

# ALTHORNE TO NORTH FAMBRIDGE

## COASTAL WALK



### LINEAR WALK

Long walk with uneven or muddy ground. Walking boots recommended.



START  
ALTHORNE  
STATION



2  
HOURS



5.65  
MILES



### OVERVIEW

A picturesque 5.65 mile linear walk along the coast between the villages of Althorne and North Fambridge; this allows you to get a train from North Fambridge station at the end of the walk to return to the start. The walk includes scenic views of the River Crouch before turning inland towards the wildlife reserve and the railway station. The walk has no paved sections and includes several short road sections.



### HOW TO GET HERE



#### Location for the start of the walk:

Althorne Station

**OS Explorer Map No:** 175

**OS Grid Reference:** TQ 905 979

**Parking:** Althorne Station (CM9 6DG)

#### Public Transport:

Greater Anglia operates regular services from Althorne and North Fambridge stations.

Visit [www.greateranglia.co.uk](http://www.greateranglia.co.uk) for train times and station information.

Tell us what you think of the walk & send us your photos:



[VISITMALDONDISTRICT.CO.UK/WALKS](http://VISITMALDONDISTRICT.CO.UK/WALKS)



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Essex & South Suffolk  
Community Rail Partnership

M A L D O N D I S T R I C T



[VISITMALDONDISTRICT.CO.UK](http://VISITMALDONDISTRICT.CO.UK)



[TOURISM@MALDON.GOV.UK](mailto:TOURISM@MALDON.GOV.UK)

This walk was developed by Maldon District Council, the Community Rail Partnership & Chris Harvey.  
Photographers - John Guiver & Chris Harvey.

### NEAR NORTH FAMBRIDGE

Blue House Farm Nature Reserve (which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest), encompasses 660 acres of coastal grazing marsh, and is managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust. It is home to a wide variety of coastal wildlife, as well as being a working farm. To the east of the public footpath there is a permissive footpath which goes to the three bird hides on the reserve. In the spring, lapwing, redshank and avocet can be seen in the flooded fields. In summer, the reserve supports large numbers of a few species of butterflies, including small heath, common blue and meadow brown. In the autumn and winter, large numbers of brent geese arrive from early November and stay until the end of March. Wading birds winter here, including golden plover, curlew, black tailed godwit, dunlin, lapwing and redshank.



The Ferry Boat Inn dates back to either the late 15th century or early 16th century. It was originally built as two or three cottages. It is not known when it was converted to an inn, but records indicate that it originally formed part of the estate buildings of the owner of the Manor House. In 1591, Queen Elizabeth I granted North Fambridge Manor to Christopher Osborne, Member of Parliament for Helston. His father, Peter Osborne, owned South Fambridge Hall, just across the river. They both owed their privileged positions to the patronage of Lord Burghley, who was the Queen's chief adviser.

### BRIDGEMARSH ISLAND

The main river channel runs to the south between the island and Canewdon. Following a flood in 1736 Bridgemarsh Island was enclosed by a sea wall and a causeway was built giving access at low tide. Farming was supplemented by industry with the island used as a source of clay. This led to the construction of a brickworks of which the chimney survives. A tramway linked these works to a quay that was used by Thames barges. Unfortunately, no serious effort was made to maintain the sea wall. The flood of 1953 caused the end of regular occupation of the island, which is now a haven for wildlife and salt marsh flowers. It is now owned by the Bridgemarsh Island Trust.



### CANEWDON

Canewdon (on the opposite bank of the River Crouch from the walk) is situated on one of the highest hills of the Essex coastline, from which St Nicholas's Church affords wide views of the Crouch estuary. The area is claimed to be the site of an ancient camp used by King Canute during the Battle of Assandun (Ashingdon) in the course of his invasion of Essex in 1016. The church's impressive 15th-century tower is said to have been erected by Henry V following his victory at the Battle of Agincourt in France. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I the tower was used as a navigation point along the River Crouch. During the First World War the tower was used for observation and as a signalling post.



## REFRESHMENTS



### THE FERRY BOAT INN

Ferry Road, North Fambridge, Essex, CM3 6LR  
Tel: 01621 740208

Email: [theferryboatinn@hotmail.com](mailto:theferryboatinn@hotmail.com)

Website: [www.ferryboatinnessex.com](http://www.ferryboatinnessex.com)

Currently closed for refurbishment but due to open  
Autumn 2020.

### RIVER BREEZE CAFÉ BAR

Church Rd, North Fambridge, Chelmsford, CM3 6LU  
Tel: 07443871549

Email: [riverbreezecafebar@gmail.com](mailto:riverbreezecafebar@gmail.com)

Facebook: [@Riverbreezecafebarnorthfambridge](https://www.facebook.com/Riverbreezecafebarnorthfambridge)

## WALK ROUTE

**1.** Starting at Althorne Station, cross over the railway line and follow the road towards the River Crouch. You will soon see the sea wall and the Marina. Turn right and head along the sea wall towards North Fambridge, from here you will get a good view of Bridgemarsh Island, the estuary and the climb towards Althorne.

**2.** Continue along the seawall towards North Fambridge. On the way you will pass Bridgemarsh Island which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The lone chimney and crumbling sea wall are all that remain of the historic brickworks and farm buildings. The seawall was damaged, and the island left uninhabited following floods in 1928, since then the island has been reclaimed by nature. Keep an eye out for the wildlife that now inhabits the island. Follow the seawall past Bridgemarsh Island until you re-join the estuary, you will see North Fambridge ahead. From here, continue along the seawall until you reach the Blue House Farm nature reserve. The reserve is owned by Essex Wildlife Trust and provides a haven for sea birds and other wildlife.

**3.** Turn right into the reserve and follow the permissive path towards the main building and car park. You will pass several hides on the way from where you can watch the birds and wildlife on the reserve. From the car park, follow the road out and turn right onto Fambridge Road towards North Fambridge Station. The entrance to the Station is on Station Approach, keep an eye out for the station sign and turn right to access the station where the route ends.

**3a. (Alternative).** Alternatively, stay on the seawall until you reach Ferry Road and the Sailing Barge "Kitty". From here turn right and follow Ferry Road towards the Avenue, passing the Ferry Boat Inn on the right. Turn right onto the Avenue and follow the road until you reach the Station entrance on Station Approach, from here head towards the station where the route ends.