



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

HEMPSTEAD



Location: 6 miles east of Saffron Walden. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL6338.
Postcode: CB10 2PD. **Access:** B1054. **Bus:** 18 between Saffron Walden and Haverhill.
County: Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Population:** 451 in 2011.

Hempstead is a small historic village of 170 properties situated seven miles east of Saffron Walden in the north-west corner of Essex. William Harvey, who discovered the circulation of blood in the human body, and Sir Eliab Harvey, commander of the Temeraire at the battle of Trafalgar and who lived in the village, are interred in the Church crypt with many members of their families. The notorious highwayman Dick Turpin was born in the village public house.



The village nestles in a gentle dip with St Andrew's Church, set at the highest point on the secondary road leading uphill from the pub, giving it a commanding presence over the heart of the village. The main road through the village connects the towns of Haverhill and Saffron Walden and with the majority of properties running along the shallow depth between the road and the fields behind, this is known as a street village.

The Bluebell Inn is a noted landmark, standing at the T Junction in the village, opposite the recently refurbished War Memorial.

The notorious 18th-century highwayman Dick Turpin grew up here as his parents were licensees of what was then called the Bell Inn. The pub has an interesting display of literature about Turpin. See also the film archive link below.

Traditionally, the Morris Ring have visited Hempstead on the morning of the first Saturday in June.



The Village Hall is set back off the road 25 metres from the pub on the opposite side of the road. The building was used as a village school until the mid 20th century with separate boys and girls classrooms. The Hall was fully refurbished and extended with funding from the National Lottery Charities Board, Essex Environmental Trust, Essex County Council and Uttlesford District Council as a village Millennium project, with the doors opened by the oldest resident on 3rd January 2000. The 'state-of-the-art' kitchen and modern facilities make it suitable for the Radwinter Pre-School to operate here 5 mornings per week in term time, providing care and learning for youngsters from the age of 2. The local Primary School is based in Radwinter, 1.5 miles away and secondary schools are attended in Saffron Walden and beyond.

The Village Hall is the location for most village events with occasional concerts held in the church, organised by Friends of Hempstead Church whose interest is in protecting its structure and history. A booklet taking you on *A Walk Through the Centuries* of St. Andrew's church by Hazel Weedon can be purchased and a management plan of the churchyard is available in the porch. The churchyard won Best Kept Essex churchyard in 2007.



As with many small villages, Hempstead can appear quite sleepy at first glance but a host of activities, entertainments and fund-raising events take place all year round between the different clubs and societies. The Gardeners' Club holds plant sales and two traditional Village Shows per year plus walks, garden visits and guest speakers. The Amateur Dramatic Society is renowned for its high quality productions and pantomimes and there is a bellringing group (for the 6

bells in the tower), an informal art group, keep fit group and much more. There is an equestrian store but the nearest food store and Post Office are in Steeple Bumpstead, 3.5 miles to the east.

The rural setting around the village is of gentle slopes and arable farmland with several nearby woods including Hempstead Wood, one of the oldest in Essex. It is a popular destination for walkers although its 190 acres of ancient woodland are only walkable on the southern boundary, but even here in springtime you can see the lovely Oxlip which is rarely seen outside this area. Footpath maps and suggested walks are available to buy in the pub and the church.

Hospitality: The Bluebell Inn - 01799 599199 - <http://thebluebell1nn.co.uk>.

Accommodation:

B&B: High Gates House, Bumpstead Road, Hempstead, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 2PW - 01440 730035 – www.highgateshouse.co.uk

Self-catering and B&B: Batchelors Meadow, Bumpstead Rd, Hempstead, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 2PW +44 - 01440 730196 - <http://apartmentstudiothreecounties.co.uk/>

Adjacent parishes:

The Sampfords, Radwinter, Helions Bumpstead, Steeple Bumpstead, Finchingfield.

Links:

Parish Council and all parish organisations and events: www.hempstead-essex.org.uk

1961 Television archive of Hempstead and Dick Turpin: www.eafa.org.uk/catalogue/213446