



# The Hundred Parishes

## Walks from railway stations – number 2

### 6.8 miles (11kms) circular walk from Stansted Mountfitchet

Note: Walk number 12 is a shorter version of this route.

*This walk explores the western side of the parish of Stansted Mountfitchet and part of the adjoining parish of Elsenham. The route is mostly on paths and lanes with some residential streets. It is gently undulating with several stiles. Stansted Airport and the M11 motorway can be heard at times along the route. Parts of the route can be muddy at times. There are pubs & cafes near the start & finish and a pub at Burton End after 5 miles. The walk passes two churches. If you hope to visit a church or a pub, please be prepared to either remove muddy boots or wear boot covers or plastic bags. There are several seats along the route.*

**Start & finish:** Stansted Mountfitchet station. Grid Reference: TL514248. Postcode CM24 8BE. Parking in Station car park or Mountfitchet Castle car park. Public may use toilets at nearby Kings Arms and Yeoman's cafe.  
The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 195.  
A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

Leave Stansted Mountfitchet station by the main exit (near the booking office on Platform 2). Keep straight ahead along Station Road to the busy junction where the route turns left up Chapel Hill. It is recommended that you cross Chapel Hill almost immediately at the pedestrian crossing and use the wider pavement on the right.

There are several interesting buildings: on the right, just after the travel agency, number 12 was once Lloyd's Bank; further on, Barley Mow on the left was once a pub.

A little further on, there is a good view through the Memorial Gardens to St John's parish church. Turn right, through the gates, and pass the war memorial. One of the seats beside the memorial was donated by the Hundred Parishes Society in 2017.



Turn left immediately before the church and soon reach the church porch. If open, you are encouraged to visit, but if boots are muddy please remove them or cover them. The church was built in the late 1800s, the first complete church designed by William Douglas Caroe, who became a well-known church architect.

On leaving through the porch, turn right and soon reach St John's Road where we turn right. Despite signs to the contrary, this is not a private road, merely one that is unadopted. We soon pass Magna Carta Primary Academy on the right. The school's name was chosen

because the Magna Carta was imposed on King John in 1215 AD by barons including Stansted's lord of the manor, Richard Montfichet.

We take the second road on the right, Brewery Lane, whose name reflects the fact that a brewery once stood to the right of the lane near the bottom of the hill.

Brewery Lane ends at a junction with High Lane, the B1351. Cross with care to the pavement and turn left, heading uphill.

After a short climb, pass Croft House and The Barn, then turn right by crossing a stile onto a footpath. After a short descent the path emerges very briefly onto Gall End Lane, opposite the entrance to North End House which dates from the 17th century and was once Stansted's workhouse. We cross a footbridge over a ditch and turn left onto a path, keeping the former workhouse on our right.

We follow this path for some distance, never far away from the ditch on our left. The ditch is properly known as Ugley Brook. Sometimes it is dry but it can become a raging torrent; in 2014 it flooded the centre of Stansted village. The footpath passes through trees, where it can be muddy, and then alongside a field on the right, always keeping the brook on the left.

Follow the field edge round to the right but, after only 50 yards and before climbing, we turn left onto a footpath through woodland. The land to the right is the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve, managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust. The path keeps left and climbs beside pine trees and then three mature beech trees. Keep straight ahead, with the valley now below on the left. Ahead and over to the left, there is a 21st-century residential development, Walpole Meadows.

After a while, the footpath passes a small commercial development, Alsa Business Park, on the right just before reaching a lane. Here, we turn right.

The lane climbs gently for a quarter mile, passing 17th-century timber-framed and weather-boarded barns on the left and then red-brick Alsa Lodge.

Soon, we pass Norman House on the right, once the home of Aubrey Buxton (1918 – 2009). He was a director of Anglia Television for 30 years and was probably best known for creating the nature series *Survival* which was broadcast for nearly 40 years. He was a co-founder of World Wildlife Fund in 1961 and in 1978 was granted a life peerage as Baron Buxton of Alsa. Beyond the house is the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve which he donated to the Essex Wildlife Trust. [Aubrey Buxton was not directly related to Edward North Buxton who bought Hatfield Forest in order to give it to the National Trust.] Norman House is now divided into several apartments.

On the left, Norman Hall Cottage dates from the 17th century, with exposed timbers and a jettied upper storey.

Soon, the lane turns left, but we keep straight ahead along the public bridleway, passing a puddingstone at the corner.

After a while, on the right, there is a small car park at the main entrance to the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve.

We pass Keepers Cottage on the left, just at the start of Alsa Wood which we will pass beside or through for the next half mile.

Soon afterwards, the path forks. We keep to the left, beside Alsa Wood on the left.

The path passes Alsa Wood Cottage and then rises to cross a footbridge over the M11 motorway. The motorway bisects Alsa Wood. On the far side of the bridge, in 2022, developers were starting to work on another housing development on the right, beside the motorway. Its provisional name is Millers View – perhaps a corruption of M11's View.

We keep straight ahead through the wood along the main path.

Approaching the far edge of the wood, we pass houses to the right and then bear slightly right to leave the wood. We turn right along a pavement for 50 yards and then cross the road onto a footpath through woodland.

Keep straight ahead, with housing on the left, and in about 100 yards reach a residential road where we turn right. We are now in the village of Elsenham (at the end of Leigh Drive).

Soon, take the first turning on the left along another residential road. Ignore a turning on the right.

At the end of this road, we turn right along a short alleyway to meet a main road. This is the B1051, Stansted Road. Opposite, Gilbey Cottages are named after Sir Walter Gilbey (1831-1914) who was a founder of a major wine and spirits company and the Elsenham Jam company and lived at nearby Elsenham Hall. We should cross the B1051 with care and turn left on the pavement.

Soon, shortly before the shops, we turn right into Robin Hood Road, noting the gold-painted pillar box opposite, outside the Post Office. It was painted gold in 2012 to celebrate the gold medal won at the London Olympics by Elsenham equestrian Ben Maher (he also won gold at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics). We follow Robin Hood Road downhill.

Just after crossing the entrance to Mill Close, the building on the left with tall chimneys was once the Robin Hood pub, after which the road is named. It served as a pub for about 150 years before closing in 1988. The location of a pub just here is explained by the fact that this was once the main road between Elsenham and Stansted, a road which followed Stansted Brook. When the London – Cambridge railway was constructed in the 1840s, roughly following the original road route, the present B1051 was built.

We continue down Robin Hood Road, passing a group of thatched dwellings called Wells Cottages. The central property, two-storey and thatched, dates from the 17th century and those on each side from the 18th or 19th.

At the bottom of the hill, we reach Fullers End Footpath Crossing over the main London to Cambridge railway line. Use the crossing with great care.

Elsenham's station was originally located here, but trains pulling away and heading uphill towards the north would struggle to get going, so the station was relocated to its present site, half a mile north from here.

Soon, the lane crosses Stansted Brook and starts to climb. We are now in the hamlet of Fuller's End, part of Elsenham. The hamlet is very rich in attractive cottages, mostly thatched and listed, and mostly dating from the 16th century to the 18th century. Two are shown on the right, looking back down the hill to Broomfield Cottage and then White Cottage, each 17th-18th century and now modernised.



Further up the lane, we pass the entrance to Elsenham Stud on the left and then more attractive cottages.

We turn left into another lane and soon pass 18th-century Fullers End Cottage on the right. After another 50 yards, we turn right onto a signposted public footpath. Keep watch for the uneven surface caused by burrowing rabbits.

We keep straight ahead on a field-edge path with hedgerow on the left, beside one field and then beside a second field.

Towards the end of the second field, the path veers left and continues on the other side of the hedge. Soon afterwards, it passes over a small stream and almost immediately we turn left along a public footpath, now heading East.

After about 200 yards, the path meets a wide track. We turn right onto this byway, heading uphill towards a communications tower on the horizon.

After a while, this clear track veers left and almost immediately right. We stay on the track, passing the communications tower close on our left. The track bends right and becomes a road as it enters the hamlet of Tye Green, part of Elsenham parish.

Almost every house in Tye Green is a listed building, mostly dating from the 17th or 18th centuries; we will mention just a few. The first house on the right is the oldest: 16th-century Moat Cottage, timber-framed and plastered with a thatched roof.

Soon we pass Tye Green Farmhouse on the right, built in the 17th century of red-brick and with a tiled roof.

On reaching a triangular green, we follow the lane round to the right, passing Falcon Cottage, set back on the right with an imitation falcon on the roof.

We turn right onto a new lane, but only for a short distance. In 50 yards, we turn left onto a footpath. The path is on the right side of the ditch, away from the house.

After a while, the hedge on the left ends and the path turns right, now keeping a hedge and ditch on the left.

At the end of this field, we bear left to cross a ditch and then continue slightly left of the previous direction of travel, heading downhill across a field with an airport communications tower off to the left at about 10 o'clock. The path passes beside a waymark and then through a gap in the hedge to cross an earth bridge over a ditch. We bear 45 degrees to the right to cross the next small field and then cross another earth bridge. Now, we keep ahead along the right side of the field, with the hedge on the right.

The field ends at a private concrete road. Turn left along the road, slightly uphill for a while and with a hedge and fence on the right. Before reaching a metal gate, we leave the road and follow the fence as it curves round to the right. Behind the fence, and well below, the railway spur passes beneath us and into Stansted Airport.

After a while, our path bears left across the field, away from the fence, and joins another path coming in from the left. We bear right, keeping the hedge on the left and then go ahead into another field.

Before reaching the end of this field, we turn left through a wide gap, now keeping a new hedge on the right. The main airport control tower can now be seen in the distance to the left.

In about 80 yards, we leave the field by turning right through the hedge (beware the trip-hazard wire mesh on the ground). Cross a footbridge, and pass through a gate into a yard. Bear left and then right through a small commercial estate and along a gravel drive to a gate. Exit through the pedestrian gate and turn right onto the road.

This is Belmer Road and we are now in Burton End, part of Stansted Mountfitchet parish. With about 1.5 miles to go to the station, you may be tempted to take refreshment at the thatched Ash public house. It dates from the 17th century and benefits from a 20th-century extension. The small field behind the pub backs onto Stansted Airport.



After the Ash, we continue along this road (i.e. turn left out of the pub), generally keeping on the right to face any oncoming traffic.

After a quarter mile, we come into the hamlet of Burton End. The first house on the right is Four Winds, dating from 1626 AD. Just after it is another house with 17th-century origins, Evergreen. Between the two houses, a footpath leads to Turner's Spring nature reserve.

We continue along Belmer Road, passing a variety of dwellings, several from the 18th century.

About half a mile after the Ash, we turn right at the first road junction, signposted to Stansted Mountfitchet and immediately passing over the M11 motorway.

Soon, we pass the entrance to Stansted Hall on the right and after a while the Hall itself comes into sight over to the right: red brick with Dutch gables and a host of tall chimneys.

This mansion was built in the 1870s by the lord of the manor, William Fuller Maitland, primarily to house his extensive art collection. He died before the building was completed. It was later purchased by a wealthy industrialist, Arthur Findlay, a leading light in the spiritualist movement. When he died in 1964, the house was left to that organisation and it now functions as a specialist residential college. Courses include hypnosis, mediumship and spiritual healing and are often attended by overseas students.

We turn right along the drive to St Mary's Church and very soon bear right through a wooden gate into the cemetery and keep straight ahead towards the church. The church has served the parish of Stansted Mountfitchet since Norman times. The doorways and chancel arch date from the 1120s. The bell tower (now with 8 bells) was a relatively recent addition in 1692. St Mary's became less used after the construction of St John's in the village centre. Today it is cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust and it is usually open for visitors. You are encouraged to enter but first please remove dirty boots or put on boot covers or plastic bags. Inside, there are impressive 17th-century memorials to Hester Salusbury and her father, Sir Thomas Middleton who lived in an earlier Stansted Hall and was Lord Mayor of London in 1613.

On leaving the church, turn right around the bell tower and then left along a formal path to leave through a gateway. From here, to the right, is another view of the private Stansted Hall.

Turn left through a small parking area and soon turn right onto a tree-lined footpath with fields to the left. Keep straight ahead, after a while following a high wooden fence on the left until the path emerges onto a drive. We keep straight ahead along the drive. Over to the right, we can see the wooden stockade of reconstructed Mountfitchet Castle.

Keep straight ahead until the lane meets the fairly busy Church Road. Bear right along this road, passing Gate House on the right (once a gatehouse to Stansted Hall) and Fullers House on the left, built as almshouses in 1883. Opposite Fullers House and just 10 yards past the entrance to the Gatehouse, you may be able to see a shiny 'spigot' in the hedgerow. It has been shining since World War II when it was installed on a concrete base. It is the metal support for a swivelling mortar gun which would have guarded the road in the event of a German invasion. This photo is of a similar gun emplacement in Newport.



Soon, Stansted Mountfitchet Station appears on the left. The turning on the left, immediately before the railway bridge, leads down to the London-bound platform number 1. For the Cambridge-bound platform, stay on the main road, crossing the railway line, and then, when safe, turn left into Station Road. If you are not in any rush, the entrance to Mountfitchet Castle and Toy Museum is to the right and there are several shops and eating places in this part of the village.

You can read more about Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham on [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk). There, you will also find a short article on Walter Gilbey.

This route description, last updated 09 March 2022, was downloaded from [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to [hundredparishes@btinternet.com](mailto:hundredparishes@btinternet.com).

A diagram covering this route, based on the Ordnance Survey map, is shown below. It is published under © Crown copyright 2020 OS 100062498.

