

## Local History

It is difficult to separate the early history of Hockley from the two adjoining villages of Hawkwell and Hullbridge as the development of each community was much dependant on the other.

The earliest evidence of local habitation was of a Neolithic settlement at Hullbridge, understandably in that area because of the ease of access between river and land. However by gradually relinquishing dependence upon the river and the acquisition of agricultural skills, development took place a little inland on the wooded slopes of the River Crouch, thus forming the first communities that were to become Hockley and Hawkwell.

The name of Hockley, which over the years has been spelt in a myriad of ways, possibly emanated from either the ownership of land by a person called Hocca or alternatively meaning a high field. If the latter possibility was correct it would probably have been when the village was centred around the parish church which is situated on a hill.

Following the first millennium and the survey for the 'Domesday Book', all three villages were fairly well established but with farming and river-working being the main local employment, life was not easy in the locality. The land was difficult to work, there was a lack of clean drinking water and because of the 'Ague' or malaria as we know it, life expectancy locally was comparatively short. Even allowing for the introduction of modern farming methods, in 1831 there were less than 800 people residing in the Hockley and Hullbridge area.

160 years ago, there was hope that prosperity might be on the way to Hockley: in 1843 a medicinal spring was discovered and a pump room, Spa and hotel were built. Sadly it was too late, as the fashion for 'taking the waters' had passed and Hockley had to wait another 50 years for the arrival of the Railway, which was to dramatically change the village and the local way of life.

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The arrival of the Railway meant that Hockley was now readily accessible to London & all the towns in between; local landowners, farmers and businessmen were not slow in realising the opportunities that would occur through local housing development. Thus as the demand for housing grew, especially following both world wars, the housing boom began to affect Hockley. However not everybody that bought in the village moved here -- a good number of people purchased plots for weekends and holidays and thus became part of a way of life, popular in the south east of Essex, and known as "Plotlanders".

The centre of the village gradually moved nearer to the Railway Station and from the mid 1950's significant development saw the population begin to increase and has moved from around 3,000 at that time to approximately 10,000 at present.

Unfortunately it has only been possible to offer the briefest of information and history relating to Hockley and the surrounding area, but should your appetite have now been whetted, there is a publication available entitled "Hockley, Hullbridge & Hawkwell Past". The author is a local resident and the book can be obtained through the local parish library.

The rest, as they say, is history - Hockley has grown substantially over the last few years and the Parish Council is keen to ensure that all local developments including the current make over of the Village Centre reflect the wishes of the residents.

This leaflet has therefore been produced to promote our local footpaths and now you have read the "talk" - what about doing the "walk"?! The footpaths are your local heritage - please do go out and walk them and enjoy a little piece of local history --there is a lot of it out there!



### Follow the Country Code

- Guard against all risk of fire
  - Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs under proper control
- Keep to the 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

If you require this publication in an alternative format, please contact:

Hockley Parish Council  
Tel: 01702 207707

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Essex County Council

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## HOCKLEY FOOTPATHS

**Footpath 2 (862 mtrs) (Jubilee Walk)** Probably the prettiest route in the parish. Starts very adjacent to the Water Trough at the junction of High Road and Fountain Lane and runs northwards to the railway thereafter joining up with **FP1 Hullbridge**.

**Footpath 3 (242 mtrs) (Jubilee Walk)** Runs from the High Road southwards along Bullwood Hall Lane towards the women's prison until joining **FP49 Rayleigh**; follow this path to Hockley Woods ---good views and some old houses to admire.

**Footpath 4 (121 mtrs)** Short path between Hawthorne Gardens and Folly Lane, linked to **FP37**.

**Footpath 5 (1733 mtrs) (Centenary Walk/Jubilee Walk)** Attractive route through Blounts Farm (do not be deterred by the 'Private Property' sign at the entrance--the owners are very amenable). The path runs north westerly through the farm, across the railway and thereafter northwards to Lower Road, passing **FP's 26 & 7** and is the parish boundary with Hullbridge.

**Footpath 7 (665 mtrs) (Centenary Walk)** Runs eastwards from **FP5** meeting with **FP26** and then south easterly across the fields, over the stiles (mind the horses and please close the gates) joining Church Road adjacent to the Parish Church. An opportunity to visit the church which shouldn't be missed.

**Footpath 10 (945 mtrs) (Centenary Walk/Jubilee Walk)** A pleasant walk from Folly Lane northwards along Folly Chase, through the shaded path to the Parish Church, and an route crossing the railway via the recently rebuilt 'British Railways' footbridge, and passing **FP's 11, 22, 33 & 31**.

**Footpath 11 (832 mtrs) (Jubilee Walk)** An attractive walk covering the essentials of earlier and quieter times - a route between two small bluebell woods, the Church and a public house - the path runs from the Bull PH on Main Road northwards towards the parish church via Folly Wood and crossfield to the copse and railway line where it joins with **FP10**.

**Footpath 12 (1053 mtrs) (Centenary Walk)** This route runs westwards from **FP13** crossfield, providing some attractive views from the railway to the River Crouch. The path winds through two ancient woods, Crabtree and Hockleyhall, eventually finishing at the junction with **FP's 22 & 33**, very adjacent to the Church and where again there are more panoramic views to the river.

**Footpath 13 (1929 mtrs) (Centenary Walk)** Runs northwards from Spa Road in the village shopping centre, across the railway, through Marylands Wood and on to the headland path along the western boundary of the Marylands Nature Park --do find time to walk around the park. The path continues northwards passing the junction with **FP12** and taking you near to Plumberow Mount and Plumberow Wood. This part of the route may be diverted in the near future to pass somewhat closer to Plumberow Mount and Wood but any change will be clearly indicated. Continue along the path until it finishes at the busy Lower Hockley Road.

**Footpath 14 (577 mtrs)** A leafy route from the entrance to Hockley Woods and following a south easterly direction around the perimeter of Great Bull Wood - part of Hockley Woods - and finishing in Woodlands Road. The route was probably an extension of **FP11** joining with **FP15** at the eastern parish boundary before the building development in nearby Woodpond Avenue.

**Footpath 15 (274 mtrs)** Another short pathway southwards from opposite the Spa Hotel through the car park to Kilwood Avenue. Before the development of Hockley village centre this path was probably an extension of **FP13** and continued southwards towards Hawkwell and eventually Southend.

**Footpath 16 (210 mtrs)** Short pathway running northwards from Greensward Lane beside the secondary school where it joins with **FP1** Ashingdon and continues gradually uphill, finishing in Beckney Wood.

**Footpath 22 (718 mtrs)** The path runs eastwards from Church Road along the drive to Madingley Lodge and Vicarage Farm swinging to the south and passing **FP's 23, 12 and 33** and meeting **FP10** just before the railway.

**Footpath 23 (371 mtrs)** One of the older paths in the parish, running from the Church past **FP31**, through the graveyard, over the field to the Old Vicarage, where it joins with **FP22**.

**Footpath 26 (234 mtrs) (Centenary Walk)** A short path running between Blountswood Lane **FP5** - the western parish boundary - and **FP7**.

**Footpath 31 (46 mtrs)** A short path through the Parish Churchyard linking **FP's 10** and **23**.

**Footpath 33 (134 mtrs) (Centenary Walk)** Short but scenic path, south of the parish church linking **FP's 10, 22 & 33**. Admire the Great Oak, over 250 years old!

**Footpath 34 (28 mtrs)** Shortest parish path runs between High Road and Woodside Close.

**Footpath 35 (64 mtrs)** Links eastern end of Broad Walk with the unmade part of White Hart Lane.

**Footpath 37 (90 mtrs)** Path runs northwards from High Road to Hawthorne Gardens, linked to **FP4**.

**Footpath 38 (77 mtrs)** Runs behind the properties on the south of Station Road in a south easterly direction between Spa Road and Great Eastern Road.



# Hockley Parish Footpaths Routes



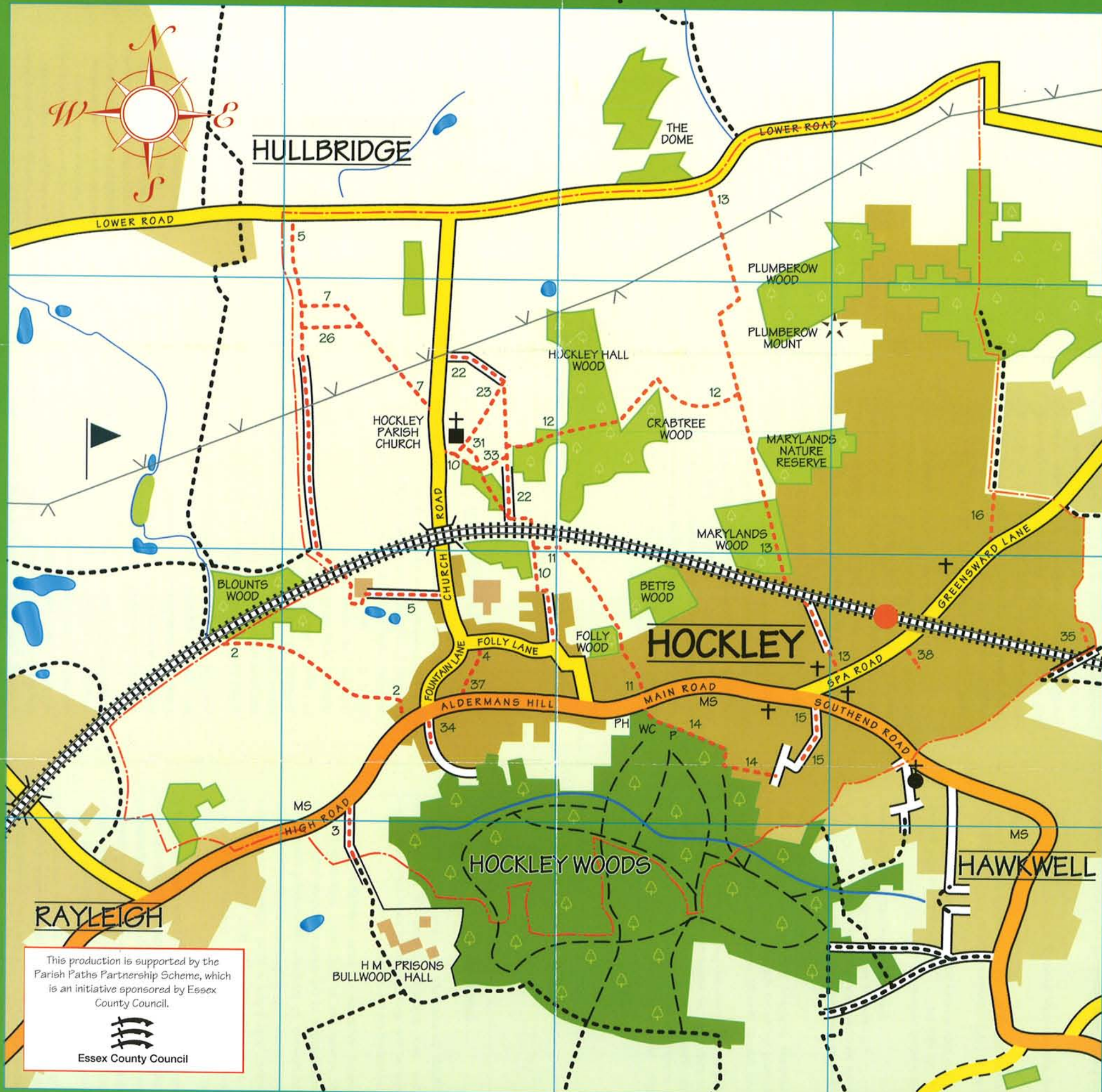
Blounts Farm & Hockley Parish Church - FP2



Water Trough - Fountain Lane - FP's 2 & 34



South Lodge - Bullwood Hall Lane - FP3



Hockley Parish Church - FP's 10 & 23



Old School House - FP's 10 & 23



The Bull PH - Hockley Woods & FP's 14 & 15

## Footpaths

All the footpaths in Hockley excluding the paths in Hockley Woods, with the exception of one, are Definitive Public Rights of Way. These paths are marked on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Essex relating to Hockley and are all officially numbered as shown on this map.

With the exception of FP14, the paths in Hockley Woods are 'Permissive' routes and although open to the public, are not Definitive Public Rights of Way. Whilst unlikely these routes could be closed at any time and it is customary to close them for at least one day a year, usually Boxing Day. This is if a landowner does not wish to dedicate a path as a Definitive Public Rights of Way.

This production is supported by the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme, which is an initiative sponsored by Essex County Council.



## Legend

- Parish Boundary .....
- Hockley Public Footpaths .....
- Other Parish Public Footpaths .....
- Permissive Rights of Way (Hockley Woods) .....
- Public House ..... PH
- Public Toilet ..... WC
- Golf Course .....
- Parking ..... P
- Pylons - National Grid .....
- Milestone ..... MS
- Church .....

Copies of this publication, which includes a description of the individual footpaths are available free of charge from the Library or Parish Clerk in the office behind the Parish Hall - 01702 207707. Leaflets for other local walks, especially the Centenary & Jubilee Walks are also obtainable from the above.