



# Prittlewell Heritage Trail

Discover Anglo-Saxon history, visit the historic Prittlewell Priory and enjoy lush green spaces on this heritage trail around Prittlewell.

**Distance** 2.5 kilometers / 1.6 miles

**Duration** 1 hour and 30 minutes



Public loos



Refreshments



Public transport



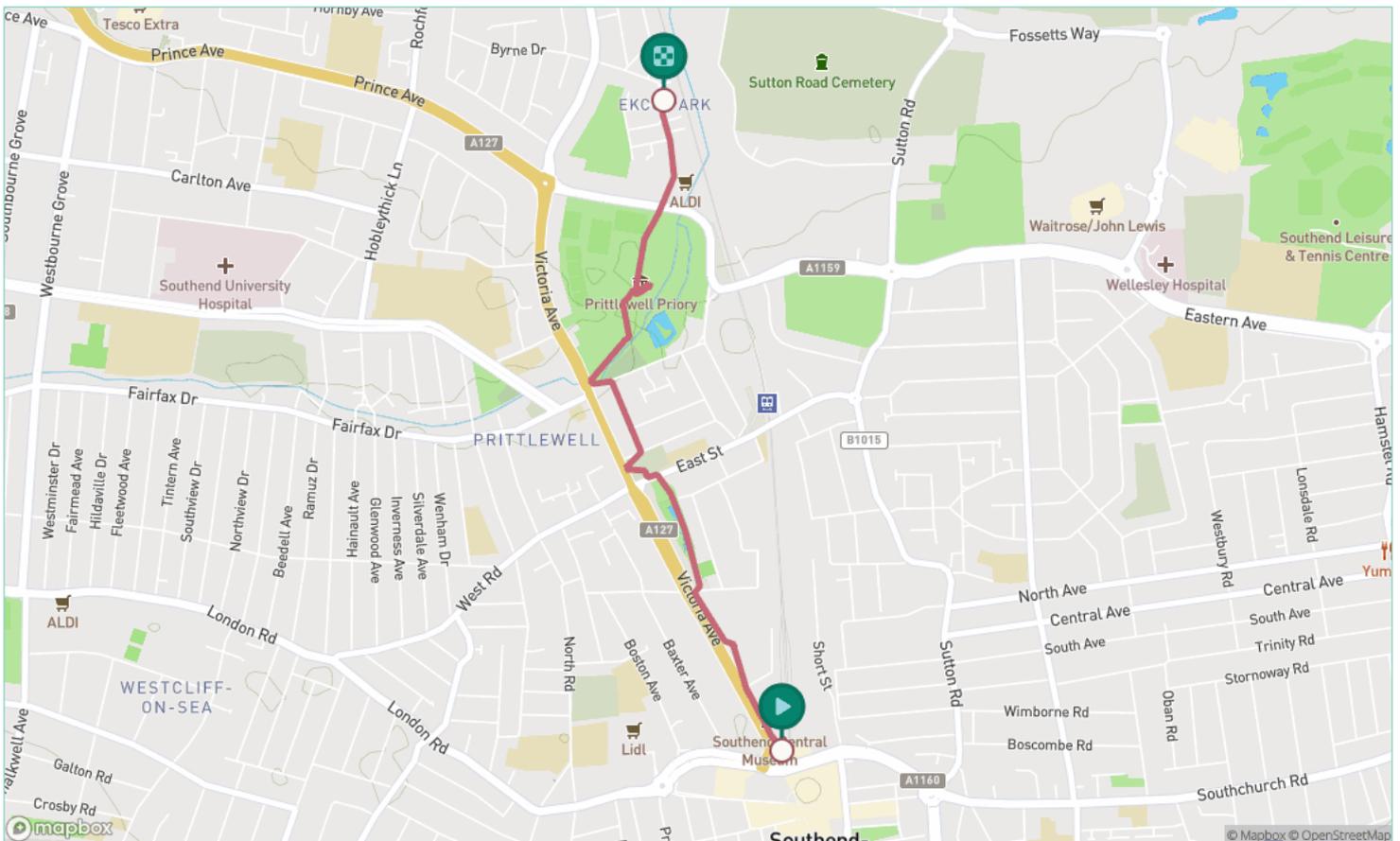
History



Dog friendly

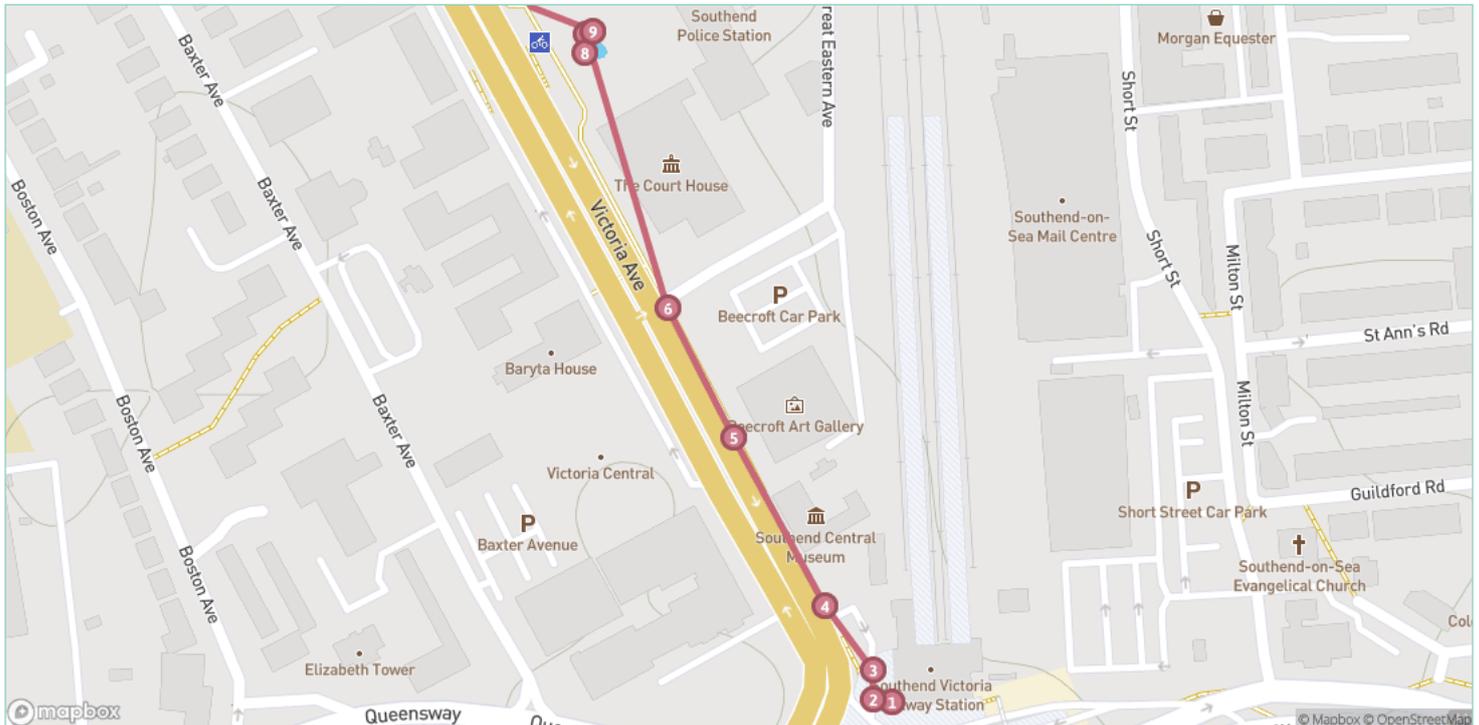


Botanics



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 © 2023. Last Updated: 03 January 2023.



**Step 1:** Welcome to this heritage walk around Southend's Prittlewell. Follow along as we pass historically important sites, lovely green spaces and sculptures.

**Step 2:** You can begin your walk by turning right out of Southend Victoria rail station and begin walking north along Victoria Avenue.

**Step 3:** Trains running to and from London Liverpool Street, Southend Airport, Prittlewell and Stratford serve Southend Victoria. There are also local buses that stop here.

**Step 4:** On your right you'll pass the Grade II listed Southend Central Museum. It's open Wednesday - Sunday each week, but please check opening times before you visit.

### Did you know?

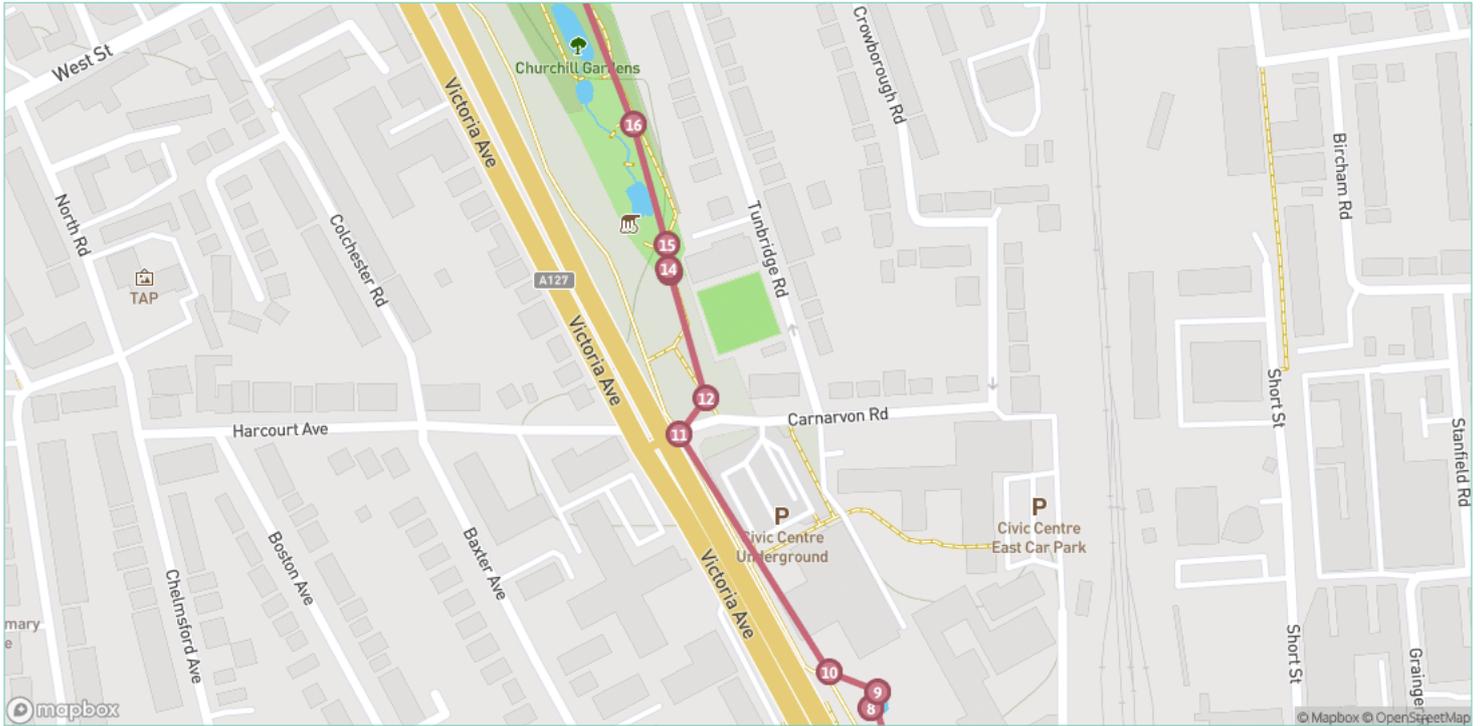
Southend Museum was built in 1905-6 and originally housed Southend Library.

**Step 5:** On your right you'll also pass the Beecroft Art Gallery. It has a permanent collection of over 2000 works, ranging from 17th century Dutch paintings to contemporary works.

**Step 6:** Cross Great Eastern Avenue at the lights to continue along Victoria Avenue.

**Step 7:** On your right, before reaching the Southend-on-Sea Civic Centre, there will be a small garden area. This is the Holocaust Memorial Garden. Take a moment to reflect whilst you're here.

**Step 8:** Just beyond the garden is the impressive Civic Fountain, created by the sculptor William George Mitchell.



**Step 9:** The 20ft sculpture features carvings of the Southend coat of arms as well as a medieval fisherman and a Cluniac monk.

**Step 10:** As you approach the Civic Centre, there will be a beautiful clock ahead of you. The Civic Clock was unveiled on Tuesday 24th March 1979. Continue ahead along Victoria Avenue.

**Step 11:** Continue along Victoria Avenue and cross Carnarvon Road at the lights.

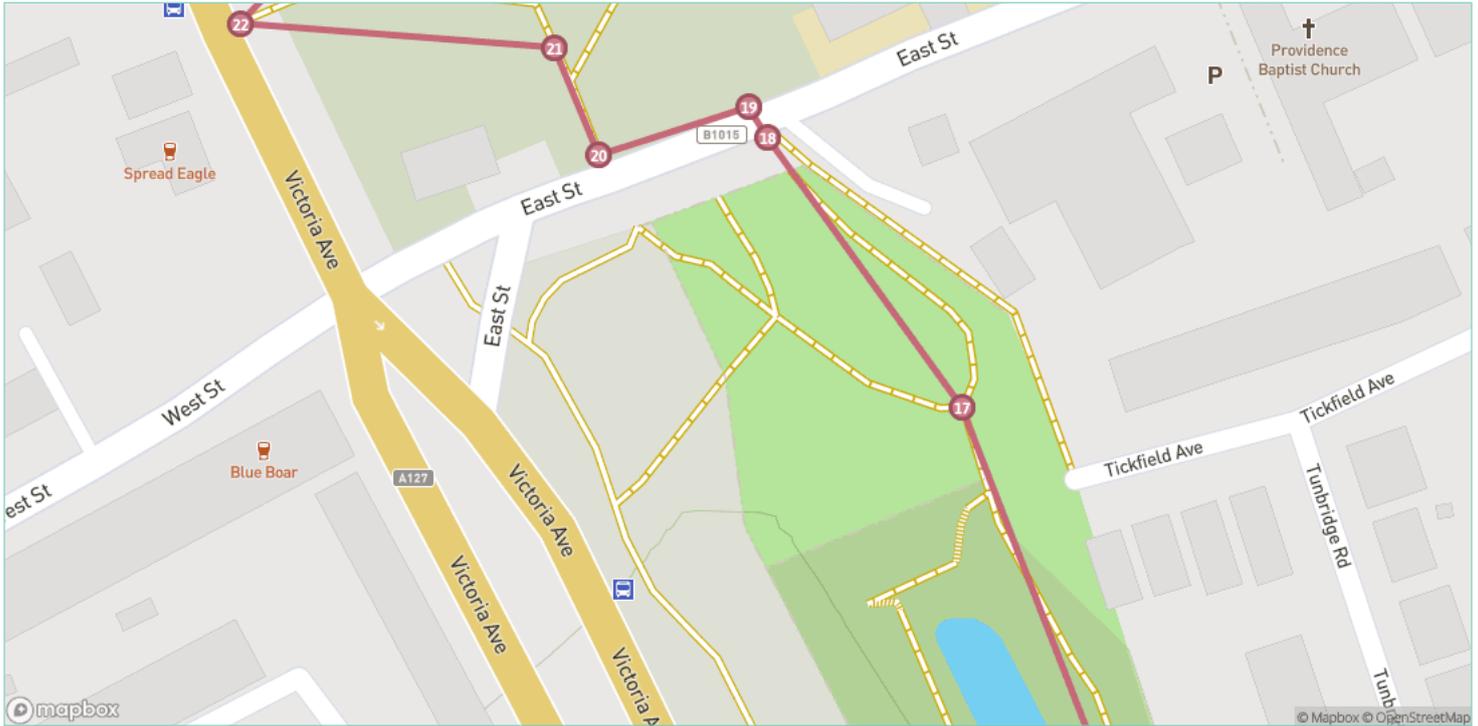
**Step 12:** Once you've reached the other side turn right and then take the path on your left, heading through the small cluster of trees.

**Step 13:** Now pass through the red metal gates into Churchill Gardens.

**Step 14:** Churchill Gardens is a hidden gem that not many people know about.

**Step 15:** Follow the path through the secluded and peaceful ornamental garden.

**Step 16:** Churchill Gardens is complete with stream and picturesque waterfall. It's a great place to stop for a little peace and quiet before continuing on.



**Step 17:** Follow the path towards the exit onto East Street. You are now in the Prittlewell Conservation Area.

#### Did you know?

The Prittlewell Conservation Area was designated in 1995 and includes buildings which illustrate the village's development history through to the early 20th century.

**Step 18:** Once you're on East Street, you'll need to turn right in order to use the crossing. Once on the other side of the road please go left towards the church.

**Step 19:** Only a short walk from here is Prittlewell train station, if you choose to begin or end your walk here. Trains running to and from London Liverpool Street and Southend Victoria serve this station.

**Step 20:** On your right is Grade I listed St Mary's Church. Follow the path to the entrance of the church.

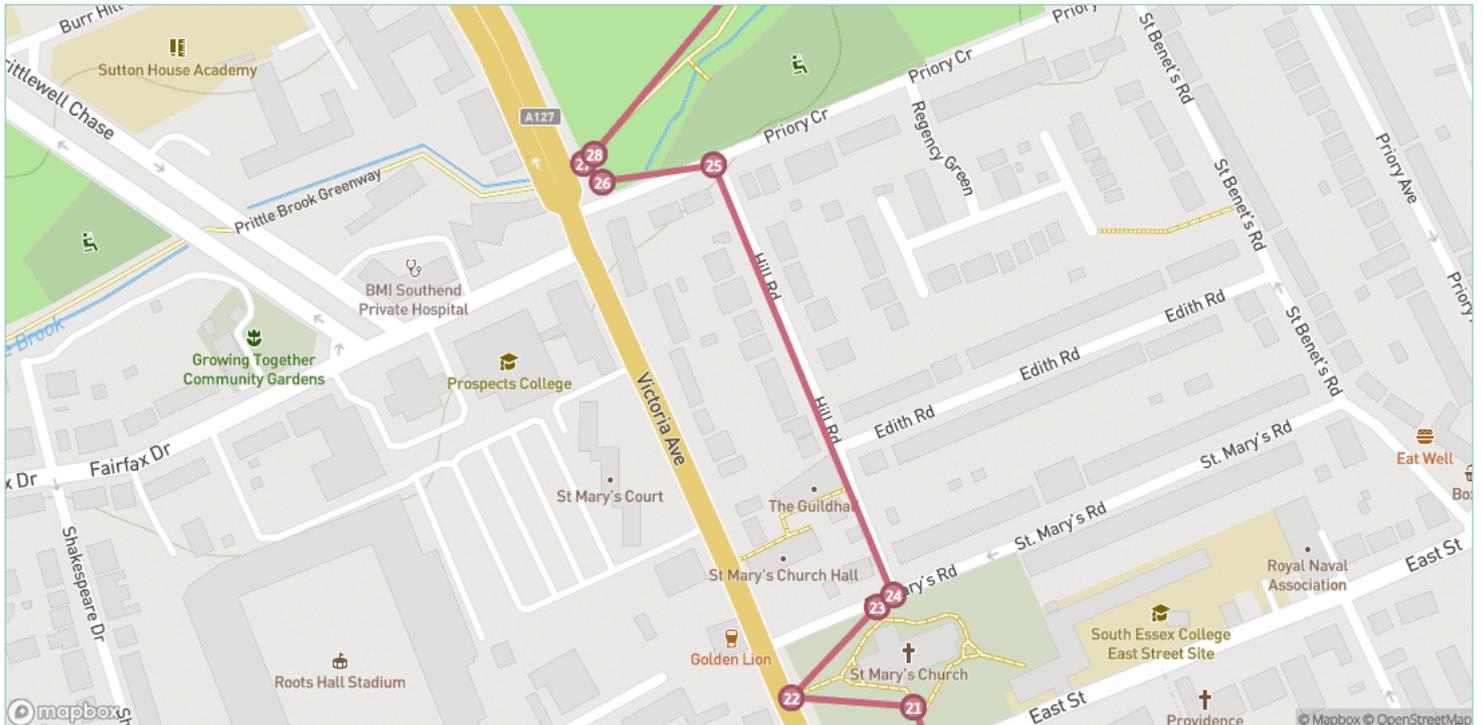
#### Did you know?

For more than a thousand years there has been a church on the site of Saint Mary's, Prittlewell. Though there is architectural evidence that suggests small chapel was erected on the site of the present church in the 7th century.

**Step 21:** Turn left to follow the path around the church.

#### Did you know?

St. Mary's is the only church in the locality mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, and suggests Prittlewell's local importance.



**Step 22:** On the opposite side of Victoria Avenue you'll see some other notable medieval buildings in the Prittlewell Conservation Area. 255 Victoria Avenue and 269-275 Victoria Avenue are Grade II listed.

#### Did you know?

These timber framed buildings still have surviving jetties. 255 Victoria Avenue has been restored to its original form, exposing and limewashing the timber frame, demonstrating medieval style windows. The gables fronting the street are a prominent feature.

**Step 23:** Follow the path round the churchyard and exit onto St. Mary's Road.

#### Did you know?

The church is mostly Norman in origin however the brick archway on the side of the church, suggests the presence of an earlier Anglo-Saxon church potentially dating to the mid 7th century.

**Step 24:** Then turn left onto Hill Road and continue until you reach Priry Crescent.

**Step 25:** Turn left and then cross over Priry Crescent at the lights. Head towards the decorative metal gates. We're now at Priry Park.

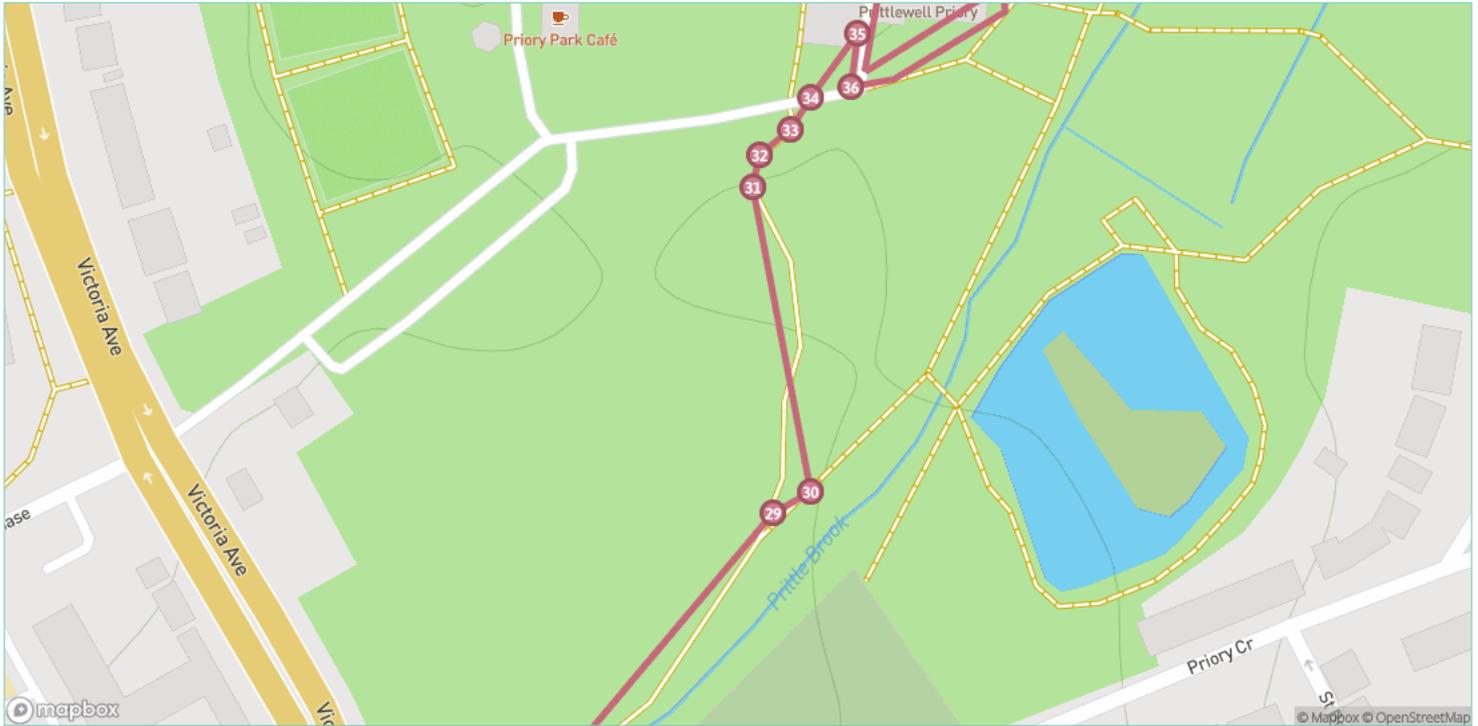
**Step 26:** On your right, just before entering Priry Park, there will be a blue water pump.

**Step 27:** To enter the park, please proceed through R A Jones Gate.

#### Did you know?

Local jeweller and philanthropist Robert Arthur Jones purchased the priory and lands. He then donated it to the people of Southend in 1917 for future generations to enjoy.

**Step 28:** Take a moment to notice the metal plaque on the right hand column. It details some of the parks history.



**Step 29:** Priory Park provides habitat for over 300 types of insect, 92 kinds of birds and 6 species of bats.

**Step 30:** On your right on entering the park will be Prittle Brook. The word Prittlewell, from old English 'Pritol Wielle' meaning place 'of the sparkling water' or place of 'the babbling water'.

#### Did you know?

Prittlewell is thought to refer either to the Prittle Brook or a potentially unlocated natural spring that may now lie underneath the Prittlewell Priory. Alongside the banks of the brook is likely to have been the earliest settlement for Prittlewell and Southend, given Roman and Anglo-Saxon evidence from the Prittlewell Cemetery.

**Step 31:** If you follow the concrete path to your left, you'll reach the Café and picnic benches, as well as the free toilets. There are accessible toilet facilities located here.

**Step 32:** Just past these facilities is Southend's eye-catching bandstand where local musicians and bands play during the summer months.

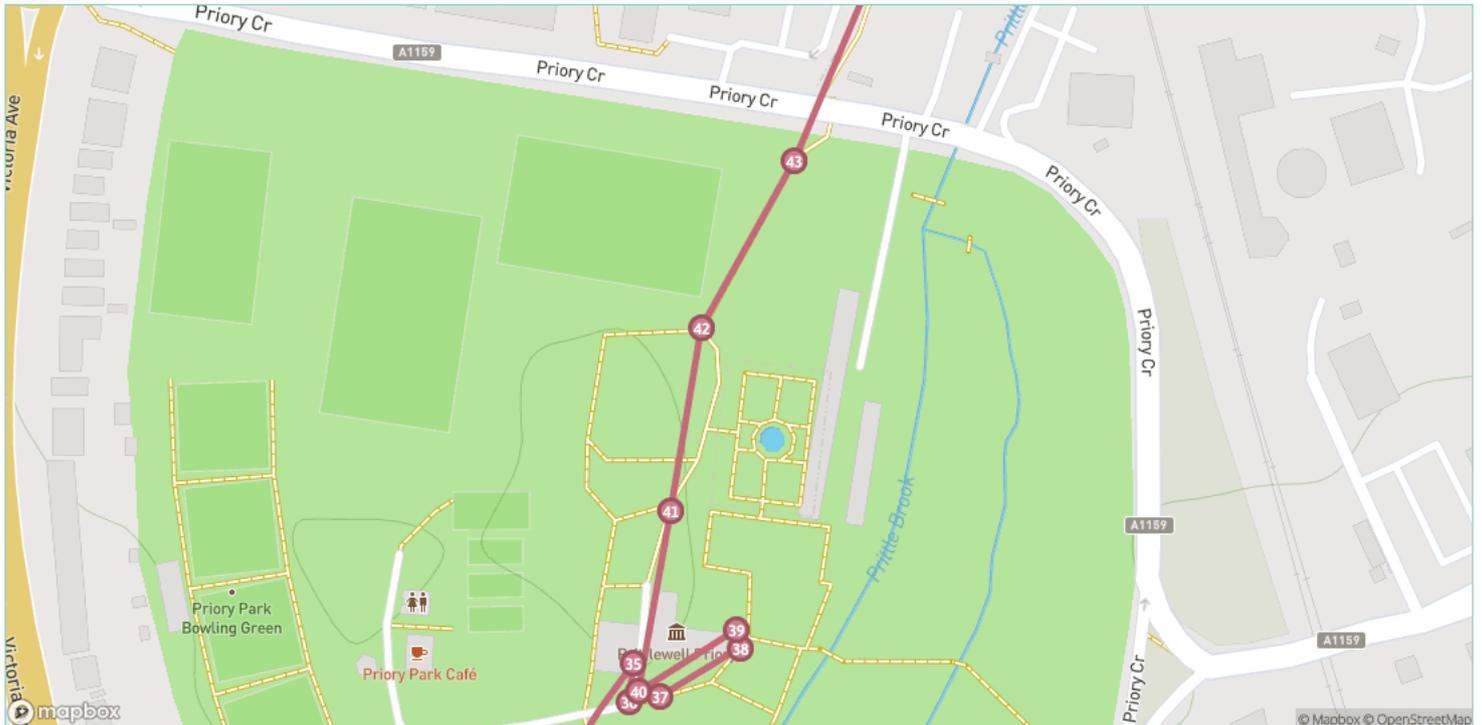
**Step 33:** You need to head off to the right, towards the Grade I listed Prittlewell Priory.

#### Did you know?

This is the oldest, continuously occupied building in Southend. It has been a monastery, a private house and a museum. The Priory was established by the Cluniac monks of Lewes Priory in the early 12th century. The surviving buildings are Grade I listed. The area covering the grounds of the Priory and the fish ponds, are a scheduled monument.

**Step 34:** On your right there is a stunning pergola. Walk underneath here or take a seat on one of the wooden benches along the way.

**Step 35:** The buildings you see today, including the refectory and Priors Chamber, mark just one corner of the original monastic site.



**Step 36:** On your left is the Visitors Centre. There is a cafe here, as well as a water bowl for dogs and outdoor seating.

**Step 37:** In the 16th century during Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries, most of the priory buildings, including a substantial church, were dismantled.

**Step 38:** The site passed in to the hands of Lord Richard Rich, the king's chancellor and remained in his family until 1675.

**Step 39:** The Priory was then purchased by Daniel Scratton whose descendants occupied the building until the 20th century.

#### Did you know?

When the Victorian Scratton family lived in the Priory, there were thirteen bedrooms that accommodated the large family and all their servants.

**Step 40:** Retrace your steps back to the Visitors Centre, exploring the Priory at your own pace.

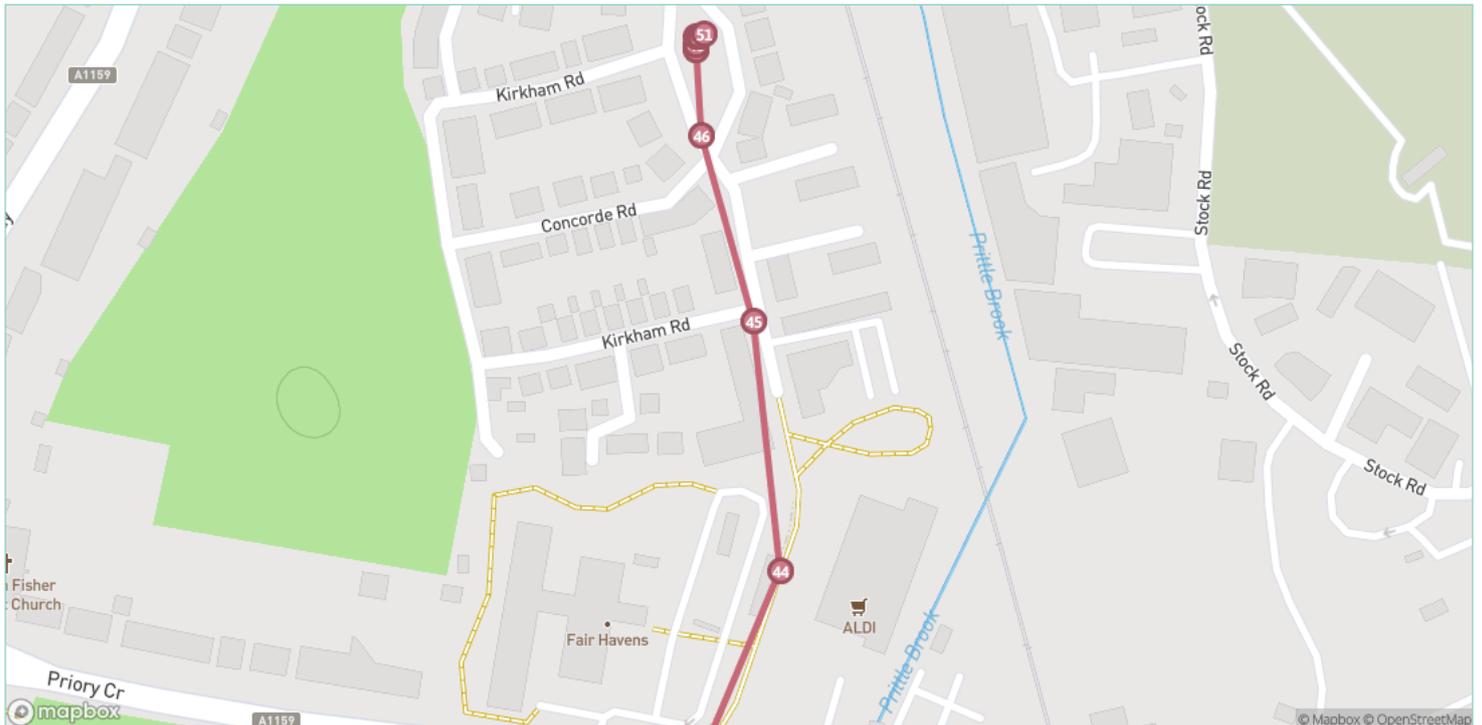
**Step 41:** Follow the path slightly downhill past the Priory and the Visitor Centre.

**Step 42:** Take the path to the right, which will lead you towards the exit.

**Step 43:** Continue following the path to the exit on Priory Crescent. On Priory Crescent to your right, there is a reconstructed burial mound. This is the site of a 6/7th century high status East Saxon cemetery.

#### Did you know?

The mound marks the spot where in 2003 archaeologists excavated the chamber burial of the 'Prittlewell Prince', described as the most important Anglo-Saxon discovery since Sutton Hoo. The stunning finds from the princely burial as well as high status female jewellery and weapons from the warrior burials discovered here are on display in Southend Central Museum.



**Step 44:** Once you have crossed Priory Crescent, you'll need to follow the path, between the supermarket and houses, straight ahead.

**Step 45:** The path will lead you on to Kirkham Road. Continue past Concorde Road towards the green square ahead.

**Step 46:** Once you enter the green square, please continue following the path where you'll find...

**Step 47:** ... the statue of Eric Kirkham Cole.

**Step 48:** Eric Cole founded the large EKCO factory which once dominated this area.

#### Image Credit

Southend Museums

**Step 49:** EKCO grew from a radio manufacturing firm to one of the largest employers in the town and an international brand that also developed radios for tanks and electronics for radar during WW2.

#### Image Credit

Tessa Hallmann

**Step 50:** If you're interested in finding out more there is an exhibition at Southend Central Museum. EKCO: 100 Years of Design and Innovation in Southend runs until 26th November 2023.

#### EKCO: 100 Years of Design and Innovation in Southend

**Step 51:** This is where your heritage walk of Prittlewell ends. You can retrace your steps back to Southend Victoria, or the nearby Prittlewell station. Or spend some more time exploring Priory Park.