



The Hundred Parishes

Circular Walks – number 177

Lindsell – 4 miles (7 kms)

This walk is entirely within the parish of Lindsell. After a short stretch of B1057, the route follows quiet lanes for the first two-thirds and paths for most of the final third. It is a rural route. There are no opportunities for refreshment along the route. The walk passes Lindsell Church. If you hope to visit, please be prepared to either remove muddy boots or wear boot covers or plastic bags. There are no stiles. The route passes one or two seats.

Start and finish: The route starts and finishes at an informal and rather pot-holed lay-by on the northwest side of the B1057 road between Stebbing and Great Bardfield, about 300 yards northeast of the turning to Lindsell (not the short lay-by just after the turning).

Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL653275. The postcode is CM7 4PT (this postcode covers a long stretch of road; the lay-by is at its western end).

The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 195.

From the lay-by, we head south-west, towards the turning for Lindsell, with the lay-by on our right. We should stay on this side of the road, facing any oncoming traffic.

After about 300 yards, we turn right into the lane signposted to Lindsell.

Just before the “Lindsell – reduce your speed” sign, we cross a ditch, actually Daisyley Brook. Up to here, we have been walking along the parish boundary, with Stebbing to our left and Lindsell to the right. From now on we will be exclusively in Lindsell, a parish which recorded a population of 260 in the 2021 census.

As the road bears to the left, on the right we get a glimpse between the farm buildings of Lindsell Hall. We will soon get a closer view of the Hall. Most of its nearby buildings are listed, dating from the 16th to the 19th century: barns, granaries, stables, cart lodges and a plough house. Some have been converted in more recent times to provide residential accommodation.

We continue along the lane, soon passing Lindsell Hall Cottage on the right, a thatched dwelling built in the 17th or 18th century.

Set back on the left, The Old Vicarage dates from the 15th century or earlier and has a 16th-century chimney stack.

Soon, we reach a road junction on the left. Just beyond it is Lindsell’s cricket ground and pavilion. We keep ahead for just a few yards to an information board in the right; this shows that we are in Church End, Lindsell. Our route turns right beside the board onto a public footpath.

We pass a church parking area on the left before reaching Lindsell Hall on the left. This was built as a hall house in the 15th century, meaning that the house had a main, single-storey

hall with a fire on the ground in the centre. Smoke would rise and mostly exit through gaps in the thatch roof. In the 16th century a chimney stack was installed and the dividing floor inserted to create two storeys.

We continue past Lindsell Hall. To our right, around a green opposite the Hall, are some of the old farm buildings we saw when we first reached the village. Immediately after the Hall, we pass a courtyard on the left with a 17th-century barn and 19th-century granary resting on cast iron staddles. It is more usual to see staddle stones used for the purpose of deterring vermin from accessing the raised granary, but here they are metal.

We continue ahead into the churchyard. The small parish church, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, dates from the 12th century and there is much that remains from its early existence. If it is open, you are encouraged to visit, first removing or covering muddy boots.

In the north wall of the chancel, to the far right, there is a tiny window which provided the only view from a small "anchorite cell", built against the outside wall of the church to enclose a recluse or anchorite who wanted solitude, possibly for the rest of their life. The anchorite, often a woman, would have been granted permission by the bishop, probably in the 12th or 13th century, on the understanding that she could pay for food to be delivered. Pretty scary!

On leaving the church, we retrace past Lindsell Hall to the lane and turn right, keeping to the right to face any traffic.

We walk beside the cricket ground on the left and several cottages on the right, including Burniere with a pheasant on guard outside. We then pass farm buildings at Prior's Hall Farm, well known in these parts for its farm shop and especially its locally-sourced pork.

We come to a road junction with a grass triangle. Opposite, on the left, is Lindsell's village sign, erected in 2017.

We turn right, signposted towards Lindsell and Thaxted. We pass more of Prior's Hall Farm on our right and, just afterwards, Prior's Hall itself.

We continue along the lane, after a while passing a sign that asks us to drive slowly through the village. Although we have already visited the historic heart of Lindsell, there is a greater concentration of residences further along this lane.

We ignore the turning on the right to Bustard Green; we will get to Bustard Green in due course.

We pass red-brick The Glebe House on our right. This was built in 1867 as the vicarage but was sold by the church in 1972 after Lindsell started to share a vicar with Stebbing.

Soon afterwards, we pass Lindsell village hall on the right.

Just afterwards, a windmill on a weather vane precedes Mill House on the left, a house that dates from the 16th century. The last windmill on this site, a smock mill, was demolished around 1906.

19th-century Old Crown House, on the right, was once a pub, The Old Crown House. Its hanging sign has gone but the frame still stands, peeking above the hedge. In more recent years its weather-boarded outbuilding operated as Lindsell Art Gallery.

We now come to a row of houses on the left, starting with School House. This was built as a school in 1877 but closed and became a private residence in the 1950s. It retains the school bell above a clock which was installed to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902. He had a connection with the Hundred Parishes through regular visits when he was Prince of Wales, especially to Little Easton to visit his mistress, the Countess of Warwick.

After a few more houses, we ignore the footpath that forks to the left, continuing along the lane which becomes narrower and more winding, with a scattering of relatively modern houses, mostly 20th century. Some have intriguing names, but their origins have not been researched for this walk description.

We ignore a footpath to the right which goes past signposted Cherryripe Farm.

Soon after, on the left we pass thatched, 17th-century Pettitts and then a few new, larger houses.

We leave Lindsell's strung-out village and continue along this country lane until we reach a road junction with a grass triangle. Here, we turn sharp right, signposted as Duck End Farm Lane.

We soon pass Brickhouse Farm, with a large carved owl in the garden, and then an ancient Esso sign outside a motor vehicle workshop.

We follow the lane round to the right, ignoring a bridleway that goes straight ahead to New Barn Farm. The lane descends gently, passing New Barn Lodge on the left and the entrance to New Barn Hall.

The tarmac lane comes to an end as we reach Duck End Farm. The listing for this 16th-century farmhouse suggests that the building may incorporate elements of an earlier house.

We bear right, past Duck End Farm, along a byway and past boarding kennels.

We pass beneath a power line and, soon afterwards, cross over an inconspicuous Daisley Brook before climbing gently on a wide track lined with trees. This is called Bustard Green Lane.

After a while, we reach a red-brick house on the left, Cherry Plum Cottage, and the byway turns to the right, being joined by a bridleway from the left.

We ignore footpaths off to left and right and pass red-brick Jeffreys on the left with a pond opposite on the right. After Bustard House on the right, we reach a large green on the left, with a bench on the far side. This is Bustard Green, registered as common land and having no owner. Its name goes back to at least 1777, possibly named after the bustard, a large bird which became extinct in the UK after the last one was shot in 1832, reputedly in the Hundred Parishes in the Hertfordshire parish of Heydon.

Bustard Green is noted for its wild flowers, notably bee orchids and sulphur clover. The population of Lindsell parish was at its highest in the 19th century, around 400 residents, and it is recorded that there were 24 cottages on Bustard Green around 1850. There is no sign of them today.

At the end of the green, the byway comes to a junction. To the right, partly hidden, is Porridge Hall which dates from the 15th century or earlier. Its unusual name is believed to be a corruption of *Poor Ridge*, an apparent description of the landscape in which it sits.

Here, we turn sharp left onto the tarmac lane, with Bustard Green on our left. We follow this winding narrow lane, Daisyley Road, for about 400 yards.

We ignore a bridleway that heads left, following the lane as it turns sharp right.

After about 200 yards of straight road, we must look out for a public footpath sign that indicates where we should leave the road. We turn left, immediately drop down to cross a dip and then turn right onto a grass field-edge path with field on the left and ditch on the right.

We follow this straight path for about 600 yards, around half way ignoring a footpath that crosses ours.

The path crosses a small area of concrete hardstanding and 50 yards later we reach a road and the layby where we parked and started this walk.

You can read more about the parish of Lindsell on www.hundredparishes.org.uk.

This route description, last updated 04 July 2023, was downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to hundredparishes@btinternet.com.

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

