

CROUCH VALLEY LINE:

Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership was established to promote the five branch lines in Essex, of which the Crouch Valley Line is one. There is something for everyone along the Crouch Valley Line, which runs for 16 1/2 miles from Wickford (on the London to Southend line) to Southminster on the Dengie Peninsula. The line has seen all manner of use over the years and gives you the opportunity to enjoy a journey through the beautiful Essex Countryside. Community rail in partnership with Greater Anglia support a station adoption scheme, each station on the Crouch Valley Line has at least one volunteer station adopter, who enhances the station and its environment.

The partnership not only aims to promote patronage on the line but also community engagement is a top priority. If you want to learn more please go to www.esscrp.org.uk

THE WALLASEA ISLAND WILD COAST PROJECT

The Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project is a landmark conservation and engineering project, the largest of its type in Europe. Four hundred years ago there were 30,000 hectares of wildlife-rich saltmarsh around the Essex coast. Now, saltmarsh is rare, with just 2,500 hectares left. The Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project aims to re-create some of this lost landscape and protect its future, both for the incredible wildlife that relies on it and for future generations to enjoy.

- The seawall footpath is open at all times
- There is a car park on the nature reserve - for opening times please refer to our website: rspb.org.uk/Wallasea
- It is free to enter the site, but donations via our website help us to continue the work here.

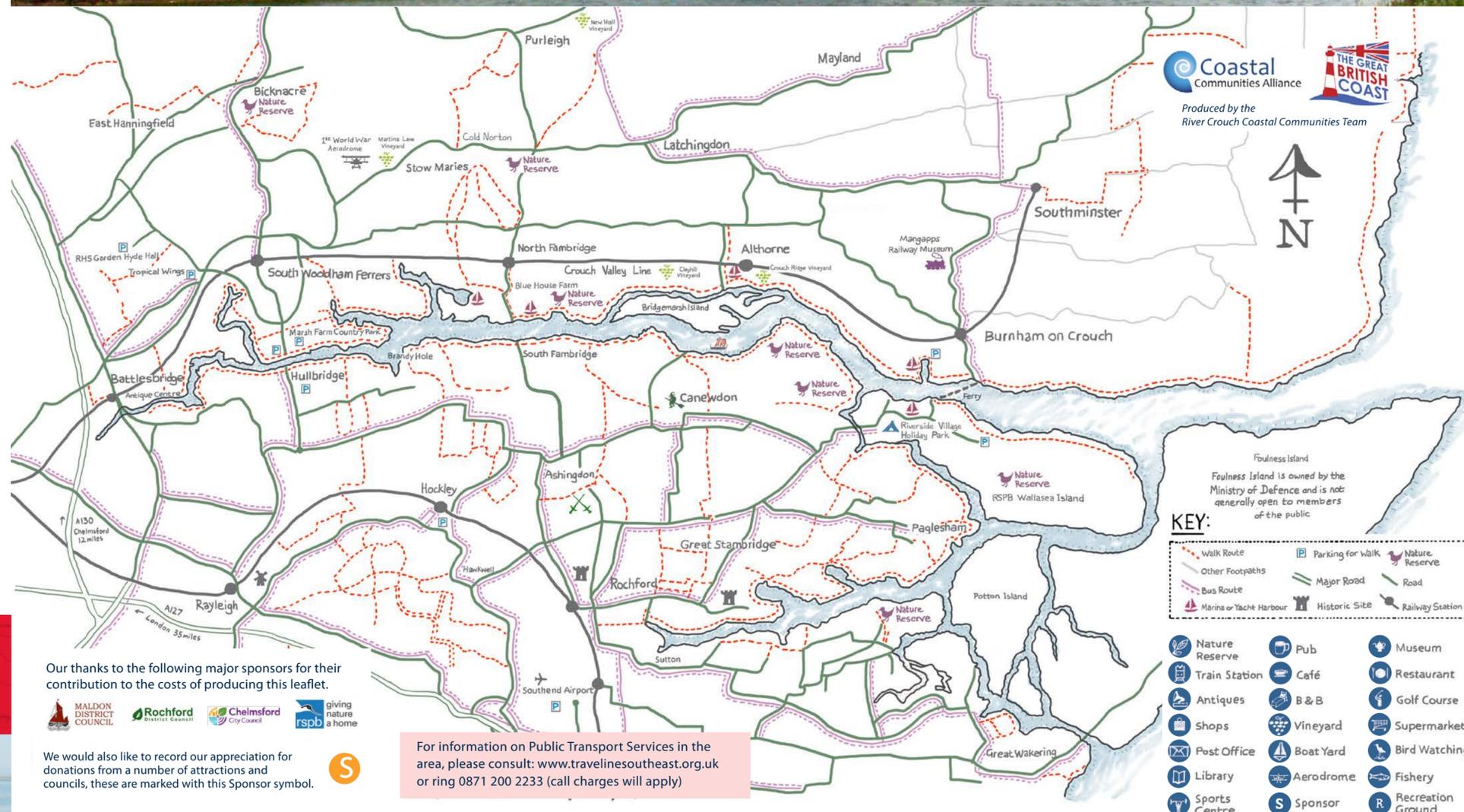
EXPLORE THE BEAUTY OF THE CROUCH COAST



For information on walks in the Crouch Valley please go to:
 For South Woodham Ferrers and the West:
www.visitparks.co.uk/media/1036/marsh-farm-country-park-map.pdf
 For Burnham-on-Crouch and the North:
www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/CrouchCoast
 For Rochford and the South:
www.rochford.gov.uk/cct



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY OF THE CROUCH COAST



With miles of coastal and countryside footpaths, there is plenty to explore on the Crouch Coast. However, it is vital that we respect the fragility of our natural environment, the rights of private land owners and businesses and the vital role of sea walls in our coastal defence. **Please keep to the footpaths, keep dogs under effective control - particularly near livestock - and do not leave litter.** Footpaths are for illustrative purposes only, please refer to ordnance survey maps for exact detail of routes.

ALTHORNE

Althorne village can trace its origins back to the medieval era with its 14th century church, St Andrew. Almost opposite the church is the award winning Crouch Ridge Vineyard from which you can enjoy stunning vistas over the Crouch, Roach and Thames estuaries.

There is a railway station with through and connecting services to London Liverpool Street Station. Its public facilities include a well equipped recreation ground. The village has an extensive network of footpaths including scenic walks along the Crouch riverbank, and from Burnham-on-Crouch, Creeksea and North Fambridge.

ASHINGDON

Ashingdon is a pretty, quiet rural parish that includes the villages of Ashingdon and South Fambridge. Ashingdon was the site of the Battle of Assandun which took place at Ashingdon in 1016 AD. Ashingdon was the base camp of King Edmund, the Saxon King of Wessex and King of one third of England.

BARLING MAGNA

Made up of the hamlets of Barling, Little Wakering, Potton Island and Stonebridge. The name "Barling" is said to derive from two Saxon words "bar", a boar, and "ing", a meadow. The village duck pond is known as Weir Pond.

LOCAL ATTRACTION: BARLING MAGNA WILDLIFE RESERVE

The reserve was created by local volunteers. Dedication and hard work, plus the planting of some 650 hedgerow and specimen trees have succeeded in making it a favourite place for all to enjoy. There is a beautiful path with specimen trees which leads to two meadows looking across the Borro dyke to the River Roach & Potton Creek.

The Reserve has won the Rochford DC Heritage and Conservation award, and no less than four Green Pennant and Green Flag Community Awards.

There is a free car park.

BATTLESBRIDGE

This small hamlet is at the head of navigation on the River Crouch and is well worth a visit by boat. Historically there has been significant commercial activity around Battlesbridge with the River Crouch barge trade, cereal milling, grain storage and road stone haulage. There is a small public jetty to gain access ashore and it is close to the road bridge port side. The upper reaches are teeming with wildlife. There are a few seals and, on the next stretch, you may be able to see our resident otter, if you are very lucky. There are two 16th century inns that also serve food. The village has one of the largest antique centres in the UK based in an old granary. There are tidal gates connected to the small tide mill.



LOCAL ATTRACTIONS: BATTLESBRIDGE ANTIQUES CENTRE

www.battlesbridge.com

Over 80 dealers housed in a variety of old buildings and courtyards. Just off the A130 on the banks of the River Crouch, midway between Chelmsford and Southend. Open 7 days a week. Free admission, on site refreshments, large free car parks. The Motorcycle Museum is open on Sundays and there is a showground hosting various events throughout the year.

RHS HYDE HALL

www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/hyde-hall

The development and enlargement of Hyde Hall gardens under the management of the Royal Horticultural Society has considerably increased the number of visitors. This is one of the five main RHS gardens, started in the 1950s from an old pig farm. It has grown to one of the RHS's major gardens with a wide range of visitor attractions including children's playground, cafe and restaurant, ponds, sunken gardens, visitor centre, shop and rose walk.

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH

Burnham-On-Crouch lies on the north bank of the River Crouch, extends to the mouth of the river and includes a number of hamlets. It has been a ferry port and later a fishing port known for its oyster beds. Most recently the town is a renowned centre for east coast yachting. There are many listed buildings in the town, including the Grade II listed Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. It is the principal settlement in the wider Dengie Peninsula area meaning it has facilities that are normally uncommon in small towns. These include a wide variety of eating places. Its railway station represents a vital transport link on a single-line branch from Wickford, with direct services to and from London Liverpool Street. It has one of the earliest established independent cinemas in the county.



LOCAL ATTRACTIONS: MANGAPPS RAILWAY MUSEUM

www.mangapps.co.uk

The Mangapps Railway Museum is a heritage railway centre located on the outskirts of Burnham-on-Crouch. The .75 miles of standard gauge demonstration train-track and museum are owned and operated by the Jolly family assisted by volunteers. To operate the line the Railway has 18 steam and diesel locomotives and over 80 carriages and wagons, some of considerable historic and technical interest.

LET'S GO BONKERS

www.lets gobonkers.com

Lets Go Bonkers is East Essex's brand new, exciting and professionally designed premier indoor children's soft play studio, featuring two uniquely designed multilevel play frames, which have something for everyone!!

The professional design team have come up with a range of equipment and designs that are both innovative and ground breaking. There is an exciting, fun and educational play environment for all children from birth to 10-years old.

BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

www.burnhammuseum.co.uk

Located in a former boat-builders premises built around 1910 at the end of Coronation Road with the main entrance on the Quay. There is an interesting collection of exhibits over two floors, displays and archive material relating to Fishing, the Oyster Fishery, Farming and Agriculture, Boat Building and the local Iron Foundry as well as more homely items.

CANEWDON

It was here that King Canute landed in his longships to conquer England in 1016 and change our history forever. The parish of Canewdon includes Wallasea Island which is home to the RSPB Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project. A ferry crossing operates between Wallasea Island and Burnham. In the second world war, Canewdon had one of the very earliest radar stations.

Legend has it that as long as Canewdon Church Tower stands there will be six witches in Canewdon.



LOCAL ATTRACTION:

RIVERSIDE VILLAGE HOLIDAY PARK

TENTS - MOTORHOMES - TOURING CARAVANS

24 acres of peace and quiet with outstanding wildlife and fauna - Shower block, shop, fishing, Electric hook-ups. Located on Wallasea Island right next to the 'RSPB - Wild Coast Project'. Pitches from £18 per night. www.riversidevillageholidaypark.co.uk 01702 258297 - Feel Closer Still

SUTTON WITH SHOPLAND

The Parish of Sutton with Shopland is a combination of two hamlets and lies to the south of the River Roach. The village sign stands at Sutton Corner, a colourful image reflecting the history of the two villages. All Saints Sutton church is now closed although used annually for a carol service. Shopland church was demolished in 1957 due to wartime bomb damage but its footprint and grounds are now a conservation area. There are historically important houses nearby including Sutton Hall, Fleet Hall, Beauchamps, New Hall and Mucking Hall. Famous past residents include Chester Moore Hall, inventor of the achromatic lens and the historian, Philip Benton.

STAMBRIDGE

The name "Stambridge" means "Stone bridge". The only bridge in the parish now is brick-built over the small stream that rises in Canewdon, flows under the road just south of the Royal Oak public house, and into the Roach near "Waldens". The original stone church of St.Mary's and All Saints, in Great Stambridge, was built about 1020-40.

Both Great and Little Stambridge are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Each consisted of two inhabited areas or "manors" in the surrounding forest.

The Floods of 1953 affected much of Stambridge including Mill Lane and parts of the main village.

COLD NORTON

To the south of the village lies Beacon Hill from where the land slopes down to lovely views of the Crouch estuary, north-eastwards from the village the land falls to a low lying plain and the Blackwater Estuary.

The disused railway is now a bridleway and footpath. A network of footpaths criss-cross the parish. Local attractions include Three Rivers Golf and Country Club The Norton public house and Cowpiece Nature Reserve with a small wildlife pond and picnic area.

FOULNESS

Foulness is an island on the east coast of Essex separated from the mainland by narrow creeks. The island is an internationally important site for migrating and breeding birds, including avocets. Although public rights of way exist, the island is owned by the MOD and access to the island is only permitted with a pass, obtainable from Shoeburyness. Visit here for details: <https://shoeburyness.qinetiq.com/Pages/default.aspx>

The island's visitor centre is opened to the public on the first Sunday in summer months, but permission must be sought to visit. The island's name is derived from the Old English fulga-naess, with fulga (modern "fowl") meaning wild birds and "naess" being the Germanic word for promontory.

LOCAL ATTRACTION:

THE FOULNESS HERITAGE CENTRE

In 2002 the Foulness Conservation & Archaeological Society (FCAS) converted the former Foulness Primary School into the Foulness Heritage Centre. It opened in February 2003 and has received a constant stream of visitors from both the UK and abroad ever since. The Heritage Centre is only open to members of the public from 12pm-4pm on the first Sunday of the month from April to October. Those wishing to visit the centre will be permitted access to Foulness from 11:45am. For further information about visiting the Heritage Centre, telephone 01702 219465.



PAGLESHAM

Paglesham's picturesque red-brick and white weatherboarded houses and inns, together with the surrounding marshes which stretch to Wallasea Island and the sea, still suggest the romantic atmosphere of smuggling and contraband. This village was indeed noted for this in days gone-by. Paglesham was long known for its fine oysters, which were reared in its favourably situated creeks. Charles Darwin's ship the HMS Beagle ended her days as a Revenue vessel in Paglesham.

GT WAKERING

The village church of St Nicholas dates back to Norman times. Much of the land area around Great Wakering is closed off to the public as it forms part of the MOD.

The MOD beach is a great spot for watching Brent geese, other waders and migrating birds. You may also see old MOD firing targets and ruined batteries. There is an ancient tidal path known as "The Broomway" but this is again subject to MOD restrictions and is extremely perilous with tidal activity presenting a potential threat to life.

HULLBRIDGE

The village of Hullbridge is tucked away in the north west corner of the District and is surrounded by green belt on three sides and the River Crouch on the northern boundary. This area was closely linked to smuggling with smugglers trying to evade the watchful eyes of revenue men by dumping bottles of brandy weighed down with salt into the river until it dissolved and the bottles could then be collected later. This area is still known as Brandy Hole today (see map).

Along the river bank there are remains of evaporation pans where salt was made in medieval times.

LOCAL ATTRACTION:

MB FALCONRY

www.mbfalconry.co.uk

MB falconry offer full and half day experiences and short sessions where you get to know our birds of prey and have them fly to your glove. This family run business offers One to One experiences and makes an unusual and memorable day.



LATCHINGDON

Latchingdon is a rural village that is the "Gateway to the Dengie Peninsula" in Mid-Essex – everyone has to drive through the Parish of Latchingdon to get onto the Peninsula. There are many public rights of way ideal for walkers. Some lead to the River Blackwater and join with paths in the Parish of Althorne which lead you to the River Crouch.

LOCAL ATTRACTION:

CLAYHILL VINEYARD

Clayhill Vineyard was the first vineyard in the River Crouch Valley, established in 2006. Located on the B1010 (main road to Burnham-on-Crouch), near Althorne (Parish of Latchingdon), with splendid views overlooking the River Crouch.

Tours are currently available by appointment. The vineyard has converted a barn into Tea Rooms, Shop and Wine Tasting venue open weekends and during the tourist season for visitors.

NORTH FAMBRIDGE

North Fambridge has a railway station on the Crouch Valley Line and its name appears in the Domesday Book as "Fanburge".

Adjoining the village is Blue House Farm, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and nature reserve owned by the Essex Wildlife Trust.



LOCAL ATTRACTION:

BLUE HOUSE FARM

This 605 acre farm is situated on the north bank of the River Crouch. It has been managed by Essex Wildlife Trust since 1998. Around 2,000 Brent geese come to the area during the winter. The farm has been improved substantially to allow our fastest declining mammal, the Water Vole, to thrive as the creeks and ditches offer an ideal habitat.

This area is surface-flooded during the winter months bringing in huge numbers of wildfowl and wading birds. It is also an important area for birds in the spring with Lapwing, Redshank and Avocet all breeding here.

PURLEIGH

Purleigh is first mentioned in a Saxon will of AD 998 and 1086 when it appears in Domesday Book. The landscape of Purleigh today is one of dispersed farmsteads, small hamlets and roadside cottages. A redundant cottage was used as the poor-house from the late 1660s but a purpose built workhouse was provided in 1784. Valley Stores on the opposite side of the hill has been in use as a shop since at least the 18th century, being at various times either a grocers, bakers, butchers or a public house called The White Hart.

LOCAL ATTRACTION:

NEW HALL VINEYARD

www.newhallwines.com

New Hall Vineyard - UK Winemaker of the year for 2013, 2015 and 2016, is a family run English Wine Producer with over 100 acres of vines, producing wines. It was first established by the Greenwood family in Purleigh in 1969 and is one of the oldest and largest English Vineyards in the country. New Hall Vineyards are open Monday - Friday 9am to 4pm and Saturday 10am to 2pm, free of charge, where visitors are welcome to taste some of wines in the cellar shop under the house and walk along the Vineyard Trail.



SOUTHMINSTER

Southminster is in the centre of the Dengie peninsula. A major horse market used to be held annually in the town. Southminster marshes were a favourite centre for hare coursing in Victorian times. Pandole Wood contains ancient earthworks believed to date from the Iron Age.

The medieval St Leonard's Church dates mainly from the 15th century there are also traces of much earlier work.

Southminster railway station is the terminus of a single-line branch that was electrified in the 1980s and provides services to Wickford and Liverpool Street.

LOCAL ATTRACTION:

WIBBLERS BREWERY

www.wibblersbrewery.org.uk/

Wibblers are a family run brewery making a range of ales, ciders and craft lager. Having relocated in 2016 to expand and add a taproom and kitchen, which is open weekends and serving homemade food. The Brewery opens to the public on three days of the year for visitors to look around and hear about how their beers are made. Group tours by appointment.

STOW MARIES



Stow Maries has a public house and a number of shops and eating places. There are many footpaths and an old railway line, part of which is used as a cycle route. This includes the former Stow Maries Halt which, along with an adjoining four-acre meadow, is now a nature reserve. The local parish church, the Church of St. Mary and St. Margaret, has a 14th-century chancel and a 15th-century nave that was extended in the 16th century. Between 1916 and 1919 there was a Great War Aerodrome here and this is now being restored.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS:

STOW MARIES AERODROME

Europe's most complete surviving Great War Aerodrome, it is being returned to its former operational state with the gradual restoration of the buildings on the site. It is also a haven for a wide variety of wildlife, particularly owls. Regular events held throughout the year, many on an automotive or aviation theme.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS:

STOW MARIES HALT NATURE RESERVE

This 5.5 acre reserve consists of the former Stow Maries Halt on the disused Maldon to South Woodham Ferrers railway line. The remains of the platform are still visible by the reserve entrance and five species of fern-Wall-rue, Maidenhair, Spleenwort, Black Spleenwort and Hartstongue grow in the mortar of the bridge.

In late spring there are many Common Spotted Orchids and a number of Adderstongue Ferns, followed in summer by Common Fleabane, Wild Carrot and St John's Wort. The reserve has a good selection of butterflies, including Purple and White-letter Hairstreaks, and dragonflies.

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS

The town's prosperity is attributed to wharves transporting butter, cheese ,salt and fish to London. It was also an important river crossing as there was a ferry until World War 2.

Smuggling was rife here and a bend just down river is still called 'Brandy Hole' today, where the smugglers dropped their contraband overboard (whilst the bend obscured them from Revenue men) weighted down with salt to be recovered days later when the salt dissolved. The seawalls here are reinforced with the foundation stones from the Old London Bridge.

In 1981 the Queen opened the town square, which is named after her. Many street names in the south-western part of the town are taken from the works of J. R. R. Tolkien.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS:

WOODHAM FEN NATURE RESERVE

www.essexwt.org.uk/reserves/woodham-fen

This 20 acre reserve lies between and near the tidal limits of two small creeks running south into the River Crouch. The southern part is saltmarsh and the northern rough grassland with a transitional zone between the two - of special interest because this natural transition is now very unusual in Essex.

Accessible at all times via footpaths. Dogs allowed if under effective control.

CROUCH VALE BREWERY

www.crouchvale.co.uk

Founded in 1981, they have survived and even prospered to be today, the longest-established brewery in Essex. They are immensely passionate about what they do and massively proud of their hand-crafted, multiple-award-winning range of beers.

TROPICAL WINGS

www.tropicalwings.co.uk

Tropical Wings Zoo is one of the best interactive zoo attractions in Essex. They have one of the finest tropical houses in the UK, an oasis where you can experience a tropical feel on any day of the year and get up close and personal with our free flying butterflies and birds. With an indoor soft play and outdoor activity play area there is something for everyone.

MARSH FARM

www.marshfarm.co.uk

Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park provides a magical day at their family visitor attraction. You can meet the animals, feed the birds in the walk through aviary, cuddle the pets and groom a pony. They provide delicious freshly prepared food, have play indoor and outdoor areas. A daily fun and educational 'Pesky Pet Show' runs daily and offers a unique insight into the lives of all small and furry friends for children of all ages.

