



The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

TAKELEY



Location: 4 miles east of Bishop's Stortford. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL5621.
Postcode CM22 6QA. **Access:** B1256, B183. National Cycle Route 16 (Flitch Way), Regional Cycle Route 60. **Buses:** 301 and 5 Bishop's Stortford – Stansted Airport (Mon-Sat).
County: Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Population:** 3,367 in 2011.

Takeley is a parish of dispersed settlements mainly to the north of the former Roman road called Stane Street. The largest settlement now is Brewer's End at 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, and the source of the River Roding. There is a new housing complex at Priors Green that contains the village school, a hall and shops. Most of Priors Green is on the site of a former nursery.



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 on an isolated and elevated position with access from the B1256. The earliest walls are Norman and contain many of the 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.

Takeley was once the site of Bassingbourne Hall, a large 16th-century house built around 1580 but demolished 200 years ago. Its occupants had 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 exist are The Grange, Sheering Hall, 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.



An attractive walk from Bamber's Green passes through Lower Bamber's Green and follows the River Roding south to the B1256. It is difficult to imagine that from the Iron Age to 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 called the Flich Way. The former Takeley Station now offers visitors excellent light meals and drinks at reasonable prices on Thursday, 12-4pm, and Friday 9-1pm.



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, Brewer's End – 01279 870228 - www.thefourashes.co.uk

Green Man, Takeley Street – 01279 879181 - <http://thegreenmantakeley.com>

Three Horseshoes, Molehill Green – 01279 870313 - www.threehorseshoesmolehillgreen.co.uk

There are also numerous B&Bs

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

Links:

Parish Council: www.takeleypc.co.uk

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

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

Holy Trinity Church: www.tlchurch.co.uk

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

Other publications are available from Takeley Local History Society