



# The Hundred Parishes

## Circular Walks – number 130

High Easter village and countryside: 3.2 miles (5 kms)

*This anticlockwise walk is fairly flat, starting and finishing on quiet lanes and with a middle section along well-defined paths. It is entirely within the parish of High Easter. In Autumn, there are numerous opportunities to pick blackberries and sloes so you may like to keep a container or bag to hand. There are no stiles. A small tea room, The Snug, is close to the start/finish, usually open from 10am to 2pm from Wednesday to Sunday (01245 230715).*

**Start and finish:** The walk starts from the car park beside the Village Hall.  
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL627148 - Postcode: CM1 4QQ.  
The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 183.  
A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

Leave the car park and return to the main road, called The Street. With care, cross to the far side and turn left along the pavement. High Easter is an extensive rural parish with the village of High Easter at its centre. *Easter* is a derivation of the Anglo-Saxon word *eowestre*, meaning *sheepfold*. Altogether the parish has around 70 listed buildings. We will pass around a quarter on the first part of the walk and will mention some as we pass.

Soon, pass the Snug Café on the right and then the depot of Lodges Coaches. This family business started in 1920 and operates a fleet of modern and vintage coaches.

Cross the entrance to Gepps Close, named after Edward Francis Gepp, JP, who died in 1903 after serving for more than 50 years as vicar of High Easter.

High Easter has a mixture of old and new dwellings. On the left, the thatched cottage with white weatherboarding, Barley Cottage, dates from the 17th century.

At the junction with a road signposted to Barnston and Dunmow keep straight ahead onto the small green, Pump Green. A lime tree, planted to commemorate the coronation of King George V in 1911, is encircled by a seat installed by Three Valleys Water in 2006. The water pump, now well preserved, served the village until the 1930s.

With care, cross The Street to the pavement and continue past 18th-century Harrington House on the left.

To the right is a cricket ground, occupying part of the former grounds of the vicarage. After the cricket field, on the right and set back from the road, The Old Vicarage is a large building with tall chimneys. It was built in 1850 for Reverend Gepp.

Just after Old Vicarage Close, Cherry Cottage and Chestnut Cottage on the left started life in the 16th century as a single house that was adapted to become the Poor House in the late 18th century. More recently, it was divided into the present pair of dwellings.

Pyms, on the right, was once the village general store.

On the left, Forge House is one of two houses built on the site of a blacksmith's forge, many of whose contents are now held by Chelmsford Museum. The next building, Anvil House, marked 1708, is listed as 17th century. This was the blacksmith's house and its garage today appropriately displays a weather vane with a blacksmith at his anvil.

The war memorial includes the names of three members of the Lodge family who fought in the First World War.

Tye Cottage on the right claims to be *circa 1375*. That is consistent with its official listing as dating from the 14th century.

On the left, The Chantry, 1847, was built as a chapel and is now a private house

High Easter's village sign, erected in 2000 AD, stands at a junction. Next to it is a Maldon Iron Works fingerpost sign. We stay on the main road round to the left, passing The Punch Bowl restaurant on the right. It was built as a house in the 16th century.

Turn right immediately after The Punch Bowl into the churchyard. The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin was built around 1100 AD, largely of local flintstone and with visible re-used flat Roman red bricks. The red-brick porch and clerestory (the upper storey of windows) were added in the 16th century. The tower is believed to date from the 15th century. The church has a Grade I listing. You are encouraged to visit if it is open.

From the church porch, retrace across the churchyard, enjoying the rear views of some of the village's older buildings including the Punch Bowl on the left. On the right, immediately before returning to the road, is The Old Post Office, built in the 15th century.

Turn right and keep to the right, immediately passing the former Cock and Bell pub on the left. It is believed to date from around 1400 AD. Next on the left, Penvites displays the date 1450 and does indeed date from the 15th century. An archway at the northern end of Penvites leads to a 16th-century house, Little Penvites.

On the right, The Meeting House looks rather like a Congregational Church and was actually a non-conformist Victorian school.

Just after the pavement ends, Lanterns on the left was once two houses dating from the 15th and 17th centuries. Next, we pass 16th-century Wild Oaks.

On the right, set back behind two ponds, is High Easter Bury, a former manor house dating from the 13th century. Soon after, Barley Barns has a collection of ancient farm vehicles beneath an 18th-century cart lodge.

Ignore the lane on the right and continue round to the left.

Old Mill, on the right, is a private house of unusual design, built in the 20th century on the foundations of an 18th-century post mill, a windmill that ceased its operations in 1906.

The next house was the 17th-century Mill House with associated bakehouse and brewhouse. The next building on the right has interesting pargetting that includes a windmill, donkey, farm horses – and, rather curiously, two men fighting with swords.

Further along on the right, 17th-century Lower House has an interesting chimney stack.

On the right, Heyrons is now residential, converted from a series of barns and farm buildings and now supported by substantial buttresses.

Pass the entrance to High Trees House, just visible through the trees.

Before the road turns right, cross with care and turn left onto a public byway, a shingle track with hedgerow on either side. This track is called Heyrons Lane and we keep along it for about half a mile, ignoring several footpaths that leave to left and right. For some distance we walk beside a deep ditch on the right.

When the main track turns sharp right, go straight ahead through a metal gate, onto a clear but narrower path that is part of Essex Way, a long-distance path. Continue along this well-defined path for nearly a mile, ignoring more footpaths off to the left and right. [Should you need to shorten the walk, any of the paths to the left will take you back to The Street and the village hall.]

When the path reaches a road, cross with care and turn left. This hamlet of High Easter is called Stagden Cross. We pass Stagden Cross Villas – of which number 4 features the figure of a stag.

Pass Rehobeth Place on the left, possibly named after a small town in Alabama, USA.

Soon after passing the High Easter welcome sign, turn left into the car park where we started.

You can read more about High Easter on [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk).

This route description, last updated 05 September 2020, was downloaded from [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to [hundredparishes@btinternet.com](mailto:hundredparishes@btinternet.com).

A diagram covering this route, based on the Ordnance Survey map, is shown on the next page. It is published under © Crown copyright 2020 OS 100062498.

