



Walton-on-the-Naze Circular walk

Coastal walk from a faded grandeur Victorian seaside resort with pier to a fast eroding, fossil rich headland and a sand spit. Return along the beach or salt marsh sea wall.



When to do this walk

Some parts of this walk **cannot be done at high tide**. Check the tide times!

The Naze (headland)

- Best done **at mid or low tide**, so as to be able to walk out along the cliffs, and back along the beach (or visa versa). Take care : **Parts of the walk below the Naze cliffs may be cut-off at high tide**. You can walk along the Naze's cliff-top path at any tide.

Stone Point (spit) and Stone Marsh

- Take care, the route out to Stone Point may be **cut-off at high tide**.
- Walk along the beach (east, sea side) of the spit. The inland (west, marsh) part is no public access (see [Map E of the England Coast Path report](#)) [Aug'17].
- From **1st May to mid August** you must walk along the beach **below the high tide mark** due to the [Little Tern \(a ground nesting bird\) breeding season](#). Nesting sites should be roped off. This is a very welcome easement of the breeding season restrictions [Jul'19].

Length

7.6 miles / 12.2km

Subtract 4km if skipping Stone Point

Add 1.5km if following the sea wall back

Add 1.4km if walking out to the end of the pier

Toughness 2 out of 10 (not quite flat, but almost)

Map OS Explorer 184 (Colchester)

Features This is a short and easy but varied coastal walk as much a day out as a walk. It starts in a faded grandeur Victorian Seaside resort with a long pier. But its real star is the Naze - a headland with fine views and red cliffs of London Clay subject to rapid erosion and a fossil hunters paradise after stormy weather, and a beach walk along a sandy spit out to Stone Point.

After leaving the pier, arcades, beach huts, some nice Victorian architecture, and good swimming beaches behind, you quickly reach the Naze - a wild headland with good sea views. There is a small tower with a tea room, which is visible for much of the walk as a landmark. Due to the erosion on the headland - by up to 2m a year - walking along the beach is quite interesting, and can be rich in fossils after storms.

After the Naze cliffs is a sand spit beach walk out to Stone point. Not at high tide. Walk below the high tide from May 1st to mid August to avoid ground nesting birds.

The Naze and spit protect the backwaters, shallow waters with salt flat islands, which inspired Arthur Ransome's Swallows and Amazons books. The return route is either along the beach, or optionally around a nature reserve's sea wall overlooking the backwaters (good for birdwatching, but a bit hard going in summer as overgrown)

Depending upon tide times, walk out along the cliffs, and back along the beach or visa-versa

After returning to the town centre, head out to the end of the 3/4 mile long pier (free, tacky fun fair rides and amusements, bar/cafe, toilets) - a nice stroll with fresh sea air and a great view.

For a longer walk, head south along the coast and beach huts to Frinton (station)

Your opinion of this walk will be in part how you see Walton-on-the-Naze - faded grandeur, or tacky amusements which may be busy and noisy during summer evenings. In winter, the town would be very quiet, the amusements closed, and beaches empty

The walk out to Stone Point would make an interesting night walk.

Walk Options

- If the tides are wrong, walk around the beach, and back along the cliff top
- Rather than an out-and-back walk, you can follow the England Coast Path around the nature reserve 'sea wall' (an earth wall), with views over the backwaters

Travel

Trains from London Liverpool Street, hourly, about 1hr 30, usually changing at Thorpe-le-Soken (where the line splits to Clacton-on-Sea) for a waiting train. Check the return trains times, as they aren't as regular in the evenings

Saturday Walkers Club: Take the train closest to 10:00

Stone Point

The walk out along the spit to Stone Point hasn't been walk checked recently.

The spit out to Stone Point is part of Hamford Water National Nature Reserve (NNR).

- The east (sea, beach) side has open access, except *"... between 1 May and mid-August when we ask that people keep below high tide mark and keep dogs under control and on a short lead so that the birds and in particular the little tern are not disturbed [tern] colonies are often mobile flitting around year to year between different sites at Hamford [NNR]. When nesting, the sites are roped off by a warden."*
- The west (inland, backwater) side has "a 'Section 25A' restriction applied on the salt marsh which means that there is no access west of the beach.

The relaxation of the former total ban on access during the spring/summer breeding season is an excellent and very welcome compromise. Thank you English Nature!. Access restrictions updated: July '19.

The spit is (was?) managed by [a local Sailing Club](#), who welcome visitors, but in order to keep "unfettered access", urges them to "take care not do anything that either disturbs the wildlife or destroys plants and vegetation." Its a popular mooring for small boats in the summer.

"In Arthur Ransome's ('Swallow and Amazons') book 'Secret Water', the children name [it] Flint Island... Stone Age flints have occasionally been found here... Stone Marsh is surrounded by gentle slopes of soft sand and mud, and small boats often use this as a temporary mooring" -- Essex Coastline: Then and Now By M.P.B. Fautley, J.H. Garon.

We still like the idea of a roped off path to guide visitors, and dogs on leads, along a specific route (with prickly plants either side where needed!) Birds would soon learn to avoid a 50 ft strip either side of the path, and everyone's happy. English Nature are against this idea, make its not appropriate for flitting about Terns :) However, the "below high water mark" access is very welcome!

England Coast Path - Sensitive Features Report - The Naze / Stone Point
(pdf - see section 5.1)

England Coast Path

Strangely, the England Coast Path plan doesn't mention Stone Point other than to impose a year-round access restriction on the salt march on its inland side.

The a) walk out along the Naze headland, and b) the circular walk around the nature reserve sea wall back to town are now a formal part of the England Coast Path. Expect better signage!

Links

- [Walton-on-the-Naze](#) - history and nature
- [The Pier](#)
- [Naze Tower](#) - £2.50 to climb, has a free tea room, open April to October
- [The Nazeman - Geology and Nature](#) - a fan site!
- [Fossils](#), also see: [\[2\]](#) and [\[3\]](#)
- [A similar walk on the BBC website around the John Weston Nature Reserve](#)
- [John Weston Reserve](#) - wetlands, good for birdwatching
- Hamford Water NNR (the Naze backwaters, including Stone Point) - no website

Help Us!

After the walk, please leave a [comment](#), it really helps. Thanks!

You can also upload photos to the  [SWC Group on Flickr](#) ([upload your photos](#)) and [videos to](#)  [Youtube](#). This walk's tags are:

By Car

Start CO14 8DH

Map Walk

This walk **requires** an OS map and a compass or GPS for navigation. You can print out OS maps using the link above.

Help

National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Tralveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

Version

Aug-24 [Andrew](#)

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Walk Directions

Walton to the Naze

1. Head down to the sea front, and turn left (north) - not right (signposted 'beach')
2. Pass the pier and town beach, and on your left, the start of the high street (Co-op supermarket, pubs, fish and chips)
3. Walk along the seafront, keeping close to the sea
4. Leaving the town behind, pass a nice looking cafe down on the beach

Along the Naze

At this point you can choose, out along the cliff and back along the beach, or visa versa. Low tide is best for the beach, so choose according to the tides. The following assumes you walk out along the cliffs

5. Keeping close to the cliff edge, continue until you reach the Naze Tower with a cafe (recommended)
6. Optionally visit the cafe (free tea room, not free viewing gallery)
7. Continue, keeping close to the cliff edge. The path becomes a raised track, with a narrow "salt flat beach" to your right.

Stone Point (not high tide)

This is an out-and-back walk along a spit to Stone Pointy

9. At the end of the path, turn right to the sea (25m), then continue out along the beach to the end of the spit - Stone Point. Then retrace your steps to this point.
10. Keep to the beach as the salt march area on the inland side of the spit is closed to the public. From 1 May to Mid-August, keep below the high tide mark to avoid ground nesting birds.

Return via the beach (low tide only), or the Seawall Path

Now you have a choice of ways back to Walton

10. Option A) Return along the beach to Walton-on-the-Naze, and view the red cliffs from the bottom (recommended)
11. Option B) Walk around anticlockwise the Naze along the seawall. This forms part of the England Coast Path, and is now well maintained.

1. Turn left (west), and follow the sea wall (west for 1km, then south for 3km). You can walk on top of the earch wall (nice view) or just below it (easier).
2. Pass a large holiday camp, a school playing field, the backs of some houses, and at a 90° bend in the path, turn left for 10m on to North Street.
3. Continue (east) along the North Road towards the North Sea. At it's end turn left then right to rejoin the outgoing coastal route. Retrace your outward route to the town centre

Visit the Pier (Optional)

12. Once Back in Walton, walk out to the end of the pier and back (no entry charge). Its so long, it adds a mile to the walk!

Back to the Station

13. Retrace your steps to the train station,

Continue to Frinton Station

14. For a longer walk, head south along the sea front towards Frinton (train station, on the same line). This is [Walk 52 in reverse](#)

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