



In Burnham-on-Crouch, the major town of the Dengie, you get the lot – great places to stay and eat, riverside walks and pubs, art galleries, gorgeous Georgian homes and even an eccentric octagonal bell tower



By Paul Gogarty, one of the country's leading travel writers and author of *The Coast Road – A 3,000 mile journey round the edge of England*

Bounded by the North Sea and the rivers Crouch and Blackwater, the Dengie is a beguiling mix of the country's richest arable farming, thatched and weatherboarded villages like the sublime Tillingham, and moody end-of-the-earth saltmarshes.

In centuries long gone, Dengie Fever was something farmers' wives worried about contracting as they assisted their husbands in the mosquito-infested swamps. Nowadays Dengie fever is something everyone, happily contracts as soon as they step into this wonderfully remote land of mussels, markets and

marshland whether they're writers, painters, filmmakers or holidaymakers (the landscape reputedly gave Hitchcock the idea of *The Birds*, & Orwell used it as setting for Martian landing in *War of the Worlds*).

For the active, there's walking, cycling, horseriding and aquatic sports at the Bradwell Outdoor Centre. For foodies there's some of the country's finest seafood and a food trail linking local farm producers. And in Burnham-on-Crouch, the major town of the Dengie, you get the lot – great places to stay and eat, riverside walks and pubs, art galleries, gorgeous Georgian homes and even an eccentric octagonal bell tower, Burnham's best known landmark, you have to duck your head under on the High Street. Burnham is the major yachting centre on the eastern

seaboard and nicknamed the Cowes of the East, hence it comes as no surprise that it has four yachting clubs (and the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club's home is considered an Art Deco masterpiece).

To get a real feel for the very special beauty of the area I strongly recommend a walk along the northernmost promontory where the misanthropic Saxon chapel of St Peter's (or St Peter-on-the-Wall) at Bradwell looks out over mudflats, cockle spits and hovering kestrels and hen harriers. St Peter Ad Murum is reputedly the oldest complete church in England that is still in regular use and is the scene of an annual ecumenical pilgrimage on the first Saturday of July each year. Its construction by St Cedd, who sailed from Lindisfarne to preach here, marked both an end to Saxon pirateering and the first foothold of Christianity in the South. The chapel was built from the walls of the Roman fort of Othona in 654AD - an intimidating fortress at the mouth of the Blackwater that was erected to protect the estuary from the Saxon pirates. Today, the location of Othona remains a major archaeological site and part of the Dengie National Nature Reserve.

The atmosphere here is like no other and the saint's word - "In this place the word is revealed to you" - still reverberates. A six-mile waymarked Wildside Walk round the promontory leads through the SSSI, passing grazing ponies, rare coastal flora, breeding coastal birds (the Bradwell Bird Observatory is located close to the chapel), old WWII pillboxes, 7th century fish traps and Shell Beach - a 30-acre treasure trove of mostly oyster and cockle shells. Today, the location of Othona remains a major archaeological site and part of the Dengie National Nature Reserve. It's a hugely important conservation area with 750 acres lying below sea level and protected by sea walls. The starting and end point for the circular walk is the car park for St Peter's chapel.

Attractions along the route

1. Burnham-on-Crouch Museum

A local museum, situated on the Quay, devoted to the history of the Dengie Hundred area from Neolithic to the present. The museum consists of two floors of exhibits of maritime, agricultural, industrial and social history. The archive contains photographs, drawings and documents. There is a regular programme of special exhibitions.
Tel: 01621 782184
www.burnham.org.uk/museum.htm



Wildlife Trips

Lady Essex

The seal and wildlife trips organised in conjunction with the RSPB who provide a guide for some of the trips. They are ideal for those who don't like rough seas as the creeks are very sheltered. Private hire for wildlife and photography trips as well as fishing trips for the more adventurous.
Tel: 01702 258666
www.ladyessex.com

Nature Break

Explore the wealth of wildlife in and around Foulness Island and nearby Wallasea Island aboard an ex RNLi Lifeboat. The trips are escorted and are suitable for all ages. You will cruise to parts not accessible by car or on foot where you can enjoy birds and seals in their own environment without disturbance.
Tel: 01268 491540
<http://beehive.thisisessex.co.uk/wildlifecruises>



2. Creeksea church

Rebuilt in 1878 to a design by F Chancellor but incorporating some features of the 14th Century Church in the south porch and doorway. The interior has a 15th Century font and a brass and sword of Sir Arthur Harris who died in 1631.



5. St Lawrence Rural Discovery Church

This active rural parish church, situated on a hilltop overlooking the Blackwater Estuary provides exhibitions and community activities. Light refreshments available.
Tel: 01621 779319

3. St Mary's church

It has often been referred to as the cathedral of the marshes. A church was first recorded on this site in 1155 although the current St Mary's Church is of 14th century origin. Construction was mainly of ragstone although there are traces of roman bricks which may have come from a roman villa which is rumoured to have stood nearby.

4. Mangapps Railway Museum

Extensive collection of railway relics of all kinds, working steam and diesel locos, carriages, wagon, historic buildings and 1 of the largest collections of signalling equipment open to the public. Most of the collection is under cover. Train rides through pleasant countryside. Special events include Santa special trains during December.
Tel: 01621 784898
www.mangapps.co.uk

6. St Peter-on-the-Wall

St Peter's on the Wall is probably the oldest surviving church in England. It is also the sole monument to Celtic Christianity in Essex (the former kingdom of the East Saxons). The chapel was built by Bishop Cedd around 654AD, almost entirely of Roman material from the fort of Othona (a small display inside explains its history). Othona was one of the nine Roman forts built along the south east coast to repel Saxon invaders. The fort has long since been eroded by the sea and buried inland. Evening services are held every Sunday during July and August at 18.30 hrs.
Tel: 01621 776203
www.bradwellchapel.org

Getting to Burnham-on-Crouch

Arriving by Road
If you are travelling from London or the south, take the A12 from junction 28 of the M25. Leave the A12 at junction 18 and take the A414 towards Danbury followed by the B1010 to Burnham-on-Crouch.

Arriving by Train
Burnham is served by a regular National Express East Anglia rail service directly from London Liverpool Street. For more information please call 0845 600 7245 or visit www.nationalexpresseastanglia.com

Travel information can also be obtained by calling 0871 200 2233 or visiting www.traveline.org.uk

Accommodation

- 1 Mangapp Manor**
★★★★ Silver Award B&B
Burnham-on-Crouch CM0 8QQ
Tel: 07769 676735
www.mangappmanor.co.uk
- 2 The Railway Hotel**
★★★★ Silver Award B&B
Burnham-on-Crouch CM0 8BQ
Tel 01621 786868
www.therailwayhotelnburnham.co.uk
- 3 The Oyster Smack Motel**
★★★★ Inn
Burnham-on-Crouch CM0 8HR
Tel 01621 786496
www.theoystersmackinn.co.uk

Tourist information

Burnham Tourist Information Centre
Tel: 01621 784962
www.visitmaldonidistrict.co.uk



Activities

1. Royal Corinthian Yacht Club
Designed by Joseph Emberton in 1930 winning national architectural award offering magnificent views of the River Crouch. Racing for dayboats and dinghies, training for cadets and optimists - strong Junior Club. Large restaurant and bar with terrace. Visiting yachtsmen welcome.
Tel: 01621 782105
www.royalcorinthian.co.uk

2. Royal Burnham Yacht Club
The most prestigious yacht club in south east England with a magnificent view over the river Crouch, open 7 days a week all year. Active junior section with a full programme of sail & seamanship training. Visiting yachtsmen always welcome.
Tel: 01621 782044
www.rbyc.org.uk

3. Burnham Sailing Club
Family club with pleasant and friendly atmosphere. Excellent training for strong junior section. Competitive Wednesday evening racing for cruisers, dayboats and dinghies. Varied social programme. Good facilities and views of the river.
Tel: 01621 782624
www.burnhamsc.org

4. Mistral Yachts
Bareboat or skippered charter of modern yachts for up to 8 persons. Evening cruises from Burnham-on-Crouch.
Tel: 01621 743853
www.mistralyachts.co.uk

5. Burnham-On-Crouch Golf Club
Superb 18 hole riverside course with stunning views over the River Crouch.
Tel: 01621 782282
www.burnhamgolfclub.co.uk

6. Elmwood Equestrian Centre
Qualified instructors cater for all ages and stages. Very good hacking, long distance and beach rides. Introduction to riding - lead rein for the very young.
Tel: 01621 784330

7. Medway Farm Equestrian Centre
Indoor / outdoor menage and hacks mostly off road.
Tel: 01621 744277
www.medwayfarm.com

1 Sensational saltmarshes and blissful sailing

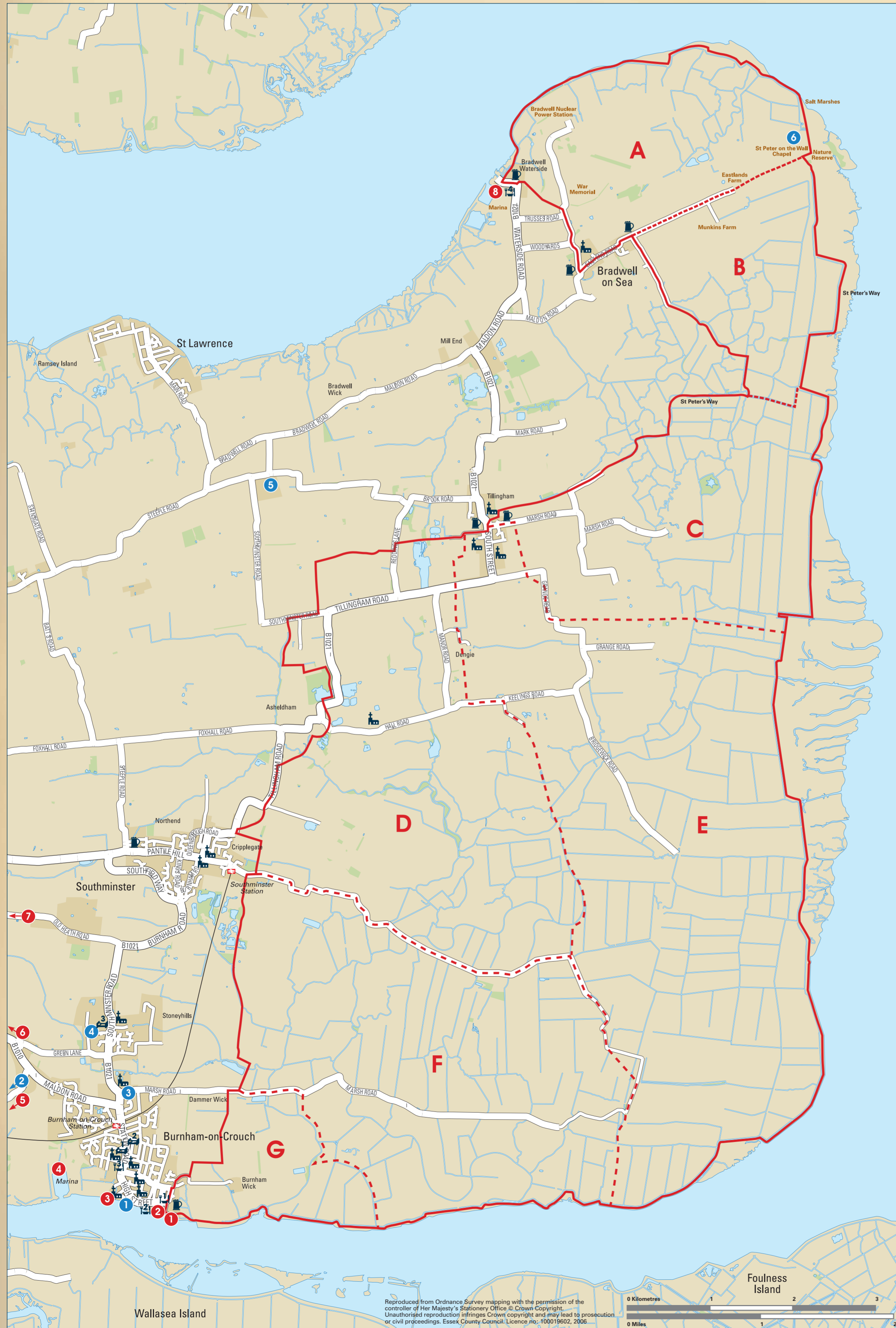
The Dengie peninsula

www.visitessex.com Essex County Council

Sensational saltmarshes and blissful sailing

The Dengie peninsula

Total distance of main route is 49.57km/30.8miles



Short walks

- A** 10km/6.2miles
- B** 9.1km/5.6miles
- C** 13.1km/8.1miles
- D** 17.8km/11.1miles
- E** 23.1km/14.3miles
- F** 16.5km/10.2miles
- G** 8km/4.9miles

Attractions along this route

- 1** Burnham-on-Crouch Museum
- 2** Creeksea Church
- 3** St Mary's Church
- 4** Mangapps Railway Museum
- 5** St Lawrence Rural Discovery Church
- 6** St Peter-on-the-Wall

Activities

- 1** Royal Corinthian Yacht Club
- 2** Royal Burnham Yacht Club
- 3** Burnham Sailing Club
- 4** Mistral Yachts
- 5** Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club
- 6** Elmwood Equestrian Centre
- 7** Medway Farm Equestrian Centre
- 8** Bradwell Outdoors

Accommodation

for details see overleaf

- 1** The Oyster Smack Motel
- 2** The Railway Hotel
- 3** Mangapp Manor

Places to eat

- 1** The Contented Sole
Tel: 01621 786900
www.contentedsole.co.uk
- 2** The Quayside Restaurant
Tel: 01621 783350
www.quaysiderestaurant.co.uk
- 3** The Galley
Tel: 01621 786496
www.thegalley.biz
- 4** The Green Man
Tel: 01621 776226
www.greenmanbradwellonsea.co.uk

This map is intended as a guide only. Please refer to relevant OS Explorer maps for specific details.

Key

- Walking Route 1
- - - Short walks
- Place of worship
- Telephone in rural area
- Public House
- National Rail
- Accommodation
- Restaurants

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Essex County Council. Licence no.: 100018602, 2006

