



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

LEADEN RODING



Location: 7 miles southwest of Great Dunmow. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL5913. **Postcode:** CM6 1PZ. **County:** Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Access:** A1060, B184. **Buses:** 59 (Mon to Fri) between Chelmsford and Harlow; 17 (Fri & Sat) to Chelmsford; 18 (Tue & Thur) to Chelmsford. **Population:** 557 in 2001, 616 in 2011, 720 in 2021.

Leaden Roding is one 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.

Known as Ledenchirche in the 12th century and Rothyng Plumbum in the 14th, the curious preface Leaden to this Roding parish appears to derive from the church of St Michael and All Angels, the first church in the area to have a lead roof. The roof is now tiled.

This small church dates from Norman times and has a shingled broach spire and weatherboarded belfry, one of whose three bells is dated 1523 – one of the earliest dated church bells in Essex. Along with many of the isolated churches in this area, St Michael's is sadly locked during the week, but one knowledgeable church enthusiast who has managed to gain access has offered his little gem of an observation (on <http://stepneyrobarts.blogspot.co.uk/search?q=leaden>):



'The 14th century font has the staples into which the cover was padlocked so that witches should not steal the water for their magical rites; the font cover was adapted for the staples in the 17th century, reminding us that the Reformation did not reform away the old belief in witchcraft. Many a sermon against witches would be preached from this perfect little 16th century pulpit.'



This is a closer view of one wall of the church.

In ecclesiastical life, St Michael's and Leaden Roding have since 1995 formed a joint benefice with neighbouring Abbess, White and Beauchamp Rodings, usually now known collectively as the South Rodings Parish.

As with much of the Rodings countryside, Leaden Roding is criss-crossed with many footpaths and byways through fields and wooded areas.

Available to download from the parish council website is their own quarterly periodical, rather cleverly entitled The Leaden Reading. This is an excellent introduction to the life of the parish, which though very small and very rural, is also very much alive.

All kinds of activities are going on throughout the year, from the Roothing Quilters to the Cloghams Cricket Club. The thatched cricket club pavilion is pictured here.



Many activities are centred in the Village Hall, which seems to be the main village social hub. It's warm and welcoming and there's probably no better way to get to the heart of this community.



Sadly, there is no longer anywhere for the visitor to purchase refreshment. Some may remember the King William IV which closed in



the 1990s. The early 18th-century building, pictured above on the right, is now a private residence, standing beside the mini roundabout that was installed on the A1060 around the time the pub closed.

The rural parish is sometimes reminded of the river whose name it shares. This is low-lying and generally flat countryside, so after heavy rain, the Roding can burst its banks and spread over adjoining fields – as it did here in 2014 near Langlands . . .



Adjacent Hundred Parishes parishes: White Roding, Aythorpe Roding, High Easter.

Hundred Parishes Society walks include two circular routes that start in Leaden Roding: Walk 128 covers 9 miles of lanes and footpaths through the countryside of Leaden, White and Aythorpe Roding.

Quiet Lane walk 333 covers 7.7 miles including Aythorpe Roding and High Easter without using footpaths.

Links:

Parish Council: <https://e-voice.org.uk/leadenroding/>

Rodings Rights of Way Conservation Group:

<https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/essex/rodings.php>

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/>