the river banks around Maylandsea. Some people find it easier to search for fossils in the winter or on cloudy days.



### 24. Pack your binoculars

Away from the busy towns are RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust and National Trust reserves that provide the perfect habitat for birds, including beach nesting little terns, ringed plovers and oyster catchers and over-wintering brent geese.



### 25. Visit a brownfield rainforest

The Canvey Wick reserve is the most biodiverse per square foot in the UK and an important site for rare and endangered invertebrates including bees, wasps and beetles. [thelandtrust.org.uk/space/canvey-wick/](http://thelandtrust.org.uk/space/canvey-wick/)



### 26. Shell spotting

The Bradwell shell bank is made up of mainly cockle and oyster shells but a walk along any beach is sure to turn up razor clams, scallops and whelks.

## FACT

You can tell how old a cockle is by the bands on the shell

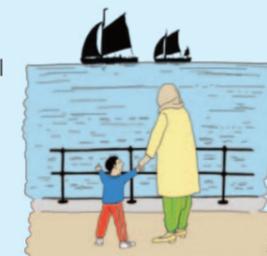
### 18. Find a festival

Whatever the time of year there is always something going on near the sea, whether on land or in the skies. Keep an eye out for The Essex Book Festival as well as local music, arts, food and drink festivals that take place across the whole county.



### 19. Watch a boat race

Catch the annual smack and barge races in Brightlingsea and Maldon or the Dredging Match in West Mersea.



### 20. Walk a disused railway

Until 1964 the 'Crab and Winkle' train connected Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe, crossing Alresford Creek over a swing bridge. Walk the embankments of the railway from either end, stopping at the Creek where there are still parts of the bridge.



### 21. Eat every day oysters

Essex Native Oysters have been farmed in Essex since Roman times and were once an everyday food. See the oyster pits at Paglesham in Rochford and on Mersea Island, which still produces oysters for the local, national and international market.



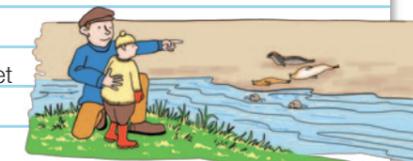
### 22. A modern surprise

Striking 20th century buildings on The Essex Coast include The Labworth Cafe in Canvey Island which shares a designer with the Sydney Opera House, Royal Corinthian Yacht Club in Burnham-on-Crouch and the modernist houses on the Frinton Park Estate.



### 27. See a seal

Try around Harwich, Walton and the Crouch and Roach rivers. You might catch sight of one on your own walk or you can join a guided tour. Check the internet for current tours by locations.

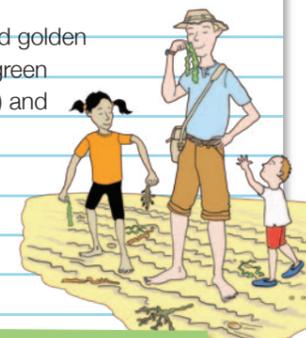


### 28. Colourful beaches

On the saltmarshes spot pink sea lavender and golden samphire and on the shingle look out for the green edible sea beet (sometimes called sea spinach) and bluey-purple sea kale with white flowers.

### 29. Find hidden plants

When the tide goes out it will reveal different plants all year round such as sea lettuce, bladder wrack, carrageen and gutweed.



### 30. Walk an ancient woodland

The path through the Copperas Wood Nature Reserve near Wrabness allows glimpses of the River Stour through the trees.



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