

1. Start with your back to the church at Purleigh. Turn left and walk about 50 metres along the road in a westerly direction. At a public footpath signpost turn right, go through a kissing gate then walk up some steps. Follow the left edge of a field. After a short while, the path leaves the edge of the field to head gently downhill. At this point just take in the view to the north-east. Follow the path down to a gap in the hedge. Go through it to cross a road heading slightly left to take the direction pointed to by a signpost. This follows the line of the road, but it's a bit more scenic. Walk around the left edge of New Hall vineyard, following its curvature to come to a path leading to the road. Turn left onto the road, then soon afterwards right onto a footpath.

Continue on this path, first between some houses, to come to a stile. Cross it then initially follow the left of a meadow, soon turning right to walk in a WSW direction. At the corner of this meadow, just after a hedge starts, turn right then left, following the way-markers. Cross over a stile into a field and take a diagonal route to the top left corner. Cross a stile then turn right onto a byway. Walk along this byway, turning first right then left. When the byway meets a lane (Lodge Lane) turn left onto it.

2. Follow the lane as it turns left at Scotts Farm. At a T-junction, turn right onto Birchwood Road. After a short distance turn left at a footpath signpost. Follow the right edge of a field, turning right after a short time. At a signpost, turn left to cross the field, coming to a crossing point on the ditch by the start of a boundary the other side. You should now be going south-west and merging with a single-circuit power-line. When you, and the power-line meet, turn right onto a road! Follow the road for about 500 metres, passing some farm buildings (Corporation Farm). At a right bend in the road, take the middle footpath of three, to walk in a WSW direction.

3. Aim to walk to the left of a tree, follow the right edge of this field to its extremity. Go through a gate by a lake, then continue in the same direction to come to a rather make-shift gate. Go through it then turn right, following the field edge to a plank bridge. Cross the bridge then turn left. At the point the boundary goes left; don't do the same, but carry on in the same direction you have been going, following a signpost (the first of some white-tipped signposts). Follow the path to another white-tipped signpost. Go right at it, crossing into another field. Soon, turn left at another signpost. Head for another of these white-tipped signposts. Pass this, then another. At this post, turn right to follow the edge of Folks Wood, until at its north-west corner, then head in a WSW direction to a white-tipped signpost to come to Thrift Wood.

4. Turn left immediately after you enter Thrift Wood to follow a path just to the left of the main one. This path twists and turns a bit, just keeping inside the edge of the wood. Follow this path for 500-600 metres, leaving the wood at its south-east tip. Keep in the same SSE direction along a bridleway following the right edge of four fields. The bridleway eventually comes to a gate. Turn right, then immediately left to walk along a road for a short while. At a footpath signpost turn left to walk across a field, keeping parallel to the left edge of the field. At the far side of the field walk across a ditch, then turn right in the direction pointed by a way-marker. Walk along the right edge of this field to another way-marker telling you to go left. Do this to skirt the edge of Cank Wood. At the SE corner of Cank Wood, turn right onto a bridleway and follow it to a lane.

5. Turn left at this lane to walk in the general direction of a water tower. At a T-junction, go slightly right, following the signpost into a meadow. Alternatively, you can make a brief detour to the right at this point to visit the Stow Maries Aerodrome. Back in the meadow, keep in a slight left line from the signpost, and soon you can see another signpost in the middle of the far boundary. Go through the gate then square up to follow the path to a hedge gap and bridge, just to the right of a farm track. Cross this bridge to follow the left edge of two fields. At a gap in the hedge, go through it then walk at a 45° angle, to the right. Mount a new fence to cross it. Keeping in the same direction, walk to the far left corner of this meadow, coming to a road.

6. Turn left on to the road and walk about 200 metres to a footpath signpost. Turn right there and head gently uphill. There are spectacular views to the north and east as you reach the top of the hill; Danbury, Maldon and the Blackwater Estuary can be seen. Carry on to a plank bridge, cross it to walk along the left edge of a field. The views continue, with a glimpse of the two main buildings of the decommissioned Bradwell Nuclear Power Station. Head gently downhill, the path becoming enclosed by fences after a while. Keep on along the path to come to a kissing gate. Cross it then turn left onto a road.

7. A short way along the road is a footpath signpost to the right. Follow it, first going around the right side of a gate. Continue along an "avenue" of trees to come to a way-marker. Go slightly left to cut the corner of a field, soon coming to another way-marker. Cross a stile to join the St. Peter's Way. Go across a pasture going slightly uphill. Cross a stile to the left of a gate, then walk past some farm buildings, making the best of some remaining views to the right. Keep ahead to a white house. Turn left then go through the gate to the churchyard at Purleigh church. Walk through the yard to the lych-gate at Church Hill.

This ends a hopefully enjoyable walk.

A famous rector of All Saints' Church in Purleigh was Lawrence Washington, the great-great grandfather of George Washington, the first President of the United States of America. Lawrence was rector from 1633 until 1642, when the Parliamentarians summarily removed him from his post, on the grounds that he was a "malignant Royalist" and a "common frequenter of alehouses". He was forced to move to Little Braxted, where he died in poverty in 1648, and was buried in All Saints' churchyard in Maldon. His sons John and Lawrence were so disillusioned with their father's ill-treatment they soon fled England and settled in the English colony of Virginia in North America.





This walk has been downloaded and printed for your convenience by Maldon District Tourist Information Centre. Chris Harvey has kindly adapted the walk description and developed the map for this leaflet. This walk is available free of charge to the public from [www.essexwalks.com](http://www.essexwalks.com)

50p  
to cover printing costs

For further information please contact:  
MALDON DISTRICT  
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MALDON DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

### Refreshments

on (or close to) the walk

Bell, The Street, Purleigh, CM3 6QJ  
Tel: 01621 828348

Sub Post Office and Store, Church Hill,  
Purleigh, CM3 6QH - Tel: 01621 828275

Brewers Arms, Main Road, Bicknacre,  
CM3 4HD - Tel: 01245 224061

Stow Maries Aerodrome Tearoom  
[www.fosma.co.uk](http://www.fosma.co.uk) - Tel: 01245 326040

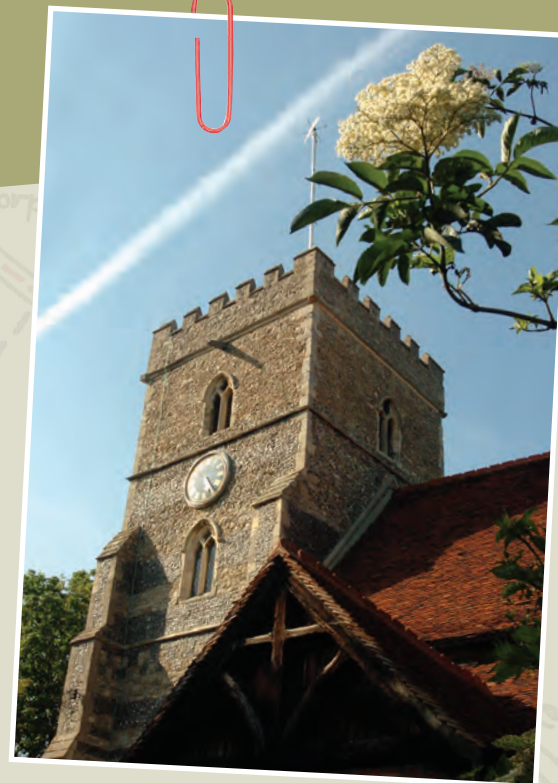
### Useful web links

New Hall Vineyards  
[www.newhallwines.co.uk](http://www.newhallwines.co.uk)

Stow Maries Aerodrome  
[www.stowmaries.com](http://www.stowmaries.com)

WALKING IN THE MALDON DISTRICT  
CIRCULAR COUNTRYSIDE WALK

## Purleigh & Stow Maries Aerodrome



Wine was made locally in the Middle Ages with a vineyard planted at Purleigh in 1120. By contrast New Hall is a relatively recent manifestation, having been established by the Greenwood family in 1969. It is East Anglia's largest vineyard (with 185 acres). The wines can be sampled and purchased from the cellar shop which is open daily. An annual wine festival is held on the first full weekend of September.

Distance:  
8.7 miles (13.9 km)  
Time taken: 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hours  
Location: Purleigh – 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles south of Maldon (south on B1018, turning right onto B1010)  
OS Explorer Map No.: 183 (Chelmsford & The Rodings)  
OS Reference: TL 841 020  
Parking:  
Roadside parking near the church, in Church Hill or The Street (CM3 6QH)  
Public Transport:  
Buses D1 and D2 from Maldon to Purleigh. Mon-Sat (not Sundays)

[visitmaldondistrict.co.uk](http://visitmaldondistrict.co.uk)



MALDON DISTRICT



Stow Maries was built in 1916 to house the Royal Flying Corps, which would later become the RAF. It is probably the only intact First World War aerodrome in the world, as all the rest were demolished or replaced by larger buildings in the Second World War. One of the station's busiest days was 7 July 1917, when 22 Gotha bombers headed for London. The airfield closed in 1919, and only reopened as a museum in 2010 following a sympathetic restoration project, which won it a special English Heritage award. The site is a haven for wildlife with many species of endangered birds including Barn Owls, Little Owls and the Short Eared Owl; all of which featured on BBC1 Great British Year.