**Saltmarsh 75 Continuous**

**Written Instructions 2023**

**Stage 1 – South Woodham Ferrers to North Fambridge**

**The start is on the sea wall at the end of Clementsgreen Creek**

Head north on wide track. At head of creek turn right and then right again to kissing gate with lifebelt. PLEASE BE PATIENT HERE – YOU WILL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME IN THE NEXT 76 MILES TO MAKE UP ANY SECONDS LOST GETTING THROUGH THE GATE

Cross stile (0.5miles), pass stile (0.8miles), pass fallen stile (1.1miles).

Through gap at next stile – DON’T TRIP OVER THE WIRE!! – and bear left heading inland with sea wall. Cross stile – BEWARE BARBED WIRE.

At fence across sea wall (2.3miles) turn left down slope & turn right over stile or through gate onto farm track. Straight through white kissing gates to cross railway line – **DO NOT USE FIELD GATES**. Straight ahead on farm track, then single track road.

At main road (2.8miles) **cross when directed by marshall** straight ahead into field & straight ahead keeping close to right hand field edge. At hidden marker post (2.95miles) turn right uphill on right hand field edge.

At marker post by garden fence turn left across field following line of small trees. At tall marker post turn left onto right hand field edge and in field corner go straight ahead through wide gap and turn right onto old railway line – DO NOT GO STRAIGHT AHEAD INTO NEXT FIELD.

Stay on this path for about half a mile, ignoring all paths to left and right. BEWARE GOLF BUGGIES CROSSING.

At 3.8miles go straight ahead at marker post & bear right, down slope to road. Turn right and follow to main road. **Cross main road as directed by marshall.** Turn left for 50m, then turn right into Rookery Lane.

Turn left with lane (4.8miles). Straight ahead past weeping willow tree onto track & straight ahead onto grass track as gravel track bears right. At hidden marker post by telegraph pole, turn right onto left hand field edge to kissing gate and cross railway line.

Through white kissing gate & straight ahead on right hand field edge. In field corner straight ahead through trees to road. Turn left on road and turn left again at junction. In 50m turn right into Ferry Road. Turn left into Ferry Boat Inn car park and Checkpoint 1.

**Stage 2 – North Fambridge to Burnham-on-Crouch**

Head out of car park on concrete road passing recycling bins. Straight ahead on gravel track with steel security fence on left. Straight ahead across open gravel area to ramp on left of Yacht Station Reception (hut on stilts). Up ramp & turn left onto sea wall.

Keep following sea wall to eventually (4miles) reach chalet plots and Bridgemarsh Marina. BEWARE OF STEPS AT TWO FLOOD GATES.

At 4.8miles (top of creek, lakes on left) turn right at marker post to kissing gate. **DO NOT MISS THIS TURNING!!!!!!**

At 5.6miles pass Stokes Hall Sluice No.1 and straight ahead UPHILLon right hand field edge to the top of Creeksea Cliff – the highest point of the Saltmarsh 75!!

Down the other side past the black metal sign & straight ahead to gap in bushes – SLOW DOWN AS THE NEXT 15 METRES ARE A BIT DODGY – MIND THE DROP DOWN TO BEACH ON RIGHT, ROOTS AND BRANCHES. Follow the path through the bushes back onto the sea wall.

Through kissing gate – MIND BARBED WIRE.

At timber fence, turn left down steps, through gate and turn right onto right hand field edge. In field corner go through gate and turn right onto road.

**THIS ROAD MAY BE FLOODED FOR SOME TIME BEFORE & AFTER HIGH TIDE WHICH IS AT 1050 – THE WATER WON’T HURT YOU BUT MIND THE VERY SLIPPERY SEAWEED!!!!!!**

At end of lane go straight ahead between fences onto sea wall.

On reaching Burnham Marina turn sharp left with sea wall. Through bollards to CHECKPOINT 2 at the RNLI station.

**Stage 3 – Burnham on Crouch to Bradwell Othona Community**

This is the most exposed stage of the Saltmarsh75. However, navigation is very straightforward and the going is pretty good underfoot for most of the way. Please make sure you have all you need when leaving Checkpoints 2/3.

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Head through boat yard and bear right between boats to pass in front of large pale blue workshop building – BEWARE STEEL RAILS IN GROUND.

Straight ahead to steep grass bank and bear right along base of bank. Straight ahead across rough stone area to pass between concrete bollards back onto sea wall – now a wide track with benches on the left.

Continue on this path which becomes Burnham Quay. Through Burnham following Quay round tight bends and through narrow section, then wide section past pubs – BEWARE WALKERS, DOGS etc.

Head east from the Corinthian sailing club back onto the sea wall. BEWARE PEOPLE & BOATS CROSSING THE PATH.

Cross stile/metal barrier (1.6miles). At 2.45miles pass grass air strip on left & on the opposite side of the river, the unloading facilities for material from Cross Rail project being used at Wallasea Island on Europe’s largest wildlife habitat creation project.

At 4.3 miles pass WWII bunker set into sea wall – one of more than 20 similar structures between Burnham and Bradwell Waterside.

At 4.9 miles pass steps down to track.

At 5.5 miles pass mine control tower in field. At 6.7 miles meet concrete wall & wave goodbye to the River Crouch as the wall starts to head north east, then north towards the Blackwater Estuary.

Pass metal field gate (6.4miles) & pass beach made entirely from dead cockle shells. At end of concrete section straight ahead back onto grass sea wall.

Reach Aid station checkpoint 3 on the seawall near Deal Hall Farm at 8mi.

**Stage 4 – Deal Hall Farm to Bradwell Othona Community**

Pass Bridgewick Pumping Station (2miles) – BEWARE PIPE ACROSS PATH.

Pass Grange Outfall (3miles). At Howe Outfall follow sea wall path right & right again round head of creek.

Reach short section of concrete (5miles). Pass Marsh House Pumping Station and radio transmitters.

Turn right at marker post now passing wind turbines. At next marker post (5.7miles) go down bank & straight ahead onto grass track **behind** old sea wall to pass derelict brick building to right.

Just before small wood (7.4miles) bear right up bank back onto sea wall, pass marker post & bench. Down steps through garden of Essex Birdwatching Society observatory. **This bit could be flooded.** Straight ahead past bird feeders & up slope through trees. Turn right onto right hand field edge passing St Peters Chapel.

Straight ahead past old bird hide on stilts & at steps turn left & follow path through trees to Othona Community and Checkpoint 4 at 7.75miles.

**Stage 4 – Othona Community to Bradwell Marina**

This is a short and straight-forward section. If you can’t find your way on this section then you’re going to really struggle on the next two stages!!!!

You just need to be careful to follow the instructions when you get to Bradwell Waterside. Don’t miss the hidden finger post!!

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Straight ahead on track past wind turbine, following footpath diversion signs. Up steps & turn left onto sea wall.

As you pass the old barges the sea wall starts to turn west as you enter the Blackwater Estuary. If visibility is good you should be able to see across the river to the beach huts and houses of Mersea Island.

At 2.4miles pass Bradwell Nuclear Power Station, which is currently being decommissioned.

On reaching Bradwell village pass the small caravan park & in 15m bear left down slope at rusty post along garden fences to road.

Cross road and turn left for 20m. Turn right at hidden finger post (before Shoemenders Lane) across parking area for Quay House. **BEWARE PLANTING TUBS AS YOU TURN THE CORNER.**

Straight ahead past bollard and up ramp between hand rails.

At Marina follow paving-slab path to Chandlery & turn right to pass Bradwell Marina Control Tower.

Turn left by notice boards and at road turn right to Marina Bar & Checkpoint 4 at 3.5miles.

**Stage 5 – Bradwell Marina to Steeple Village Hall**

**CAUTION – much of this section is along an indistinct path with long vegetation & uneven ground.**

From the Checkpoint head towards the boatyard, passing the temporary building on the right. Bear right across concrete pad passing large brick workshop on left. At end of marina/boat moorings turn right across rough crushed stone area towards sea wall. At sea wall (Westwick Sluice sign) turn left onto sea wall path.

Pass Orplands saltmarsh re-creation site sign and in 40m turn right to go through gap next to stile onto low bank with ditch/hedge on left & saltmarsh on right. **START OF ROUGH SECTION**. At tall marker post turn left with bank & in 20m turn right still following low bank between salt marsh & arable land. **TAKE CARE ON THIS SECTION – LONG GRASS, FAINT PATH & STEEP BANK ON LEFT**.

Pass metal field gate on right & straight ahead now with trees & bramble etc on right. Eventually meet hedge/marker post/oak tree ahead. Turn right here & in 30m turn left just after marker post to cross stile. Straight ahead to join sea wall. Eventually cross tarmac slipway & reach caravan park on left. Follow path round to left hand side of lake ahead. At far end of lake bear left to kissing gate & join gravel sea wall path. IGNORE FOOTPATH DIVERSION SIGN.

Through gap between barriers across sea wall & straight ahead – DO NOT GO DOWN STEPS. At end of sea wall turn left onto wide grass strip & straight ahead onto gravel road – **BEWARE BARRIERS & BLOCKS**.

At road turn right onto pavement.

At end of road, turn left pass barriers onto sea wall for 160m to reach Stone Sailing Club.

**As you leave St. Lawrence beware of the electric fence on the left.**

At 5.6 miles reach Marconi Sailing Club & continue over concrete slab (**BEWARE OF STEP & FLAG POLE**), past black hut & back onto grass sea wall.

Pass white hut on right and at end of timber building on left bear left down slope & straight ahead onto concrete road, heading away from sea wall.

**DO NOT MISS THIS TURN AS THERE IS AN UNFENCED DROP ON THE SEA WALL JUST AFTER THE END OF TIMBER BUILDING**

Exit sailing club grounds via kissing gate to right of vehicle gate & straight ahead on road.

**Stage 5 – Bradwell Marina to Steeple Village Hall (cont.)**

At 6.6 miles as road starts turning to left, turn right over hidden stile in hedge. **VERY EASY TO MISS THIS!!**

Follow cut path through rough ground & bear right to metal field gate. Through gate – string loop on right hand side. – DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GO THROUGH GAP TO LEFT OF GATE – OLD BARBED WIRE.

Straight ahead for 30m & turn left down slope onto grass track **behind** sea wall. Just before gate turn left to cross concrete footbridge – BEWARE METAL BARRIER ACROSS BRIDGE.

Cross stile into field & straight ahead, keeping close to right hand field edge. In field corner cross kissing gate & straight ahead past marker post onto wide grass strip. Cross footbridge, through kissing gate & straight ahead on grass path between fields.

Through kissing gate into wood – **BEWARE TELEGRAPH POLE CABLE ANCHORS**. Follow path straight ahead through wood – do not take any of the turnings to left. Through metal gate on left into Steeple Village Hall car park.

**RELAX!!!!!!!!!!**

**Stage 7 – Steeple to Maylandsea**

This is a short section but some careful navigation is required.

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Exit Steeple Village Hall car park, turn right, staying on the pavement.

As road bears left go straight ahead into lane. As lane bears right go straight ahead between brick pillars onto farm track.

Straight ahead between barns – BEWARE COW MUCK!!! – and straight ahead past marker post onto right hand field edge. Pass marker post & in field corner go straight ahead on grass track past marker post.

Just before next field (1mile) turn left to marker post & stile & turn left onto sea wall. Follow sea wall to reach Pigeon Dock Sluice 1 at 1.7 miles. Pass between metal barriers & straight ahead onto narrow path through scrub.

Bear right with path & then bear left on the less worn path heading away from the sea wall. DO NOT HEAD TOWARDS THE MARKER POST.

Cross small open area & onto straight wide path between trees.

Through gap by field gate & turn right onto lane – BEWARE SPEED BUMPS

At end of lane bear left onto grass path between Delta Nursery & sewage works.

Cross metal stile into horse paddock & cross paddock heading for metal field gate to left of large white house. BEWARE HORSES & ELECTRIC FENCES

Cross stile & straight ahead for 50m to road. Cross road & straight ahead past marker post onto path. Bear left & left again at concrete pad to continue on path behind gardens.

Straight ahead past dog bin. Pass metal barrier & straight ahead onto tarmac path.

At gravel drive (marker post ahead) turn left to road & turn right onto pavement (Imperial Avenue).

Turn right into North Drive & follow to end. Straight ahead onto gravel drive for short distance to turn left to Checkpoint 7 at the end of North Drive.

**Stage 8 – Maylandsea to Promenade Park, Maldon**

This is a longish section but the going is pretty good for most of the way and navigation is very straight forward.

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Exit Checkpoint via ramp onto sea wall & turn left.

At boat yard, turn left down steps & turn right to follow yellow lines through boatyard.

Up steps, turn left & turn right almost immediately down steps.

Pass Maylandsea Bay Sailing Club & straight ahead onto narrow path. Pass last house & straight ahead onto sea wall.

At tall marker post (2.75miles) turn right with sea wall.

Through metal kissing gate (6.8miles) – BEWARE CATTLE.

Through kissing gates & cross Northey Island access track – thought to be the site of the Battle of Maldon 991AD.

Through kissing gate now with security fence on left – BEWARE DOG WALKERS.

Cross gravel track & straight ahead through gap into park. After 10m bear left on grass path between rows of trees.

Cross road & straight ahead past information board onto tarmac path.

Turn left onto sea wall along the promenade and continue along the sea wall, passing the green shelters and black sheds on the left to reach Checkpoint 8 just Before the Queen’s Head Pub at 50.5mi.

**Stage 9 – Maldon to Goldhangar Sailing Club**

This is a short and interesting stage but there is a bit of tricky navigation to cope with. The route passes the old port of Maldon, active boat yards and industrial areas including the famous Maldon Salt factory.

At Fullbridge you cross from the south to the north bank of the Blackwater Estuary and enter the ‘home straight’! This is good news if the wind is coming from the west as it will be mostly behind you for the next 20miles. Not so good news though if the wind is coming from the east!

There is quite a lot of tarmac, a good wide section of sea wall, and just one short (300m) section of rough ground.

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Leaving the checkpoint, bear right to join the road and straight ahead past the Queens Head PH. As the road bears left uphill take the second road on the right – more or less straight ahead as you come round the bend.

Along this road is the 2nd highest point of the Saltmarsh75!!!

After 400m as the road turns sharp left uphill bear right downhill (finger post on right) passing black timber buildings (Maldon Salt Works). Straight ahead past Bath Place Wharf following the worn white lines on the ground and straight ahead to narrow path between fences.

Straight ahead at road. Turn right, then left with road onto quayside. At main road turn right onto pavement and cross Fullbridge.

Straight ahead over two roundabouts ignoring all side roads until Bates Road on right. Turn right into industrial estate. Cross Bates Road onto left hand side pavement passing Enviro Biotech. Follow pavement round to left and up ramp. At top of ramp turn right to cross concrete road and straight ahead (finger post) onto grass path along top of bank. **THIS SECTION IS QUITE UNEVEN.**

At sea wall (marker post on left)turn left and in 60m turn right. Follow sea wall path for 1.5miles to eventually reach Chelmer Canal sea lock.

Turn left down steps and turn right to cross timber walkway over lock gates. **BEWARE OF GAPS IN SIDE RAILS AND PROJECTING WINDING HANDLES.**

Use upstream gate crossing if this gate is in use.

Bear right along sea wall opposite Jolly Sailor PH.

Take the tarmac path between the Jolly Sailor PH and The Lock tea rooms and simply follow the sea wall path.

The only slight confusion may be just after the converted malting buildings where you meet a tarmac road. Bear right here towards the gates of Saltcote Sailing Club then bear left back onto the sea wall path.

As you pass the last caravan park and cross the access road to Osea Island, say goodbye to the lovely tarmac which you won’t see again until the last 400m of the event.

Eventually you will reach a black timber hut on the sea wall at about 7.5m. Pass this hut and in 200m turn left down the grass ramp to the checkpoint at Goldhanger Sailing Club.

**Stage 10 – Goldhanger Sailing Club to Tollesbury Seawall Location**

This is a long (10.5miles) but straightforward section which is pretty good underfoot for most of the way. Just follow the sea wall and you should be fine. The only slightly awkward section is at about 1.3miles where there are a couple of dodgy stiles and a short and usually uncut section of sea wall.

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From Goldhanger Sailing Club head back up grass ramp and turn left onto sea wall.

Follow path down & back up steps at Highams Farm Flood Gate.

At 5miles there will be a water/aid station drop point. There will not be any personnel at this location but you can refuel ready for the next section to Tollesbury Activity Centre.

**Stage 11 – Tollesbury Sea wall to Tollesbury Activity Centre**

At 1.7miles go through metal pedestrian gate onto Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve – please close the gate and beware of sheep!!!

On reaching Tollesbury Marina, go between wooden fences & through metal gate to exit Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve. Straight ahead on gravel track with post & wire fence on right.

BEWARE LARGE DIAMETER PIPE ACROSS TRACK

Through gap onto gravel car park & in 10m bear right by Hawthorn bush & marker post onto path between wire fences. Straight ahead onto path with white boarded flats to left & open-air pool on right.

At road go down steps & turn left on to pavement to checkpoint at the Tollesbury Activity centre approximately 400m up Woodrolfe Road on your right.

**REALLY IMPORTANT WARNING - Make sure you get properly refuelled here before you start the long and remote last stage.**

**If you are in any doubt about your ability to complete the last stage we strongly advise that you withdraw here and come back and try again next year.**

**If you arrive at this checkpoint after the cut-off time or, in the opinion of the marshalls, are unfit to continue you will be withdrawn from the event.**

**Stage 12 – Tollesbury to Salcott**

**The final stage – at last!!!!!!!**

Another fairly straight forward stage in terms of navigating but note the warnings below. The path surface deteriorates as you leave Tollesbury and there are a couple of sections around Old Hall Marshes Nature Reserve where the grass has not been cut and the ground is quite uneven.

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From The Tollesbury Activity Centre, head down the track towards the water treatment works. At the gates, take a quick left the right along the right hand field edge towards the seawall, then up the slope onto the sea wall, turning left.

After 0.4miles go straight ahead on the sea wall and DO NOT turn right onto the old section of sea wall. If you do, you will reach a dead-end and have to come all the way back again.

The same warning applies at 0.9mile – go straight ahead past the marker post.

Through the gap between the rusty metal barriers (Guisnes Court Sluice) and straight ahead between the post & wire fence (Danger- Deep Water sign).

Straight ahead to steps and footpath sign post on left.

IMPORTANT WARNING - You are about to set out on a roughly six mile loop of the marshes. This part of the course is remote and it will take us some time to reach you if you get into difficulty. If you are in any doubt about your ability to get to the end of this section we strongly recommend that you talk to race control on 07368 533808 and we can make arrangements to recover you from this point if necessary. There is always next year!!!

Straight ahead on sea wall between bushes **- BEWARE SMALL TREE STUMPS**

Through gate onto Old Hall Marshes Nature Reserve.

Follow the sea wall around the nature reserve, through another gate and across 5 stiles to eventually reach a pedestrian gate just after 7miles. At this point, there is only 1.5miles to go!! If you are tight on the cut offs, you might need to try one final effort if you want one of our lovely medals!!!!!!!

Through another pedestrian gate & turn sharp right with the sea wall. The houses ahead in the trees is the village of Salcott – just 1mile to go.

Pass the Blackwater Estuary information board and through gate. In 80m turn left down the dodgy steps & even dodgier handrail to cross footbridge with metal handrails and cross field on grass path. Through kissing gate onto road and straight ahead for 400m on the road to the finish at Salcott Village Hall on your right.

Amazing work, well done. It’s medal time and time for a well-earned rest.

New Hall Marshes short cut for retirees at approx. 69.8mi.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SHORT CUT THROUGH OLD HALL MARSHES**

Down steps & straight ahead to road. Turn right onto gravel track. In 60m cross cattle grid or go through gate on right hand side.

Turn left with track (signed Office & Deliveries) to reach large agricultural building on left.

Bear right before open barn on right to gravel track heading into open field.

(There are several field gates across this track between here and the sea wall but we have been told that they will all be open. If any are closed go through or over them)

Cross field and at track junction take left fork between piles of timber posts.

Just after left hand bend go straight ahead up bank onto sea wall – or go over stile and up steps.

Turn left on sea wall.

Pass the Blackwater Estuary information board and through gate. In 80m turn left down the dodgy steps & even dodgier handrail to cross footbridge with metal handrails and cross field on grass path. Through kissing gate onto road and straight ahead for 400m to finish at Salcott Village Hall.