

1. The walk starts from St Peter's churchyard. Take the footpath which passes the main entrance of the church, going through the gap in the stone wall on the eastern edge of the churchyard. Go straight ahead on the path, which has a hedge to the left.



2. Keep going in the same direction, crossing the farm track, onto a grassy field path. At the end of the field, cross the footbridge in the gap in the hedge, continuing in an easterly direction.

3. Cross the smaller field, and then turn right at the field edge in the direction of the river (south). At the end of the field, with the small pond to your right, turn left onto a grassy path, with a large field to your right. Head towards Joyce's Farm, passing in front of the Georgian farmhouse.

4. At the top of a small rise (just past the farmhouse), follow the footpath sign to the left towards some old farm outbuildings. Skirt around these buildings (turning right, then left around the edge of the field). On reaching the footpath sign pointing across the centre of a field, walk across this field to the point where the overhead power-line meets the trees bordering Lauriston Farm. 10 yards to the left of this point, there is a footbridge. Cross this bridge, passing through the gate on the other side. Follow the footpath signs through the Lauriston Farm estate, passing to the left of a bungalow. At the end of the track which leads up to the bungalow, turn right at the T-junction. Go past the front of the farmhouse, following the track which passes between barns. After passing the barns, go through the kissing gate, following the clear path through the middle of the field.

5. Go through the gate at the eastern end of the field. Turn right after 20 yards, after skirting around a pond, by using a grassy 'bridge' which crosses a ditch. Turn immediately left onto the grassy track which soon curves right, with a ditch and high hedge to your left. After nearly 400 yards, cross over a farm track, keeping to the grassy path with the ditch and hedge to your left.

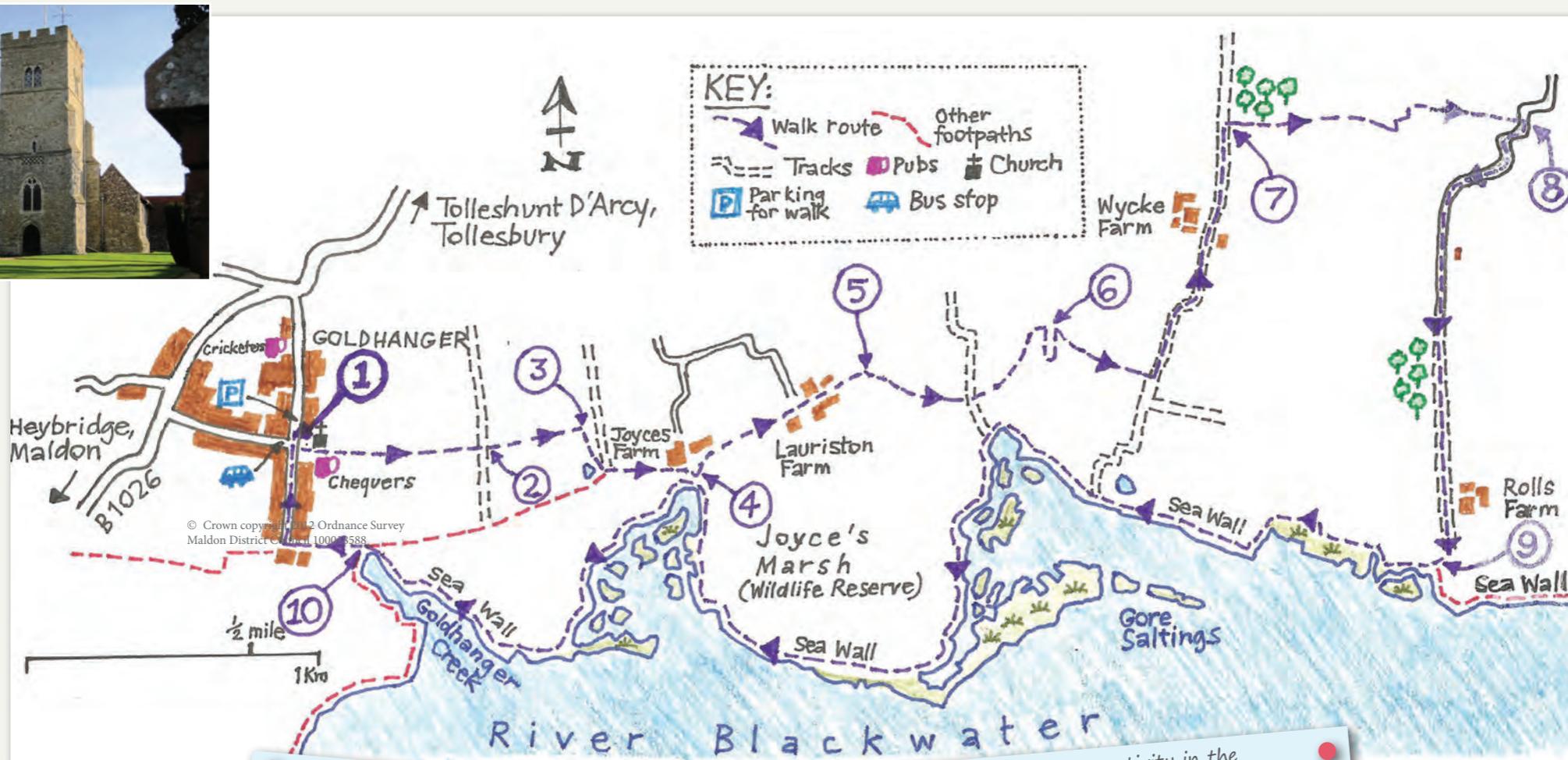
6. 40 yards after the field edge path takes a right turn to follow the field perimeter, cross the footbridge (in the gap in the hedge) to your left. Then turn left for 40 yards, and turn right at a footpath sign and take the grassy track across the middle of a large field. On reaching the far side of the field at a T-junction, take a left turn onto the track signposted as a footpath. The path soon bends right, then left and goes past the imposing house at Wycke Farm.

7. 1/4 mile after passing the entrance to the farmhouse (just before a copse on the right), turn right to take the signed footpath, which runs along the left-hand edge of a large field. After 1/3 mile, cross the footbridge in the far right hand corner of the field, following the path as it bends right, then left. After 125 yards, cross another footbridge and enter another large field, keeping to path on left hand edge. Go over a crossing track, eventually reaching a lane.

8. Turn left onto the lane, which soon zigzags right and then left, passing a 15 mph speed limit/restricted access sign; follow the track, designated public bridleway. Eventually, you will reach Rolls Farm; continue past the farmhouse. The path bends right towards the sea wall; ascend the slope ahead of you and turn right to follow the path along the top of the sea wall.

9. This is a perfect spot to admire the Blackwater Estuary, with the Dengie Peninsula on the opposite bank, and Osea Island in the middle distance. Continue on the sea wall for the next 3 1/2 miles. On the way, you will pass Joyce's Marsh, which is being restored to wet grazing for birds by the Blackwater Wildfowlers' Association.

10. On reaching the head of Goldhanger Creek (with the village and church close by), descend the steps away from the sea wall, taking the second path left, which is laid with gravel and runs between high hedges. Pass the football pitch and children's playground on the left, arriving at Fish Street. Turn right to pass some historic properties, and then go past the Chequers pub on your right; look out for the early 20th century water pump in the village square, recently restored to full working order to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. In a few yards you will reach the starting point of the walk.



In 2005 the Blackwater Wildfowlers' Association purchased the 80-acre Joyce's Marsh site, with the aid of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Wildlife Habitat Trust and Maldon District Council's Blackwater Project. Joyce's Marsh is a no-shooting zone, and is intended to provide a haven for wintering wildfowl (including brent geese).

Oyster fishing has been an activity in the Blackwater Estuary for many centuries. Oyster shells still litter the foreshore and oyster shells are found in the gardens in Fish Street, Goldhanger. Commercial oyster beds have now been re-established in the Estuary close to Lauriston Farm (Joyce's Marsh) and Maldon Oysters are now sold all around the world.

This walk was kindly developed by
Chris Harvey for the
Maldon District Tourist Information Centre.

50p
to cover printing costs

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MALDON DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Refreshments on (or close to) the walk

Chequers, The Square, Goldhanger
CM9 8AS. Tel: 01621 788203
Cricketers, 33 Church Street, CM9 8AR.
Tel: 01621 788468
Salty Dogs Tearoom
www.saltydogstearooms.co.uk
Tel: 01621 788471

Useful web links

Saltmarsh 75
www.saltmarsh75.co.uk
Blackwater Wildfowlers Association
www.blackwaterwildfowlers.org.uk
Essex Birdwatching Society
www.ebws.org.uk

WALKING IN THE MALDON DISTRICT CIRCULAR COASTAL WALK - PART OF SALTMARSH75 Goldhanger & Blackwater Estuary



This lovely walk combines a good stretch of walking in Essex farmland with a decent hike on the sea wall alongside the estuary of the River Blackwater. The walk starts and finishes in the charming and historic village of Goldhanger, with its old cottages, two pubs and 11th century church of St Peter's. Along the way, there are red hills (formed as a result of generations of local salt making), inter-tidal salt marsh and mudflats (a chance to see brent geese, grey plovers, black-tailed godwits and dunlins), and boats harvesting the oyster beds.

Goldhanger was once a well-used smugglers' haunt. The village was sufficiently distant from Maldon to escape the attentions of all but the most diligent officers stationed there. A favourite trick of the Goldhanger smugglers was to float rafts of tubs containing gin, brandy and tobacco down the Blackwater, and land them at Mill Beach (opposite Northey Island).



Distance:
8 miles (12.8 km) – circular walk

Time taken: 3¼ hours

Location: 4½ miles east of Maldon
(B1026 from Heybridge)

OS Explorer Map 176
(Blackwater Estuary)
OS Grid Reference: TL 904 088

Parking: Roadside parking near
the church, in Church Street
(CM9 8AS)

Public Transport: Bus No. 95 –
Maldon to Tollesbury. Mon-Sat
(not Sundays)

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