



The Hundred Parishes

Walks between railway stations – number 4

Stansted Mountfitchet to Newport – 7.5 miles (12 kms)

Start: Stansted Mountfitchet Station (Grid Reference [GR]: TL514248). Parking in Station car park or Mountfitchet Castle car park. Public may use toilets at Stansted's Kings Arms and Yeoman's tea room.

Finish: Newport Station (GR: 522336). Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 195.

7.5 miles of paths and quiet lanes, gently undulating, with no gates or stiles to climb.

Pubs and tea rooms near start & finish and pub at Rickling Green (GR: TL511299 at 3.8 miles).

A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

Tips:

- *If travelling by train to and from the two stations it is usually cheaper to buy a return ticket for the most distant station, rather than two single tickets.*
- *This walk can be linked with walk number 5 (Newport to Audley End) to form a walk of 11 miles in total.*

Leave Stansted Mountfitchet station by the main exit (near the booking office on Platform 2), and go straight ahead along Station Road. At the junction with Chapel Hill turn left and cross with care at the pedestrian crossing. Continue up Chapel Hill, passing several interesting buildings on either side of the road. Beyond the memorial gardens, St John's Church was built in the 1880s. A seat beside the war memorial was donated by the Hundred Parishes Society in 2017. Further up, on the opposite side of Chapel Hill, The Old Courthouse was originally built in 1854 as a reading room, an early kind of library, and has since been used as a village hall, courthouse with cell and in the 1980s as a night club, before being converted into apartments. The Old Post Office served the village for 100 years until its closure at the beginning of the 21st century.

At the top of the climb, Chapel Hill meets Cambridge Road, the B1383. On the triangle at the junction there is a fountain that was given to the village in 1871 by the Gilbey family. It stands on the site of a mediaeval wayside chapel that was demolished in Victorian times. On the opposite side of the main road stands one of the largest mile irons in Essex, indicating that we are 31 miles from London. The route goes straight across Cambridge Road into Bentfield Road, but you may like to turn right for 100 metres to cross at the pedestrian crossing and then retrace, passing a few shops and a sandwich bar / café along the way.



Go down Bentfield Road, passing turnings to the left and right and, after a short rise, the road turns right. Keep on Bentfield Road, ignoring the turning on the left, Bentfield Causeway. The road twists and turns, passing Bentfield Green on the left before becoming Pennington Lane.

The pavement ends and Pennington Lane becomes a lane, skirting the last of Stansted Mountfitchet village. Stay on the lane for a kilometre. After passing some caravans and before the lane bears right, turn left past a gate onto a bridleway. After 100 metres the path divides. Take the right fork, keeping the hedge on your left. Keep straight ahead on a well-defined track for a considerable distance. Over to the right, the houses strung out along the road are in the parish of Ugley.

When the track meets a tarmac road coming in from the right, keep straight ahead on the tarmac road, soon passing Bollington House and then an entrance to some large farm buildings on the left. Keep to the right (signposted Harcamlow Way), passing Wades Hall. Keep straight ahead on the track, downhill into a dip.

The track starts to run beside a wood on the right, and after 200 metres the main track bears to the right, but this is private. Bear round to the left on the footpath, at first keeping a field on the left. Pass through woodland for 100 metres and, shortly before the wood on the right finishes, bear half right, pass a small pond on the left, and cross a ditch by a wooden bridge. Bear slightly right to follow the path diagonally across the field, passing beneath two electricity transmission lines.

When the path reaches a tarmac road, turn right past Birds End to Rickling Green, where the village sign invites you to "Reduce your speed". At the T junction, turn left past the green and cricket field on the right and the pavilion on the left. Soon, take the road to the right, signposted to Quendon and Newport. There is an opportunity for refreshment at The Cricketers Arms, just off to the right.

Continue along the road towards Quendon and Newport, crossing to use the pavement on the left side. Ignore the footpath that turns left along Long Ridge beside Spinney Cottage, pass the old parish hall on the right, and 50 metres later turn left (immediately after number 2, Woodside) onto a public bridleway. After 50 metres, follow the path round to the left, keeping houses on the left. The path keeps generally straight ahead through what is a fine bluebell wood in springtime.



The path emerges from the wood beside a house on the left. Cross a small wooden bridge and turn right onto a bridleway. This is part of the Harcamlow Way long distance path and our route runs along it for some distance. This track climbs gently with the bluebell wood on the right. Over to the left, Rickling Church may be visible in the distance, around 1.5 kilometres northwest of Rickling Green.

The bridleway leaves the wood, to descend and bear round to the left before a short sharp climb beneath a line of oak trees (shown here in autumn) to the top of Hanginghill. One can only speculate as to the origin of the name. Long ago, it was usual for gallows to be erected at busy crossroads. At the top of the hill there is today a crossing of tracks. Perhaps this was once the site of a hanging.



At the top of Hanginghill, turn right, descending and then climbing again with woodland on the right. At the top of this gentle climb, the field on the left comes to an end. Turn left, following a number of oak trees on the left. Pass through a gateway after 400 metres and almost immediately turn right onto a byway heading north.

The route descends gently for the next two kilometres. After about 1 kilometre, the path divides into two. Take the left option. The other path remains immediately on the right for some way. The route continues with woodland on the right until it bears left to cross a bridge and then bears right again. Soon afterwards, the route passes one of the oldest buildings in the Hundred Parishes, the tiny Chapel of St Helen, built in the 10th century. We are now in the parish of Wicken Bonhunt.



Soon after the chapel, pass through a gate and turn right onto a short stretch of road that was realigned when the M11 motorway was built in the 1970s. Soon, immediately before the motorway embankment, turn left onto a footpath for a short distance to join the road. Turn right, keeping to the grass verge on the right side of the road. Pass beneath the motorway and after 100 metres, just after crossing a stream, bear right into a field. Almost immediately, fork right across the field. Pass through a hedge to meet another path. Turn right and continue uphill through a strip of woodland. At the top of the rise, cross a narrow field to enter the outskirts of Newport village. Keep straight ahead across a service road to a junction, where turn right. Soon turn left, heading downhill along a residential road.

At the bottom of the hill, Frambury Lane meets the London to Cambridge Road, B1383. Cross with care, and proceed almost straight ahead down Station Road to Newport Station.

If you wish to pause before catching the train, turn left at the bottom of Frambury Lane into Newport High Street, where there are a few shops and Dorringtons tea room. About 500 metres further along there is a pub.

At the railway station, the ticket machine is on this side of the track, the platform for Cambridge. Cross the footbridge for trains heading towards London. Not all trains stop at all stations so, before boarding one, please check that it is scheduled to stop at your intended destination.

A map of the route, drawn by Glyn Kuhn for the Hundred Parishes Society, is shown on the next page.

