How to get online for free in Southend

This information sheet explains where and when you can access free IT equipment and free Wi-Fi in the Southend area.

The SECH Hub

The Digital Housing Hub (DHH) project operates from the Victoria Hub offering free access to computers and support from volunteers to help more people develop the digital skills and confidence to get online. The help extends to assistance on how to use mobile phone, tablets and PC's. Support and guidance can be given on a whole range of digital issues that you may be facing.

The DHH is open at the Victoria Hub on Mondays, Wednesdays Thursdays, and Fridays from 10.00am – 4.00pm for help, advice and computer support.

Number: 01702 611199   Email: info@hubproject.co.uk

Victoria Hub

Victoria shopping centre, 324-325 Chartwell Square, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5SP

Learning how to use computers and getting online, setting up emails, looking for work on the internet and putting together CVs. This will be every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 10:00am and 4:00pm.

Please Note: The Victoria Hub will close between 12am-1pm Monday, Wednesdays and Thursdays and Fridays.

Shoeburyness Hub (from 8th September)

Friars Baptist Church, Eagle Way, Southend-on-Sea, Shoeburyness, SS3 9RJ

Learning how to use computers and getting online, setting up emails, looking for work on the internet and putting together CVs. This will be every Tuesday 10:00am – 12:00pm and 1:00pm – 4:00pm.

Westcliff Hub (not yet open, as it is based within Westcliff Library)

Westcliff library, 649 London Road, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9PD, UK

Learning how to use computers and getting online, setting up emails, looking for work on the internet and putting together CVs. This will be every Tuesday between 10:00am and 1:00pm.

Local Services

The Forum, Elmer Square, Elmer Ave, Southend-on-Sea SS1 1NE

Libraries are slowly reopening, so at the moment only the computers at the Forum are available, this includes one hour free use, and these have to be booked by phoning the number below. The opening hours are 10am – 4pm and a mask must be worn. There is a one way system and sanitising procedures in place. All computers (including those for children) are on the first floor and a lift is available.
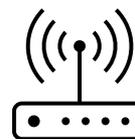
Number: 01702 534117

Job Centre Plus

Southend Jobcentre, Dencora Court, Tylers Ave, Southend-on-Sea SS1 2AP

The Job Centre currently have reduced computer access service to their customers that will need to be pre booked in advance same/next day (they don't book beyond that).

There are two computers available for 1 hour maximum slots

Computer 1 is available to be booked: 10am 12 noon and 2pm

Computer 2 is available to be booked: 11am 1pm and 3pm

The hour after each booking is for sanitizing the areas.

Number: 01702 575724

Local Businesses and Public Services

Lots of cafes, restaurants, shops and public places (such as train stations or hospitals) offer free Wi-Fi. Some places will require you purchase a coffee or something to eat but will provide Wi-Fi once you do. Other places don't require a purchase, just be sure to check your device for available networks and connect if you're in these places.

To make it easier to find you can either look out for this logo in shop windows or use the Wi-Fi map below:

See where there are free Wi-Fi spots in the local area with a Wi-Fi map: https://www.wifimap.io/4796-southend-on-sea-free-wifi

These places include: Costa, Starbucks, Caffe Nero, McDonalds, Burger King, Muffin Break and other independent cafes across Southend.

#SouthendFreeWiFi

This service is an outdoor, free Wi-Fi service across Southend town centre, central seafront, Hamlet Court Road and Leigh Broadway – providing residents and visitors to these areas with access to fast, efficient internet connectivity. You'll need to register to use the service, in order to register, you will need to provide either:

a valid email address and a few simple details (i.e. name, gender, age range); or

your Facebook log-in details (email address and password)

For more information and a larger map please visit their website: http://www.southendfreewifi.com/

This map shows exactly where you can find this free Wi-Fi:

Southend Town Centre- Central Seafront- Hamlet Court Road- Leigh Broadway
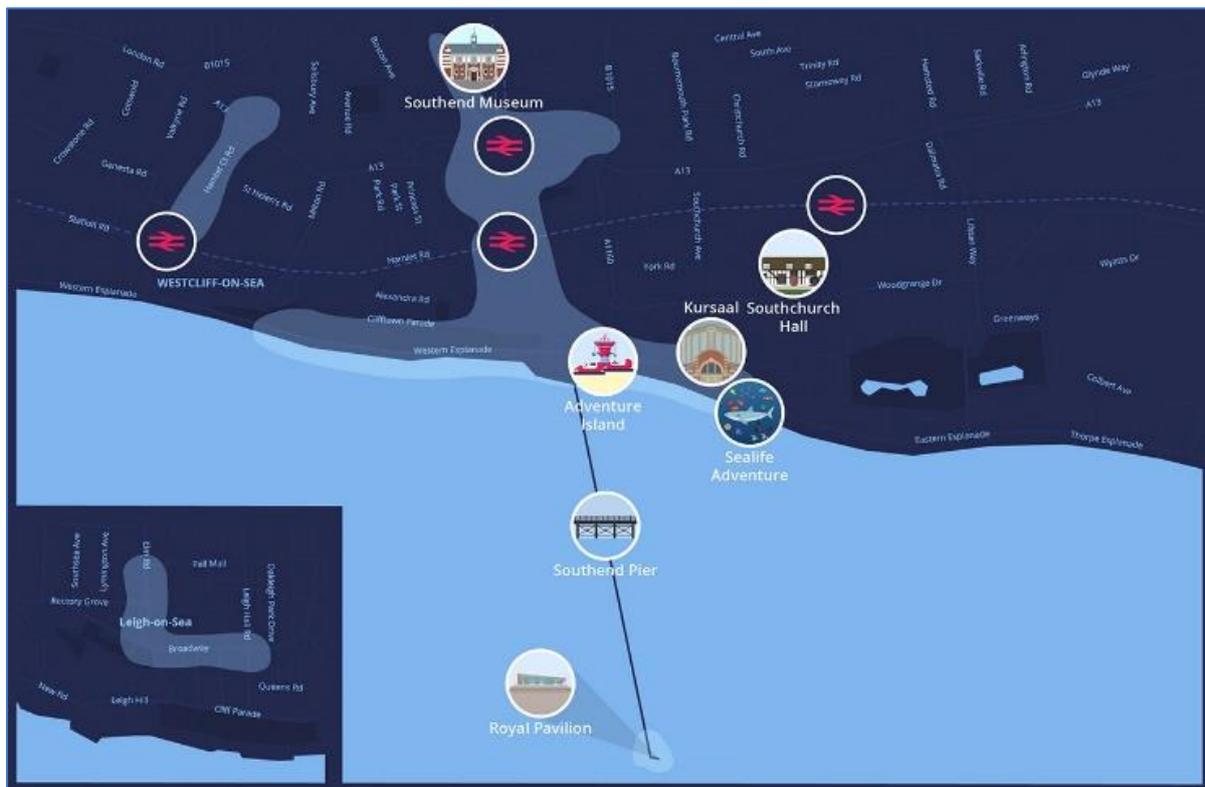
Other services available:

Learn My Way

Learn My Way offers free information and guidance on how to use digital services like the internet and email, from basic things such as using online GP services to more advanced uses like online banking: https://www.learnmyway.com/subjects

Wavelength

Wavelength can provide free IT equipment to people dealing with loneliness. You will need to be referred by a professional or associate that has known you for a while (e.g social worker, neighbour, a voluntary organisation that supports you). Find out more on their website: https://wavelength.org.uk/

Free Wi-Fi with BT

BT will offer "those who are most in need" access to these hotspots via a "voucher-code system," which will provide kids with the ability to access the internet on up to 3 devices at a time, for six months (until December). As this is only intended for education, BT's vouchers will only allow access with comprehensive content filtering and is for children up to 16 or 24 if they are a care leaver.

Every voucher comes with content filtering, and one voucher can be used on up to three devices at once. Vouchers will work until the end of December 2020.

To check that you are able to access BT Hotspot coverage please click use the following link https://www.btwifi.com/find/

More information on eligibility can be found here: https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/about-bt-wifi

There are a limited number of vouchers available, to apply please email Workskills on: workskills@Southend.gov.uk

BT Hotspots (there is a cost involved)

There are 8 in the Borough and access costs £4.99 an hour or £7.99 a day. The hotspots are at: HSBC in Thorpe Bay Broadway; TSB, NatWest and EE in the High Street; Shell garage on the A127/Hobleythick Lane; Tesco's on the A127; NatWest and TSB in Leigh Broadway.