



The Hundred Parishes

An introductory article about GRAND HOUSES AND MANSIONS

Over the centuries, wealthy individuals and families have often built grand houses. In our area, many remain, albeit that few still serve as individual family homes.

The best-known is Audley End House in the parish of Saffron Walden. Its splendid 17th-century architecture can be seen from the B1383. The house, now only one third of its size when purchased by King Charles II in 1668, is cared for today by English Heritage. It is usually open to the public. Hundred Parishes Walk number 16 passes the front of the house.



Less well-known, but also visible, are the following four mansions which can be found in various parts of the Hundred Parishes. All can be seen from one of our downloadable walk routes.

In the northeast, in the parish of Steeple Bumpstead, three-storey Moyns Park was built around 1580. It is privately owned and a mile from a public road, but it can be seen clearly and appreciated from an easy public footpath. If you would like to see the house for yourself, the best view is from Grid Reference TL694407, on a footpath that is included in Hundred Parishes walk number 155.



In the southeast, Great Waltham is home to Langleys, another fine three-storey private house that has been in the same family since it was built in 1719. This mansion is visible from the road, but it can be much better appreciated from the Essex Way footpath, which passes the end of the drive. The best viewpoint is from the footpath at Grid Reference TL698137, easily found by following Walk number 110.



In the far southwest of the Hundred Parishes, Wareside has Fanhams Hall, an 18th-century home that was extended in the early 1900s when the Japanese gardens were created. Fanhams Hall now functions as a conference centre and wedding venue, while the grounds can be enjoyed for the price of an afternoon tea or Sunday lunch. Bookings can be made via their website



www.exclusive.co.uk/fanhams-hall/eat-drink/ . Fanhams is close to the start of Walk number 124.

Near the centre of the Hundred Parishes, at Farnham, Hassobury stands close to Farnham church. Both were built in the 19th century by lords of the manor, Robert Gosling and his son, also Robert. Hassobury, in High Gothic style and with many chimneys, was built in 1868-1870. It replaced an earlier house that had been purchased in 1773 by their ancestor, William Gosling, a wealthy banker.



Hassobury was used during the Second World War as a convalescent home for injured servicemen. It was then occupied by educational establishments, most recently as a private school, Waterside, from 1976 until 1994 when the school closed. The mansion was then partitioned into several individual houses. This building can be seen on Walk 161.

You can read a little more about each of these interesting buildings within the walk descriptions and also within the appropriate parish introduction on the Hundred Parishes website.

These are just a few of the mansions within the Hundred Parishes. This article will be expanded in due course to include others

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Any comments or suggestions for improvement may be submitted by using the Feedback form on the website. The website has many short articles on various aspects of The Hundred Parishes, as well as introductions to individual parishes and to a number of local celebrities, and an extensive What's On section. More than a hundred walk route descriptions can be freely downloaded, with each of the hundred parishes featuring in at least one walk.