



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

TAKELEY



Location: 4 miles east of Bishop's Stortford. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL5621.

Postcode CM22 6QA. **County:** Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Access:** B1256, B183. National Cycle Route 16 (Flitch Way), Regional Cycle Route 60.

Buses: (**Daily**) 42A between Stansted Airport, Great Dunmow and Chelmsford and route 133 between Stansted Airport, Great Dunmow and Braintree; (**Mon – Sat**) 7, 7A and 305 between Bishop's Stortford & Stansted Airport, 316 between Stansted Airport & Saffron Walden, 323 between Great Dunmow & Bishop's Stortford, 324 between Stebbing & Bishop's Stortford, 508 between Airport & Harlow; and (**Tuesday only**) 322 between Lindsell & Bishop's Stortford.

Population: 2,306 in 2001, 3,367 in 2011, 5,300 in 2021.

Takeley is a parish of dispersed settlements mainly to the north of the former Roman road called Stane Street. The main established settlement is Brewer's End around the crossroads of the B1256 and B183. It has a public house, housing, shops, the village hall, a take-away and a Non-Conformist chapel with its ancient graveyard.

The hamlets of Smiths Green, Bamber's Green and Takeley Street (shown here) have many ancient and beautiful houses, some dating back to the mid-14th century. All the older buildings along Takeley Street, including the pub, are on the northern side because the south side was once part of Hatfield Forest, now owned by the National Trust.



Molehill Green also has an ancient pub, pictured here but currently closed, and the source of the River Roding. There is a large new housing complex at Priors Green, mostly on the site of a former nursery. It includes the village school, a village hall and shops.



The name Takeley is of Saxon origin and means the open land, or ley, of a man called Taecca. There are very few Saxon remains, but artefacts from the Neolithic, Bronze, Iron and Roman periods have been discovered. Excavations before the expansion of Stansted Airport revealed Bronze Age settlements and an Iron Age village. A sarsen stone, which probably had great significance to the inhabitants of the Bronze Age village, was re-positioned in 2003 beside the village sign on the green at Takeley crossroads.



The church of Holy Trinity sits in an isolated position with access from the B1256. The earliest walls are Norman and contain Roman roof tiles that also exist in abundance in the original graveyard. The church was extended up to the 15th century and was heavily renovated by the Victorians. Its most impressive feature is the unusual and beautiful font cover dating from the late 15th century. The carved pulpit is from the same period. The handsome carved rood screen and chancel fittings were donated in 1912 by

Florence Ross of Hatfield Grange. The isolated position means that the church is kept locked, but a key can be obtained. The Harcamlow Way runs through the eastern side of the churchyard.

Below is a selection of the parish's historic houses.



At the top, on the left is 15th-century Josephes; on the right Street Farmhouse. They are both on the main road through Takeley Street.

So too is 16th-century Clock House on the right below. On the left is Sheering Hall in Bamber's Green, dating from the 15th century.



The thatched cottage below on the left can be found in Bamber's Green. It dates from the 17th century and, not surprisingly, is called The Old Thatch. The Cottage, on the right, is also from the 17th century and is set back from the lane through Smiths Green.



Takeley was once the site of Bassingbourne Hall, a large 16th-century house built around 1580 but demolished 200 years ago. Its former occupants included Symon Mayne, who signed Charles I's death warrant, and Sir Peter Parker, the senior naval commander of his day and first sponsor of Horatio Nelson.

Manor houses that still survive are Sheering Hall (pictured above), The Grange, Waltham Hall and Warish Hall. Warish was one of the manors given by William the Conqueror to St Valery's Priory in Picardy. The Grange, Sheering and Warish are all surrounded by moats and are set in quiet rolling countryside.

Although Stansted Airport occupies some of the parish to the west, the areas to the east remain rural. The ancient Cobbs Lane, pictured here, starts at Upper Bamber's Green and heads northeast towards Great and Little Easton.



It is difficult to imagine that from the Iron Age until the end of the 19th century Lower Bamber's Green was a busy place with many houses and industries, including pottery kilns.

Another feature that has now gone is the railway line from Braintree and Dunmow to Bishop's Stortford, but its trackway has been converted into a popular walk and cycle route, the Flitch Way, pictured here.



Takeley is a lively village with many clubs and activities, including two cricket clubs, a football club, and a recreation ground with play equipment.

Hospitality:

Four Ashes, CM22 6SB – 01279 870228 - <https://www.facebook.com/TheFourAshesTakeley/>
La Bonta, Italian, Priors Green, CM6 1HE – 01279 871989 - <https://www.labontarestaurant.com/>
Tap Hall B&B, CM22 6QS – 01279 871035 - <http://www.taphall.com/>
The Old Vicarage Guest House, CM22 6QJ – 01279 874955 - <http://www.takeleyhouse.co.uk/>
The White House B&B, CM22 6NR – 01279 956962 - <http://www.whitehousestansted.co.uk/>
The Willows Guesthouse, CM22 6PE – 01279 874838 - <https://www.thewillowsguesthouse.com/>
Three Horseshoes, Molehill Green, CM22 6PQ – CLOSED 2023, FATE UNKNOWN

Adjacent parishes: Hatfield Broad Oak, Great Hallingbury, Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham, Broxton, Little Easton, Little Canfield, Great Canfield.

Hundred Parishes Society walks include . . .

Circular walk 158 covering 5.8 miles from Takeley, including Little Canfield.

Circular walk 159 covering 5 miles from Takeley, including Hatfield Forest

Links:

Parish Council: <https://www.takeleyparishcouncil.co.uk/>

Takeley Local History Society: <http://tlhs.org.uk>

History: www.recordinguttlesfordhistory.org.uk/takeley/takeleyhistory.html

Holy Trinity Church: <https://www.tlcchurch.co.uk/>

Further reading: *Takeley: A History*, Takeley Parish Council.

Other publications are available from Takeley Local History Society