THE WITCHFINDER’S WAY

This cycle ride starts from the town of Harwich, famous for its seafaring history and heritage. From here the route heads through rolling countryside and picturesque villages, to the little port of Mistley, haunt of Matthew Hopkins - ‘The Witchfinder General’. From 1645-1646, he was employed to hunt out the area’s witches. The route returns to Harwich via the River Stour with its views and riverside hamlets. Along this route you can see Robert Adam’s 18th C. towers, discover the bird life in a riverside coppiced wood and stroll atop the historic Ha’penny Pier.

Essential information
Starting point: Harwich - Iconfield Park, Parkeston. Located off A120, 1 1/2 miles south west of Harwich (Old Town).
Alternative starting point: Manningtree - ‘Fiveways’ Supermarket car park (Riverside Avenue East). Join the route by cycling eastwards along the B1352 to Mistley. Start from ‘I Mistley’.
Nearest railway station: Harwich - Dovercourt (1 mile east of Iconfield Park); Harwich Old Town (1 1/2 miles north east of Iconfield Park); Parkeston Quay (1 1/2 mile north of Iconfield Park). Manningtree - 1 1/2 miles west of Mistley along B1352.
Type of route: Day ride - moderate, circular; on roads and cycle paths.
Distance: 26 miles/41 km.
Short cut: From Wix Abbey, north along unclassified road to T-j with B1352, 1 1/4 miles (3 km). Total route with short cut, 21 miles (34 km).
Terrain: Gently rolling. One or two moderate climbs on B1352 between Mistley and Ramsey. Lowest point - 10 feet (3 metres) at Wrabness. Highest point - 108 feet (33 metres) between Bradfield Heath and Wix.
Ordnance Survey map area: Landranger 169 - Ipswich & The Naze.
National Cycle Network links: Route 51. This ride follows the NCN between Harwich (Iconfield Park, Parkeston) and Stone’s Green (nr. Wix).
**Points of Interest**

(listed as you would find them along the route)

Please note: within this map there is only room to list basic details regarding opening times. In this respect, if you are planning to visit any of the places of interest on this route, we advise you to telephone in advance to confirm exact opening days and times. Refreshment establishments listed on this map are just a small selection of those available. For further information, please contact the nearest Tourist Information Centre.

---

**Mistley Place Park (New Road)** - over 2,000 rescued animals and birds. Woodland and lakeside walks. Open all year. Admission charge. (01206) 396483.

**Mistley Quay Workshops** (High Street) - houses various artists and craftsmen. Showroom open all year. Admission free. (01206) 393884.

**The Mistley Thorn** (High Street) - stands on the site of an earlier pub which was used as offices by Matthew Hopkins, the unsuccessful lawyer who brought a reign of terror (1645-1646) to the area as 'The Witchfinder General'.

**Mistley Towers** (High Street) - two towers designed by Robert Adam in 1776. English Heritage. Open all year. Admission free. (01206) 393884 (for keys).

**Swan Fountain** (High Street) - designed by Robert Adam, as part of the failed spa scheme. The town is famous for its flock of swans.

---

**Manningtree**

---

**Just off the route** - Manningtree (1/2 mile west of Mistley along B1352). Attractive riverside town, once a flourishing port, haunt of smugglers. Matthew Hopkins hung some of his victims on the green, and his ghost is said to haunt the town. Market - Wed and Sat.

**Manningtree and District Local History Museum** (High Street) - artefacts, maps and books. Open all year. Admission free. (01206) 392747.

**Wide selection throughout town.**

**Market site (Brook Street).**

---

**Bradfield** - small village. The apt sign for the Strangers Home Inn shows a cuckoo, renowned for making its home in other birds' nests.

**St. Lawrence's Church** - dates back to 13th C. Contains memorial to Mr Edwin Harris Dunning, the first officer to land an aircraft onto the deck of a moving ship in 1917.

**The Strangers Home Inn** (01255) 870304.

---

**Witness 2005** - large scattered village.


**Ramsey** - attractive village grouped around the side of a hill. Dominated by its windmill, built in 1842, and the tallest surviving one in Essex.

**The Castle Inn** (01255) 880203.
The River Stour

ROUTE DIRECTIONS

STARTING POINT: Harwich (Iconfield Park, Parkeston).

Iconfield Park, Parkeston (Harwich) - the nearby International Port is one of the UK's leading.

Follow the road out of Iconfield Park. As you approach the roundabout with the A120, join the cycle/pedestrian path on the R. This runs between the two large roundabouts. At the end of this path, turn L to reach the 'Toucan crossing' over the A120. On the other side, go onto Parkeston Road (A136), SP ‘North Sea Cycle Route’.

After 35 yards, turn L onto the off-road path, following the ‘North Sea Cycle Route’ signs to Dovercourt railway station. There are excellent views over Harwich harbour, the port of Felixstowe and Shotley.

From the railway station, turn R onto Kingsway. Then at the traffic lights (X-roads with the High Street), turn L to Harwich.

Harwich (Old Town) - seafaring history and heritage.

Once you have explored Harwich, retrace your route back along Main Road/High Street.

At the X-roads with Kingsway, turn L, following signs for the National Cycle Network Route 51 (Colchester). This brings you onto the Marine Parade in Dovercourt.

Dovercourt - Edwardian-style resort.

Follow the route (National Cycle Network Route 51 signs) along Marine Parade, Lower Marine Parade, Wick Lane and Low Road. There are various seafront amenities and attractions.

At the mini-roundabout, turn L onto Oakley Road.

Little Oakley - views over the Walton Backwaters.

Turn R (with the pub in front of you) onto Rectory Road, SP ‘Wrabness’.

Turn L, SP ‘Great Oakley’.

Turn R back onto the B1414 (NS).

Great Oakley - 17-19th C. cottages.

Turn R, SP ‘Wix and Little Bentley’ (cycle sign).

Turn L, SP ‘Stones Green, Tendring and Little Bentley’ (cycle sign). This tiny lane passes the church, then heads back into the countryside.

Turn R, SP ‘Little Bentley 21/2’ (cycle sign).

Follow the main road around to the R towards Wix. Do not follow the National Cycle Network Route 51 signs which goes SA.

Wix - church overlooks former abbey.

Short cut (1¼ miles). Total route with short cut - 21 miles.

¼ mile after the X-roads at Wix, turn R along Spinnel’s Lane, SP ‘Wrabness’. This takes you north for 1¼ miles to the T-j with the B1352, where you turn R, SP ‘Wrabness, Dovercourt and Harwich’. Follow this road for just over a ¼ mile.

Please now continue from ‘direction no. 21’.

Bradfield Heath - large village.

Beside the Village Maid pub, turn L, SP ‘Colchester and Tendring’.

Turn R onto Straight Road, SP ‘Mistley Heath’.

Mistley Heath - where ‘Mistley’ first evolved.

Turn L onto Harwich Road (B1352), SP ‘Manningtree 1¾, Colchester 10¾’.

Mistley - small picturesque port.

Just off the route - Manningtree (continue along the B1352 for 1½ mile). Attractive riverside town.

Retrace your route back along the B1352, this time continuing SA to Bradfield.

Bradfield - small village.

Just before the busy roundabout with the A120, dismount from your cycle and walk along the pavement to your L. This brings you to a safe point to cross. On the other side, you can resume cycling along the B1352, SP ‘Clacton B1414, B1352 and Dovercourt’.

At the roundabout, go SA onto Main Road, SP ‘Dovercourt and Harwich’.

Continue straight over the next two mini roundabouts.

At the mini roundabout, turn L onto Parkeston Road, SP ‘Parkeston (A136)’. Now retrace your route back to Iconfield Park (using the ‘Toucan crossing’ at the A120 roundabout).
The Map shown in this route provides just a general outline - in this respect, we recommend that you purchase the Ordnance Survey Landranger Map which covers the area. Ordnance Survey map area: Landranger 169 - Ipswich & The Naze. 'Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO © Crown copyright (2006). All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100017282.'