



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

HIGH RODING



Location: 4 miles southwest of Great Dunmow. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL6017.
Postcode: CM6 1NS. **County:** Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Access:** B184. Regional Cycle Route 60. **Buses:** 17 (Fri & Sat) to Chelmsford; 18 (Tue & Thur) to Chelmsford.
Population: 471 in 2001, 478 in 2011, 580 in 2021.

High Roding is the most northerly of a cluster of eight settlements in west Essex, collectively known as The Rodings. The northern four Rodings fall within the Hundred Parishes. Their shared history is told in the introduction to Aythorpe Roding.

The village of High Roding, sometimes referred to as High Roothing, is a long linear settlement beside the Dunmow to Ongar road, the B184. Here, this former Roman road which forms the backbone of the parish is known as The Street. It is a village rich in listed buildings dating from the 14th century onwards, many timber-framed and at least half still thatched. In the 19th century, many of these would have formed the commercial hub of the village: grocer, wheelwright, blacksmith, beer retailer, shoemaker and tailor are just some of the cottage industries which have been recorded.

Today, most of the buildings are private residences, but still worthy of note for their architectural interest and the accompanying sense of history which stirs the imagination. The 19th-century school (shown on the right) is just one of these, and of not too distant a heritage to evoke thoughts (for some of us) of our early school days.



Further along The Street, thatched Rosemary Cottage is actually a row of three dwellings that date from the 16th century.

Of all the ancient buildings that line The Street, the 15th-century former coaching inn, The Black Lion, is probably the most eye-catching, its white plaster between exposed black timbers forging an unmistakable landmark. What used to be the old hay loft is reputedly haunted by the ghost of a Roundhead officer. It might be worth a visit; you never know



Refreshment is also available at the quirky Roding Hall Tea Room, towards the northern end of The Street. The tea room is adjacent to Roding Hall – now sadly dilapidated and awaiting renovation.

The 13th-century parish church of All Saints is situated approximately a mile out of the village to the south on the edge of High Rodingbury Wood. One is inclined to speculate as to why it is so far removed from the village and its people, although it was clearly established before the greater number of buildings in the village itself. Many parts of the building and its artefacts are 13th and 14th century, though there was some 19th-century repair and modification after a lightning strike destroyed the tower.



The best way to explore the parish is on foot, using the many footpaths, byways and quiet lanes. Many of these lead off the B184; this is not usually a busy road and it is quite possible to park and take a circular walk to north or south. This is the concept adopted by Hundred Parishes walk number 127 – see below.



Venturing east from the cross-roads at the northern end of The Street will take you along the winding and picturesque lane pictured above, part of Regional Cycle Route number 60.

Hospitality:

The Black Lion, The Street, CM6 1NT - 01371 872847 - <https://www.theblacklionhighroding.co.uk/>
Roding Hall Tea Room, The Street, CM6 1NN – 07462 046083 – <https://www.facebook.com/rodinghalltearoom/>

Hundred Parishes Society walks can be freely downloaded and printed. They include the following circular routes . . .

Walk 127 (4.7 miles) - footpaths and lanes, mostly rural and mostly in High Easter parish.
Quiet Lane Walk 314 (4.3 miles) in rural High Easter and High Roding, avoiding footpaths.

Adjacent parishes:

Aythorpe Roding, Hatfield Broad Oak, Great Canfield, Great Dunmow, Barnston, High Easter.

Links:

Parish Council: <https://highrodingparishcouncil.co.uk/>
Conservation area appraisal – downloadable from: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

Further reading:

The Rodings: Eight Ancient Parishes of Essex and a Lost Hamlet. Peter Foley – out of print but a copy can be downloaded from <https://therodings.blogspot.com/>