



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

STANDON



Location: 6 miles north of Ware, 6 miles west of Bishop's Stortford. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL3922. **Postcode:** SG11 1LA. **Access:** A120, A10. **County:** Hertfordshire. **District:** East Herts. **Buses** (Mon to Sat): 331 between Hertford & Buntingford; 386 between Bishop's Stortford & Stevenage. **Population:** 4,141 in 2001, 4,335 in 2011, 4,700 in 2021.

Standon was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. Today, the parish covers a large area, one of the biggest in the Hundred Parishes, incorporating the villages of Standon and Puckeridge and also the hamlets of Barwick, Colliers End, Latchford and Wellpond Green.

Standon, Latchford and Barwick grew up beside the River Rib, which meanders from north to south through the middle of the parish. Puckeridge and Colliers End developed alongside Ermine Street, the old Roman road from London to Lincoln and York that later became a busy coaching route, especially serving London and Cambridge. A second Roman highway, Stane Street, ran between Colchester and St Albans, crossing Ermine Street north of today's Puckeridge. A Roman town once stood to the north of this crossroads, its site now being mainly in the adjacent parish of Braughing. Wellpond Green is a relatively new residential hamlet.



Much of Stane Street has become today's A120, with a diversion that now runs to the south of Puckeridge. This distant view of Standon Church can be enjoyed from the A120 when approaching from the west.

Today, it is hard to imagine that as traffic descended into Standon on the A120 it would often be halted at a railway level crossing. This served the Buntingford Line which crossed here, close to Standon Flour Mill. The crossing went when the line closed in the 1960s after 100 years of operation, and the mill has been converted into flats.

The centre of Standon lies immediately south of the A120, yet it is probably unknown to most drivers who pass by. Just off that busy main road is a different world, a short High Street with a choice of shops and pubs. The street is wide, a reminder that this had been the venue for regular markets since the 13th century. The parish church dates from that time, built mostly in the 13th and 14th centuries.

This photo illustrates that the tower of St Mary's was once a separate building (thought to be the only such example in Hertfordshire), before being connected in the 19th century when an organ chamber was added during a programme of major repairs.

The church is listed as Grade I, primarily for its interior which includes a lavishly-carved chancel arch, an interesting 13th-century font and imposing memorials to Sir Ralph Sadleir (1507 – 1587) and his son, Sir Thomas.



Sir Ralph Sadleir was a senior statesman, serving both Henry VIII and later Elizabeth I, including a spell as gaoler of Mary, Queen of Scots. Resting beside his tomb is the flagpole he retrieved from the 1547 Battle of Pinkie Cleugh. The pole once bore the standard of the Scottish army that suffered a resounding defeat in the battle against the English army, with the loss of six thousand men. The home of the Sadleirs was Standon Lordship, a little south of the village and pictured on the right.



The parish has a total of 150 listed buildings, more than half dating from before 1700 AD. They are spread all over the parish, with several in Standon

High Street, including Knights Court, shown above. It was once a manorial courthouse and then served as a school for about 400 years until its closure around 1980, when it was converted into homes. Opposite, beneath the oak tree, stands a Hertfordshire puddingstone, formed during one of the Ice Ages and left here by a retreating glacier.

Standon is on the south side of the A120, with Puckeridge on the north. Once separate communities, Puckeridge and Standon have coalesced and now form the core of the single administrative parish of Standon.



Puckeridge has its fair share of heritage buildings, some of which are shown here. The building on the left dates from the 16th century or earlier and was probably a guildhall. It has since been re-modelled and now comprises several houses. The photo below was taken further north along the High Street. In the early 20th century this road was designated as the A10. Later, in the 1970s, when the High Street could no longer cope with the ever-increasing volume of motor traffic, Puckeridge was by-passed. The village continued to expand and today Puckeridge is the main centre of population for the parish of Standon.



Puckeridge had grown over the centuries, holding a regular fair and market since the 14th century and later servicing the passing coach traffic on Ermine Street, its many inns providing accommodation and a change of horses. The 17th-century diarist, Samuel Pepys, sometimes stayed at one of Puckeridge's many inns, possibly the 16th-century Falcon – now renamed the Crown and Falcon.



At the southern end of the parish, the A10 passed through Colliers End. There was a campaign for many years before this hamlet was eventually bypassed in 2004. The road of a hundred years ago, pictured here, is recognizable today.

Between Colliers End and Puckeridge, just off the old A10 at Old Hall Green, is St Edmund's College, a substantial Roman

Catholic school that was first established here in 1759. Many of its buildings, only partly visible from the public highway, are listed and include a spectacular 19th-century chapel designed by Augustus Pugin. His best-known work is the clocktower of the Houses of Parliament, generally referred to as "Big Ben".

Standon parish offers many attractive opportunities for the fit walker. Several well-defined, long paths cross it, including the Harcamlow Way which often runs close to the River Rib, pictured below at Latchford on the left and Barwick Ford on the right.



Hospitality:

Bell, Standon, SG11 1LA – 01920 745010 - <https://www.facebook.com/thebellstandon/>

China Garden, Standon SG11 1QW – 01920 821236 - <https://www.facebook.com/ChinaGardenStandon/>

Crown & Falcon, Puckeridge, SG11 1RN – 01920 821561 – <https://www.facebook.com/crownandfalcon>

Pearce's Farm Shop & Café, SG9 9ND – 01920 821246 – <https://pearcesfarmshop.com/>

Star, Standon, SG11 1LB – 01920 823725 - <https://www.starstandon.com/>

White Hart, Puckeridge, SG11 1RR – 01920 821309 - <https://www.thewhitehartpuckeridge.co.uk/>

Hundred Parishes Society walks include . . .

Circular walk 105 which covers 3.5 miles, mostly through Standon and Puckeridge.

Circular walk 168 of 7.8 miles between Much Hadham and Standon. The route description starts in Much Hadham, but could be joined in Standon at page 4 of the description.

Station walk 18 follows a route of 17 miles between Ware and Stansted Mountfitchet stations.

The fit and adventurous could start in Standon at the top of page 3 of the description, travel by train from Stansted to Ware and then finish with the first part of the route back to Standon.

Adjacent Hundred Parishes parishes: Thundridge, Braughing, Little Hadham, Much Hadham.

Links:

Parish Council: <https://www.standonparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

Puckeridge village: <https://www.puckeridgevillage.co.uk/>

History: www.hertfordshire-genealogy.co.uk/data/places/places-s/standon/!-standon-frame.htm

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