

# Essex Coastal Path Access Guide: Goldhanger to Heybridge Basin (part of the Maldon to Salcott coastal stretch)

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Last surveyed 14th June 2023



This section of the coastal path runs along the sea wall on the north side of the Blackwater Estuary. The estuary is an internationally important site for wintering birds. Depending on the state of the tide, large numbers of waders and wildfowl can be seen. Across the mudflats you can see Osea Island, a private property that has had a varied history. There are a number of buildings on the island that are currently used for music studios and accommodation, including holiday lets.

**Distance:** 7.5 km / 4.6 miles (one-way, excluding approach/exit)

## **Start point:**

what3words: stream.winds.zone; Grid Ref TL 90670 08489

The start point is given from the path itself at the Goldhanger end. The distance from the centre of Goldhanger, at the Chequers pub, to the coastal path is an additional approx. 520m.

**Facilities at start:** Goldhanger village is approx. 0.5 m from the coastal path. [The Chequers Inn](#), closest to the coastal path, serves food and is dog-friendly. There is no wheelchair accessible public toilet in the pub or village, but one is available along the route at the Beach House café (15).

**Facilities at end:** Two pubs (The Jolly Sailor and The Old Ship) and The Lock Tea Room are close-by ([Visit Maldon](#))

## **Public transport and parking:**

**Buses** - [The 95/95A bus route serves Tollesbury-Goldhanger-Heybridge-Maldon—view timetable](#)

**Parking** - At Goldhanger there is a small car park for pub patrons opposite The Chequers; otherwise parking is on the road but quiet. At Heybridge Basin there is parking in the Daisy Meadow car park, next to the canal.

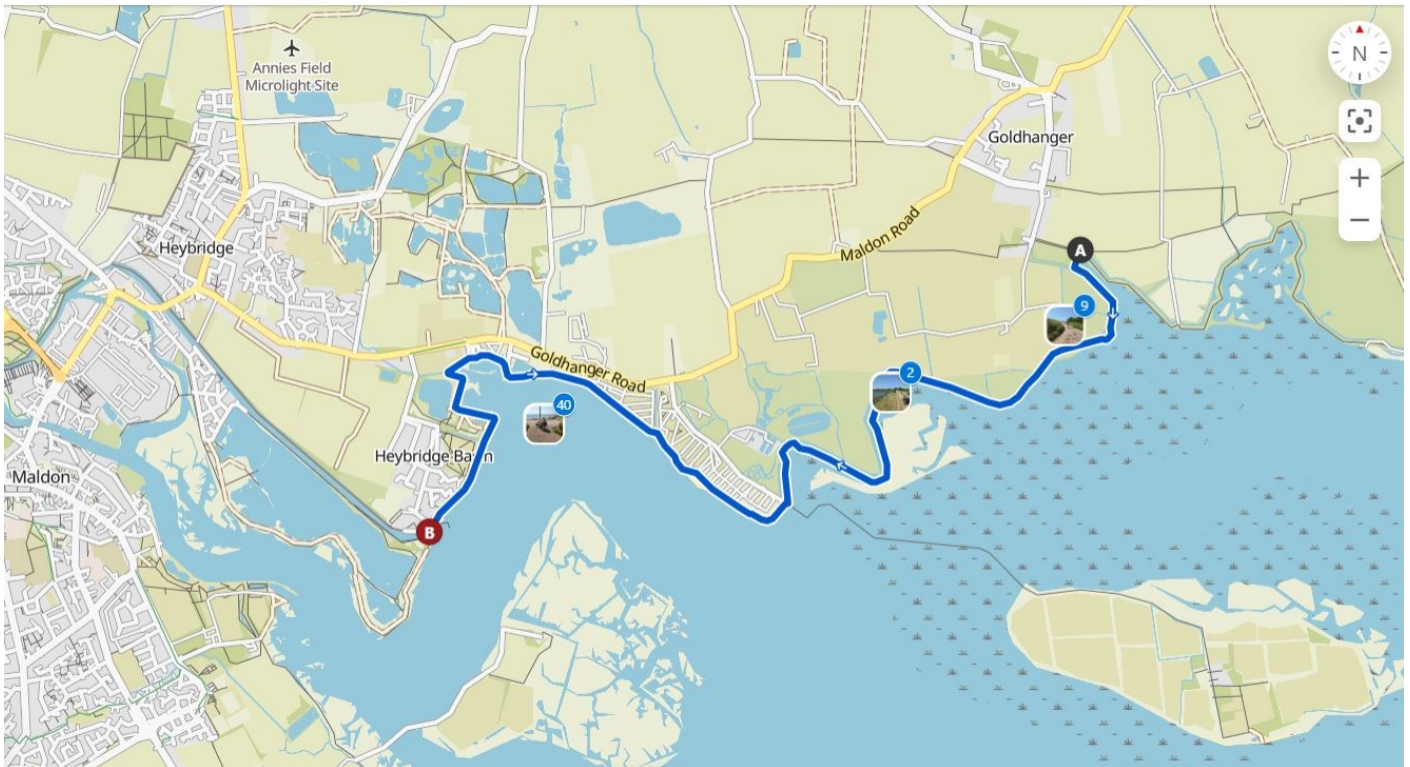
**Access features:** the route is step-free and mostly level, save for access/exit to the sea wall, and two points detailed.

Terrain is mixed/uneven but largely firm, with grassy/earthen track and some light gravel at the Goldhanger end; tarmac (with some poor-repair) at the Heybridge end.

**Suitability for chair/scooter users:** we estimate this route section is likely to be accessible to all-terrain chair and scooter users, and to some independent chair users, with assistance likely to be necessary in places, on account of occasional gradients/camber and mixed surfaces.



**The route on the map (right to left):  
Goldhanger (A) to Heybridge Basin (B)**



**The route phototrail**

[Note: click here to view the following phototrail images on the map](#)



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Access to the coastal path: at the start point, alongside an information board, there is both stepped access (1) with metal handrail to both sides, and ramped access with a medium gradient of approx. 1:12-15 m(?) to the sea wall. The ramp and sea-wall path is hard-surfaced (hoggin), with a dusting of light gravel.



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Occasional bench/rest points are located at the Goldhanger end, and there is ramped access to the water here also (4), close to the Goldhanger Sailing Club shelter (5).





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Approx. 1 km along (///fonts.discussed.painter), an inlet forces a small diversion (6), creating short, steeper sections off and back onto the sea wall. Rutted farm track on the downward gradient and single footpath on the upward (7), combined with camber, make this section more difficult. Chair/scooter users may require assistance.



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At Osea Island causeway, the barrier shown (11) has since been removed. This point marks the start of tarmac path, which continues to Heybridge. The barrier previously obliged chair and scooter users to use rough greensward to the right, as shown, for approx. 250 m until a grassy ramp enabled access back up to the path. itself (12).



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Smooth tarmac for the most part aids onward accessibility beyond Osea, although collapsing path surface in places has created some short stretches with significant camber in places (13-14). More than one café serves the coastal path here though (the 'Beach House' (15) also has an accessible toilet) so there are good refreshment breaks.



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The changing character of the waterfront between the more rural Goldhanger end and the holiday vibe of the chalets and wooden beachfront huts on the approach to Heybridge Basin make this stretch particularly delightful.





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Beyond the huts, at Saltcote Sailing Club, a long concrete ramp leads up to Wharf Road, ahead/right (20), whilst the coastal path continues to the left (20-21) along a very narrow, overgrown section (///handfuls.secure.closed).



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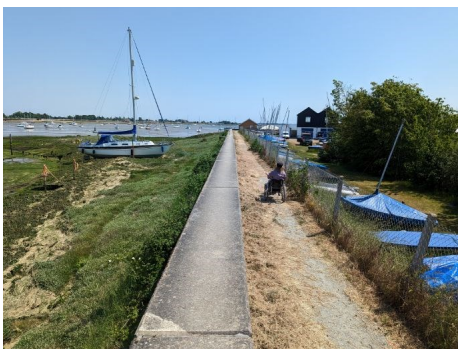


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Likely to be off-putting to some, this was manageable in a 16" chair with a little help. Further on (23), a turn in the path combined with a low-level concrete obstruction (hard to capture), also hampered independent access.



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Towards Heybridge, the path opens up (24-25) and once again its character changes as it runs alongside boat yards at Blackwater Sailing Club. Just beyond the club, a chicane-style barrier (27) *may* deter some larger scooters.



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At Heybridge, plentiful watering holes await: a waterfront café (The Lock tea room) and two pubs (The Jolly Sailor and The Old Ship), and a very pleasant spot alongside Heybridge Lock to stop awhile before the return journey.

**Your feedback is important:** We strive to keep these guides up-to-date and as useful as possible to allcomers. We welcome your input to this end. Please be in touch via email: [ELAF@essexhighways.org](mailto:ELAF@essexhighways.org). Thank you!