

# St. Osyth - Clacton-on-Sea - Essex

Sunday, 16 May 2010

## General

Located a little to the east of Clacton in Essex, St. Osyth derives its name from the dedication of a local priory to a 7th century princess - Osgyth - who was martyred there. The St. Osyth naturist beach is on the North Sea coast (south facing) and is just to the east of the Colne estuary.

## Google Map

## Getting There

St. Osyth lies south of the B1027 road from Colchester to Clacton-on-Sea. Proceeding from Clacton, go west on the B1027 from its junction with the A133 for just over two miles and take a minor road on the left signposted 'St. Osyth'. Head due south from St Osyth - Beach Road and to the end of the road in Hutley's Caravan Park. This reaches a dead end at the seawall with a car park pub and cafe just on the left .

From there go over sea wall on to the beach (or through gate in wall during day time), turn right (west) and walk one mile to reach the naturist beach - slow and rather difficult walking on the small shingle.

The dirt road which used to give access to the beach is no longer in existence, having been destroyed by storms in the winter of 2003-4.

In reply to an enquiry about the future of the road Alan Hutley [from the nearby caravan park] said:

" To rebuild the road we would have to retreat further back on to the saltings, this we are not allowed to touch, as it is an area of S.S.S.I. [Site of Special Scientific Interest]

To replace the road in its original place would only be temporary until the next rough high tide takes it away again. We would love to have the road again, but we have known for along time that one day we would lose the road, the only surprise was, that it did not occur sooner ."

## Description

St Osyth beach is on the north shore of the Colne branch of the Blackwater estuary. The shoreline is sand or shingle in some parts, tending to estuary mud in others. Bathing at nearby Brightlingsea is said to be dangerous - as is the case in many estuaries, so caution is required. The far end of the naturist beach is fenced off and is a "Nature Reserve" and "Private Property". To the north of the beach lie marshes and dykes.

This beach is reported to suffer from inappropriate behaviour by some beach users. Naturists are advised to take care when deciding which section of the beach to use. (See comments below)

## Facilities

None on the beach itself - nearest facilities are in St.Osyth itself.

## Water Quality

Since it is not a recognised bathing beach, water quality details are not available.

## Selected Visitor Comments

2003

August - " [The] beach was very busy with a really good mix of people. It seems that the far end of the beach was used mainly by the gay community. As the evening drew closer it seemed like the naturists left and in came the swingers.... so we decided to leave. Overall it was a great day - but if you're not into swinging leave before five o'clock"

2004

January - "As a caravanner, my wife and I have been visiting St. Osyth nudist beach for the last 3years....by using the touring park at Hutleys we find it a great escape from the normal holiday.."

June - "...very surprised to see the damage [to the road] down there.... It's a great shame you can't drive down there anymore because it's a long walk.. is now quite dangerous as there is virtually no path at all on some bits and you end up clambering over loose rocks, etc... "

July - "2004 so far has been full of stress and a feeling of being very uncomfortable.. due to the increasing arrival of single and gay men - which is a shame on families and the elderly which like to visit the beach. It would be a good idea if the beach were patrolled on a regular basis, so that families and visitors of a naturist nature could come and enjoy themselves without any hassle of men watching and masturbating..."

August - My husband and I have been going to this beach for over 15 years and we were very upset... worrying about the trip back across the rocks as they are very loose and an accident waiting to happen."

August - "What was the road is now just rubble. I have no idea what happened to the original road but there is NO sign of it at all! The whole long road section has completely vanished to be replaced by rubble... On the good news front the same storms seem to have removed a lot of the shingle to reveal sand underneath. Other improvements are a new dune/nature/bird conservation area right in the middle of the beach...complete with illustrated notices about what is going on."

August - .. access is, as stated by various others, by foot only. This is OK when the tide is out. However, when the tide is in the walk can be quite treacherous."

September - "...a lot of naturists...many couples and single men as the weather was absolutely fantastic on both days, The walk from the carpark is about 1km... the only problem is when the tide comes in you have to negotiate the rocks and rubble from the old road that has broken up. The beach is all shingle, but there is plenty of grass amongst the clumps of bracken to hide yourself if preferred. I thoroughly enjoyed my visits..."

2005

May - "As a regular user of this beach, and being a single male, I do not like the fact that single men are stereotyped. We do not all sit on the beach and masturbate, or participate in gay activity in full view..."

August - " It takes around 20 minutes to walk from the car park to the beach which is good as it puts off non-naturists ... Not so good if you are disabled or a more 'mature naturist'. The path is a bit rocky in places but most of it is either shingle/sand (i.e. walking along the beach), or walking along the path via the sand dunes. The first part of the beach is straight naturists. Here there were several couples, two women on their own and around 5 men. There was a good atmosphere, no one stared at you and one could relax. The second half of the beach was men only, and I learned that

this is unofficially the gay part of the beach. The third part of the beach is the sand dunes behind the beach. Here couples were camped out in tents and also many men had set their towels down here. I was told by some regulars that this is - or used to be - a kind of swinging area ..."

2007

April 22 - "After the beachfront carpark there is a trek over the wasteland and what remains of the old road. This does however discourage most voyeurs. At the end of the wasteland there is a hillock and then some wooden fencing. That is the start of the beach. The sand just around this area is very fine but a bit flat. Here and in the dunes close by is where the couples set up camp... When it's really hot the beach can get crowded. The beach is flat so swimming is safe. Depends on the tides whether there is sand or stones underfoot. Don't be put off by the voyeurs and pessimists."

April 26 - "We were told that this particular beach was known for it's sexual pests, which is a shame as I can imagine on nicer days that there are genuine naturists attending."

April 27 - There always seem to be a few "meercats" bobbing up and down...We don't pay any attention to them and they leave us alone. Gorgeous sun and a good book is all you need. Try not to be put off by others negative comments."

May 02 - "It seems to me that a lot of people visiting for the first time have the very same impression of this beach which is a shame really. I was brought up in a naturist family... we all used to go to naturist camps together...and have never experienced anything sinister as written so many times above. However, we do realise now that this is probably easy to avoid...if you strip as near to the carpark side as allowed then the problems [are]virtually zero."

June 13 - "...the sun burst through the clouds and we had almost 3 hours of warm sun. A few couples passed on their way home. With a natural windbreak from the sea it was beautiful...And no strange guys wandering about aimlessly. A really pleasant Saturday."

June 16 - "We love St Osyth beach because its peaceful and private. We say hello as others pass but aren't great conversationalists. We prefer to read and snooze. The single guys have spread further along the beach but were no bother this weekend. Even the water was warm enough. There were two separate single ladies reading on the sand. And a young foreign couple wandered along."

June 28 - "...lovely to see so many people there today...quite a few couples and single ladies, lots of men, mostly keeping themselves to themselves..."

2009

July 28 - "A load of stone has been laid along the route of the road which was washed away...this work has improved the trek to the beach. We found a beautiful stretch of soft fine sand with a natural windbreak. And the water was warm. Best to wait for high tide so you know where you're wading."

August 06 - "...me and my wife are looking forward to going to the beach over the next few days , But it does put my wife off , When the red cap brigade start strutting around... this is supposed to be a designated nudist beach where ladies men & families can enjoy being naked with out being perved by some very sad men..."

August 07 - "...something has to be done...my wife won't go to st oysths anymore... [however] it would only be fair to keep a balanced view and include [the] females that also encourage the perverts with their outrageous carring on."

August 07 - "Both are couples and the perves have to take equal responsibility.. [but] a balanced view when shaming is only fair... believe me i'm not sticking up for the pervs... they hounded my wife from the beach never to return."

August 07 - "... the beach must be cleaned up other wise it will continue to go downhill... we also agree about keeping a balanced view.. I am certainly no fan of any sex pests but what is a man supposed to do when there are women openly teasing and flashing."

August 07 - "...lets let the sex pests know they are not welcome."

August 10 - "...the first time we have gone to a naturist beach and... We really enjoyed the feel of being naked and outside... Very soon after we found a spot, the lurkers started appearing, slowly walking past and hovering about 7 mtrs away. Then a fully clothed young man and an elderly naked man with a white cap stalked us and settled... not far from us. We stayed for about an hour until it became a bit tedious being watched and heads popping up everytime my wife turned or moved. It won't put us off but hope to go when the weather is better and at the weekend when hopefully more couples will be there!"

August 11 - "The water was lovely and warm and almost reached the dunes. We even went for a stroll to dry off after swimming and passed the time of day with those close by. It was great to see so many couples. We can understand the single ladies bringing their dogs, which are so well behaved they are no bother whatsoever. The lack of screaming kids and radios is so relaxing when accompanied by the sound of the waves and the seagulls."

August 12 - "...please do not label all men as pervs just because we go to the beach.. being civil costs nothing, I try to treat the other beach users with respect... there are some genuine people there."

August 15 - "I like to go and relax read my book and have my headphones on.. so I'm not disturbing anyone [but] because you're on your own people... think your pervng.... [now I] rarely talk to anyone anymore for that simple reason"

August 22 - "The sea was choppy today and threatened to reach the dunes... Now we can understand how the old road was washed away. Lots of the regulars and only a couple of guys sitting too close and smoking."

September 09 - "I have noticed that over the years the naturist part has crept ever nearer the end of the car park. I tend to find a spot before I strip off rather than stripping as soon as I reach the beach. I have seen some sexual activity on the beach, both heterosexual and homosexual. I tend to ignore it and continue walking. On the odd occasion somebody has approached me to hold a conversation. This may have been a chat up but I didn't treat it as such and continued some conversation for a short while before making my excuses to get away. On the whole I believe that if you are single you will mainly be left alone. I would like to think that there are sufficient genuine naturists on the beach to actively discourage any unwanted interest should it be spotted. There are some bad stories and they may not be totally unfounded but I wouldn't let them put you off. If you make it clear that you are not interested in any unsavoury behaviour the people who are will generally leave you alone."