

ESSEX

Outstanding Circular Walks

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Britain's
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guides

Burnham and the River Crouch

Start Burnham-on-Crouch

Distance 8½ miles (13.6km)

Height gain 225 feet (70m)

Approximate time 4 hours

Parking Burnham-on-Crouch

Ordnance Survey maps Landranger 168 (Colchester),
Explorer 176 (Blackwater Estuary)

GPS waypoints

-  TQ 952 955
-  TQ 979 953
-  TQ 961 969
-  TQ 947 973
-  TQ 938 974
-  TQ 935 969
-  TQ 937 955

The first and last parts of the walk are along promenades and embankments beside the River Crouch and there are wide views, looking across the estuary to the desolate and uninhabited marshes of Wallasea Island on the other side. In between, the route heads inland across fields and along lanes, doing a loop around the edge of Burnham and passing its imposing medieval church, about one mile north of the present town centre.

SCALE 1:27777 or about 2½ INCHES to 1 MILE 3.6CM to 1KM





SCALE 1:25000 or 2½ INCHES to 1 MILE 4CM to 1KM

Maldon



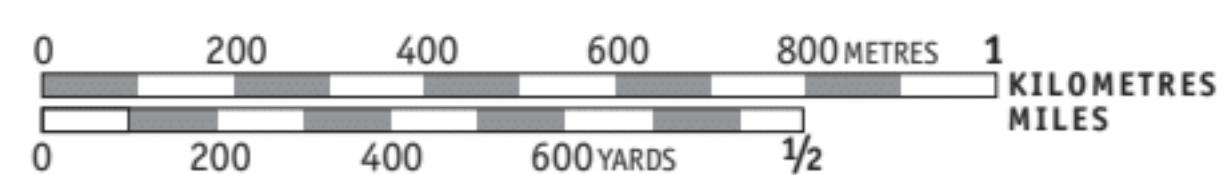
House as a landmark, and continue northwards across the grassy clifftop, heeding the warning notices to keep well clear of the unstable edge. As the path descends to keep across the top of lower cliffs, Harwich can be seen ahead.

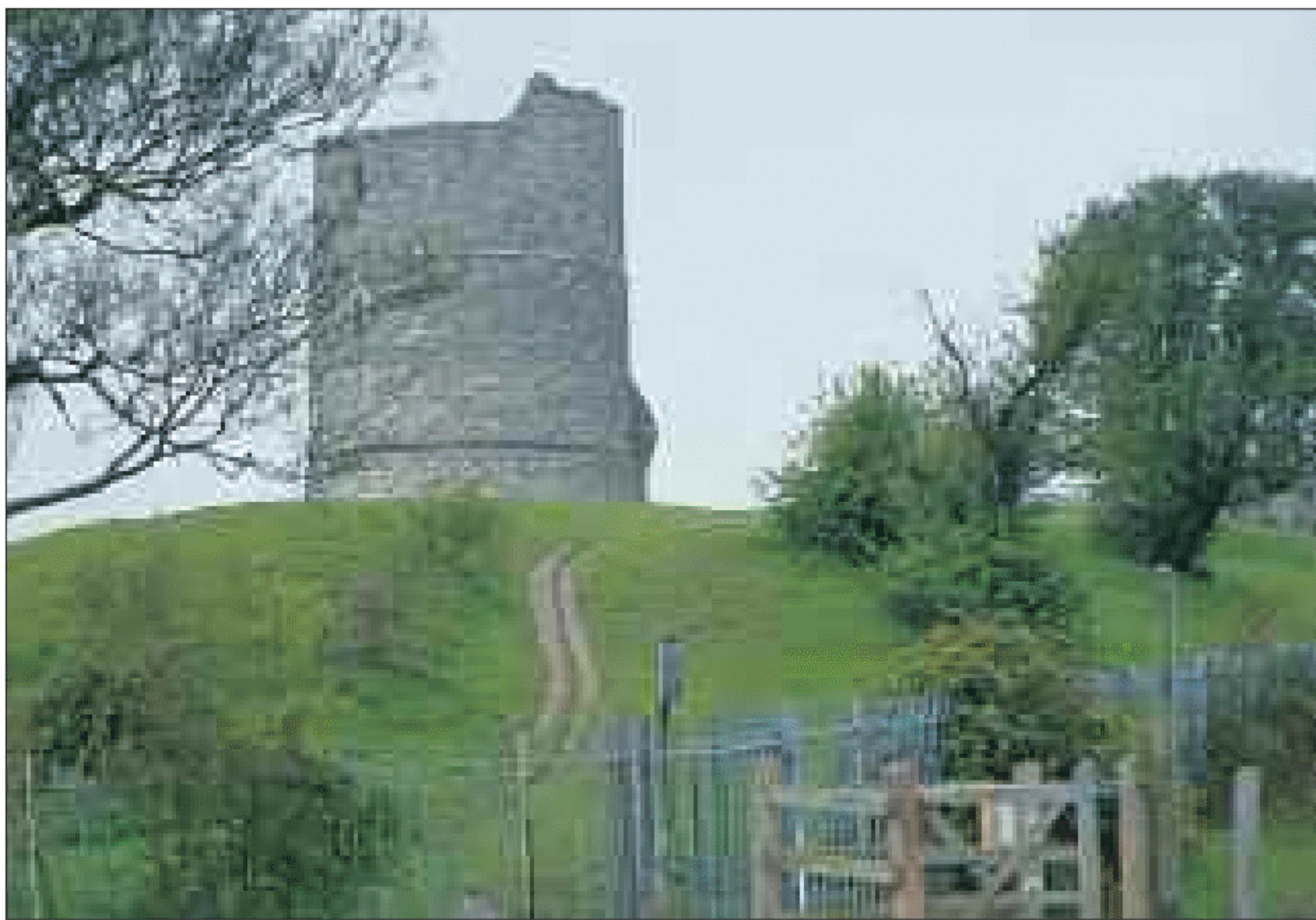
At one point a slight detour has to be made to the left between gorse bushes to a T-junction. Turn right, turn right again at a crossroads and immediately turn left to continue along the coast path. On joining a tarmac path, bear left **A** on to it to walk on top of an embankment, above pools and marshes and along the edge of an Essex Wildlife Trust nature reserve. Where this tarmac path ends, bear left again to continue along a pleasant grassy path – still on the top of an embankment – above Cormorant Creek and the surrounding marshland. The Naze Tower stands out

prominently on the skyline to the left.

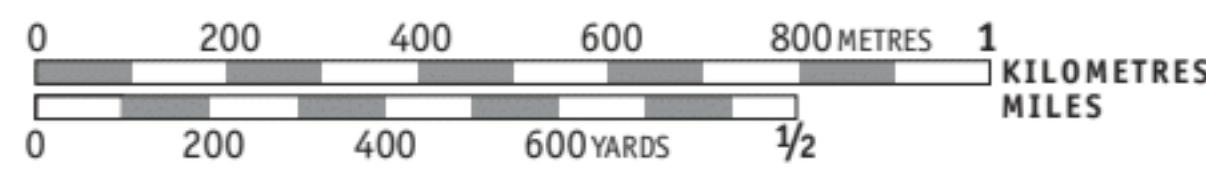
The path bends sharp left **B** to keep by the broader expanses of Walton Channel on the right and above Walton Hall Marshes on the left. A few yards before reaching a track in front of a caravan park, turn left and continue above a small pool on the right. Keep ahead to climb another one, and the path bends right to emerge on to a road on the edge of Walton-on-the-Naze **C**.

Turn left gently uphill and where the road bears left – by a sign for The Naze – continue through a small car park to join a track and then bear left on to a narrow enclosed path. At the top of steps, turn left to a track and turn right along it to return to the starting point. ●





Hadleigh Castle



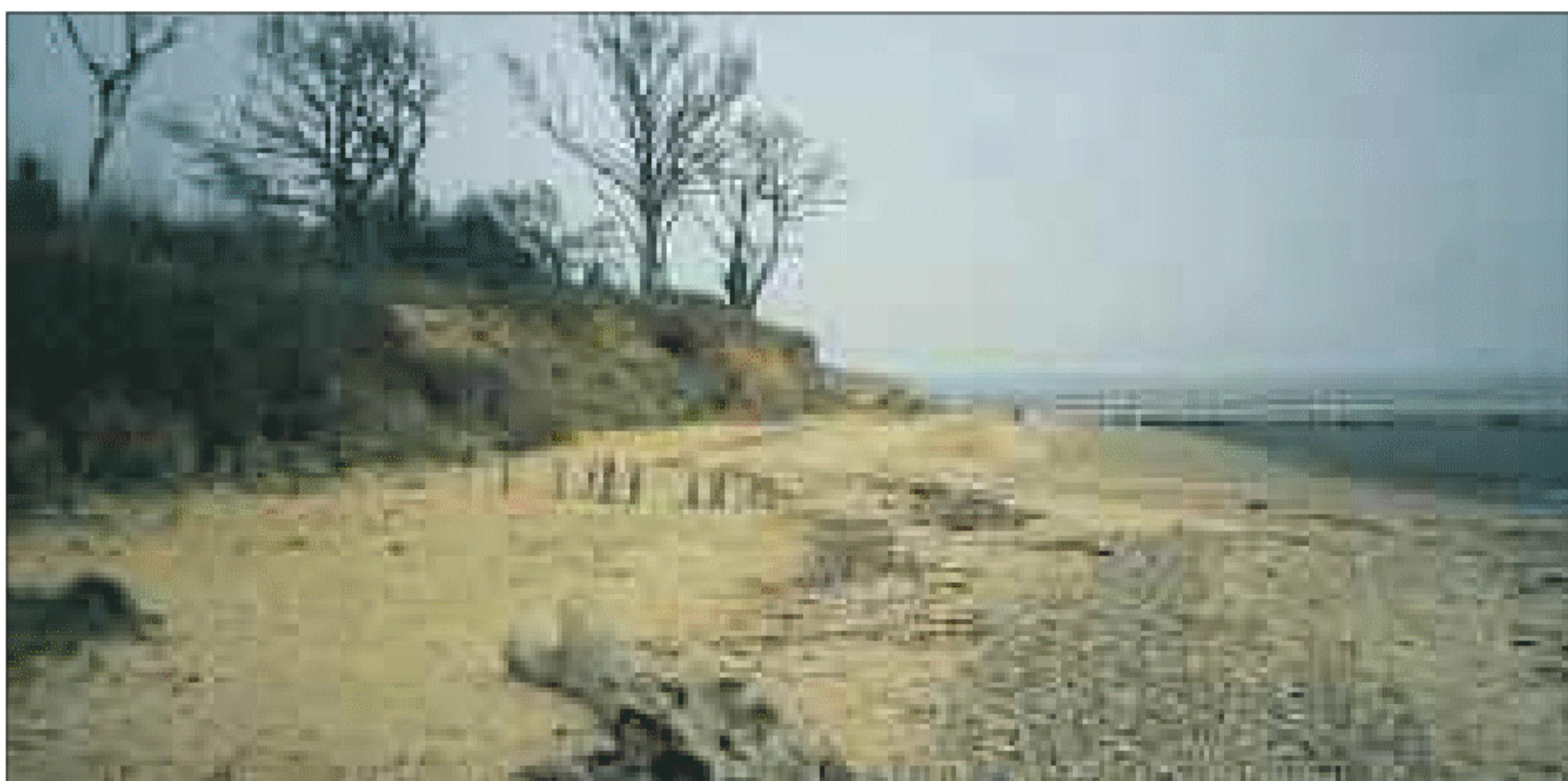
service road **C**.

Turn right to a junction and go left, passing the Hadleigh Country Park car park. Beyond a barrier, over to the right, is a reconstruction of an Iron Age round house. The route, however, continues ahead beyond the end of the drive to a kissing-gate into the country park.

To the left, a track drops through trees, shortly passing through a gate into the corner of rough meadowland. A swathe leads on down the hill, closing with the trees to the right to reach the bottom corner. Ignoring a kissing-gate, keep ahead through a gap and continue at the edge of two more fields to leave through a gate onto a crossing track. Cross to another gate opposite and keep ahead at the edge of scrub grazing to emerge at the far end onto a gravel path **D**.

To the right, the path winds on at the edge of the grazing marsh, later rising onto higher ground across the slopes of Benfleet Downs. Keep going as it is then joined by other tracks and finally turns





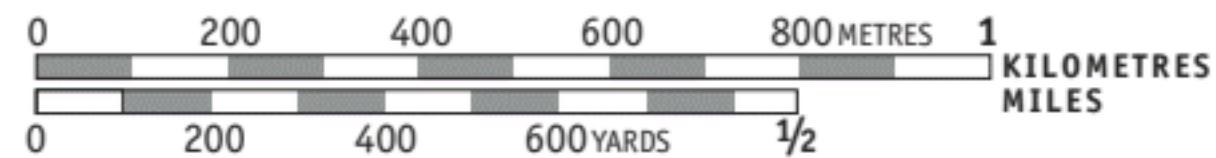
Mersea Island

along a short section of enclosed track to a narrow lane. Turn left to a T-junction **C**, turn left along the road into the hamlet of East Mersea and turn right down Church Lane to the medieval church, thought to stand on the site of a Viking camp.

Continue past the church along a tarmac drive through a holiday park, pass beside a gate and keep ahead along a hedge-lined track, which bears left to reach a section of new sea wall **D**. Turn

left along it, passing in front of a beach **café** and chalets and, after the wall ends, continue by the shore across a mixture of grass, sand and stones. Later continue along the beach below low cliffs – *the clifftop path is not a right of way and is also dangerous because of the crumbly nature of the cliffs* – to regain the sea wall near the start of the walk **A**.

Immediately turn left to return to the car park.



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