

The Ford RideLondon Classique returns to Essex

The world's very best professional cyclists will return to Essex on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 May in one of the highest profile sporting events hosted by the county in 2024.

The Ford RideLondon Classique is a UCI Women's WorldTour event – the highest level of professional cycling – and sees the best female cyclists in the world race over three days for the right to be crowned champion.

Twelve months ago thousands of cycling enthusiasts lined the streets of Essex to watch more than 100 elite riders come through their streets. In 2024, which marks the tenth edition of the race, the Classique promises to be even more competitive, with the first two days of racing returning to Essex.

On Friday 24 May, thousands will pack the streets of Saffron Walden to watch the start of the race at 11am. Beginning in Market Square, the riders will roll out towards Great Chishill before making their way east towards Thaxted (arriving at roughly 12:30) heading through Finchingfield (12:45), Halstead (13:20) and Mistley (14:25) among others en-route to the finish on East Hill in Colchester (15:00).

It will not be the first time an elite bike race has come through Essex, with 2024 marking 10 years since the Tour de France raced through the streets of Finchingfield and thousands packed the streets to cheer on their sporting heroes.

On Saturday 25 May, Stage Two of the race will start and finish in Maldon. The town has become synonymous with the event in recent years having hosted a stage since 2022, and the race will get underway in Promenade Park from 11am, heading north east towards Tolleshunt D'Arcy (11:15) and Tiptree (11:45) before arriving in Witham (12:10). Riders will complete three loops through Witham, Little Baddow, Wickham Bishops and Maldon before a final sprint finish on Maldon High Street (14:40).

The Classique, which is a London 2012 Olympics legacy event, will finish in London on Sunday 26 May, as the elite riders, which will include the best Great Britain has to offer as well as international superstars, head to Essex for one of the only top-level bike races in the UK.

In 2024, the elite teams taking part includes 11 Women's WorldTour teams – the highest level in the sport – and includes the best female team in the world. Team SD Worx-Protime have set the professional cycling scene alight in the last 12 months, and provide fierce competition to the two-times defending champion Team dsm-firmenich PostNL.

In 2024, you can be part of the Ford RideLondon Classique, with Active Essex's Community Activation fund offering grants of up to £250 to support cycling-themed events on Friday 24 May and Saturday 25 May, as well as the mass participation ride which comes through Essex on Sunday 26 May. More information can be found on activeessex.org/ridelondon-essex.

Full details on road closures and when the race will come through your area can be found on the [Ford RideLondon website](#).