



# The Hundred Parishes

## An introductory article about STRAW FINIALS

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One of the local delights in The Hundred Parishes is the number of thatched buildings. Most thatched roofs are topped out with a decorative straw feature on the apex. These decorations are called straw finials.

Pheasants and foxes are still among the favourites for this tradition that goes back centuries. These finials may once have been installed to keep away birds or even witches, while some may have been the trademark of the individual thatcher. Today, they are more likely chosen by the customer from an online catalogue. They seem to be more abundant and varied than ever.



There are some fine examples around The Hundred Parishes such as the two boxing hares on a cottage in Farnham.

Families of ducks are popular. The group below is in Hatfield Heath.



There is a large thatched cow on the barn of the Red Cow pub at Chrishall.



The galloping horse can be seen in the parish of Great Bardfield.

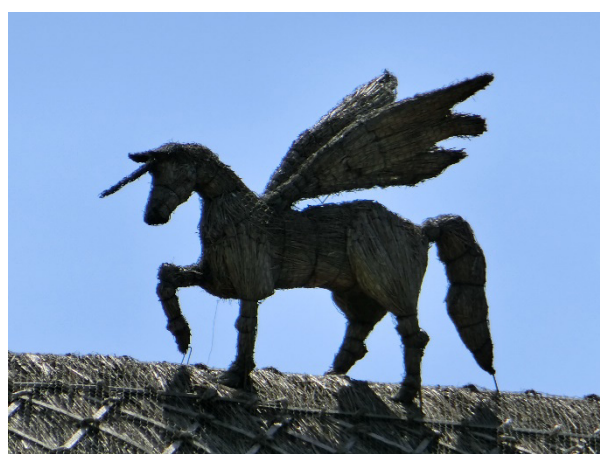


Most straw finials deteriorate over time, so you are encouraged to capture them on your camera or phone before weathering takes its toll.

The flying pig was spotted in Ugley; the cats were playing in Arkesden.



The dog was seen running off with the sausages in Great Chesterford. Pegasus had landed on a roof in Leaden Roding.



This eagle has landed in Aythorpe Roding.

Do keep looking up!

Please see the separate article about Thatch.

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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.