

2021 Blackwater Marathon 26.5 Mile Route Description

Start / Finish Daisy Meadow Car Park, Heybridge Basin

Grid Ref. TL 871 069 Post Code CM9 4RW

Reminders

You must comply with any current government Covid-19 restrictions and guidance.

Please show consideration to other people on narrow and enclosed paths.

Stiles and Bridges can be very slippery at this time of year. Please take extra care.

On roads please note warnings on route description and face oncoming traffic unless otherwise stated.

Notes

Daisy Meadow Car Park

This was a free Car Park at the time of writing the route description (September). There have been rumours that parking charges may be introduced sometime in the future.

Maps

Landranger No. 168, Colchester & The Blackwater Area, covers the whole route.

The route spreads over Three Explorer Maps, Nos. 176,183,184

Possible Facilities on Route – subject to opening times

Start / Finish There is a refreshment kiosk on the canal towpath by the car park. There are pubs and a cafe close to the lock gates at Heybridge Basin 200 yards up the canal towpath. Paragraph 1 Line 2 . Paragraph 27 Line 3.

Goldhanger – Pub, Paragraph 3 Line 3.

Tollesbury – Cafe, Paragraph 10 Line 4/5. Public Conveniences, Para.10 Line 6

Little Totham – Pub, Paragraph 19 Line 6

There are more facilities off route at Heybridge Basin, Goldhanger, Tollesbury and Tolleshunt D'Arcy Paragraph 15/16.

Abbreviations Used :-

AHD Ahead (In same direction), BL Bear Left, BR Bear Right, BRG Compass Bearing, BW Bridleway (Blue Waymark), 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

1. At far end of Car Park go up steps and TL on canal towpath, canal on R, for 200 yds to lock gates at Heybridge basin. *(After 30 yds look out for the safari park through a gap in trees on the left).* At end of tow path continue AHD through gravel car park to pass Old Ship PH. FPS, TL on tarmac path onto sea wall passing Jolly Sailor PH 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 2.3 miles

2. 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 4.5 miles

3. At bottom of slope BR to metal gate and red dog bin, 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. 10 yds past pub TR and go through KG, 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. X TRK and AHD, BRG 90, on path between fields for 350 yds. Go AHD through hedge, X bridge. Go AHD X narrow field, BRG 90. GR TL 914 088 5.5 miles

4. At hedge TR with hedge on L, field on R for 160 yds to bottom of field. AH to pass over earth bridge. Immed. TL, BRG 80, hedge on L. At end of field pass to L of metal gate. Continue AH with hedge on L, wooden fence on R, passing house on L. At bench with notice 'No Entry', TR, WM, keeping wooden fence on R. At end of hedge on L, TL between wire fences towards R end of old sheds, WM.
GR TL 918 088 5.8 Miles

5. At sheds, BR across field (broken WM propped up against gate), aiming for the tall tree to L of far telegraph pole in the far hedge, BRG 70. Cross plank bridge in hedge. Through broken gate. Keep to LH side of garden by hedge. Cross gravel and through gate, WM. 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. AHD on TRK between barns (WM). AHD to next WM, then through metal KG. Cross field towards metal gate. Through gate, X earth bridge 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 6.2 miles

6. Continue AHD on grassy TRK keeping the ditch and hedge on L for 400 yds. X gravel TRK, WM, 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 7.5 miles

7. Where concrete surface ends, TR down field edge (WM in bushes), 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 8.4 miles

8. 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. TL at WM (permissive path). In 15 yds BR through trees to pass skate boarding ramps. AHD on recreation field edge, hedge on R. At field corner TL, hedge on R. 10 yds past seat TR through gap in hedge. **X RD WITH CARE** to go through gate opposite. (FPS in hedge on R). TL 956 101 9.0 miles

9. Follow path, hedge to the R, to field corner. BR 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 and building on R. Continue AHD on footpath which becomes enclosed. Path becomes gravel. Follow gravel path then BL to join gravel TRK at FPS. GR TL 968 103 10.0 miles

10. 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. TL on RD using pavement and at side RD on L, X RD to continue AHD on pavement for a further 240 yds. TR on TRK. AHD passing Recycling Bins and Public Toilets. GR TL 963 106 10.4 miles

11. After toilets, BL on TRK to go through kissing gate to L of metal gate, WM. Go AHD on concrete TRK between tall hedges. At metal gates TL through hedge gap. TR on field edge, hedge on R field on L, to field corner. Go AHD through gap in hedge and BL up to WM on sea wall. TL on sea wall (saltings on your R). Continue AHD on sea wall 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 11.5 miles

12. In 300 yds, WM, (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 12.2 miles

13. TR on RD crossing to pavement passing houses on L. In 200 yds, where RD bends R, continue AHD, FPS, on FP towards telegraph pole. Continue on grass TRK between fields, later 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, WM. 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 13.0 miles

14. 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, X ST on R, then TL with fence on L in tree lined area. BR to ST at end. X ST and 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 13.8 miles

15. 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 14.7 miles

16. In 100 yds TR into RD using pavements, Festival Gardens. In 120 yds TL towards Harvesters. At RH end of cul-de-sac TR on enclosed FP, FPS, Barrier. BL with FP. At field, WM, AHD cross field, BRG 290. At far side of field TL with hedge on R for 20 yds. 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 15.5 miles

17. 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, soon becoming hedge on R. After 350 yds. fork R on enclosed path, then hedge on L and exit to RD (use edge of field on L if overgrown). TL on RD crossing to face traffic for 1100 yds passing Home Farm on L and kennels on L. 10 yds past large wooden barn on R, TR, FPS. (Renters Farm sign on L). GR TL 902 119 17.2 miles

18. Pass to R of gate, AHD on grass verge/TRK. At WM BR between fences. At end of fences BL into field and cont same direction with hedge on R, field on L. AH through gap in hedge to RD. **BUSY ROAD TAKE CARE.** TR on RD for 200 yds to FPS on L. TL off RD and follow field edge, hedge on R, field on L. At end of field at WM BR onto enclosed path. X bridge and continue on enclosed path later fence on R. At end of fence follow drive to RD. GR TL 894 119 17.7 miles

19. TL on RD for 300 yds. passing Bakers Nursery and White Chimneys Farm on your L. At large gap in hedge on your R, FPS, take 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 and BR on gravel drive. Follow drive to RD at Little Totham. (Pub The Swan opposite). GR TL 889 117 18.3 miles

20. TL on RD for 110 yds. to FPS sign on R next to red dog 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 18.8 miles

21. TR on road for 200 yds. At road junction TL on gravel drive (5 M.P.H.sign, 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. GR TL 883 103 19.7 miles

22. AH on wide earth TRK passing two Oak trees on R of TRK, BRG 280. At RD, X, to wide gravel TRK opposite (Sheepcotes 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 gap 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 20.7 miles

23. 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 past metal gate then through low wooden barrier, WM, to RD. (Don't use drive).

GR TL 873 095 22.0 miles

24. TR on RD. In 550 yds. pass Slough House Farmhouse on R. In a further 150yds. (20 yds past paddock gate on L), TR through bushes, FPS, X concrete bridge and continue on enclosed path passing through metal squeeze gate. At brick building, WM, continue on wide grassy TRK, lake on L. Pass through gate, to L of rusty gates. TL on TRK, WM. Follow TRK, passing between lakes, for 850 yds. to main RD. **BUSY ROAD, CROSS WITH CARE.**

GR TL 861 090 23.1 miles

25. TL on pavement for 450 yds., **crossing side roads (TAKE CARE)**, to chevron markings where road bears right. Continue AHD on pavement (RD on L) **crossing side roads (TAKE CARE)** and in a 350 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 (WM), 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, FPS bridleway (canal towpath), canal on R.

GR TL 854 082 24.0 miles

26. 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. 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 24.9 miles

27. 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. TL on tarmac, then TRK, then towpath for 200 yds (canal / boat park on L). TR down steps to Daisy Meadow car park. **FINISH**

GR TL 871 069 26.5 miles