



Title: Saffron Trail: Hockley to Battlesbridge

Distance: 6½ miles

Time taken: 2½ hours

Start Point: Hockley Woods, Main Road, SS5 4RN

OS Explorer Map: OS Explorer 175

Grid Ref.: TQ 834 924

Transport:

Hockley: Trains from Liverpool St.

Battlesbridge: Trains from Shenfield - Southminster;

Bus:- Regal No 1/1A (hourly) from Chelmsford

Refreshment: Hullbridge: The Anchor,

Battlesbridge: The Barge Inn & The Hawk.

Walk Description

This section of the Saffron Trail begins with a lovely walk through Hockley Wood - before taking you through some very pleasant rolling hills north of Hockley. There are more undulating fields on the route towards the River Crouch, followed by a pleasant riverside walk along the Crouch estuary through Hullbridge and into quiet farmlands. The walk ends in the village of Battlesbridge, situated at the tidal limit of the River Crouch. Now Battlesbridge is a busy centre for antiques, but much of its industrial heritage can still be seen including the tide mill, tide gates and the tall Victorian granary which dominates the skyline. Sadly the last part of the walk into Battlesbridge is not pleasant, being along the margins of a busy rural road, often with no verge.

Directions

A. From the train station, walk up Spa Road past the shops then bear right into Main Road. After about 600 yards you come to the entrance to Hockley Woods, next to the Bull pub (1). This section of the walk commences in the Hockley Woods car park.

B. Take the track between the fence and a hedge which starts just south of the toilets, along the west side of the car park. After a few yards it turns right into the woods. Continue along this track for about 400 yards until you come to a junction just past a low bridge with a log on each side and in front of a seat (2). Turn right at this junction.

C. Walk along for a further 400 yards following the path as it bears to the left, until you come to junction with another path on the right, over a bridge next to a fence (3). Turn along here and continue until you exit the woods into a residential area.

D. Walk up the hill past the end of Crown Road and turn left into Hillside Road (4). Walk the length of the road then turn right along Woodside Road. From the cul de

sac at the end of the road, walk along the enclosed path between two houses leading to the main road.

E. On the opposite side of the road on the left, just past the junction with Fountain Lane, there is another enclosed path between two buildings (5). Walk along this heading north west, until you emerge into a field with expansive views across the Essex countryside. Turn left along the field edge.

F. Walk along the field edge with a hedge on your left, until you come to the facing fence then climb up the bank on the left and continue north west with a paddock on your right. The path begins to descend bearing left around part of Blounts Wood as it does so (6).

G. At the bottom of the hill cross the railway line and follow the path into the woods. After about 40 yards, go straight across a more major path to head towards to edge of the woods: your path turns right immediately after the crossroads to follow the edge of the woods heading north with a golf course on the left (7).

H. After 210 yards cross a bridge leading out of the woods into a grassy area and turn right into the the grounds of Centre Oaks Farm Equestrian Centre, walking over grass then gravel, with the woods to your right (8). Cross the stile beside a metal gate and walk east along the farm track.

I. At the end of the track, by the entrance to Murrells Hall, turn left along Blountswood Road (9). Continue north along this route for about three quarters of a mile as the road surface changes from metalled to hardcore to green lane, until you come to the junction with Lower Road.

J. Turn left along the road for about 160 yards to the junction with Pevensey Gardens, by the post box (10). Take the enclosed footpath virtually opposite this junction, going north again. Once over the stile continue north along the field edge, and cross through the facing hedge into another field.

K. Head diagonally north west across this field, cutting off the south west corner of the field towards a small gap in the hedge leading to the access road (Long Lane) to Cracknell's Farm (11). Turn right and uphill on the asphalt track towards the farm.

L. From the crest of the hill, by the farm, there are very nice views across Essex (12). Continue walking north along the track as it starts to descend to the coast. When you reach Pooles Lane continue north along the road then follow it round to the left. Go past several houses. Just after the final house, go through a gap in the hedge on your right into the recreation grounds at Hullbridge (13).

M. The Saffron Trail takes you diagonally north west across the playing fields to join the sea wall at a spot where the river view is unfortunately obscured by gorse bushes. A more pleasant variation (which adds 100 yards to the route) would be to walk north directly to the coastal public right of way, and so enjoy the view across the estuary before the bushes get in the way.

N. Turn left along the sea wall and walk along the coast towards Hullbridge. Keep walking west along the coastal path until you pass the Anchor. Just past the pub turn left along Ferry Road for a few yards then turn right to continue along the coastal path.

O. Keep walking through trees with the estuary on your right for around 500 yards until you come to a row of houses along The Esplanade. About half way along this road fork right along a path between two fences to stay on the coastal path (14). Continue west along the coast for another 700 yards (15).

P. When the coastal path turns to the right, continue straight ahead so as to go down from the sea wall and enter a field beside a gate (16). Continue west along the hedge line. At the end of the field, go up a rise and through a blue gate on your left into another field (17).

Q. Bear left to cross the field towards a hedge in front of the pylon and walk south west along a sunken lane with the hedge on your left (18). Continue through some bushes back up onto the sea wall.

R. At the coast turn left through a kissing gate, cross through the hedge (19) and then immediately turn right to walk south, with a hedge on your right. After about 200 yards the hedge disappears and you are back on the sea wall. Follow the curve of the coast until, just before you reach the road, the path continues south west between two hedges to the road.

S. At Beeches Road, turn right (20). Follow the road for another two-thirds of a mile as it curves left then right towards Battlesbridge. As you come into the village turn right at a T junction to walk northwards along Hawk Hill, with a garden centre on your right (21). Cross over the road bridge towards the Antique and Craft Centre and The Barge Inn. This section of the Saffron Trail stops at Maltings Road, Battlesbridge, 70 yards west of The Barge Inn entrance.

T. To walk to Battlesbridge Station, continue along Hawk Hill heading west for about 450 yards to The Hawk, then turn right up the access road to the station.

[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](#).