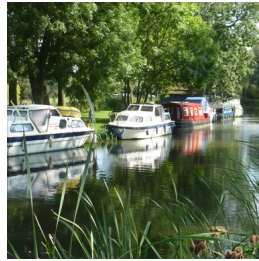


Points of interest

The Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation

The Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation was designed by the famous canal architect John Rennie. It opened in 1793, with the last working traffic using the navigation in the early 1970s. Nowadays it is the preserve of recreational users. The navigation runs for 14 miles, with 13 locks, through a largely unspoilt part of rural Essex.



Beeleigh Abbey

Beeleigh Abbey was a monastery constructed in 1180 for the White Canons. After the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, many of its buildings were destroyed. In 1943, the Abbey was purchased by the Foyle family, owners of the famous bookshop. It is now a private residence and is not open to the public apart from some garden open days.

Leech Memorial Garden

In 1974, sisters Edna and Joan Leech, who lived in Lodge Road, were killed in a plane crash. In their will they gave their garden to the people of Maldon and money was provided to care for it, securing it for future generations. This tranquil, hidden garden is a haven for wildlife and offers good views over the surrounding countryside.



St Mary's Church

Parts of the building date back to 1130 when the original tower was designed so a beacon fire could be lit on top to guide ships. This tower collapsed in 1605, with the shingled spire added in 1740. Take time for a tranquil moment inside and admire the contemporary stained glass window by Mark Angus, commemorating the Battle of Maldon in 991.

Refreshments

The Muddy Duck
The Lock Tea Room
The Jolly Sailor

No phone
01621 854466
01621 854210

muddyduckmaldon.co.uk
tiptree.com/heybridge
thejollysailorheybridgebasin.co.uk

More locations available at visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/food-and-drink

BEELEIGH FALLS & MALDON FROM HEYBRIDGE BASIN

Coastal Walk

This waterside walk provides the perfect introduction to Maldon and Heybridge's countryside and riverside, including the seawall, Navigation and Beeleigh Falls



Walking boots recommended, muddy in areas, stile and gates



Four hours



8.4 miles



View from the Moot Hall, Maldon

How to get here



Daisy Meadow Car Park, Basin Road, Heybridge Basin, CM9 4RW



Buses 73, 73A, 73B from Chelmsford/Maldon



Explorer 183 | Grid ref: TL 870 069



directly.organ.centuries



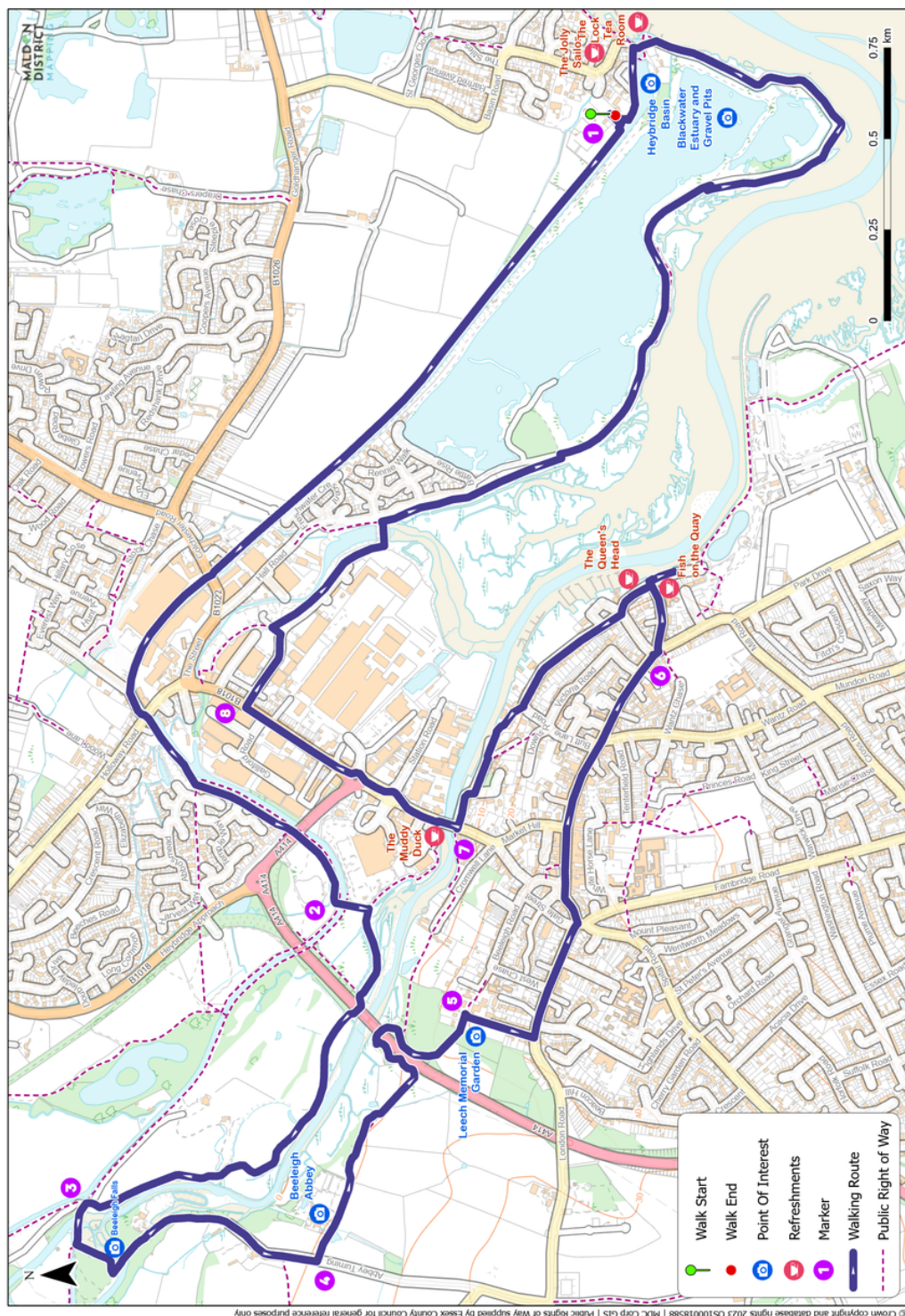
Discover the Maldon District



visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/walks



@visitmaldondistrict



Route

1. Ascend the steps out of the car park to reach the **Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation** towpath. Turn right along the towpath, following this for 1.8 miles. Along the way, you will pass (on the opposite bank of the navigation) typical canalside buildings, such as the imposing **Bentall warehouse**, which was built in 1863, before you reach Tesco supermarket.

2. Towards the end of Tesco's car park (on the opposite bank), take the right fork just before the footbridge over the navigation, and cross over the bridge. Around 70 yards after the bridge, you reach the embankment bordering the river **Chelmer**, and a T-junction of paths. Turn right to walk along the river embankment. There is an optional detour here to explore the newly created **Ironworks Meadow Nature Reserve**. Continue along the river embankment footpath for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. The path soon passes under the A414 Maldon bypass bridge and then runs alongside **Maldon Golf Club** as the path twists and turns to follow the course of the river.

3. The path eventually emerges from a small group of trees onto the navigation towpath. Turn left, soon crossing a footbridge over a **weir**. Just before **Beeleigh Lock**, take the footpath to the left heading into trees away from the navigation. This path soon provides views of the system of weirs where the river Chelmer and river Blackwater meet the tidal Chelmer, known as **Beeleigh Falls**. Turn left after 150 yards to cross the long wooden footbridge over the large weir. Follow the path through the kissing gate and go past the historic **Beeleigh Mill**, which in Victorian times was a large flour mill, with two water wheels driving 10 millstones and a steam-powered beam engine which drove five stones. The steam mill is currently being restored and is very occasionally open to the public. After passing **Beeleigh Falls House** on the left, the path becomes a lane, going past Kingfisher Cottage and Beeleigh Grange Farm.

4. Ninety yards after passing a footpath off to the right heading west across fields, turn left into the road which leads up to the gates of **Beeleigh Abbey**.

Route 2

Continue ahead on the gravel path, which soon becomes an enclosed grassy path. Around 500 yards after passing **Beeleigh Abbey**, take the footpath off to the left and downhill, to avoid having to dodge the traffic on the busy A414 ahead. By the river Chelmer, the path turns right to pass under a road bridge, then soon turns right again. Ignore the footpath off to the left; the path soon ascends rather steeply and joins a footpath coming from the right to continue uphill.

5. At the top of the hill (shortly after passing a couple of houses on the left), turn right onto the lane. Take the gate to your right to explore the **Leech Memorial Garden**. There is an exit back onto this lane at the other end of the garden. Turn right and walk to the end of the unmade road (Lodge Road) between houses. At the end of Lodge Road, turn left onto London Road.

Look out for the old **County Court** (now a private house) on the right-hand side (with its Royal coat of arms), built in 1858 to handle civil law cases then used as a Magistrates' Court. At the end of London Road, turn left onto Maldon High Street. You will soon pass the 13th-century **All Saints' Church** and 15th-century **Moot Hall** on the left. Go ahead on the High Street for 900 yards, until you reach Church Street.



The Lock gates at Heybridge Basin

Route 3

6. Turn left on to Church Street past **St Mary's Church** and head down to **The Hythe**. After exploring **Hythe Quay** and its historic **Thames Sailing Barges**, go along the Hythe (past the **Queen's Head** pub on the right and the small fishermen's cottages on the left). Where the road climbs and bends to the left, cross over and take Downs Road ahead. Continue along Downs Road for 400 yards; where the road takes a sharp left-hand bend uphill, cross over and head down the signposted **England Coast Path** footpath past the **Maldon Salt** factory. You can now follow the England Coast Path signposts all the way back to Heybridge Basin. Continue ahead on the signposted path until you reach Market Hill.

7. Turn right to cross the bridge over the river Chelmer at **Fullbridge**. Continue ahead on The Causeway for ½ mile, until you reach Bates Road on the right.

8. Turn right into Bates Road. After 250 yards, just by the first turning on the left (an access road for car parking), cross Bates Road. Turn left into the car park access road, then almost immediately right onto the footpath along the earth embankment, running parallel with Bates Road. After ¼ mile, you reach a junction of paths. Turn left here, then turn right after 70 yards onto the seawall embankment footpath, going through a gate after 300 yards. Follow the seawall path, not forgetting to look back from time to time to get attractive views of Maldon across the river Blackwater. The flooded gravel pits to your left are a haven for many kinds of birds. Depending on the season, you may see common tern, oystercatchers, redshanks, godwits and shelducks. You will eventually reach **Heybridge Basin**, where there are interesting 18th- and early 19th-century houses and pubs, as well as a fascinating collection of pleasure craft of all shapes and sizes. The **sea lock** (alongside the **Old Ship** pub) connects the canal to the Blackwater Estuary. Cross over the upper or lower gates of the sea lock, then turn left back down the towpath to reach the Daisy Meadow car park, where we started the walk.