

More nature and more access

To ensure visitors a memorable nature experience, the public authority has purchased areas along the cliff. This makes it possible for the wild plants on the slopes to spread further inland, and there is plenty of room for

a path along the entire cliff. Together with the owners, the public authority has also established a path that enables visitors to experience the northern side of the peninsula and Ristinge Nor.



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laurssen, Fyns Amt

Path along the top of the cliff

More commonland recreated

By Danish standards, the climate on Ristinge Klint is very dry and warm. The subsoil is clay and sand, although most of the surface is sand. The climate and soil thus provide ideal potential for the formation of commonland, with the fauna and flora typical of this type of countryside. The commonland species have survived on the slopes, but most of the peninsula has been used as agricultural land. The public authority owns a zone that is about 100 m wide along the cliff, where the aim is for the many plants and animals that live on commonland to start to spread out over a larger area.

Typical of commonland are low plants that need little water. Many insects, such as butterflies, live on the plants that grow there. Lizards and other reptiles also like the warm climate, combined with the possibility of finding shade in the scrub that grows on commonland.

Today, commonland covers a very small area of Denmark, compared to the early 20th century. This highly diverse type of countryside has receded as changes have taken place in agriculture. Formerly, agriculture made use of commonland for grazing and harvesting hay, which is how commonland is maintained. In future, the public area along the cliff will be grazed and no fertilisers or pesticides will be used on it.

Welcome to Ristinge Peninsula

“... a new highland that ends in the remarkable, 30-metre-high, steep cliff of Ristinge Klint, which, like the breast fin of a giant eel, protrudes from the west side of the island over towards Ærø, partially closing off the southern entrance to the small Funen archipelago... Ristinge Klint, where the intestines of the land are in an unusual way exposed to daylight as a result of having been attacked by the sea for thousands of years.” (Achton Friis: *Denmark's Major Islands*)



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laurssen, Fyns Amt

View from the cliff down towards the beach

Here are fine views, a fine bathing beach and a distinctive geology. Balance on one of the boulders on the stony beach, get covered with sand on the sandy shore, or feel mud squelch between your toes in the shallow waters of the north coast. If you take a walk along the marked path, you will experience all three types of coastline and, when the wind is in the north, Ristinge is the perfect place for angling – especially out at Ristinge Hale.

Ristinge Strand is an exceptionally fine bathing beach – one of the few places with sand dunes on Funen. The area has been a tourist attraction since around 1900. Since the 1950s, the number of visitors has increased sharply, with many summer cottages having been built in the area. Ristinge now has many visitors every year. Follow cycle route 82, and make a detour to Ristinge Peninsula.

South of Ristinge you can see the re-established cove of Nørreballe Nor as well as the bird sanctuary Tryggelev Nor, which are described in a folder.



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Photos of the Cliff: Birgit Bjerre Laurssen, Fyns Amt

Ristinge Peninsula



Ristinge Peninsula

You are allowed to use public areas, the beach, roads and paths and uncultivated areas if not fenced in. You are allowed to use **publicly owned areas** at any time of the day or night. You are allowed to use **private uncultivated areas** that are not fenced-in as well as private roads and paths from 6am to sunset – though the beach may be used at any time. **Dogs must be kept on a lead** – although this is not required on the beach from 1 October to 31 March.

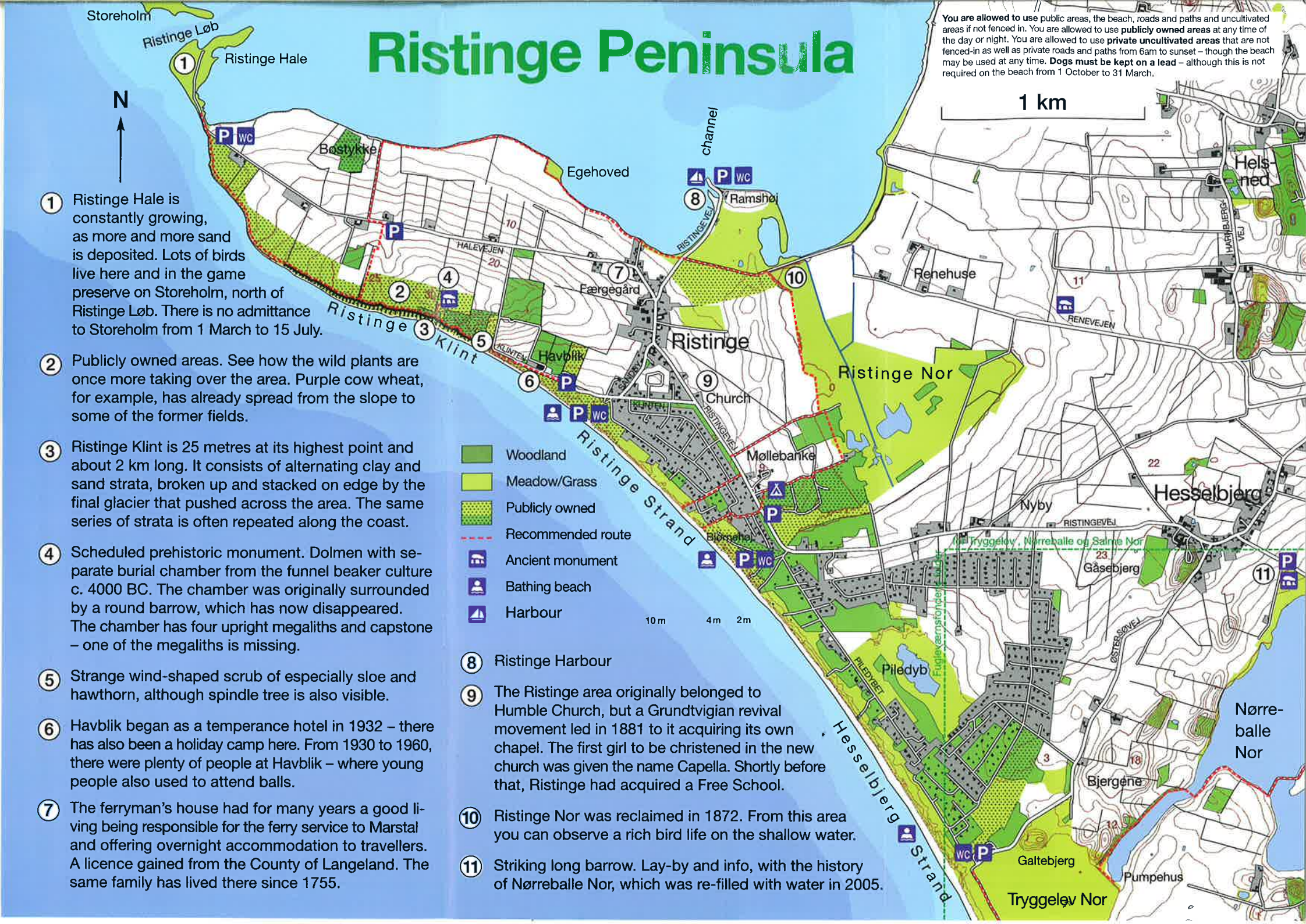
- 1** Ristinge Hale is constantly growing, as more and more sand is deposited. Lots of birds live here and in the game preserve on Storeholm, north of Ristinge Løb. There is no admittance to Storeholm from 1 March to 15 July.
- 2** Publicly owned areas. See how the wild plants are once more taking over the area. Purple cow wheat, for example, has already spread from the slope to some of the former fields.
- 3** Ristinge Klint is 25 metres at its highest point and about 2 km long. It consists of alternating clay and sand strata, broken up and stacked on edge by the final glacier that pushed across the area. The same series of strata is often repeated along the coast.
- 4** Scheduled prehistoric monument. Dolmen with separate burial chamber from the funnel beaker culture c. 4000 BC. The chamber was originally surrounded by a round barrow, which has now disappeared. The chamber has four upright megaliths and capstone – one of the megaliths is missing.
- 5** Strange wind-shaped scrub of especially sloe and hawthorn, although spindle tree is also visible.
- 6** Havblik began as a temperance hotel in 1932 – there has also been a holiday camp here. From 1930 to 1960, there were plenty of people at Havblik – where young people also used to attend balls.
- 7** The ferryman's house had for many years a good living being responsible for the ferry service to Marstal and offering overnight accommodation to travellers. A licence gained from the County of Langeland. The same family has lived there since 1755.

-  Woodland
-  Meadow/Grass
-  Publicly owned
-  Recommended route
-  Ancient monument
-  Bathing beach
-  Harbour

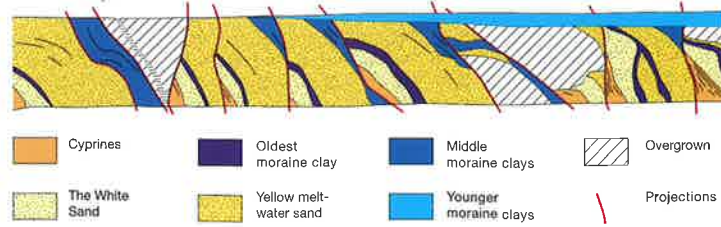
- 8** Ristinge Harbour
- 9** The Ristinge area originally belonged to Humble Church, but a Grundtvigian revival movement led in 1881 to it acquiring its own chapel. The first girl to be christened in the new church was given the name Capella. Shortly before that, Ristinge had acquired a Free School.
- 10** Ristinge Nor was reclaimed in 1872. From this area you can observe a rich bird life on the shallow water.
- 11** Striking long barrow. Lay-by and info, with the history of Nørreballe Nor, which was re-filled with water in 2005.

10 m 4 m 2 m

1 km



Drawing of the strata at Ristinge Klint: Jürgen Ehlers, 2000



Strata stacked on edge

Ristinge Klint displays a 130,000 year-old history, with strata from the whole of the last interglacial period and last Ice Age being constantly exposed. And what is so special is that the strata have been stacked on edge. The cyprine clay has been partly deposited in a lake and partly in the sea during the last interglacial period, when the temperature was roughly that of the present-day south coast of France. The hard clay can be seen as an overhang along the cliff face. The White Sand has been polished and deposited by arctic winds that blew off a glacier. The strata of moraine clay and meltwater sand were deposited by three glaciers. The most recent of these broke up the strata and stacked them on edge, covering the cliff with a layer of moraine clay. When taking a walk along the beach, you can see the same series of strata repeated at least 34 times. Ristinge Klint is of international interest for research and educational purposes.

The name Ristinge

Ristinge is mentioned for the first time in 1464 as Resting. The name comes from the Old Norse rista, which means incision, or cut. The reference is probably to the bay that cuts its way in towards Ristinge and that – prior to the reclamation of 1872 – continued into Ristinge Nor.

During the Second World War, peat was dug in the cove.



The Royal Danish Academy of Science and Letters map of 1783. Here the bay prior to the reclamation areas (The Coves) can be seen at Ristinge and Nørreballle.

Sandy agriculture

The whole peninsula was once covered with woodland, of which only a few areas have been preserved, e.g. Bostykke Stævningsskov. The area was badly affected by sand-drifting in the late 16th century. The farms and houses of the town belonged to the Crown until 1672, after which they were part of the County of Langeland. The town was late in abandoning the open-field system, with three farms moving out in 1820. Around 1900, the transition to freehold had been completed. The 12 farms in the town were quite small. This is connected to the fact that income could be supplemented by fishing and shipping.

The cliff has always attracted people – here is an association outing from 1933



Photo: Harald Knudsen, Rudkøbing Town archives



Ristinge Klint, with a fine view out over The South Funen Archipelago



Photo: Langelands Museum

You can sample the atmosphere of the place on board 'Mjølner', which operates cruises in the Archipelago

Customs house in Ristinge

Right from the early medieval period, Ristinge has been a place for loading and unloading. Customs had to be paid in Rudkøbing as early as 1558. Over the years, the citizens of Rudkøbing tried on many occasions to have the loading dock discontinued. The Crown and later the County of Langeland, however, had a considerable interest in preserving the loading dock for the export of grain and timber without using Rudkøbing. The old ferry and loading dock can still be seen as some large boulders in the water north of Ristinge By, close to the ferryman's house. With its remote location, the site was known to have been a popular place of smuggling in more ancient times.

Ristinge Harbour ⑧

About 1900, the old jetty had become too small and too shallow, so in 1907 the Ristinge Jetty association was formed. In 1909, a completely new jetty was built at Ramshøj. At the same time, the channel was deepened. Large ships were now also able to moor. This was Ristinge's heyday. Schooners, ketches and yachts now lay at the jetty with Ristinge as their home port – including Mjølner, which is now a museum ship owned by Langeland Museum. There was also a regular steam ferry service once a week to Copenhagen and several weekly departures to Marstal and Rudkøbing. After the Second World War, transportation by water declined, and shipping came to an end. Trains and lorries took over the transportation of goods and passengers. Many Ristinge inhabitants changed occupation, with some becoming fishermen. The 1940s and 1950s were good times for fishing. The jetty passed to the fishermen in 1962 and, on their initiative, a proper harbour was established. Today, there are a couple of professional fishermen left apart from anglers.

Fisherman fixing his nets at Ristinge Harbour



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laursen, Fyns Amt

The whitethroat

The whitethroat thrives on the dry slopes with grasses and bushes. This small songbird has a creaky, quite short song. From mid-May, it defends its territory from the top of a bush or a tree. When it has finished breeding in August–September, it migrates to Africa until the following May.



Photo: Leif Bisschop-Larsen, Naturfoto

Seakale

At the foot of the cliff seakale grows, where seaweed has been washed ashore and enriches the soil. The plant can become quite large and impressive – up to 75 cm. The ball-shaped fruit can float on the water and thus spread to other stretches of coast. The leaf stalks were considered a delicacy in Copenhagen around 1900 and seakale was cultivated in manor and villa gardens.



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laursen, Fyns Amt

Purple cow wheat

This beautiful plant is relatively rare in Denmark, but is found in considerable quantities on Ristinge Klint. From June to August it flowers along the path that leads from Havblik up over the cliff. It is 15–30 cm high and typically grows on slopes near the coast. Purple cow wheat has over a few years spread to public areas after agriculture has been discontinued.



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laursen, Fyns Amt

Along the cliff path one can also come across sand lizards



Photo: Birgit Bjerre Laursen, Fyns Amt