1. Cross the footbridge from the north-eastern edge of Tesco’s car park, which goes across the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. Take the right-hand path onto the canal towpath and double back west. Go under the Maldon By-pass road bridge (which follows the alignment of the old railway to Maldon West station).

2. By the sluice gates on the Navigation, where there is a crossroad of paths, turn right to head away from the canal. Continue to the car parking area for Elms Farm Park. Go past the entrance to the park on your left, then turn right into the lane leading back to the bridge. Head straight on to the T-junction of paths and take the right-hand turn to Headcorn.

3. On reaching the road, double back over the road bridge (WITH GREAT CARE, it is recommended you cross over to the left-hand road side of the road, as there is a laid brick bed for traffic travelling in the opposite direction). Continue down this lane, cross over the road bridge (Blue Mills Hill). As soon as possible, cross over to left-hand road verge, staying on this for 650 yards.

4. Cross over the road, going through a gap near a gate opposite. Follow the path here right to begin the route as it turns right after the bridge, which leads towards Mill Cottage. Don’t miss the information board on the bend near the river, which has details concerning the railway and the wooden trestle bridge (the only surviving example in the country).

5. The track turns away from the old railway route. Head off left at a T-junction of paths to follow the path heading towards St Peter’s Church (disused, but now a stained glass church). The path leads towards Mill Cottage; don’t miss the information board on the bend near the river, which has details concerning the railway and the wooden trestle bridge (the only surviving example in the country).

6. Go under the wooden viaduct, following the riverside path, which passes through the Benton Hall Golf Club. After a mile, you reach a T-junction of paths; take the left-hand turn to ascend the zig-zag cycle/footpath to rejoin the Blackwater Rail Trail.

7. At the “Witham” road sign, cross over the road to take the footpath to the right. You have now rejoined the route of the old railway. Stay on this path as it passes under St Peter’s Church, then turn left at a T-junction to begin the route of the old railway.

8. Where the path comes out onto Pasture Road, use the traffic calming crossing, then take the footpath which runs parallel to and to the right of the old railway path (marked by a concrete surfaced path). Where this path meets the road, use the traffic calming crossing and then cross over on your right-hand side.

9. Take the path to the right, then ascend the steps up to Albert Road. Take the first left here for the No 99 bus stop, go back up the road to the junction with Collingwood Road, which crosses over the railway line. Take the first left here and then turn left off the railway footpath, which runs parallel and to the right of the old railway path (marked by a concrete surfaced path). Where this path meets the road, use the traffic calming crossing and then cross over on your right-hand side.

10. After 220 yards, you see a sign on the right for the Whittlesford Reservoir (Blackwater Lane). Turn right down this lane, after 20 yards turn left to ascend the zig-zag cycle/footpath to regain the Blackwater Rail Trail.
This delightful linear walk closely follows the route of the former Witham-Maldon Railway, some sections of which are under private ownership and are not public rights of way. As a result, it is necessary to leave the actual route of the railway and follow an alternative route in a couple of places. This walk is designed to start from the Tesco’s car park in Maldon and end at Witham station, using the No. 90 bus to return to the starting point.

Refreshments
on (or close to) the walk
McDonalds, Fullbridge Road, Maldon CM9 4LE Tel: 01621 842757
Costa at Tesco’s, Fullbridge, Maldon CM9 4LE Tel: 0845 6779459
The Railway, 2 Chipping Hill, Witham CM8 2DE Tel: 01376 500200
Benton Hall Golf Club, Wickham Hill, Witham CM8 3LH Tel: 01376 502454

Useful web links
It’s About Maldon (Old Railways)
www.itsaboutmaldon.co.uk/railway
Wickham Place Farm Gardens, www.wickhamplacefarm.co.uk
Friends of Friendless Churches, www.friendsoffriendlesschurches.org.uk

MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL
The railway bridges which carried the railway line over the river Chelmer and the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation were eventually demolished and later replaced by new structures carrying the Maldon bypass road (A143). Maldon East Station (the terminus Maldon East station (the terminus) is the link between Witham) still stands in all its glory, and it now used as offices. It can be seen down Station Road, Heybridge, which is a short walk from the Tesco’s car park.

This walk was kindly developed by Chris Harvey for the Maldon District Tourist Information Centre from the Blackwater Rail Trail leaflet produced by Essex County Council.

For further information please contact:
MALDON DISTRICT TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
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Email: tic@maldon.gov.uk

50p to cover printing costs

Distance:
8.10 miles (13 km)
Time taken: 3 hours
Location of Start:
1/2 mile north of Maldon town centre (just off A14
OS Boxtor Map No: 183 (Chelmsford & The Rodings)
OS Grid Reference: TL 849 076
Parking:
Maldon Tesco Extra Car Park
CM9 4LE
Public Transport:
Bus No. 90 Maldon to Witham (Blackwater Link), Mon-Sat (not Sundays)

The Maldon to Witham railway line was built by Thomas Jackson for the Eastern Counties Railway in 1847-8. The first goods train left Maldon East station in August 1848, soon followed by passenger services. Originally, the line was dual track, however, with traffic levels being much lower than forecast, one track was filled during the period of the Crimean War (1854-6) and sold to the War Office. Services ran on the line for over 100 years, but it was eventually closed to passenger traffic in 1964, despite strong local opposition. The last goods train ran on the line in 1966.