

A Short History

High Easter is located in central Essex, some seven miles north west of the County City of Chelmsford, and four miles south of Great Dunmow. The village is situated approximately 75 metres above sea level and lies just west of the source of the River Can, which flows south eastwards from the village to meet the River Chelmer in Chelmsford.

High Easter developed as a linear settlement to the east of the Parish Church and was known as "High Estra" before the Norman Conquest. "High" because of its elevated position, and also to distinguish the village from its neighbour - Good Easter - which is situated one and half miles to the south. "Estra" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning "sheepfold". The village was also latterly known as "High Easton".

Before the conquest High Estra belonged to Ely Abbey, but at the time of the Conquest it was seized by Algor, the constable of the army. He was dispossessed by William the Conqueror who gave the Parish to Geoffrey de Mandeville. The principal Manor is called "High Easterbury", which is situated to the south-west of the Parish Church. This important house was formerly held by the Earls of Essex and the Fitz-Piers, Bohun and Stafford families.

Village Setting

High Easter is essentially a linear street village situated along a low ridge between two tributaries of the River Can that comprises gently undulating farmland under intensive arable cultivation. In a village setting of this nature, hedgerows and trees are important visual elements in the countryside. The lanes leading into the village are bordered by good hedges. Two are protected lanes (School Lane and Slough Road) and their hedgerows form an important part of the historic landscape character.

The belt of trees along Parsonage Brook to the north of the village plays an important role in emphasising the local topography and provides an attractive landscaped setting when entering the village from the north. The trees at Parsonage and around the cricket ground considerably enhance the attractiveness of these areas, which is emphasised by the rising ground as the road heads southwards towards Pump Green.

The historic core of the village is situated at its western end, around the Parish Church of St Mary's, High Easterbury (manor house), the Punch Bowl, Cook and Bell House, the Old Post Office and the group of cottages south of Cook and Bell House. This area is also a key part of the village Conservation Area, which was designated for its special architectural and historic interest.



The Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways in the Parish of High Easter

Produced by High Easter Parish Council (2012)

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

High Easter has many miles of public rights of way consisting of footpaths (for walkers only), bridleways (for walkers, cyclists and horse riders), and byways (for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and vehicles). If you're not already a regular user you might be surprised at how quickly these rights of way can take you out into the surrounding countryside, with its attractive views, wildlife and relative tranquility.

This guide has been produced to help you explore the network of paths around High Easter and the maps enable you to plan your route and to take in some of the oldest lanes and footpaths in Essex. We hope that when you use the paths you will find them clear, well-marked and with a good surface. Both the County Council and landowners have a duty to keep the paths in good condition. You can help by letting the Parish Clerk know of any problems that you find (see email address below).

Of course users have responsibilities too: you must keep to the official path wherever possible, and remember that the wide field margins, which are becoming more common, are not necessarily public paths. Although you have a 'right of way' you are walking or riding on someone else's property so please respect it. If you are exercising your dog, please keep it under control and clear up after them, just as you would on a public road.



High Easter at Work

The Parish is a thriving community and as well as being home for over 1,300 people, it includes a number of successful local businesses, which are listed below:

- The Village Post Office & Cafe - 01245 231230
- The Punch Bowl Restaurant - 01245 231222 www.thepunchbowl.co.uk
- The Spotted Dog, Free House and Shop - 01245 231598
- Great Garnetts Farmers Market and Shop - 01245 231331 www.greatgarnetts.co.uk
- Lodge Coaches, The Garage - 01245 231262 www.lodgecoaches.co.uk
- R C Boreham & Co. Agricultural Equipment - 01245 231320 www.rcboreham.co.uk
- Sellens Engineering Ltd, Motor Engineers, The Garage - 01245 231366
- Maldens Barn Wedding & Function Venue - 01245 231363 www.maldensbarn.com
- Christmas Wrapped Up, Hill Farm - 01245 231722 www.christmaswrappedup.co.uk
- Ian J Perry, Building & Property Maintenance - 01245 231511
- Martin Alvin, Plumbing & Heating Services - 01245 231996
- Andrew Clarke, Tree Surgeon (Treeology) - 01245 231334
- Acres Landscaping & Maintenance - 01245 231277
- Acorns Equine Clinic - Conor Fensholt FRCVS - 01245 231152
- Imprint, Poplars Farm - 01245 231670
- Radius 360 (Training Company) - 01245 231488
- Martin Speller, French Polisher - 01245 231295
- Derek Tuttlebury - Architectural Drawings & Plans - 01245 231242
- P.S. Planning & Design - Town Planning Consultancy - 01245 231337

High Easter Parish Council usually meets on the first Monday of every month to discuss Parish matters. The Parish Clerk can be contacted by email: highesterpc@gmail.com.



The photograph above shows "The Punchbowl", viewed from St. Mary's churchyard, which dates from the 15th century. The property was a public house from the mid 16th century until 1923, although since 1976 it has been a well-known restaurant. The Roman brick quoin detailing on the Church can be seen on the left.



The Parish Church of St Mary's has its origins in the 12th century, although it is thought that it could date back to Saxon times. It incorporates a wide Norman nave and chancel and the east elevation has quoins of Roman brick. The height of the nave was raised in brick in the 16th century and given three-light clerestory windows and battlements - the line of the older, steeper roof can be seen on the tower's east face. The south porch was also added at this time.

The Church consists of nave, north aisle, chancel, south porch, tower and 19th century vestry. The nave has a north arcade of c.1400 and of 4 bays inserted in the 12th century wall. The columns are octagonal with moulded capitals and bases and the arches are 2 centred and of 2 hollow chamfered orders. The south wall has 3 c.1400 windows, largely rebuilt, and traces of a 12th century window with semi-circular arch. The south doorway is 12th century with plain jambs, semi-circular arch and grooved and hollow chamfered impost. The door is 15th century with plain battens and 3 strap-hinges and sexfoil scutcheon.

A central internal feature of the Church is the 14th century font, which has an octagonal bowl, the faces carved alternately with angels holding shields and with symbols of the Evangelists. It is of a stem octagonal type with shaped stops and lead lining with scratched inscription and date 1594. There are fragments of 14th century or 15th century stained glass in south window of nave. The Church is a Grade 1 listed building of national importance for its special architectural, historic and landscape importance (see below).

THE LISTED BUILDINGS OF HIGH EASTER

Buildings and other structures that are considered to have special architectural or historic interest are "listed" by the Government. These "Listed Buildings" enjoy special protected status under Planning law to ensure that their character and important features are preserved. The buildings within High Easter Parish that are listed, are set out below in alphabetical order:

- Anvil House (Grade II) The Street; Barn 10m to South West of Stagden Cross Farmhouse (Grade II) The Street; Barn 20 Metres South of the Hill (Grade II) High Easter; Barn 30 Metres South of Crops (Grade II); Barn 35 Metres North of Greens Farmhouse (Grade II); Barn 50 Metres North East of the Parsonage Farmhouse (Grade II); Barn 5m West of the Labourers Rest (Grade II); Barn at Birds (22 Metres to North East) (Grade II) Bishop's Green; Barn at Great Garnetts Farm, Immediately South of the Gate House, Cartledge and Outbuildings (Grade II); Barn at Little Garnefts (32 Metres to South West) (Grade II); Birds (Grade II) Bishop's Green; Blakes (Grade II); Braids (Grade II); Brewhouse 5 Metres East of Blakes (Grade II); Cherry Cottage, Chestnut Cottage (Grade II) The Street; Chimballs (Grade II); Cook and Bell (Grade II) The Street; Cottage (Hilly Ley) 40 Metres North West of the Parsonage Farmhouse (Grade II); Cottons Cottage (Grade II) The Street; Crippings Farmhouse (Grade II); Cromps (Grade II); Ellis Farmhouse (Grade II); Games Farmhouse (Grade II); Gatehouse, Cartledge and Outbuildings at Great Garnetts Farm (Grade II); Granary and Cartledge 30 Metres North West of Greens Farmhouse (Grade II); Greens Farmhouse and Attached Front Garden Walls (Grade II); Harpers (Grade II); Heyrons (Grade II); High Easterbury (Grade II); Hopkins Farmhouse (Grade II); School Lane; Houseground (Grade II); Lanterns (Grade II) The Street; Little Garnetts (Grade II); Little Penvites (Grade II) The Street; Lower House Cottage (Grade II); Lower House Farmhouse (Grade II); Maiyons (Grade II); Markhams Cottage (Grade II); Motts Green Farmhouse (Grade II); Mudwall (Grade II); Parish Church of St. Mary (Grade II) The Street; Pentlow End (Grade II); Penvites (Grade II); Poplar Cottage (Grade II); Poplars Farmhouse (Grade II); Ramseys (Grade II); Randalls (Grade II); School Lane; Reylands (Grade II); Rolles Farmhouse (Grade II); Sawkins (Grade II); School View Cottage and Chapel House (Grade II); Slyces (Grade II) High Easter Road; Smarts (Grade II); Spoozers (Grade II); Spotted Dog Public House (Grade II) Bishop's Green; Stagden Cross Farmhouse (Grade II); Thatched Cottage (Grade II) The Street; The Cottage (Grade II) School Lane; The Hill (Grade II); The Labourers Rest (Grade II); The Mill House with Attached Bakehouse/Brewhouse (Grade II) Slough Road; The Old Beer House (Grade II); The Old Mill (Grade II) The Street; The Old Post Office (Grade II) The Street; Tye Cottage (Grade II) The Street; Upper Harveys (Grade II); Wild Oaks (Grade II) The Street; Yew Tree Farm, Barn Approximately 20 Metres South of Farmhouse (Grade II).

Further information on the Listed Buildings of England can be found on the "Images of England" website: www.imagesofengland.org.uk and on the English Heritage website: www.english-heritage.org.uk.