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 turn just take in the view to the north-east. Follow the path down to a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap and merging with a single-circuit power-line. When the other side. You should now be going south-west crossing point on the ditch by the start of a boundary. At a signpost, turn left to cross the field, coming 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 some waymarkers. 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 Thriftwood Road. After a short distance turn left onto 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 which by 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 point, 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 45o 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 getting 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 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.
50p to cover printing costs
For further information please contact:
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TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
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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

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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 828875
Purleigh, CM3 6QH - Tel: 01621 828348
Stow Maries Aerodrome Tearoom
www.fosma.co.uk - Tel: 01245 326040

Stow Maries Aerodrome
This walk explores the lonely countryside around the hilltop village of Purleigh, and provides an opportunity to visit a working vineyard and an historic World War I aerodrome near Stow Maries (check with the Maldon District Tourist Information Centre for current opening times). Points 1 to 3 of this walk form part of the long-distance St. Peter’s Way footpath; look out for the distinctive red logo on many of the footpath signposts on this section of the walk.

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.

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