

Maldon's Riverside Trail



A gentle walk of about 1¼ miles, largely accessible to wheelchair users, taking about an hour exploring Maldon's historic quayside, with opportunities to detour and visit extra places. The walk is dog friendly. Refreshments are available in the Promenade Park and High Street



Maldon is an historic maritime and market town of some 15,000 people in the County of Essex, situated on the Blackwater estuary. It is an ancient Anglo-Saxon burgh that was granted a Royal Charter by Henry II in 1171. From the Iron Age, it has been settled by the Romans, Saxons, Vikings and Normans and is the site of the famous Battle of Maldon fought between Vikings and the native Anglo-Saxons in 991AD. Today, Maldon is world famous for many things, such as the Maldon Mud race run in May, Maldon salt and the Thames barges that still sail from the Hythe.

History and Heritage

A walk along the High Street reveals many buildings whose brick facades conceal medieval timber frames. At the junction of the High Street and Market Hill stands the tower of St Peters which is attached to the building erected in 1704 by Dr Thomas Plume to house his famous library and the Maldon's grammar school. The school has long since moved and the ground floor now contains the Maeldune Centre which displays the Maldon Embroidery depicting life in the town from the Battle of Maldon to the present day. Further along is the Moot Hall, built in the 15th century for the d'Arcy family and most recently used as the council chambers, magistrates court and police station. In another few yards you reach the 13th century All Saints' Church, famous for its triangular tower and Washington Window. Maldon's Market Hill is lined with more timber framed buildings including the old workhouse and leads steeply down to Fullbridge at the crossing of the River Chelmer. This area was once a thriving port with its wharves busy unloading ships laden with timber and other materials. Here the Combined Military Services Museum contains a large collection of weapons and armoury and other displays.

Local Heroes and Traditions

Interesting local historical characters include the Saxon hero Lord Brythnoth who bravely led his army against the invading Danes, Edward Bright, the fat man at Maldon, “supposed to be the biggest and weightiest Man in the World” upon his death in 1750, and the zealous Puritan peacher, Rev’d Joseph Billio whose sermons in the URC were legendary. Plough Monday is celebrated in a parade of ploughshares through the town, led by the border dance troupe, Dark Horse Morris.

Maldon Heritage Group

In 2017, the Maldon Heritage Group was formed to enable member organisations to work together to share ideas, information and expertise with the objective of increasing footfall to venues and raising the profile of Maldon’s heritage to visitors and residents. Membership of the group is open to all Maldon-based non profit organisations with a heritage or cultural focus. The heritage venues and members currently represented are:-

- All Saints’ Church www.allsaintsmaldon.com
- Beeleigh Abbey Gardens
- Beeleigh Water and Steam Mill www.beeleighmill.co.uk
- Combined Military Services Museum www.cmsm.co.uk
- Friary Walled Garden
- Maeldune Heritage Centre www.maelduneheritagecentre.co.uk
- Maldon Museum www.maldonmuseum.org.uk
- Maldon Little Ship Club www.mlsc.org.uk
- Maldon Riverside Association
- Maldon Society www.maldonsoc.org
- Moot Hall www.themoothall.co.uk
- Museum of Power www.museumofpower.org.uk
- www.midessexquakers.org.uk/maldon-meeting.
- St Mary’s Church www.stmarysmaldon.org.uk
- St Giles Ruins
- Salt Water and Beer Shanty Singers
- Steam Tug Brent Trust www.steamtugbrent.org
- Thames Sailing Barge Trust www.bargetrust.org
- Thomas Plume’s Library www.thomasplumeslibrary.co.uk
- United Reformed Church

Wheelchair access

The Riverside Trail is for the most part accessible to wheelchair users. The exceptions are:-

Motorised wheelchair users have access to all areas except the stepped section of St Mary's Lane, the Down's footpath and the narrow section shared with the National Cycle Route 1.

Manual wheelchair users can access all areas except the stepped section of St Mary's Lane.

Section 2 the last 50 or so metres past the Salt Works up to Downs Road are steep for wheelchairs.

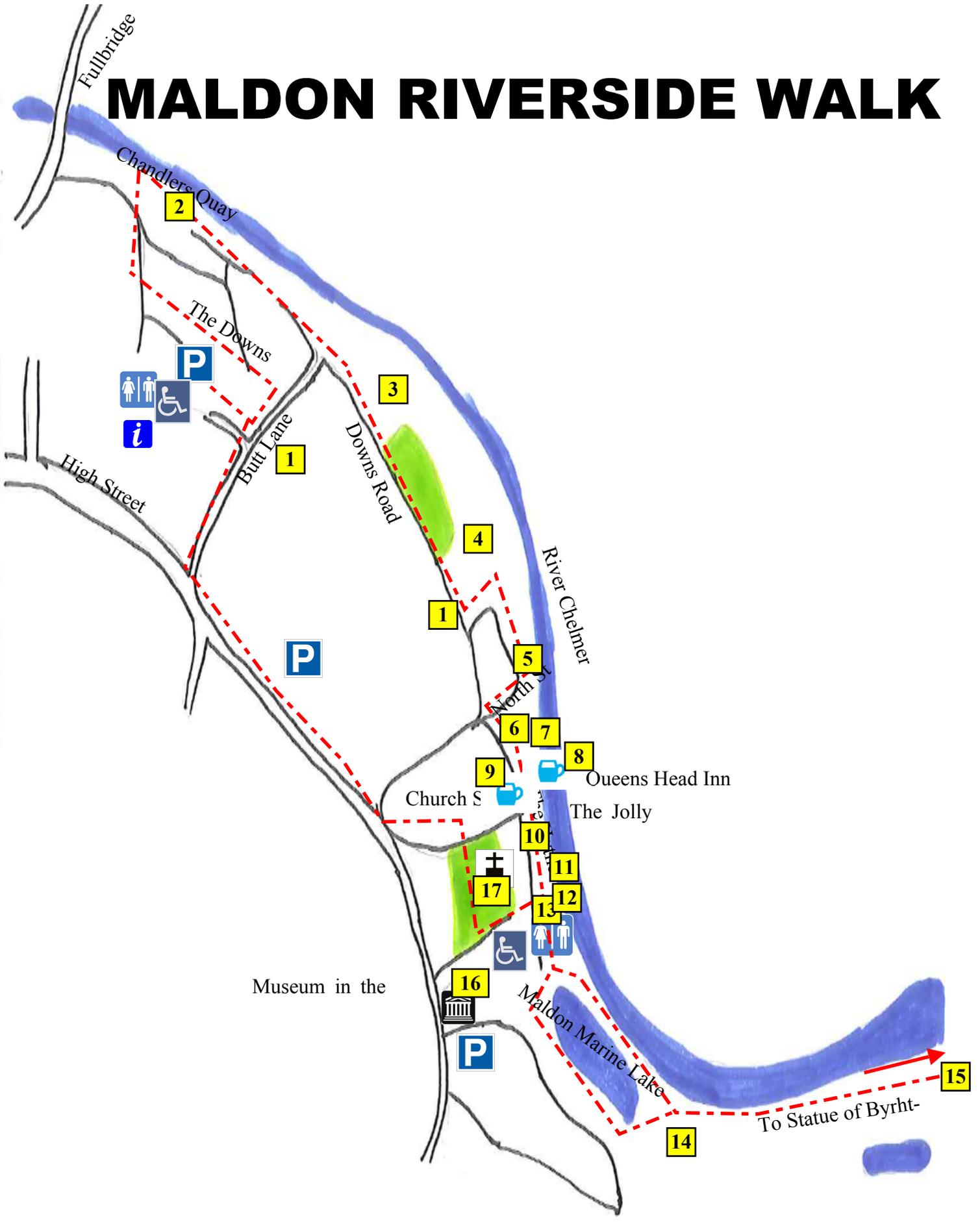
There is no footway on the left hand side of Downs Road and there is a section of double height kerbing on the right where caution is needed.

There is no wheelchair access to the green open space

There are two choices for wheelchair access to St Mary's Church; whilst at the Quay take the steep slope up Church Street, past the Jolly Sailor and then left through the church wall to the Church grounds and the Octagon. Retrace your steps to the Quay; or exit the churchyard onto St Mary's Lane, turning right. Turn left through the wheelchair friendly gate into the play area just beside the Museum in the Park, which is well worth a visit. Follow the paths through the park back down onto the Quay.

Or return to the refreshment area on the East side of the lake and take the higher of the wide paved footpaths up towards the Museum in the Park, just by the park gates. After visiting the museum, pass through the play area on its East (river) side toward the exit onto the narrow St Mary's Lane, turning right, followed by a left turn through the gate into the churchyard. Exit the church yard turning left onto Church Street and join the High Street to return to Butt Lane Car Park.

MALDON RIVERSIDE WALK



Butt Lane Car Park is an ideal place to park. Walk carefully down the Car Park to Butt Lane. Caution required crossing the road. Opposite stands the Quaker Meeting House

1. Maldon's Quaker Meeting House *was built in 1821. This handsome little brick building is set back from the road in a burial ground which is maintained to encourage wildlife. All the headstones have the same dimensions and lettering in accordance with Quaker testimony to equality. Internally, the building comprises two separate rooms; originally one for women and one for men, although since 1830 men and women have met together. The Georgian benches and tiered elders' benches remain. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the peace of the meeting house grounds.*

Cross Butt Lane again, keep left and take The Downs footpath to Chandlers Quay. Beware of vehicles manoeuvring here. Turn right at bottom of footpath and take care to stay to the **right** of chain link fence.

Be wary of cyclists here. This brings you past old slipway and to

2. Maldon Saltworks *The original and extended buildings still in use, characterised by the black silos. Salt has been produced in Maldon by the evaporation method for hundreds of years. Maldon Salt came into being, on the present site, in 1882. In 1922 The Osborne family took ownership, and it is now being run by the fourth generation, Steven Osborne. The site was visited by the Queen in 2010 and a Royal Warrant was granted in 2012.*

Turn left along Down Road (note footpath detour round hawthorn tree!)

3. Downs Road Boatyard

After the Nursery take the path along the grassy area. Views of mud berths and varied craft. Take the next left into Chelmer Terrace towards

4. Noddy's Boatyard

At the entrance to Noddy's Boatyard, turn right onto the un-made track which is the original Chelmer Terrace, admiring the row of cottages and The Blue House. Turn right

5. House of John Howard - Master Ship-Builder

Number 61 North Street is the former home of John Howard (1849-1915), a qualified naval architect and one of Maldon's most famous barge builders. He was best known for his 'stackie' barges, known as "hay up and dung down" because the barges were loaded with hay and straw at Maldon and returned with London horse muck for the clay fields by the Blackwater Estuary.

6. Marinestore boatyard

7. Sail Lofts - *The Hythe starts outside the chandlery and at this point, in Victorian times, stood a Blacksmith's forge and workshops. A long red brick wall marks the boundary of the Sail Lofts, making sails for the barges and fishing boats. Sailmaking ceased here some twenty years ago. The grassed area was used for spreading the canvas sails out so they could be painted with preservative; fish oil mixed with red ochre, giving the sails their traditional red brown colour. Opposite is a row of traditional fishermen's cottages*

8. Queens Head Pub

9. Jolly Sailor Pub - *The Belvedere (roof top observation room) served to inform the hostel keeper and lodgers when ships and barges were coming in to dock at the Hythe Quay. The building dates back to the 16th century.*

10. Hythe Quay barges with Maldon Little Ship Club *Although the Club was formed in 1927 it had no home and has been using this old Forge and Blacksmithy since the 1950's. Various extensions and alterations have been made over the years, the most ambitious involved extending the Upper Deck. Evening classes, social events and private parties all make good use of this lovely old building. Very early pictures of Maldon show St Mary's Church and the black boarded building, now the Clubhouse.*

11. Cook's Yard Shipwriting *has been carried on here for many years; maybe since Saxon times. From 1874, the yard was run by Walter Cook, and then his son, Clifford. Sailing barges were built here, including the Dawn who is currently lying in the yard. Work at Cook's involved many boat building and barge repair. The large timbers for this repair work can be seen on the shore. Now Topsail Charters use the yard mainly for the repair and maintenance of their fleet of barges, which lie at the quay between charter trips.*

12. Steam Tug Brent - *has been part of the Maldon waterfront scene for many years. Prior to coming to Maldon she spent all her working life in the London Docks. Brent came to Maldon in 1971 and for many years steamed here on the river. Since 2011 she has been owned by the Steam Tug Brent Trust, has all her original steam machinery and is mainly unchanged from her working days. Looked after by a team of volunteers, the Trust plan to restore her and steam her again*

13. Bath Wall Parliament - *On the side of the black shed near the Brent is a plaque relating to the Bath Wall Parliament where local fishermen met to discuss*

14. Marine Promenade and Recreation Ground *The Prom Park as it is now known was opened by the Mayor and local historian, Edward A Fitch, FLA on 26th June 1895. The Marine Lake addition was opened on 23rd June 1905. Plaques relating to these events can be seen on the main gates near the Museum.*

15. Bryhtnoth - Heroic defender of Maldon against the invading Saxons and savagely defeated at the Battle of Maldon in 991.

Walk to the very end of the Prom to see the statue of

Bryhtnoth and back around far side of Lake and end back at the Grotto. Turn right round last black shed **(Toilets here)** Walk back towards the Barges and turn left up the steps before 32 The Hythe into St Mary's Lane

16. Maldon Museum in the Park

The Museum was founded in 1920 by a group of Borough Councillors (see plaque). There are many rooms in the lodge house holding archives of Maldon's history. The wheel outside the Museum is not a mill wheel; it came from Maldon Water Supply company

17. St Mary's Church with Octagon extension

Turn right through the gate into the churchyard at the back of St Mary's Church which is known as the Fisherman's Church as its tower serves as a mariner's beacon for boats coming up the River Blackwater. The Church dates back to 1130 but there is archaeological evidence dating back to Roman Times. A stained glass window design is based on the dying prayer of the Earl Byrhtnoth, which gives thanks for the joy in his life.