

Thames Estuary Path – Introduction to Maps

Methodology

Routes were surveyed on foot or by bicycle during August and September 2008. Although measurements have been taken in places, this is not a detailed survey of every metre of the Thames Estuary Path. The intention is to give a general assessment of the condition of the route and to identify areas where further work is required.

We have not shown existing public Rights of Way as this information is available from Local Authority Definitive maps and will be covered by Natural England's coastal access audit.

We have used a "traffic light" system to describe the routes, where

- green = fully open with a good surface
- orange = some infrastructure, but physical or legal work is required
- red = major work required

Green routes are typically existing tarmac or concrete paths which are suitable for shared use, although the legal status may not be clear in some places.

Orange routes are primarily existing rough stone paths which need some improvements to make them suitable for shared use. In a few cases, they are existing roads or paths that need legal work to allow public access.

Red routes are existing public footpaths with a rough natural surface, or proposed routes where no public access is currently available. In most cases, major works involving new construction are required.

The main Thames Estuary Path is shown with solid lines and all links are shown with dashed lines. Some of these links can also describe options for the main route if the preferred alignment is not available. In rural areas, the vast majority of existing and potential links to local communities and transport hubs are described. In urban areas, only the strategic links to the wider walking and cycling network are included.

Significant barriers on the main route are shown on the maps and these vary from major river crossings to a set of steps. Some barriers are also shown on the link routes, but these have not been surveyed and reported in detail. Major man-made and natural barriers to a continuous estuary path are listed towards the end of this report.

Although there is a focus on cycling in the report, all the proposed routes are intended to be for shared use by pedestrians and cyclists. We know from research over the last 10 years on traffic free sections of the National Cycle Network, that around 50% of the usage of these routes is by pedestrians.

Although we advocate shared use paths, there may be some places where different routes can be provided for cyclists and pedestrians. Where an existing path on the flood defences is narrow, it might be easier to accommodate cyclists on a new path below the embankment. There may also be a few places where a separate alignment for pedestrians and cyclists is desirable, such as Gravesend to Cliffe.

Circular routes

Some potential circular routes are described in the text and others can be seen on the seven overview maps. There are very few opportunities for developing high quality circular routes because the urban areas are so densely developed. Links have not generally been surveyed in the same detail as the waterfront path, so we do not have many specific recommendations for circular routes.

The local Green Grid strategies for East London, South Essex and North Kent give some useful general guidance for potential circular routes including the Thames waterfront.

Horse riding

As far as we are aware, the only section of the main route with public bridleway status is a 2600 metre length on the north side of Canvey Island.

Subject to permission from landowners, other sections that could be opened up for equestrian use include:

- Cliffe Pools to Dagnam Saltings (maps 51 to 55)
- Coalhouse Fort to Mucking Tip (maps 22 to 24)
- Benfleet to Leigh and Hadleigh Country Park (maps 35 to 37)

There may also be opportunities as public access is developed across the Thames Gateway through the Green Grid strategies.

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Thames Gateway London

1	Royal Docks
2	UEL and Gallions Reach
3	Barking Creek
4	Barking Riverside
5	Dagenham Dock
6	Beam River and the Ford Motor Company
7	Rainham Creek
8	Rainham Marshes
9	Thames Barrier
10	Woolwich
11	Thamesmead Central
12	Thamesmead East
13	Bexley Riverside
14	Erith
15	Crayford Marshes

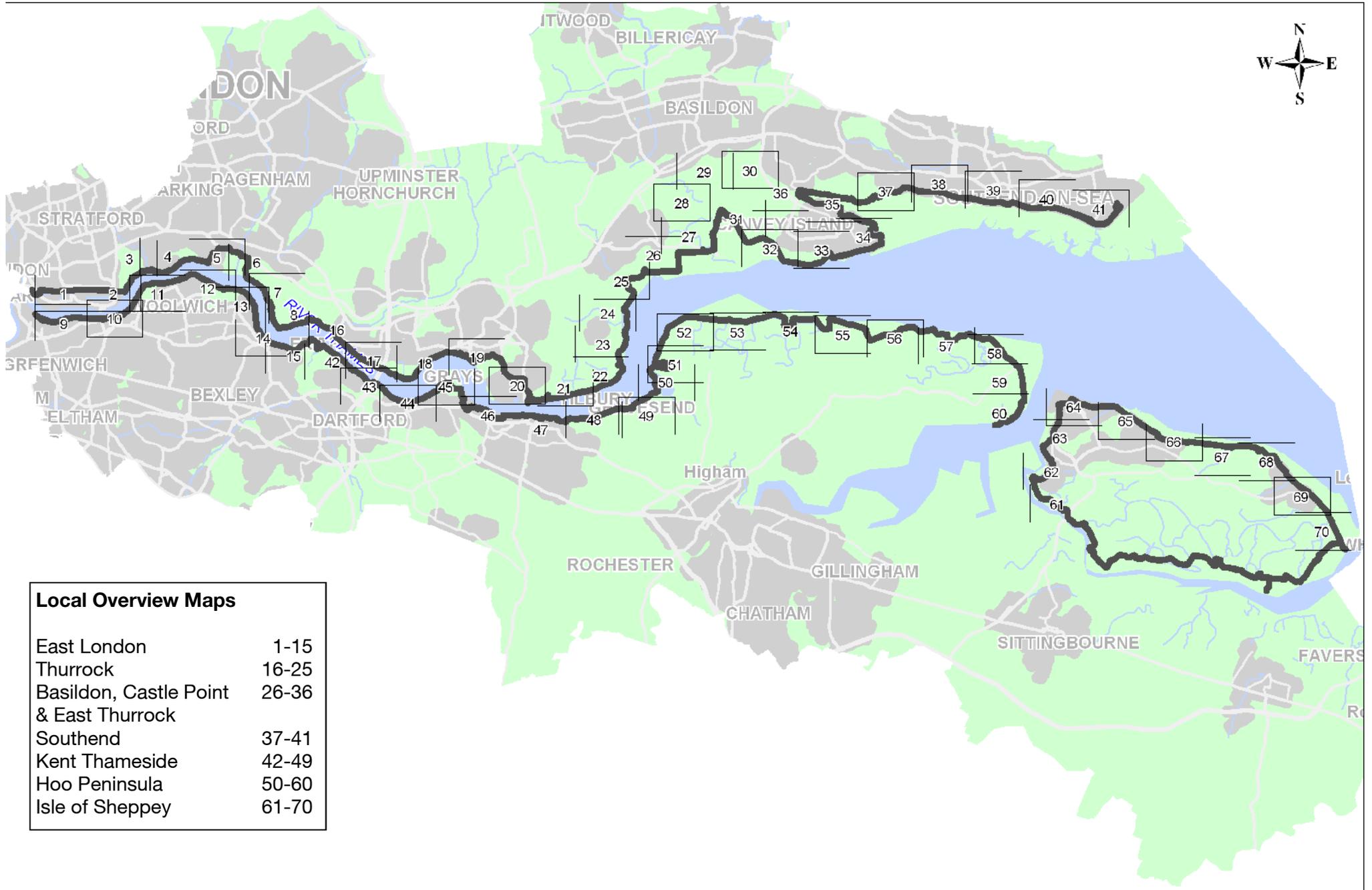
Thames Gateway South Essex

16	Aveley Marshes and Purfleet
17	Purfleet Industry
18	West Thurrock Marshes and South Stifford
19	Grays
20	Tilbury
21	Two Forts Way West
22	Two Forts Way East
23	East Tilbury Marshes
24	Thurrock Thameside Nature Park South
25	Thurrock Thameside Nature Park North
26	Stanford-le-Hope
27	Fobbing
28	Fobbing Marshes
29	Wat Tyler Country Park
30	Bowers Marshes
31	Fobbing Horse and Northwick
32	Canvey Island Hole Haven
33	Canvey Island Thorney Bay
34	Canvey Heights
35	Benfleet Creek

36	South Benfleet
37	Two Tree Island
38	Southend Seafront West
39	Southend Seafront Central
40	Southend Seafront East
41	Shoeburyness

Thames Gateway North Kent

42	Dartford Marshes
43	Littlebrook and Crossways
44	Greenhithe
45	Swanscombe Peninsula
46	Northfleet
47	Gravesend
48	Eastcourt Marshes
49	Shorne Marshes
50	Higham Marshes
51	Cliffe Pools
52	Cliffe Marshes
53	Cooling Marshes
54	Egypt Bay
55	St Mary's Marshes
56	Allhallows-on-Sea
57	Yantlet Creek
58	Grain North
59	Grain South
60	Grain Power Station
61	Rushenden Marshes
62	Queenborough
63	Sheerness South
64	Sheerness North
65	Minster West
66	Minster East
67	Connetts Farm
68	Warden
69	Leysdown-on-Sea
70	Shellness



Local Overview Maps

East London	1-15
Thurrock	16-25
Basildon, Castle Point & East Thurrock	26-36
Southend	37-41
Kent Thameside	42-49
Hoo Peninsula	50-60
Isle of Sheppey	61-70