

2025 Blackwater Marathon 26.7 Mile Route Description

Start / Finish - Rugby Club, Drapers Chase, Heybridge, Grid Ref. TL 868 081

Participant Parking – Rugby Club Car Park. The entrance track to the Car Park is next to Heybridge Swifts Football Ground at Grid Ref TL 866 085 CM9 8JA

Finish Closing Time 17- 30 If you retire you must advise a Marshal.

Reminders

Please take care on roads and note warnings on the route description. Face oncoming traffic unless otherwise stated. Use pavements when available. Stiles and Bridges can be very slippery at this time of year, take care. Caution should be taken throughout over rough ground.

Maps

OS Landranger No. 168, Colchester & The Blackwater Area, covers the whole route. The route spreads over three OS 1:25,000 Explorer Maps, Nos. 176,183,184

Abbreviations Used :-

AHD Ahead (In same direction), BL Bear Left, BR Bear Right, BRG Compass Bearing, BW Bridleway (Blue Waymarks), FP Footpath, FPS Footpath Sign, GR Grid Ref, KG Kissing Gate, L Left, LH Left Hand, R Right, RD Road, RH Right Hand, ST Stile, TL Turn Left, TR Turn Right, TRK Track (Vehicle width or more), WM Yellow Waymark, X Cross over, yds Yards

BW Marathon Leg 1 Heybridge to Goldhanger 8.5 miles

1. TL from clubhouse past black metal railings on L. AHD through gap in treeline. Keep Rugby pitches on R and trees on L to end of field. BR up grass bank, TR fence on L to tarmac path. TL on enclosed path between fences to RD. TL on pavement to RD junction, TR X RD and continue AHD on RH pavement, pass Redshank Drive on L. X Sandpiper Close and AHD to Coop Shop on R. BR to X Coop car park. TL on pavement, red railings of school on R, to TL at Sanderling Gardens. Pass through bollards and continue round L bend on LH pavement. X to RH pavement and at T-junction TR on pavement for 110 yds to reach main RD. X RD using pedestrian crossing. TL on Pavement. X Wood Rd and in 80 yds. at FPS, TR through barrier (next to gates) into Plantation Hall Sports grounds. Keep to RH side of car park. At end of car park, TL hedge on R. Pass building on L and continue on RH side of sports ground, hedge on R. At end of playing field through railings and TR on FP and in 8 yds TR on RD which becomes gravel TRK. Follow TRK round to L, (becomes tarmac) houses on L and R. At end of tarmac, X gravel to FPS, and follow concrete path. At FPS pass through barrier/gate/barrier, and follow tarmac path between houses and gardens. At end of path, through metal gate, TL on gravel

TRK and in 30 yds TL on tarmac RD for 150 yds to where RD bears right. TL, (canal towpath), canal on R. GR TL 854 082 1.4 miles

2. Follow canal towpath, canal on R, for 450 yds to pass under RD bridge. Continue on towpath for a further 500 yds and TR to X canal bridge (marked Hall Road). AHD, Hedge on L, metal railings on R. Follow pavement on L through houses (ignoring all side RDS) to T-junction (Northey view sign opposite). X RD and through gap in low barrier, arrow signs on posts. TR on path, hedge on R, for 220 yds. BL across rough ground, X TRK, and BR up path with wooden railing fence on L to top of sea wall. TL through fence. GR TL 859 072 2.2 miles

3. Follow the top of the sea wall, Blackwater estuary and Maldon on R, for 1.4 miles to lock gates at Heybridge basin. TL down steps and cross canal on path over lock gates towards Old Ship PH. TR towards seawall. FPS, TL on tarmac path onto sea wall passing Jolly Sailor on your L, CRS Marine boat yard on your R. *(The top of the sea wall is now followed for 4.4 miles to the head of Goldhanger Creek keeping the Blackwater Estuary on your R.)* After 1 mile, 300 yds after Maltings, BR with RD crossing bridge to boat yard (Saltcote Sailing Club) then BL onto sea wall. After passing Mill Beach and Osea Leisure Park, at end of caravans and holiday homes, X TRK and continue AHD on sea wall. *(The TRK to the R is the causeway to Osea Island, access at low water only.)* GR TL 891 070 5.8miles

4. The sea wall is now in more open country. After 1.9 miles pass a small hut with aerial and green seats either side. The sea wall now turns L up Goldhanger Creek past a third green seat. After fourth green seat at the head of the creek BL off sea wall down path. GR TL 906 084 8.0 miles

5. At bottom of slope BR to red pooh bin and information board, TL (sharp L) on enclosed path. Pass play area on L, then through metal barrier to RD. TR on RD for 300 yds to Chequers Pub. TL on Head Street for 200 yds. to Village Hall on R.

Checkpoint 1 Goldhanger Village Hall GR TL 902 089 8.5 miles

Opening Time 09-30 Closing Time 12-30

(Note the 18 mile route splits off at this point).

BW Marathon Leg 2 Goldhanger to Tollesbury 4.3 miles

6. Leave Village Hall, TL on RD for 200 yards to T-Junc. at Chequers Pub. X RD and go through gate to L of the pub, (FPS), into churchyard. AHD on path passing to R of Goldhanger church, AHD on path through yew bushes. X ST in wall and AHD on path, hedge on L, field on R for 600 yds to gravel X TRK ,WM. X TRK and AHD, BRG 90, on path between fields for 350 yds. WM, go AHD through hedge, X bridge. Go AHD X narrow field, BRG 90. GR TL 914 088 9.3miles

7. At hedge ,WM, TR with hedge on L, field on R for 160 yds to bottom of field.WM. BL to pass over earth bridge. Immed. TL, BRG 80, hedge on L. At end of field pass to L of metal gate ,WM. Continue AH with hedge on L, wooden fence on R, passing house on L. 5 yds before bench with notice 'No Entry' TR, WM, keeping wooden fence on R. At end of hedge on L, WM, TL with wire fence on L towards R end of old sheds.
GR TL 918 088 9.6 Miles

8. At sheds, WM, BR across field aiming for the tall tree to L of telegraph pole in far hedge, BRG 70. Cross plank bridge in hedge, WM. Keep to LH side of garden by hedge (Caravan and wire fence on R). Through gate, WM and continue along TRK, wooden fence each side. At TRK junc., FPS, TR, hedge / wooden fence on L. At end of hedge/fence TL at FPS, WM, (Sign on R Lauriston Farm). AHD on TRK between barns ,WM. AHD to next WM. TL, fence on R. In 25 yds at corner TR, wire fence on R to metal gate in hedge. Through gate (please close gate), X earth bridge, WM and after 25 yds, WM, TR over earth bridge. Immed. TL, with ditch on L, and in 30 yds TR with ditch on L.
GR TL 924 090 10.1 miles

9. Continue AHD on grassy TRK keeping the ditch and hedge on L for 400 yds, WM. X gravel TRK and continue AH keeping hedge and ditch on L. At end of field continue round to R to bridge. TL over bridge, then TL keeping hedge on L. After 50 yds., WM in bushes, TR on grassy path between fields. At end of field, WM, TL up gravel TRK. At WM bear R with TRK between hedges. Follow TRK round to L ,WM and then pass barns on your R. Continue on concrete TRK, house on L, pond on R, through metal gate, WM. BR on concrete TRK passing houses on R. Continue on concrete TRK for 350 yds.
GR TL 936 098 11.3 miles

10. Where concrete surface ends, WM, TR down field edge, hedge on L, field on R, BRG 90, for 600 yds to end of field. TL, WM, over footbridge into next field. AHD on field edge, ditch on R, field on L. TR over footbridge. AHD, hedge on L, field on R. In 230 yds, X TRK,WM, and continue AHD across field, BRG 105 for 240 yds to gap in hedge and RD. TL on RD. In 350 yds, just after brick houses on L, TR off RD at FPS onto TRK.
GR TL 947 101 12.2 miles

11. AHD on TRK passing to L of double gate. Continue ditch/hedge on L, field on R. Just after double metal gates on L, fork L on enclosed footpath leaving the field edge. After 80 yds ignore footbridge on L. Continue AHD on permissive path for 80 yds. BL through hedge into recreation ground. BL, playing field on R, Follow path along avenue of trees. At fence TR, fence and houses on L. Keep to fence on L past play area towards buildings. TL past metal barrier and BR to RD junction. TR to

Checkpoint 2 Parish Rooms, Tollesbury

GR TL 956 103 12.8 miles

Opening Time 10-00 Closing Time 12-40

BW Marathon Leg 3 Tollesbury to Tolleshunt Major 8.5 miles

12. Leave checkpoint and TR on RD. BR with RD and after 100 yds TL through small gap in hedge at FPS. Follow footpath diagonally across field, fence on L, to field corner. Through gate and hedge and AHD on field edge with hedge on R, field on L. At end of field AHD into next field, hedge on R, to RD. TL on RD. After 300 yds pass Telephone Box and in a further 30 yds TR into side RD, FPS. After 200 yds continue AHD on gravel TRK. In 140 yds, WM, continue AHD on TRK, wooden fence on L, fence and building on R. Continue AHD on footpath which becomes enclosed. Path becomes gravel. Follow gravel path which BL and then AHD to wooden railings to join TRK at FPS. GR TL 968 103 13.9 miles

13. TL on TRK with the Tollesbury Marina on your R. Pass to R of gate, WM, then BR through car park area. Take narrow path enclosed between wooden fences with clubhouse on your L. X concrete RD and continue AHD on path opposite, white houses on your L, and then Woodup Pool on R to RD. At end of houses, down steps, X RD passing to R of concrete barrier opposite (Green dog bin), then BL to the top of sea wall with Tollesbury Sailing Club on your L. AHD on sea wall. GR TL 967 106 14.1 miles

14. After 500 yds pass sewage works on your L and FPS where continue AHD on sea wall for 950 yds. At RH bend in sea wall ignore a gravel TRK on L. **(This is not a Public Right of Way)**. Continue on sea wall. In a further 250 yds, AHD at WM pass gate & wooden barrier on your R. Continue AHD on sea wall for 350 yds to WM sign. **TL down grassy bank to leave sea wall.** X a broad earth bridge to farm TRK. TL on farm TRK. GR TL 955 116 15.3 miles

15. In 300 yds where TRK BL, BR on grass path with ditch and willow trees on L. After 200 yds TL over footbridge then TR on footpath, hedge on L. After 140 yds, TL with path through hedge, then immed. TR, with hedge on R, field on L. At field corner, WM, TR through hedge. Up steps with hand rail, cross old railway track, then down steps and AHD on enclosed path to RD. GR TL 954 106 15.9 miles

16. TR on RD crossing to pavement passing houses on L. In 200 yds, where RD bends R, continue AHD to L of black gate on path towards telegraph pole. Continue on grass TRK between fields, then hedge on L to corner of field. AHD through hedge into next field. Continue AHD with hedge on L to meet crossing TRK. TR on TRK, hedge on L, field on R for 450 yds to TRK junction. TL on TRK with hedge on L, field on R. Follow TRK round R bend on edge of field to corner of wood. AHD to follow TRK, BRG 310, with wood on R, field on L. GR TL 945 112 16.8 miles

17. At end of wood AHD, BRG 310, on wide grassy TRK between fields. At end of field, TR, in 20 yds TL, wire fence and hedge on R, field on L. In 120 yds, TR

through gap (green signs), then TL with fence on L in tree lined area. BR through gap in hedge. TL on field edge with hedge on L. At end of field X bridge, WM, and TR on TRK. At end of field through wide gap in hedge and TL, hedge on L field on R. Before drive TR, WM, on path on field edge parallel to R side of drive for 90 yds. TL, WM, onto drive and TR to RD. GR TL 936 114 17.6 miles

18. TL on grass verge, field on L, RD on R. To avoid using busy RD continue AHD on field edge, hedge on R. At end of hedge continue on grass verge to TRK. **CROSS RD WITH CARE** then AHD on TRK opposite, BRG 280. Follow gravel TRK with hedge on R, field on L past 2 fields for 800 yds to TRK junction. BR on TRK, hedge on R. Pass green barrier then at barns BL with TRK, hedge on L, to RD. **STOP! BEWARE TRAFFIC FROM R. WARNING BUSY ROAD, CROSS WITH CARE.** AHD on RD opposite using RH pavement. GR TL 927 115 18.5 miles

19. In 100 yds TR into RD (Festival Gardens). In 120 yds TL towards Harvesters. At RH end of cul-de-sac (red dog bin) TR on enclosed FP, FPS. BL with FP. At field, WM, AHD cross field, BRG 290. At far side of field WM, TL with hedge on R for 20yds. to WM where TR across earth bridge to green KG. AH through gate on grassy path keeping close to hedge on R and enter enclosed FP. At end of hedge, WM, BR on grassy TRK between fields. BL onto TRK at WM, hedge on R Follow TRK passing farmyard on R. GR TL 917 118 19.2 miles

20. Where concrete TRK turns left, continue AHD on compacted TRK, WM on R. At end of field and TRK Junc., AHD, ditch and hedge on R. Continue on grassy TRK for 600 yds. At end of field, WM, cross earth bridge and TR, WM, hedge on R. Pass under power lines. 100 yds after power lines TL at WM on path between fields, then becoming hedge on R. After 350 yds. fork R on enclosed path, then hedge on L and exit to RD (if overgrown use edge of field on L next to paddock). TL on RD crossing to face traffic. After 550 yds to pass under power lines. Continue on RD passing Rivals/Renters Farm on R. In another 300 yds pass 30mph sign into Tolleshunt Major. At new development cross RD to pavement on L. X estate RD and BL with pavement to X RD (Tolleshunt D'Arcy Road). TL to face traffic for 250 yds to CP3 on L.

Checkpoint 3 Village Hall, Tolleshunt Major GR TL 902 114 21.3 miles

Opening Time 11-15 Closing Time 15-40

BW Marathon Leg 4 Tolleshunt Major to Rugby Clubhouse 5.4 miles

Note The 18 mile and 26 mile routes join here.

21. Leave checkpoint and X Rd. TR on RD (signpost Maldon) for 130 yds to RD junction. TR on RD for 120 yds. TL, FPS (red pooh bin). Follow FP for 300 yds. BL (**Caution. uneven planks on Bridge**), X bridge through hedge, WM. TR, hedge

now on R, field on L to RD. TR on RD. In 170 yds pass under power lines. In a further 80 yds, at double metal gates, TL, FPS, through gap. Follow field edge path, hedge on L field on R. Continue to corner of field. Turn R and follow path for 90 yds to TL through gap in hedge and cross footbridge. Continue hedge on L field on R to pass building on R. Go to L of wooden gate (ignore small gate on R) and BR on gravel drive. Follow drive to RD at Little Totham. (Pub The Swan opposite).

GR TL 889 117 22.2 miles

22. X RD and TL for 110 yds. to FPS sign on R next to red pooh bin. TR and follow enclosed path into field, hedge and ditch on L field on R. Follow grass path to end of field where BL over earth bridge. Take wide grass path ditch on R for 35 yards and turn R over concrete bridge. Follow grass path, ditch now on L field on R to pass to L of metal gate to RD.

GR TL 885 113 22.6 miles

23. TR on road for 200 yds. At road junction TL on gravel drive (Moor's Farm Chase). AHD on drive to brick wall where turn L on TRK, paddock on L, hedge on R. BR through small gate, WM, onto enclosed path, fence on R, ditch/hedge on L. Follow enclosed path round paddock. At end through gate and take grass path to field. AHD hedge on L field on R. At end of field go through gap in hedge to X footbridge and BL on wide grass path hedge on L. At end of field continue on enclosed track between high hedges. Pass small wooden building on R and continue AHD passing a house behind the trees on the L towards large metal container. TR with TRK to TRK junction, WM.

GR TL 883 103 23.5 miles

24. AH between fields on wide earth TRK passing two Oak trees on R of TRK, BRG 280. At RD, X, to wide gravel TRK opposite (Sheepcoates Farm) pass to L of large metal gates and AHD on TRK, BRG 280. Pass electricity pylon on L (metal gates here usually open). Continue on TRK, then BL, WM, round side of farm buildings. Keep farm buildings on R. TR at end of farm buildings into farmyard and immed. TL, WM, through gate and then roofed passage way to emerge opposite farmhouse. BR in front of farmhouse on gravel drive. BL with drive and continue for 600 yds. through KG on R to RD.

GR TL868 108 24.5 miles

25. TL on LH side of RD, after 100 yds. Keep on RD round sharp R bend. In 100 yds at FPS TL on gravel TRK. Stay on TRK for 1100 yds to pass farmhouse (Sains Hall) on L. Continue AHD on TRK for further 400 yds. to where TRK bears R. TL leaving TRK, WM, on path on field edge, hedge on R, field on L. After 400 yds at WM, TR X bridge. Cross field, BRG130, to L of house. At end of field, WM, exit to R of metal gate (BEWARE DITCH ON R) then through low wooden barrier, WM, to RD. (Don't use drive !).

GR TL 873 095 25.8 miles

26. TR on RD. In 500 yds. pass Slough House Farmhouse on R. In a further 500 yds. at start of houses on L X RD. Continue AHD to metal gate at end of houses. TL

Emergency Numbers Base 07732 902218 Roving 07427 857003 - 7 -

in front of metal gate, WM. Follow enclosed path for 20 yds to next WM. TR, electric fence on L, for 80yds to go through KG, WM. Continue AHD fence on R, hedge on L
Take care rough path, after 100 yds beware hole. In further 150 yds continue AHD on enclosed FP and follow for 300 yds. to Rugby Club.

FINISH – WELL DONE Closing Time 17-30 GR TL 868 081 26.7 miles

Please remove muddy footwear before entering the Clubhouse to check in..