

# STEEPLE CREEK

## COASTAL WALK



### CIRCULAR WALK

Easy coastal walk but good shoes recommended.



START  
STEEPLE



2 HOURS  
15 MINS



4.4  
MILES



## OVERVIEW

This attractive walk branches off St Peter's Way, the long distance footpath, at the village of Steeple. It heads north to the Blackwater Estuary and follows the seawall anti-clockwise until it returns to the village. The views across the creek towards Osea Island are magnificent, and the intertidal salt marsh and mudflats provide the perfect habitat for brent geese, grey plovers, dunlins and black-tailed godwits.

## HOW TO GET HERE

### Location for the start of the walk:

Steeple (6 miles east of Maldon, using B1018, then 4 miles on road towards Bradwell)

OS Explorer Map No: 176

OS Grid Reference: TL 937 031

### Parking:

Garden Fields (off The Street, almost opposite the "Star" pub), Steeple, CM0 7JY

### Public Transport:

Buses 31C, 31D, 200, 593, D1, D2, D6 from Maldon and/or Burnham-on-Crouch (most of these bus services are infrequent – check for details)



## CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE & ALL SAINTS

Steeple's church of St Lawrence and All Saints was built in 1884. The old medieval church was situated some distance away, and was sadly demolished. The Victorian architect used materials from the medieval church to build the walls, mixed in with contemporary brickwork, which created an unusual "patchwork" effect. One doorway and one window from the old church were integrated into the Victorian building.

## OSEA ISLAND

Osea Island is approximately 380 acres in size and is connected to the north bank of the River Blackwater by a causeway, covered at high water. The island was the site of a coastal motor torpedo boat base during World War I. Two thousand sailors were billeted there, mainly in temporary huts, which were removed after the war.



Osea Island was once owned by a member of the famous Charrington brewing family. Frederick Charrington established a retreat for wealthy alcoholics on the island in the early 20th century. One famous patient is reputed to have been the avant-garde artist, Walter Sickert. From 2005 to 2010, it was a rehabilitation centre specialising in the treatment of addiction problems and mental health called the Causeway Retreat; Amy Winehouse was treated here in 2008.

The Manor House and cottages are now available to rent as exclusive holiday homes. The Manor House also boasts a state of the art recording studio.

The Island has featured in numerous film and television productions over the years and most recently has appeared in the HBO/Sky Atlantic mini-series 'The Third Day' starring Jude Law which was filmed on the island during the summer of 2020. Other productions include 'The Woman in Black' starring Daniel Radcliffe.



## STANSGATE PRIORY

Stansgate Priory was founded by the Cluniac order in 1120. It was never really a thriving priory, and when it was dissolved by Henry VII in 1525 to help pay for the construction of Christchurch College in Oxford, it only had a prior and two monks. The last remains of the priory (which stood in the grounds of Stansgate Abbey Farm) were destroyed in 1922. Stansgate Abbey Farm has belonged to the Benn political dynasty since 1900, of whom Anthony Wedgwood-Benn (Tony Benn) and his son Hilary Benn are the best known.

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

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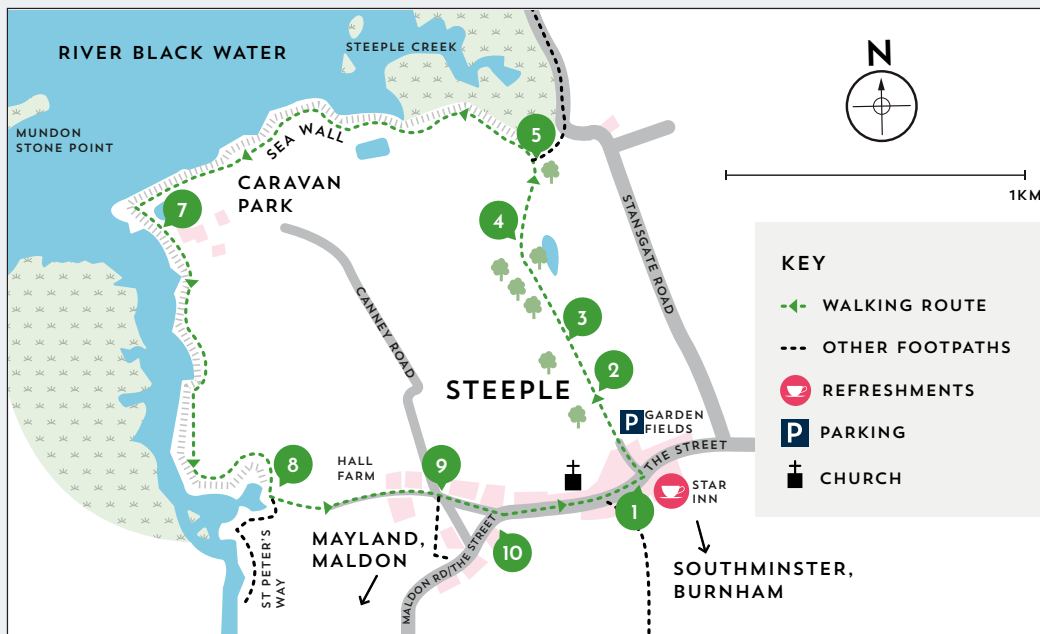
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This walk was developed by Maldon District Council & Chris Harvey.

## WALK ROUTE



- 1.** From Garden Fields, turn right onto The Street for 220 yards, then look out for a footpath sign on the right. Take this path, which is initially fenced on both sides and then enters a more wooded area. Walk through the woodland for 250 yards, passing the village playing fields on the right, until you reach a kissing gate opening onto a large field.
- 2.** Follow the path across the field (in the direction of the footpath sign arrow) for 350 yards.
- 3.** At the end of the field go through another kissing gate, cross the footbridge and continue ahead on a grassy track for 350 yards. There is a fence to your right and a ditch (with trees beyond) to your left.
- 4.** Cross over a gravel track and continue in the same direction, walking along the left-hand edge of a large field with a hedge to your left.
- 5.** After 350 yards, you will reach a stile leading into a dense thicket in the far left hand corner of the field. Go over the stile and continue ahead on the path which enters into a thicket; after rain, this section of the path can be quite muddy. In 30 yards, as you emerge from the thicket, cross over a footbridge and climb up the embankment ahead.
- 6.** Turn left and take the stile over the Shoat Farm sluice outfall. You are now on the estuary bund, which protects the inlands from flooding. The route for the next 1¼ miles is simple; stay on the coastal path along the seawall and enjoy the views, crossing one stile along the way. Further to the east along the coast from Steeple Creek, the imposing riverside house at Stansgate Abbey Farm can be seen. Osea Island can be seen across the River Blackwater.
- 7.** As you round the north-west tip of the peninsula, you will pass the Steeple Bay Holiday Park. Keep to the coastal path, with Mayland Creek to your right. About ⅔ of a mile after you have passed the end of the Holiday Park on your left, the seawall eventually bends to the left then right, following an inlet off Mayland Creek.
- 8.** 175 yards after the right-hand bend on the seawall, and 70 yards before the stile on the seawall, look out for the path descending left away from the seawall. Take this path, soon turning right along the grassy track, which heads east towards Steeple. This track is on the left-hand edge of a large field. After ⅓ of a mile, you will pass through Hall Farm, with the barns and outbuildings to your right and the elegant farmhouse on the left.
- 9.** Go through Hall Farm's main gates and go ahead along Canney Road until you reach the junction with The Street in 320 yards.
- 10.** Turn left to head along The Street for just over ⅓ of a mile, passing the Church of St Lawrence and All Saints to reach Garden Fields, where we started the walk.

## REFRESHMENTS

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