



# Southend City Heritage Trail

Explore Southend's history. Visit Conservation Areas, Southend's oldest pub and garden, plus spot a listed monument or two.

**Distance** 2 kilometers / 1.2 miles

**Duration** 1 hour and 15 minutes



Water feature



## Refreshments



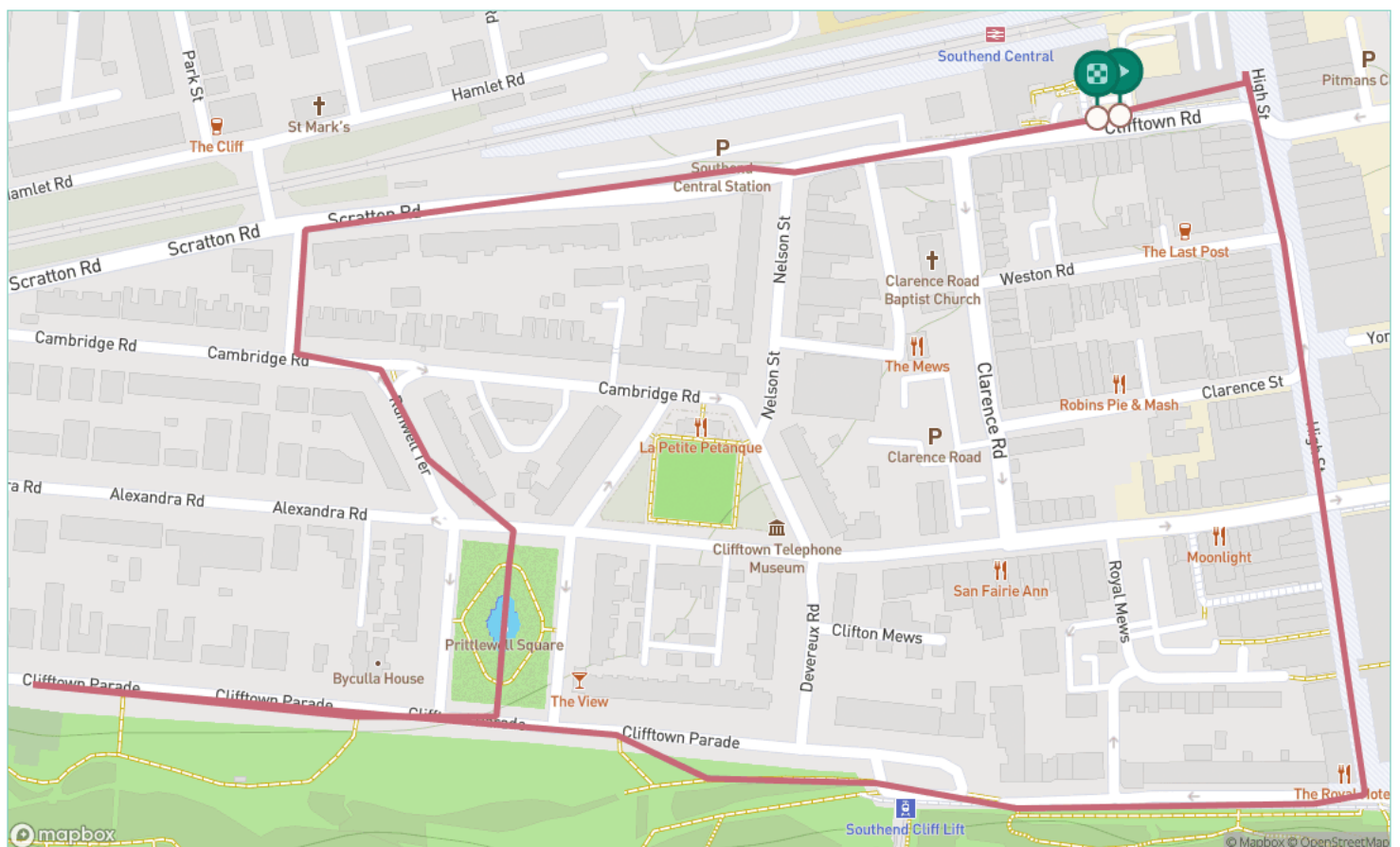
Public transport



## History

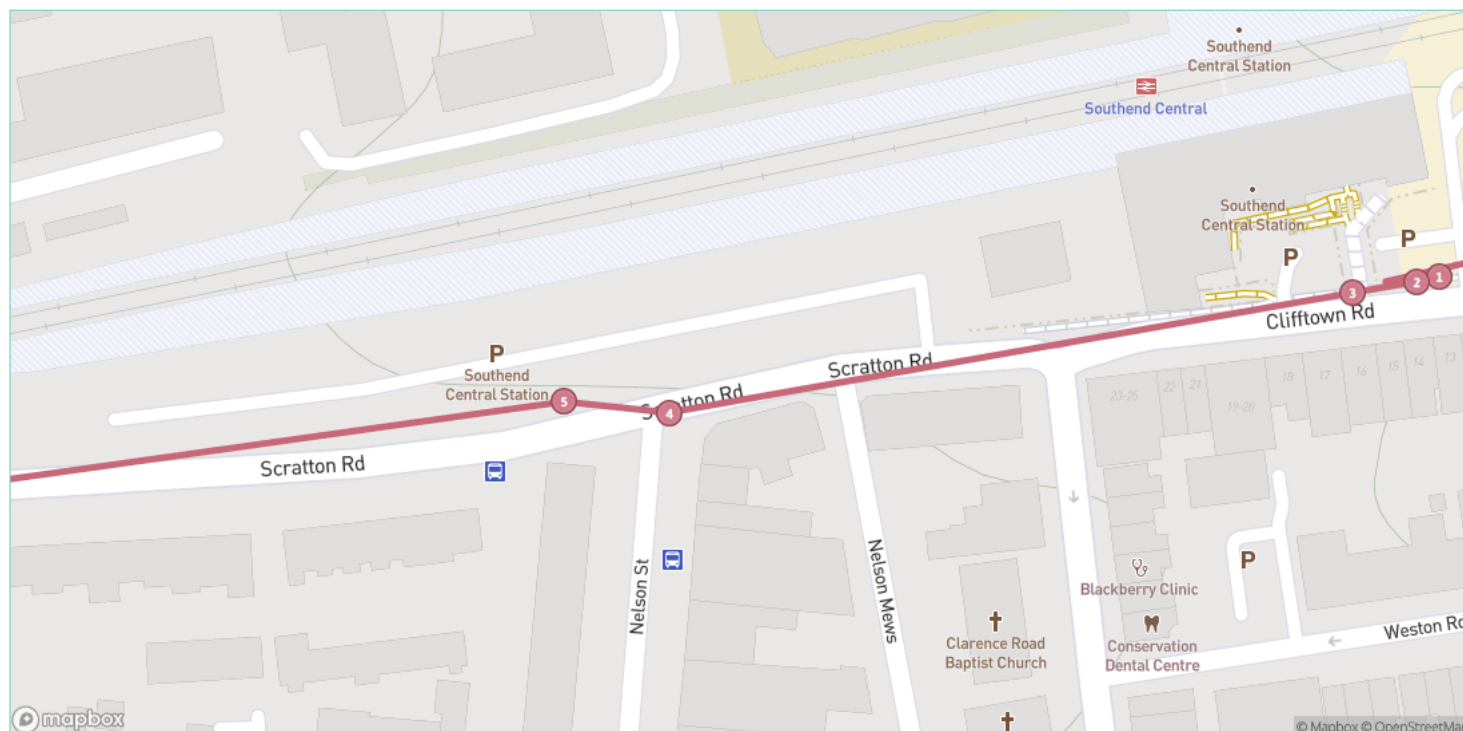


Dog friendly



Disclaimer: Directions are provided as guidance only. Weather, construction, closures or other factors may affect routes. Please take care when crossing roads and avoid private land. Always follow local signage and use common sense.

Created by Go Jauntly Ltd © 2025. Last Updated: 24 June 2025.



**Step 1:** Welcome to this heritage trail around Southend City Centre. Your walk begins at Southend Central.

**Step 2:** Trains running to and from London Fenchurch Street, Shoeburyness, Leigh-on-Sea, Benfleet, Basildon, Barking and Limehouse serve Southend Central. There are also local buses that stop here.

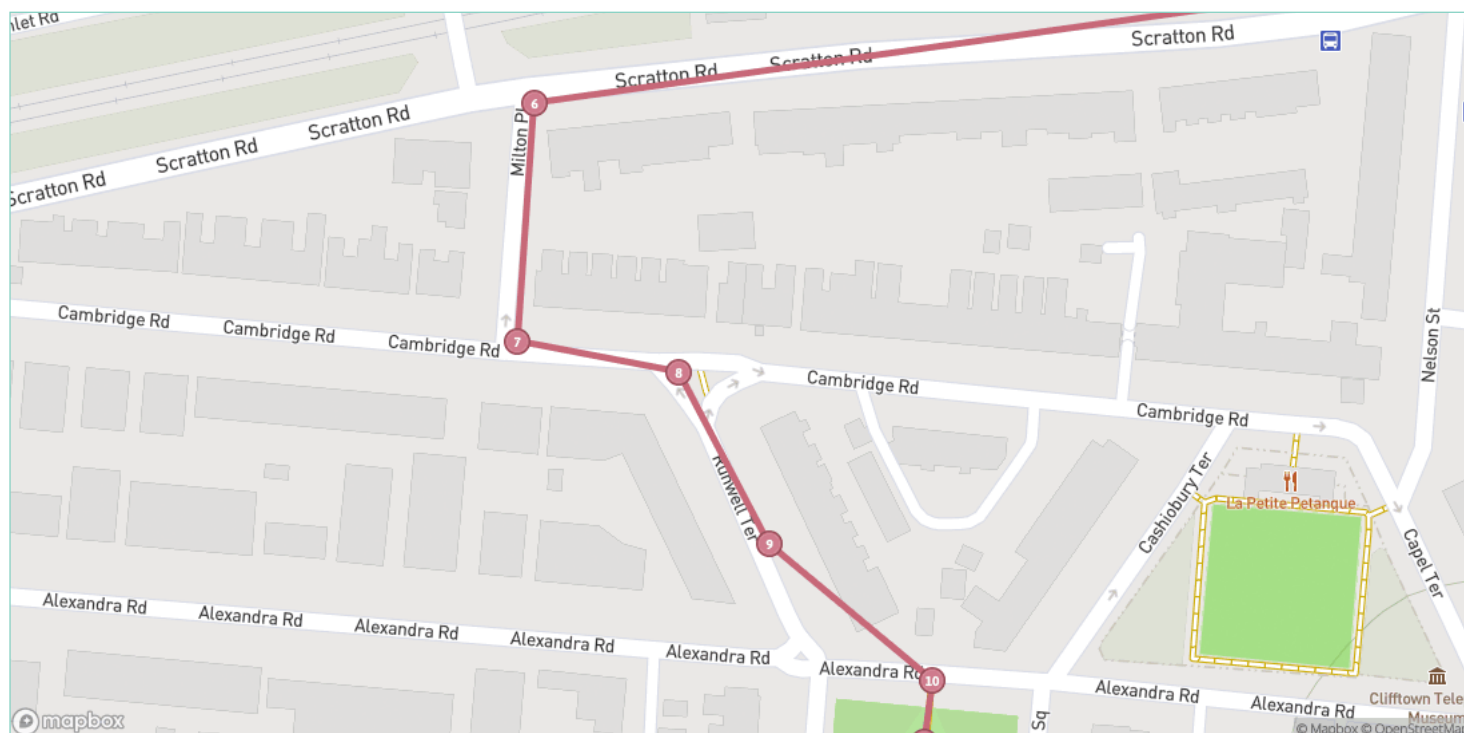
**Step 3:** With the station behind you, turn right onto Clifftown Road. You will soon reach the Railway Hotel.

**Step 4:** It bears important local architectural & historical significance to the city, as one of the City's first public houses.

**Step 5:** Continue along Scrattton Road. The Scrattton's were wealthy land owners in Southend, with links to Prittlewell Priory and leased the railway company 40 acres of land here for residential development.

### Did you know?

The railway from Fenchurch Street to south Essex was first built in the 1850s. It was operated by the London Tilbury & Southend Railway. Throughout the 19th century the line was extended and new station were added. In 1912 the line was taken over by the Midland Railway, which later became London, Midland and Scottish Railway.



**Step 6:** Now take a left onto Milton Place. These streets that you are passing through are all part of the Clifftown Conservation Area.

#### Did you know?

Clifftown Conservation Area was first designated in 1968, and represents an important part of the City's history, marking the first major attempts to develop Southend as a seaside resort.

#### Find out more

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/conservation-areas/clifftown-conservation-area>

**Step 7:** Please turn left onto Cambridge Road.

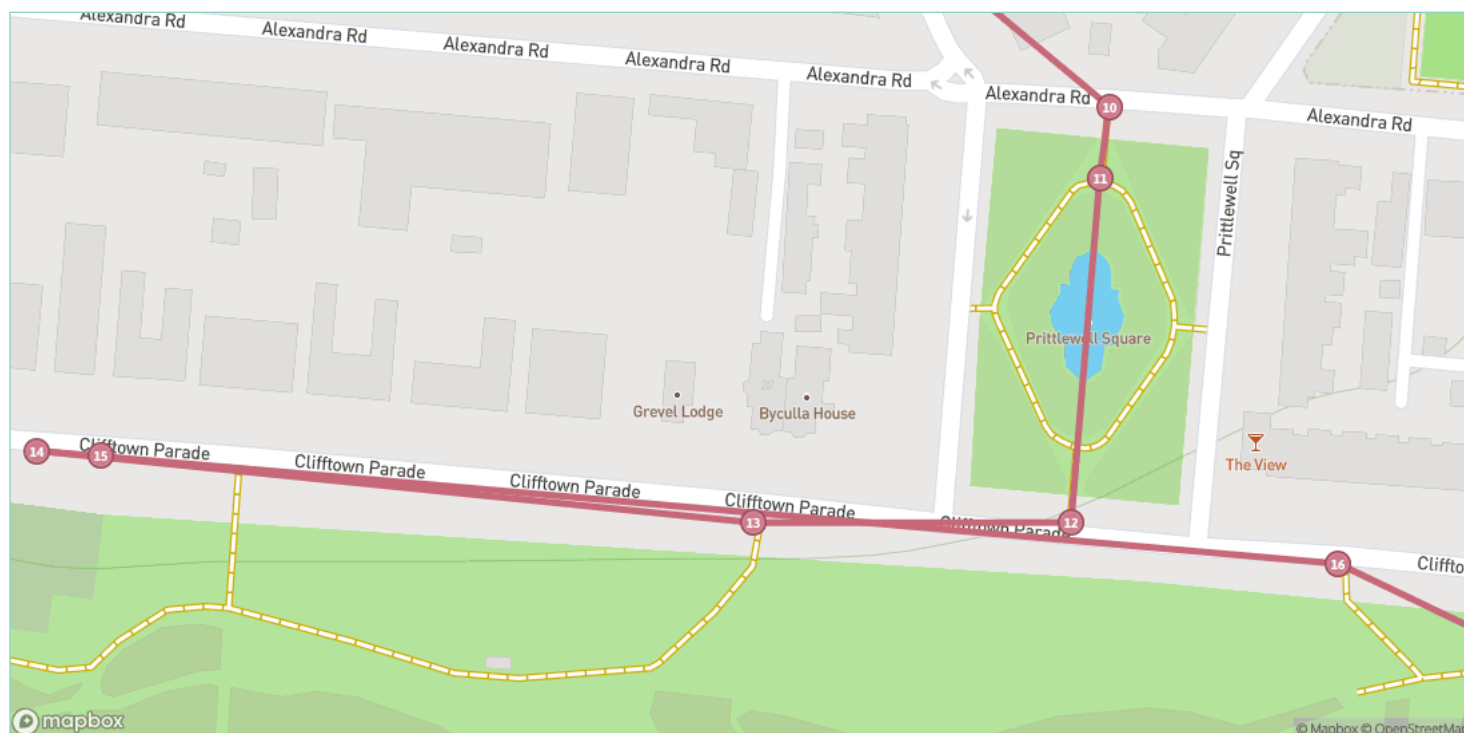
**Step 8:** Then right onto Runwell Terrace. We're approaching our next heritage site soon. Please note it is someone's home, so do respect this when viewing.

**Step 9:** On your left is the house where Reverend Benjamin Waugh lived. Now continue along Runwell Terrace until you reach Alexandra Street. Turn left here.

#### Did you know?

Reverend Benjamin Waugh is the founder of one of the largest and most successful charities in British history - the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

**Step 10:** Once on Alexandra Street, turn right into the tranquil Pittlewell Square. The park has a lovely pond and fountain, surrounded by beautiful ornamental gardens.



**Step 11:** Prittlewell Square Gardens is the oldest park in Southend and is a focal point in the Clifftown Conservation Area.

#### Did you know?

Prittlewell Square Gardens were planned as formal public gardens with a simple layout. This evolved and the recently restored layout dates from the 1920s with a 'diamond' alignment.

**Step 12:** The decorative clock in the Square was donated by local jeweller and philanthropist R A Jones. Now turn right onto Clifftown Parade.

**Step 13:** Continue along Clifftown Parade. There are benches dotted along the route, so do have a rest if you need, or just take a seat to enjoy the sea views.

**Step 14:** You will soon reach the Southend War Memorial. The sculpture here is by local artist Dave Taylor.

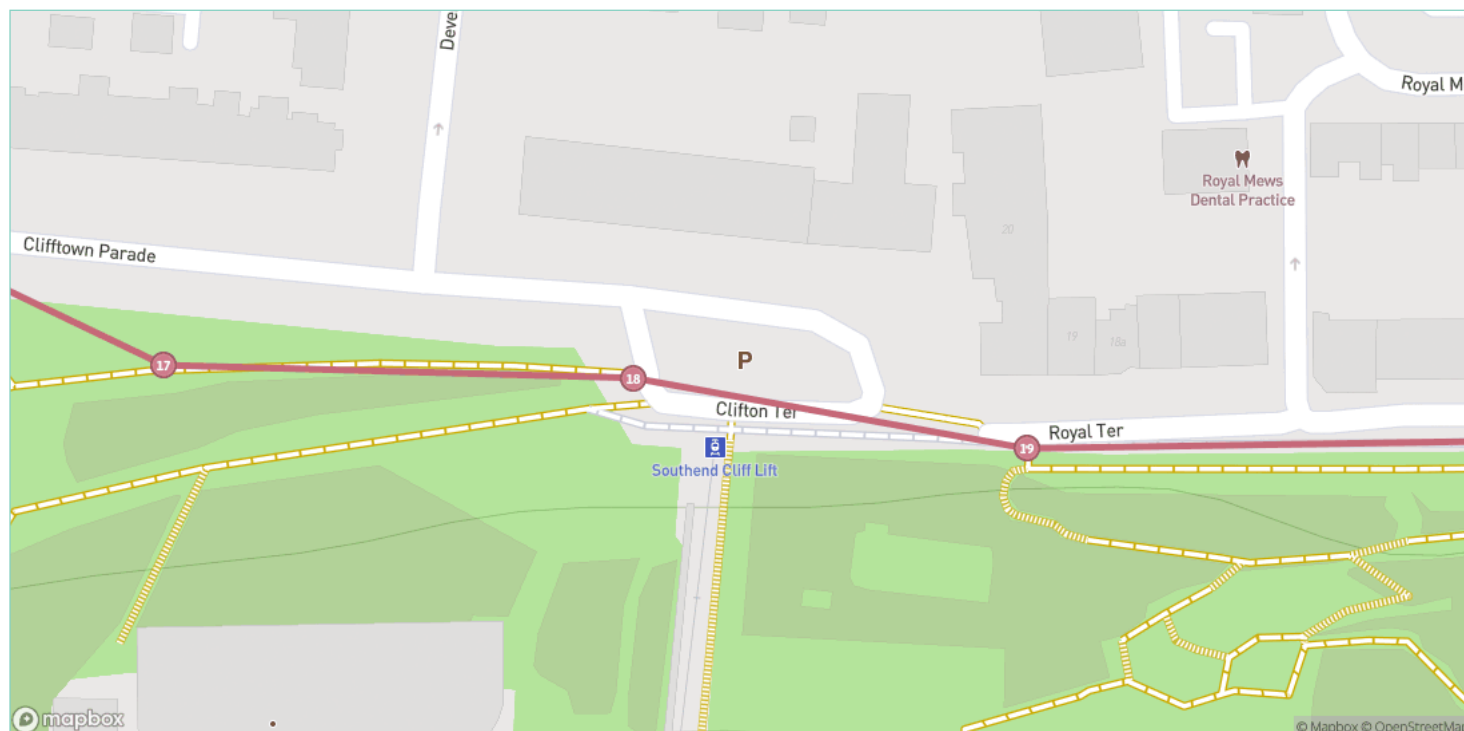
#### Did you know?

The Grade II\* listed memorial was built in 1920 to commemorate those who lost their lives in the First World War.

It was designed by the famous English architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, who is also responsible for the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London.

**Step 15:** You now need to retrace your steps along Clifftown Parade. This section of the cliff-top, extending to the Royal Terrace, has a unique range of seaside architecture. Which is one of the reasons why this is a Conservation Area.

**Step 16:** Now take the path off to your right.



**Step 17:** Where you'll pass the Grade II Listed Queen Victoria Statue.

#### Did you know?

The statue was presented to Southend by Mayor Bernard Wiltshire Tolhurst, to mark the Queen's diamond jubilee in 1897.

It was originally placed at the top of Pier Hill where residents joked she was pointing to the gent's toilets!

Due to the changing architectural styles in the 50s and 60s, it was decided the statue should be moved to a less prominent place. In 1962 the marble statue was moved to Clifftown Parade where it has sat overseeing the coastline ever since.

**Step 18:** After a short while, on your right will be the Cliff Lift.

#### Did you know?

The Cliff Lift, is a funicular railway, constructed in 1912 and is locally listed. The lift operated for the first time on Bank Holiday Monday, in August of that year.

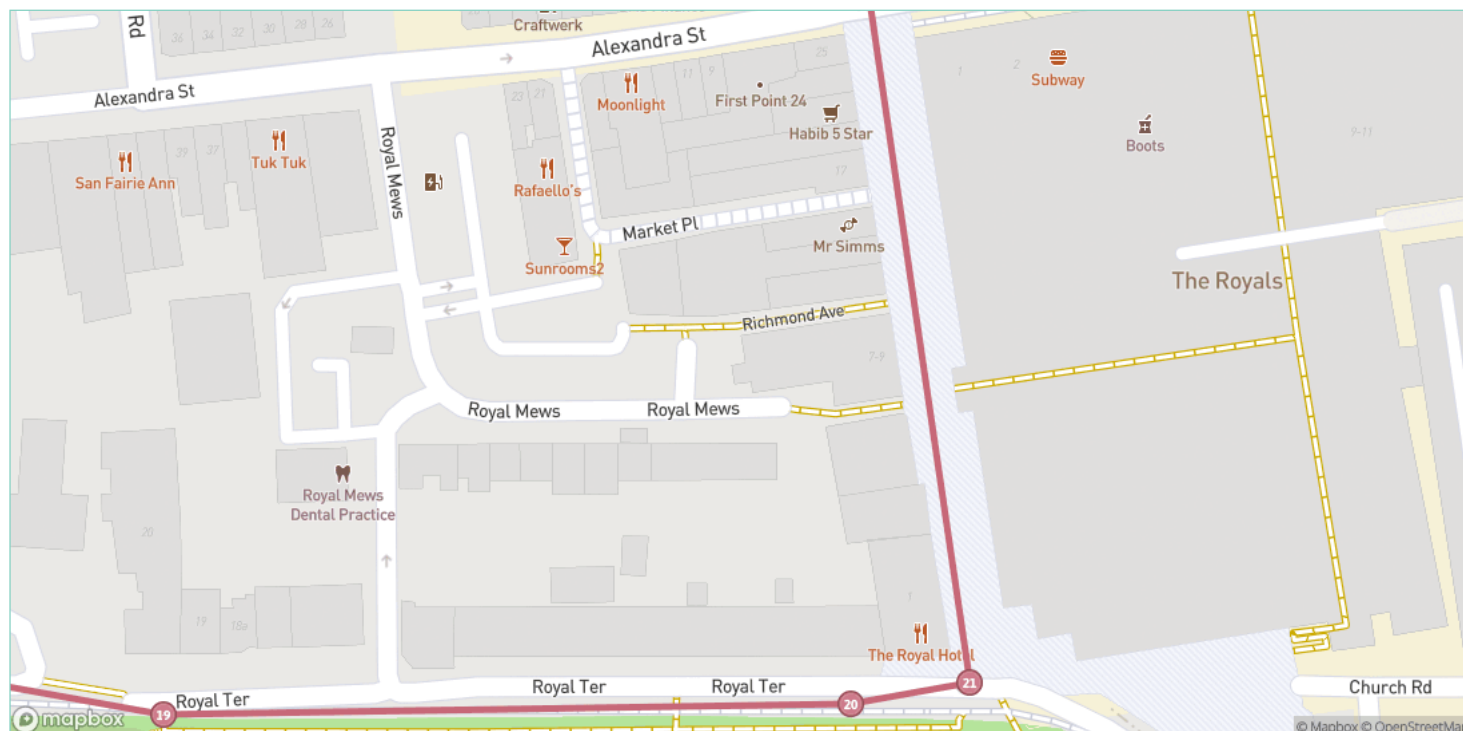
It's officially the shortest funicular railway and the only single track funicular railway in Britain!

**Step 19:** Continue ahead and onto the Grade II listed, Georgian, Royal Terrace. Take a seat and enjoy the view over The Shrubby and towards the sea.

#### Did you know?

The Royal Hotel and Terrace were built between 1791 and 1793. Their name commemorates a visit by Princess Caroline, wife of the Prince Regent. The Shrubby is of the same period as the terrace. In the Second World War houses in the terrace were used as headquarters by the Thames Navy Control Service for the organisation of convoys.





**Step 20:** At the eastern end of Royal Terrace is the Grade II Listed Royal Hotel.

#### Did you know?

The Royal Hotel was restored in 1978/9. A ball in honour of Lord Nelson was given in the Assembly Room of the hotel by Lady Hamilton who stayed in Royal Terrace in 1805.

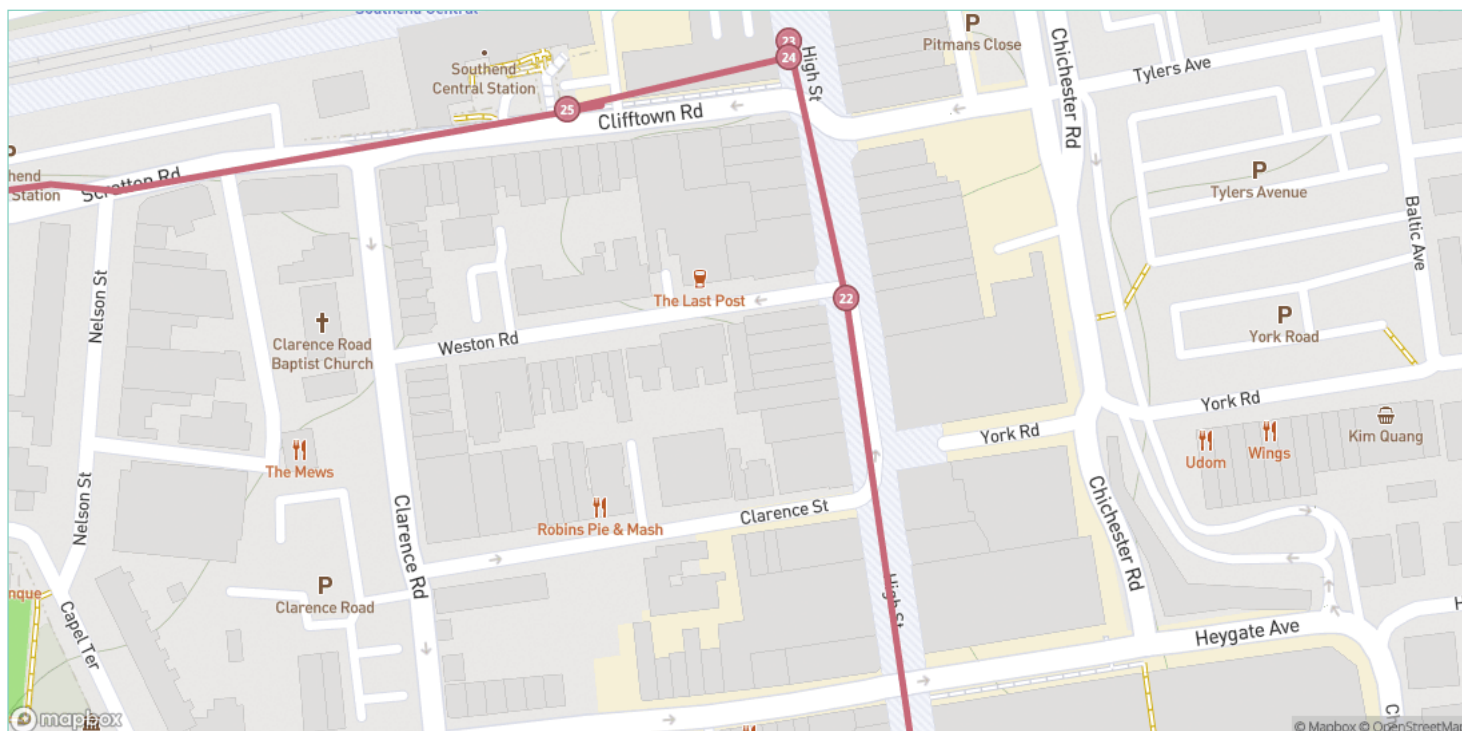
Throughout the 19th century the Assembly Room was used for social and civic events including meetings of companies to build the first pier and the railway to London.

**Step 21:** Now turn left onto the pedestrianised High Street. We're heading towards our next heritage location.

#### Did you know?

Southend High Street became the new focus for retailing during the Edwardian period.

The first major store, 'Garons', opened in 1885 other new shops quickly followed. Electric trams were introduced in to the High Street in 1902 and proved very popular with shoppers until their removal in 1942 during the Second World War. The High Street was pedestrianised in 1974 when it became one of Essex's regional shopping centres.



**Step 22:** Opposite Weston Road is the RA Jones & Sons Clock.

**Step 24:** Now look up to your right. You'll see the old shop frontage for Offord's Cafe.

### Did you know?

Local jeweller and philanthropist Robert Arthur Jones set up his jewellery store at 76-78 High Street in 1890. Before his death in 1925, he used his wealth to set up the Jones Memorial Ground off Eastern Avenue. He also created Priory Park by buying and donating 30 acres of the Prittlewell Priory parkland to the public.

### Did you know?

Offord's Cafe was run by the Italian Offredi family who came to Southend in the late 1800s and opened their first cafe in Marine Parade. The family later changed their name to Offord, became a hit and before long, they had catering shops, bakeries and cafes around the High Street.

**Step 23:** On your right is The Ironworks. It's Southend's new Arts and Culture venue. JUN 25 - unfortunately this is permanently closed.

**Step 25:** Now turn left down Clifftown Road to return to Southend Central. Why not try another of our local walks if you have the time?