



Stansted Mountfitchet

Stansted Mountfitchet is a large parish situated in the pleasantly undulating countryside of North West Essex and close to the borders of Hertfordshire. It contains several cottages and farmhouses of medieval and Tudor times, a few nice Georgian frontages, a Windmill and quite a number of interesting Victorian buildings as well as houses of more recent origins. There have been signs of human activity since the Stone Age and of human habitation since the

Middle Bronze Age. Later there were substantial Roman and Saxon settlements. The name Stansted is Saxon in origin, compounded of two Saxon words, "Stan" a stone and "Sted" a place. In the 11th century, William the Conqueror granted the lordship of the Manors of Stansted and Bentfield to the Gernon family, who were succeeded by the Montfitchets – their name is derived from Montfiquet in Normandy. The family name was later incorporated into the place name.

At some point a motte and bailey castle was built (a mound with a keep and an open space within an outer wall). The mound and a section of the stone wall remain to this day and form part of a major tourist attraction – Mountfitchet Castle and Toy Museum. In the 19th century the railway came to Stansted, making the village quite accessible to London, and the present Stansted Hall was built to house the valuable art collection of the wealthy Fuller Maitland family who left the village in 1922.

In the south east part of the parish is Stansted Airport. Despite being fairly close to such a major development the parish has many lovely rural walks and peaceful vistas – well worth exploring! Descriptions of some further walks can be found on the Parish Council Website. www.stansted.net

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this leaflet Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. We would like to thank The Vine at Linden House whose support made the publication of this leaflet possible.

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Stansted Mountfitchet

Village Trail



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL



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The Stansted Mountfitchet village trail is a circular walk of the village which can be done in an hour. If you have the time and energy there are two extension loops suggested which will guide you around some very attractive areas on the edge of the village.

www.stansted.net

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Trail

1 Kings Arms Hotel – note the list of past publicans.

Make your way up Chapel Hill.

2 Stansted Free Church, formerly the United Reformed Church. Current building dates from 1864 but the original church was built in 1698.

3 Memorial Gardens where the village war memorial is sited.

Before crossing the road to Recreation Ground look back down the hill and across the valley to get an impressive view of Stansted Hall Park. Turn left into Recreation Ground.

4 The Recreation Ground is an open space maintained by the Parish Council. There is a memorial commemorating the donation of the land to the village by William Fuller Maitland in 1867. This is a great place to get a photogenic view of Stansted's iconic windmill.

Take the footpath, known locally as a twitchell, to Millside.

5 Stansted Windmill dates from 1787 and has ancient monument status. It last worked in 1910 and was given to the village in 1935 by Lord Blyth. The old miller's house is to the west of the mill and there is a row of nineteenth century workers' cottages opposite.

Proceed down Mill Hill and cross Silver Street. Turn to your right and head for the centre of the village.

6 The village sign was erected for the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee. The Knight depicted is the second Richard de Montfichet, and the date 1215 is shown because he was one of the 25 barons chosen to make King John observe Magna Carta.

7 Linden House (see back cover).

8 The cast iron mile post may be the largest in Essex.

9 The Wood Grill started life as the Bell Coaching Inn which then became the Bell and Feathers Inn.

10 There are a number of period properties located on both sides of the road including Forge House, Potts Cottage and York Cottage.

Cross the road and make your way back towards the fountain.

11 The Greens Building. There has been a shop on this site since at least 1687, when Quaker John Day started trading here. The Greens took over in 1840 and the business continued to trade here until 1980.

12 Western House – impressive seventeenth century (C17) house.

13 The four column McFarlane Victorian drinking fountain erected in 1871 was presented to the village by Henry and Walter Gilbey.

Proceed down Chapel Hill.

14 Behind the Friends Meeting House is an old burial ground with some traditional headstones that have local interest.

15 The old summer house incorporates timbers from the original chapel from which Chapel Hill takes its name.

16 Central Hall, now the Old Court House, was built in 1854 to house the Stansted Literary Institution. It was later used for some time as a court house.

Turn left into St John's Road.

17 No.1 St John's Road is an early nineteenth century stuccoed house and former vicarage.

18 The Church of St. John the Evangelist was designed by W.D. Caroe and built in 1889.

Turn right into Burnells Way and then proceed down the twitchell to Lower Street which contains a number of historic properties.

19 No.61 – Brewery House – C18 red brick house with a number of interesting architectural features.

20 Dog and Duck public house – fine example of Essex weather boarding.

21 No.47 – C19 iron casements with glazing bars and "Gothic" arched top panes. Doorway has ogee shaped canopy.

22 No.45 – The Old Bakery – original carved bargeboards.

23 Chimneys Guest House – takes its name from the unusual central chimney.

24 No.29 – The Porch dates from medieval times.

25 No.38 – Jubilee Building – note Queen Victoria's head on the crest under the eaves.

26 No.32 – Former Corn Merchant's.

27 No.11 – The Tudor House – C16. Interesting carved panels with crowned roses.

28 No.9 – Savages – Impressive C16 gabled house, formerly a wine shop.

29 Queen's Head – public house that dates back to the seventeenth century.

30 Mountfitchet Social Club – Given to the village in 1888 by Henry Parry Gilbey.

31 Mountfitchet Castle and Toy Museum. Reconstructed Norman Castle and a large collection of historic toys.

Bentfield Green Extension Loop

Proceed down Cooper's Alley, cross Bentfield Gardens and continue up the alley to Bentfield Road and turn left.

32 There are a number of attractive period residential properties on the left-hand side including The Willows, White Cottage and Widdershins.

Turn right into Bentfield Causeway. There is a small thatched cottage on the left-hand corner and a number of other attractive properties from different periods in Stansted's history.

33 At the top of the The Causeway you come to Bentfield Upper Green which is fringed by a number of interesting and historic residential buildings. Cross the green to take in the village pond and then pass the play area towards Bentfield Lower Green.

34 The Rose & Crown. This was built c1879 on the site of three cottages. It was originally named the Waggoners and later the Coach & Horses before becoming the Rose & Crown.

35 Thatched cottage. It is understood to be around 500 years of age, probably starting its life as an Essex Hall House.

36 Wealden House, dating back to 1498, which makes it probably the oldest house in Stansted.

Turn right into Bentfield Road.

37 Laundry Cottage, which was part of the Hargrave estate and dealt with their washing as the name implies.

Continue along Bentfield Road until you come to the Coopers Alley twitchell. Turn left and make your way back to Cambridge Road.

St Mary's Church Extension Loop

Make your way up Church Road.

38 Bridge House, said to be one of the oldest houses in the village.

39 The Gatehouse, former lodge to Stansted Hall.

Continue past The Gatehouse and bear left taking the footpath/drive.

40 Manor House was once the vicarage.

41 Stansted Hall, built by the Fuller Maitlands in the 1870s and now the home of the Arthur Findlay College, the headquarters of the Spiritualists' National Union.

42 The Church of St Mary the Virgin. The church was built by the Montfichets and dates back to about 1120. It contains two exceptional 17th-century tomb figures of Hester Salusbury and her father, Sir Thomas Myddelton.

Go past the churchyard and cemetery and turn right down Church Road.

43 Fullers House on your left – former almshouses.

