



TEN HISTORIC FACTS

1. The line, as well as the Crouch Valley Line which branches off it at Wickford, was opened in 1888–89, and represented the largest railway building project in Essex undertaken by the Great Eastern Railway (GER).
2. These 15 “New Essex” stations were the epitome of the “domestic revival” style, pioneered on the GER by the company’s architect, W. N. Ashbee, which came to be known as the New Essex or Ashbee style.
3. The stations on the Shenfield–Southend line are largely in their original form, including the platform canopies.
4. It is 22 miles 26 chains (35.9 km) in length.
5. A typical journey along the length of the line takes 35 minutes.
6. In December 1887 The Essex Chronicle reported that 1,700 navvies were being employed on the works, together with a large number of magnificent horses and five steam navvies, (steam driven excavators) better known as “American Devils”.
7. Electrification of the Shenfield to Southend Victoria line using 1.5 kV DC overhead line electrification (OLE) was completed on 31 December 1956.
8. Southend Victoria was originally named Southend for Westcliffe & Thorpe Bay from 1933 to 1949; from 1 May 1949 it was renamed Southend-on-Sea Victoria; and from 20 February 1969 it was finally changed to Southend Victoria.
9. Although known as a fairly flat county, this part of Essex has a number of hills and valleys. Large cuttings had to be dug at Billericay, Hockley and Prittlewell.
10. With an increase in traffic on the route, the line between Wickford and Hockley was double tracked in 1900.



Photo by Dr Neil Clifton – Southend Victoria This is the former Great Eastern, later LNER, station, electrified in 1949 as one of the first post-war schemes.



One of the sights on the heritage trail at Rochford

Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership (ESSCRP) was formed in 1998, with the aim of promoting the six branch lines within Essex.

It sits under a larger umbrella of the Community Rail Network and is fully supported by the Department for Transport, who see community rail as a vital link between the railway and the local community. Community Rail is a growing, unique grassroots movement, connecting people with their railways and station, delivering social, environmental and economic benefits.

ESSCRP works with Greater Anglia (GA) and helps support GA's Station Adoption Initiatives, which has become very successful, with most of the 40 branch line stations having one or more station adopters. Many of these stations are unmanned so the station adopters not only improve the station environment but are also the 'eyes and ears' for their station – a vital link for GA and ESSCRP.

Promoting the branch lines entails producing publicity material, promoting the lines on social media, and organising special event trains – with multiple themes, such as trains to the Sea Shanty Festival in Harwich, to Christmas train events and music trains. To find out about the many events throughout the year please visit www.esscrp.org.uk/events

Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership (ESSCRP)



SUSTAINABILITY

Why take the train? With everyone trying to do their bit to cut their carbon footprint and create a healthier future, using the train rather than getting in the car is a great way to get started.

Did you know that rail is one of the greenest form of transport? Only cycling and walking are better for the environment!

Brand new trains that are greener than ever before were introduced in 2021 and now cover the whole East Anglia network and booking your train ticket in advance often gets you the best deal, plus using e-tickets saves miles and miles of paper every year. A busy commuter train which people travel on from home to work daily can take up to 500 cars off the road.

ACCESSIBILITY

The train operator has several options if you need help travelling. For immediate travel you can request help from a member of staff at any staffed station. At an unstaffed station you can use the help button on the Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) to request assistance. This live helpline connects to a member of staff in the Norwich office. They will be happy to help arrange assistance for you or alternative transport if they can't get a member of staff to meet you.

For all planned journeys you can use Passenger Assist, which is part of the national Passenger Assist arrangement which gives our disabled and older customers the opportunity to plan and pre-book assistance for their journey. If you know when you are travelling you can book assistance by Free phone **0800 028 2878** or Text **18001 0800 028 2878** or on-line at www.bookings.passengerassistance.com

Greater Anglia's new trains are wheelchair friendly

RAIL SAFETY

Keep Safe, Stay Safe when travelling by train, and teach children to follow the three key messages.

1. Stand behind the Yellow Line away from the platform edge.
2. When getting to your platform, always follow the passenger walkways around the station and use the footbridges, underpasses, or foot crossing.
3. If you drop something on the track – leave it and report it to a station staff or if at an unmanned station, use the help point and they will tell you what to do.

For more walks please visit our website www.esscrp.org.uk or scan the QR Code

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Join us on Facebook [@esscrp](https://facebook.com/esscrp)

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WALKS AROUND THE SOUTHEND LINE

Useful phone contact numbers

Samartians call on **116123**

Alcoholics Anonymous call on **0800 9177 650**

Refuge Domestic Violence call **0808 2000 247**

Childline call **0800 1111**

Missing People call or text **116 000**

Streetlink for rough sleepers call **0300 500 0914**

British Transport Police call **0800 40 50 40**

Useful websites

www.allionboard.co.uk

www.hubhope.co.uk

www.railisulcidprevention.co.uk

www.btp.police.uk

For train times, tickets and service information see www.greateranglia.co.uk

Latest information on train times and fares for any rail operator in the UK can be obtained from National Rail Enquiries on **08457 484950** or via the website www.nationalrail.co.uk

TRAIN TIMES, TICKETS AND SERVICE INFORMATION

THE SOUTHEND LINE



Attractions on the Southend Line, Shenfield to Southend.

Services on the Southend Line are direct between Southend-on-Sea and London Liverpool Street. From London, it is at Shenfield its route branches off to follow its dedicated track towards the coast.

Along the way, the line passes through incredibly beautiful historic market towns. Each one worthy of a visit to soak up the history and shop or eat in the many small independent outlets that the towns' quirky architecture supports.

The Southend branch line finishes at Southend-on-Sea, where the seafront offers traditional seaside delights – a stroll down the pier, splashing in the sea or playing the arcades. Yet the City is somewhere to visit any time of year with theatres, museums, casinos, restaurants, music venues and art galleries all within walking distance of Southend Victoria train station.

Surrounding each town is stunning countryside and for those who enjoy walking, our website has a list of routes which can be reached from the different stations.

SHENFIELD, BILLERICAY AND WICKFORD

Shenfield and Billericay are commuter towns popular with families. Billericay is a historic market town with its town centre a conservation area with numerous listed buildings. Both towns are surrounded by stunning countryside.

Within easy reach of Wickford Station is the town's Memorial Park and Gardens – established in 1949 the site now covers 110 acres incorporating formal gardens, woodlands and wildflower meadows; as well as a playground, café and tennis courts and outdoor gym. Wickford Station is the interchange for the Crouch Valley Line services.

RAYLEIGH

Rayleigh station is located at the bottom of the hill upon which the town centre is found. The town is steeped in history and well worth a visit to explore. Rayleigh Town Museum, located on the bustling high street, has installed plaques to create a heritage trail providing information and tales about many of the buildings. Key places of interest include the 200 year old Rayleigh Windmill.

The Rayleigh Mount, part of a Norman Castle, remains and is managed by National Trust. Holy Trinity Church has been serving the parish since the thirteenth century. And the octagonal Dutch Cottage, actually built in the 18th Century, was constructed for its strength and ease to thatch, but also ensured there are no corners where evil spirits could lurk!

Adventure Island – Southend Seafront



HOCKLEY

Hockley is another historic town, being mentioned in the Domesday book with reference to its wooded landscape. Today these ancient woodlands remain, managed by Rochford District Council with 91 hectares designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Once considered a royal hunting ground for the likes of Henry VIII, today Hockley Woods can be easily accessed from Hockley station with many trails and paths to enjoy the woodland. The entrance near Bull Inn pub on the Main Road offers toilets and a large play area.

With the opening of the railway in 1889, Victorian society enjoyed travel for leisure. Hockley promoted itself as a countryside destination offering walks, places to picnic and enjoy nature. A local family – the Horslins – established the Hockley Tea Pleasure Garden to cater for the day trippers offering pony rides, tea, dancing and merriment. The site is long gone but its entrance on Main Road is marked with a plaque and tea set which you will pass on the way to Hockley Woods.

Near the station is an early Victorian building (1842) built to offer medicinal spring waters. Unfortunately, the fashion of 'taking waters' was waning and the Spa Pump Room closed less than 10 years after opening.

ROCHFORD

Today's Market Square remains the town's central focus and is surrounded by an eclectic mix of buildings albeit it is more subdued than its historic self. The Medieval market, given permission to trade from 1247, would host livestock sales bringing folk from miles around. The square would be full of animals, people, musicians, traders and entertainers whilst the pubs would be equally busy.

The "Old House" is a fine example of a 13th Century timber framed building and is the oldest secular building in the area. Over the years the building has been amended. An interesting addition was the 17th century fireplace and chimney. Superstition of the time feared witches could come down the chimney, so an old shoe was bricked into the fireplace and witch marks carved into the brickwork – risk averted!

Whilst wandering around the town you can spot the 20th Century buildings which are built in a traditional style.

Rochford Hall, currently the home of Rochford Hundred Golf Club, was historically the manor house of the town's lords or prestigious families and has been associated with many kings and queens of England or those who held high positions in the country's administration. One inhabitant was 'The Other Boleyn Girl' Mary Boleyn – Henry VIII's mistress.

For more information on the town and its rich history The Rochford Town Team website offers a variety of Heritage Trails to guide you around. See www.rochfordtown.com



Rock Pool – Southend Seafront



SOUTHEND AIRPORT

A purpose-built station, just 100 paces from the terminal, the station offers a quick and simple way of getting to and from the airport. Travel by direct train to/from London Liverpool Street in just 52 minutes or to Stratford in only 43 minutes. Quick, easy, close.

PRITTLEWELL

Roots Hall Field in Prittlewell is the original home of Southend United football club, the station would be busy on home match days.

Prittlewell Priory was founded by the Cluniac Order in the early 12th Century. After the Dissolution the site became a private residence until 1922 when the buildings and grounds were gifted to the community and became the site of Southend's first museum. Today the building is a visitor centre linked with Southend Museum.

Priory Park and Gardens offers scenic walkways and formal gardens to explore, the bandstand is a focus with musicians playing there during summer weekends. A playground, bowling greens, tennis courts and picnic areas make for a lovely rest spot.

SOUTHEND

Located 3 minutes walk from Southend Victoria Station is Southend Central Museum and Planetarium. Part of their permanent display are finds from the Prittlewell Princely Saxon burial site. The Beecroft Art Gallery has significant works of art on permanent display plus ever changing temporary exhibitions of modern works or themes.

Southend Pier, the world's longest pleasure pier, extends 1.33 miles into the Thames Estuary. You can either walk or hop on the railway to reach the end and treat yourself to a cup of tea.

The sea front offers traditional seaside entertainment. You can stroll along the promenade whilst enjoying fresh doughnuts or ice cream. Or sit and eat fish and chips watching families play on the beach. For something a little more fast paced there is the amusement park – Adventure Island located at the foot of the pier. At the opposite end of the front is the Sealife Adventure aquarium.



Southend Pier entrance



Southend Pier Café