



# The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

## WHITE RODING



**Location:** 8 miles southeast of Bishop's Stortford. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL5613.

**Postcode:** CM6 1RJ. **County:** Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Access:** A1060.

**Bus:** 59 (Mon to Fri) between Chelmsford and Harlow.

**Population:** 333 in 2001, 327 in 2011, 320 in 2021.

White Roding is one of a cluster of eight settlements in west Essex, collectively known as The Rodings. Their shared history is told in the introduction to Aythorpe Roding.

White Roding is the largest and the most westerly of the Rodings parishes and has in bygone centuries been known as Magna Rodyngs and Blanche ROUNG. The 'White' of White Roding is thought to have derived from the parish church of St Martin, a flint rubble 11th-century church whose tower was constructed using a paler colour of rubble than that which predominated in the area as a whole. Craftsmanship from every century is represented in this building, from medieval stone carving, through 15th-century timber-framed porch and 16th-century embattled tower, to the relatively modern 19th-century vestry. St Martin's is tucked away off the main road through the village and not immediately obvious, but there is much to commend a visit, and it clearly remains a focal point of village life.



The parish of White Roding now embraces a further Roding which once stood separately to the north. This was Morrell Roding (see 'Further reading' below), named after a lord of the manor and owner of Cammas Hall which is now a fruit farm. Morrell Roding was recognised as a separate entity well into the 20th century, but there are no obvious indicators of its presence today.

In addition to St Martin's Church and the 16th-century Cammas Hall, there are a further 46 listed buildings around the parish of White Roding, a good number for a parish with little more than 300 inhabitants. A large number of them are moated. One such is 16th-century Colville Hall, originally a manor house and now a wedding venue. Colville Hall is a little set back from the road, while other attractive buildings can be enjoyed without a wedding invitation. They include 17th-century Dovecote Cottage, below on the left, and 19th-century Church Cottage on the right.





There are some beautiful houses and cottages to be viewed across the parish, including 18th-century The Ivy House, below on the left, and 16th-century Lucas Farmhouse on the right.



The distinctive shape of a former windmill can be seen for some distance across the open fields. It was built in 1877 on a site occupied by an earlier post mill since 1609. Its working life came to an end in the 1930s; its greatest modern-day claim to fame is that it was briefly owned in the 20th century by the actor Sir Michael Redgrave. Nearby, a giant spider on The Old Post Office succeeds in attracting attention.

As with all the Roding parishes, there is an abundance of footpaths and quiet lanes in White Roding for walkers. Those requiring a challenge might want to try part (or possibly all) of the Three Forests Way, a 60-mile long-distance path linking the ancient woodlands of Hatfield, Hainault and Epping. The path bisects the parish north-west to south-east from its origins in nearby Hatfield Forest. A lesser challenge is offered by Hundred Parishes walk 128 (see below).

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#### **Hospitality:**

Bretts Country Restaurant, CM6 1RF - 01279 876571 - <https://brettscountryrestaurant.co.uk/>

#### **Adjacent Hundred Parishes parishes:**

Hatfield Heath, Hatfield Broad Oak, Aythorpe Roding, Leaden Roding, Matching.

**Hundred Parishes Society walks**, free to download and print from this website, include two longer circular routes that could be joined as they pass through White Roding . . .

Walk 128 starts in Leaden Roding and covers 9 miles of country lanes and footpaths through three Rodings: Leaden, White and Aythorpe.

Quiet Lane Walk 316 starts in Matching Green and covers 9.6 miles of country lanes including parts of Hatfield Heath and Hatfield Broad Oak parishes without using footpaths.

#### **Link:**

Parish Council: <https://www.whiterodingpc.org.uk/>

#### **Further reading:**

White Roding Parish Plan: see the Parish Council website (above).

*Lost in Time: A Short History of Morrell Roding*, Ken Searles – see the Parish Council website.

*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/>

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