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# Army flares set up UFO alert

THE mystery surrounding the UFOs floating around South East Essex appears to have been solved.

The McCoy family and pensioner Mrs Ellen Gibbs of Basildon, and Southend fireman Mr Arthur Fielding were sure they had seen flying saucers making a visit last Tuesday.

Southend Airport and Basildon police could not explain what the saucer spotters might have seen, but coastguards in Frinton think they have the answer.

A spokesman said: "We were flooded with inquiries about flashing lights on Tuesday night.

So we went chasing around to find out just what had been seen.

"It turned out that the UFOs were no more than a vigorous army exercise over the Medway in Kent."

"Soldiers were shooting brightly coloured flares into the night for a considerable time but they had not thought of telling anyone.

"By coincidence it was a very clear night which meant their activities could be seen for miles around.

"Because of the considerable distance involved the lights could have appeared to hang in the air like fireworks. The distance also explains why no noises were heard."