



## Tilbury

Distance: 6½ miles

Time taken: 2½ hours

Location: East Tilbury, 8 miles southwest of Basildon

OS Explorer Map: 163

Grid Ref.: TQ 676 788

Parking: In Princess Margaret Road, on the pavement on the left, RM18 8SB.

Please don't block driveways.

Bus: 374 (Clintona from Grays, excluding Sundays)

Train: East Tilbury Station

Refreshment:

PEAR Rating: 

## Walk Description

This walk begins near East Tilbury Rail Station, and heads east along the outskirts of the town, then across the marshes before heading south along the riverside to the Coalhouse Fort. From there it goes west over farmland, then north and east back to the town.

The glory of this walk is the contrast between the local industrial and architectural heritage, and the eternal stillness of the marshlands themselves. From the constant movement at the Mucking Landfill site, the magnificent towers of the Coryton Oil Refinery, the busy river traffic, the ancient and modern sea defences, the fort itself, the distant views of Cliffe Fort opposite, and the sad dilapidation of the Bata factory, the history of this part of coastal Essex is played out before your eyes.

Some of the footpaths are not as indicated on the OS maps: and sadly are not clearly marked on the ground, either. This has been reported to Thurrock Council and hopefully the signage will be improved soon. There is also a short section (500 yards) along a lane without pavements or verges.

There is also a free car park by Coalhouse Fort, so an alternative would be to start the circular walk there (from 8. onwards).

## Directions

- A.** From the parking (P), head north up towards the station and turn right on the footpath alongside Gobions Park, going through a kissing gate onto the grassy track that runs between the playing fields and the houses (1).
- B.** At the end of the houses, the track bends left then right around a small copse before continuing east through a shrubby area (2). After crossing a small stream the track turns right in front of the landfill site boundary fence.
- C.** The path continues southwards between the fence and the stream for about 400 yards before bearing left. From this point on you begin to get good views across the marshes to the sea wall. Continue heading east until you reach the sea wall.
- D.** Cross the sea wall using the ladder provided (3) (or there is an easier crossing point about 50 yards to the left of the ladder) and take in the views across the mud flats to Coryton oil refinery. Despite the industrialisation of this part of the coast, the mud flats are an important resource for indigenous and migratory birds.
- E.** Turn right, away from the oil refinery, and walk along the sea wall (4). You have wonderful views of the mud flats to your left, the busy Thames, and the hills of Kent in the distance.
- F.** After about a mile the sea wall turns inland leaving a larger marshy area between the wall and the river (5). Stay on the sea wall.
- G.** Head straight across over the ramp continuing on the sea wall until you come to the grounds of the Coalhouse Fort itself (6). The grounds are open and you can walk through as you choose: we took the path on the mowed grass inside the lake, where there is often a good view of freighters moving up and down the Thames (7).
- H.** Head back north up the road until you come to St Catherine's Church (8). Opposite the church is public footpath 200 heading west across a field (9).
- I.** Follow this path until you come to a slight rise, where the footpath is crossed by a farmtrack. Go straight across the farmtrack, heading slightly downhill towards a tall concrete wall you can see in the distance (10). The terrain is more overgrown here although the path is still clear.
- From here until you reach Station Road (M.), the signage is either missing or plain confusing. It is also impossible to follow the exact route of the Ordnance Survey marked footpath due to overgrowth. Follow these instructions and you'll find the way through.*
- J.** Just before you reach the wall the path turns right up the slope, circuiting the end of the wall and then descends back down onto valley floor (11). After about 50 yards the valley opens out into a field traversed by telegraph poles: this is roughly level with the marshland on the edge of the estuary. Follow the southern field edge on the left (12).
- K.** At the far bottom corner of the field is a gap in the hedge and a ditch. Cross the ditch and you will find a well maintained path between hedges (13).

**L.** Continue along this for about half a mile until you come to a farm track (14). Bear right into the shrubbery to find another grassy path between hedges, parallel with the farm track heading north west. This rejoins the official public footpath and emerges back onto the farm track by some metal gates (15). Go around the gates on the right hand side and continue on the track until it meets the corner of the main road (Station Road).

**M.** On the road, carry straight on for about a quarter of a mile to the junction with Love Lane. Just before this junction there is a bridleway (No. 58) on the left, adjacent to a house: follow this (16).

**N.** This bridleway starts off as a green lane called Coal Road then becomes field side track: follow the signs across a field and then along the field edge with the hedge on your left, until you come to the level crossing. You will see the abandoned Bata factory on the right (17), and Tilbury Power Station on the left.

**O.** Once across the railway line, follow the bridleway signs across the field towards the electricity pylons. As you go under the second line of wires you will pass right by the pylon. The bridleway turns left here but there is a permissive path straight on (north) towards a small hedge, with a white house in the distance; take this (18).

**P.** When you reach the start of the hedge turn right on FP 61, going under the overhead power lines, following the line between two fields towards a gap between the houses (19).

**Q.** This gap takes you into Beecroft Avenue: cross the road and bear right into Stenning Avenue and continue until you see an alleyway on your right (20) which takes you to East Tilbury Station entrance. Turn left away from the station to the automated crossing gates on Princess Margaret Road, cross over the crossing and head back south to the parking.

### [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](#).