Burnham-on-Sea High Lighthouse

(Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset)

Early postcard showing how it looked in earlier times, possibly 1910. Image from Camera Images GB Pictures archive
History

The High lighthouse or pillar lighthouse is one of three lighthouses in Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. A Grade II listed building, it is no longer functional as a lighthouse and is now holiday apartments. Although it also still serves as a day mark for coastal navigation.

Burnham-on-Sea is notable for its beach and mudflats, which are characteristic of Bridgewater Bay and the rest of the Bristol Channel where the tide can recede for over 1.5 miles (2.4km). Burnham is close to the estuary of the River Parrett where it flows into the Bristol Channel, which has the second highest tidal range in the world of 15 metres (49ft), second only to Bay of Fundy in Eastern Canada. The constantly shifting sands have always been a significant risk to shipping in the area.

The 30 meter (98ft) pillar or High Lighthouse was designed and built by Joseph Nelson for Trinity House, in the 1830's and equipped with a paraffin lamp, which shone through a half-gallery under a window. It was used in conjunction with the Low lighthouse, Burnham-on-Sea Low Lighthouse, which is still operating, to replace the original Round Tower Lighthouse, Burnham-on-Sea Round Tower, which itself had been built to replace the light kept burning in the tower of St Andrews Church to guide fishing boats into the harbor.

The ground floor was 5 metres (16ft) in diameter and the top room 3 metres (9.8ft). It was automated in 1920.

In the 1990's it was deactivated and sold by Trinity House and bought by a member of the Rothschild family. The red stripe on the building is still used as a day range.

The Rothschild family owned it until 1996 when it was bought at auction by Patrick O'Hagan. Conversion for residential use included the removal of the 6th floor and the construction of stairs where there had previously only been ladders.
Within the town not far from the beach based low light. Located on Berrow Road, just north of Stodden’s Road, about 500m east of the low light in Burnham-on-Sea

Holiday Rentals

It is now available for holiday rentals. It can sleep 6 with 3 bedrooms and is split over 8 floors, you can see details of this, the current inside and some views from windows on its own website at: www.lighthouseholiday.com