

7. You are now entering Hockley's conservation area. The present building of the parish church of SS Peter and Paul dates from the 12th century, but its foundation is believed to be much older. Note the remains of the rare alabaster crucifix in the west wall of the unusual octagonal tower. Set in the path outside the Tudor porch is the tombstone of William Waight (WW) who when he died in 1791 left instructions that he should be interred outside the church door as he had always been trampled upon in life and wished to receive the same treatment in death.

Hockley Hall is the site of the original manor of Hockley and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The thatched building is the old school house built in 1841 at a cost of £540. Until the last century there was a windmill to the rear of Mill House.

8. This magnificent oak tree is believed to be at least 250 years old.



Dunnocks

Hockley Hall and Crabtree Woods have a long history and the man-made banks that criss-cross them were built in ancient times to mark ownership. There are fine displays of bluebells in the spring.

10. The ancient woods of Marylands can be seen to the south and are being restored with the help of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)

11. A slight diversion to the right brings us to the mysterious Romano/British mound of Plumberow Mount. Although excavated in the last century its true purpose and origins are still unknown. There are some magnificent views and on a fine day Danbury church can be seen to the north west and the forts in the Thames to the north east.

12. The ancient manor house of Lower Hockley Hall - just visible through the trees - is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Over the centuries it has had many famous owners including Ann of Cleves the dispossessed wife of Henry VIII.

PLEASE TAKE CARE CROSSING THIS BUSY ROAD

13. Hockley marshes were formed in the last century when the land was flooded following a breach of the old sea walls (still visible). Do not venture on to the marshes as they are tidal and can be extremely dangerous. The curious ridges in the field to the left are all that remains of an old firing range.

This is the end of the walk which we hope you have enjoyed.



Hérons in flight

The Country Code

- Guard against all risk of fire
- Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs under proper control
- Keep to paths across farmland
- Avoid damaging fences, hedges and walls
- Leave no litter - take it home
- Safeguard water supplies
- Protect wildlife, wild plants and trees
- Go carefully on country roads
- Respect the life of the countryside

Walk Information

Public transport - a regular bus services runs to Ferry Road, Hullbridge, from Rayleigh

Parking - available at Hullbridge Riverside. There is none on the Hockley side of the route. Hockley church car park is private.

Toilets - there are public toilets at Hullbridge Riverside. There are none on the Hockley route

Refreshments - only from the Anchor Inn, Hullbridge Riverside.

Length of walk - approximately 3 hours

Waymarkers - the centenary walk waymarkers are branded 'HPC' (Hockley /Hullbridge Parish Council and banded in red)

Map used throughout - Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1143, 4 cm to 1 km (Burnham on Crouch)

Sensible shoes should be worn as many of the footpaths are very muddy - even in summer

Compiled by Hockley and Hullbridge Parish Councils
(for further information contact: 01702 202829)

This publication is supported by the Parish Paths Partnership which is an initiative sponsored by Essex County Council and the Countryside Commission



Hockley Parish Council



Essex County Council Highways and Transportation



COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION



Hullbridge Parish Council

Hockley and Hullbridge Parish Councils



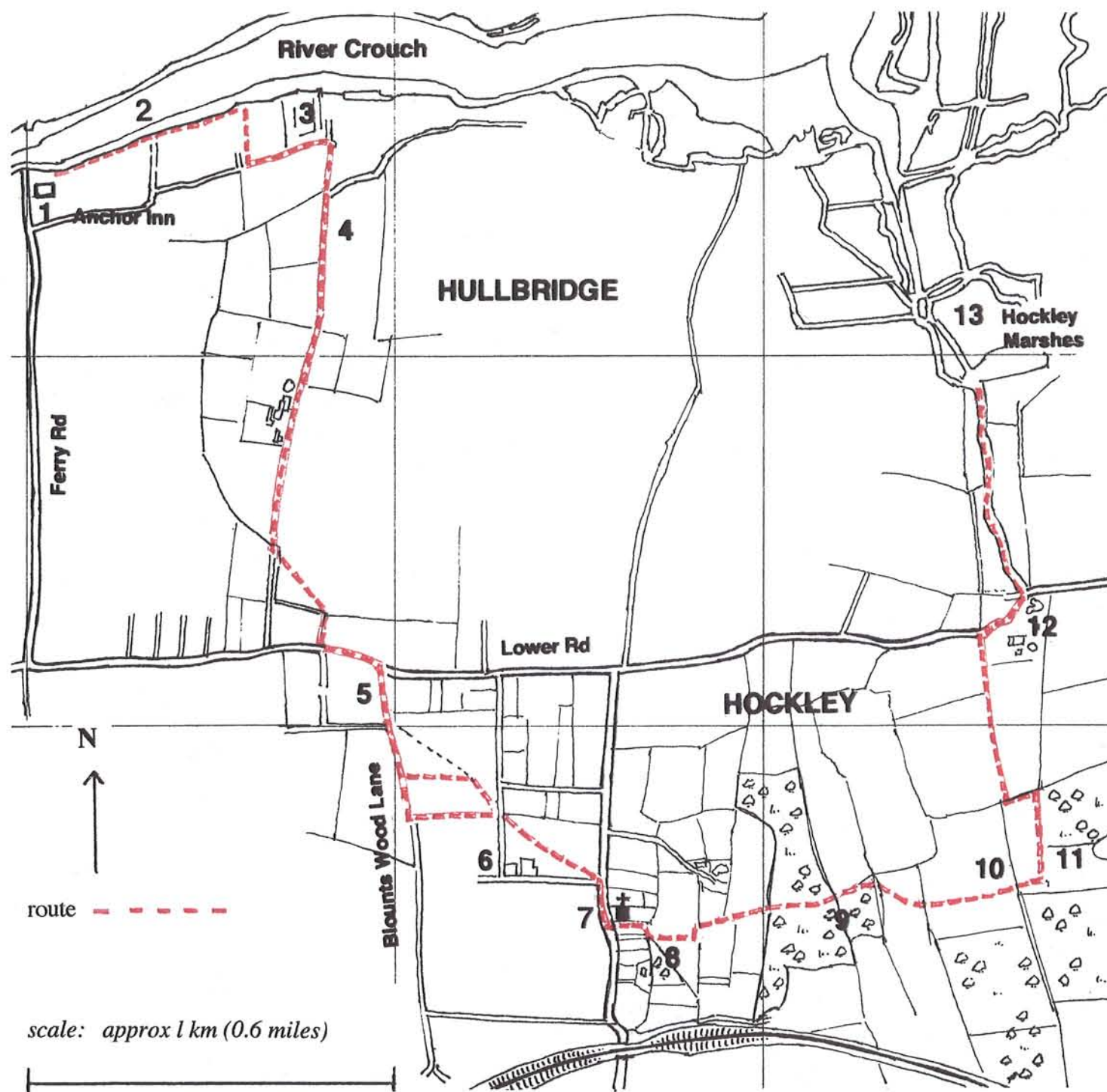
Anchor Cottages, Hullbridge

Centenary Walk
(created to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Parish Councils, 1994)



SS Peter and Paul and the Old School House, Hockley

A 5 mile walk through the parishes of Hullbridge and Hockley



The Centenary Walk

From early times until 1964 the rural communities of Hockley and Hullbridge were counted as one for administrative purposes. In 1894 the civil administration of the parish was split from the ecclesiastical vestry and it is the centenary of his event that is being celebrated in this special walk encompassing the two parishes.

The area of our walk stretches from the wetlands of the river Crouch to the hills of Hockley. It is an ancient landscape whose small regular fields and woodlands are believed to have been formed in pre-Roman times.

Points of Interest

1. Hullbridge - anciently known as Whuolebrigg (the bridge over the river Whuole) grew up around the ford and the later bridge built in medieval times. The bridge fell down in the 17th century and was replaced with a ferry which ran until the early years of this century. The Anchor Inn is the latest of the inns that have occupied this site, and nearby pilgrims crossing the river on their way to Canterbury offered up prayers at the now demolished chapel of St Thomas a Becket. The attractive Anchor Cottages are said to be at least four hundred years old.

2. This stretch of the river was once a favourite haunt of smugglers who hid their contraband in 'Brandy Hole' further down the river. Stories of smugglers' hoards abound, not least of a secret room in Hockley church. In the summer the marshes are covered in the blue flowers of the sea lavender.

On the north bank of the Crouch is the new riverside town of South Woodham Ferrers. Time was when this land belonged to the manor of Hockley and was the centre of the local salt making industry.

3. This pleasant residential park was once a brick and tile works. The 19th century owner, John Poole, is commemorated in the name of the lane and the cottage erected for his work force. (John Poole's tombstone can be seen beside the south door of Hockley church).



Swifts

4. Long Lane derives its name from Cllr Ernest Long who served on Hullbridge Parish Council from 1964 (when Hullbridge became a separate parish) to 1978. Previously it was a continuation of Pooles Lane.

PLEASE TAKE CARE CROSSING THIS BUSY ROAD



Great (left) and lesser spotted woodpecker

5. Blounts Wood Lane is a greenway (ancient road) which leads to the early medieval manor of Blounts Farm, now the other side of the railway. The parish boundary runs down the centre of the lane.

6. Wadham Park Farm gets its name from Wadham College, Oxford, which once owned all the land in the area and to this day is responsible for the living of Hockley Church.