

Lambourne History

Abridge is the only substantial village in the Parish of Lambourne. It takes its name from the bridge crossing the River Roding, which has been an important crossing for centuries. On the Sextons Map of Essex, 1576, it is marked as Heybridge.

The oldest buildings in Abridge are the Roding Restaurant and Roding House which date back to Medieval times.

St Mary's and All Saints Church was the only church near Abridge until 1836. Until this time villagers had to walk three miles to get to church using footpaths as there were no direct roads.



Lambourne Parish is also home to Stapleford Tawney Aerodrome. It was opened in 1933 as a base for Hillman Airways using Biplanes to fly to Europe. Hillman was bought up by Whitehall Security Corporation Ltd and merged with three other airlines to form British Airways in 1936. The RAF took over Stapleford Tawney Aerodrome during World War II, to use as a satellite station for North Weald.



Bluebells in Ape's Grove

About the Walk



St Mary's and All Saints Church

The Lambourne Woods Country Walk is a pleasant six mile walk around the ancient woodlands of Hainault and Lambourne and will take about 4 hours to complete. Start from the Hainault Forest carpark opposite the Miller and Carter pub, Manor Road, RM14 1NH.

The footpaths are in good condition but these may become muddy after wet weather. Sturdy footwear is advised. There is a small amount of road walking involved, please be aware of traffic and take care whilst walking on the road. As you walk please follow the Country Code. Keep dogs on a lead near livestock, and keep to the footpath when walking across privately owned land.

For any footpath queries please contact Essex County Council on 08457 430 430.

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Lambourne Country Walk



The Squires Oak

Photo credit Martin Rogers

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Points of Interest

1. Hainault Forest

Hainault Forest is one of the best surviving medieval hunting forests left in England. It is dominated by veteran hornbeam forests left in England. It is dominated by veteran hornbeam pollards and is managed by the Woodland Trust.

2. The Squires Oak

The Squires Oak is believed to be the oldest oak in Hainault Forest at well over 250 years old. It is 4.8m in girth and was last pollarded 150 years ago. It is called the Squires Oak because the trunk of the tree was owned by the Squire (Lord of the Manor) and tenants were allowed to harvest the branches after they had been lopped.

3. London City Council Boundary Marker

London County was a county of England between 1889 and 1965 and it encompassed the area now known as Inner London. In 1965 the London Government Act 1963 replaced London County with Greater London.



4. Featherbed Lane

Featherbed Lane is an ancient green lane and a Local Wildlife Site Ep102. These lanes have been used by the public for hundreds of years. The lane provides ecological connectivity between the woodlands of Abridge and Lambourne and Hainault Forest. It allows wildlife to travel relatively undisturbed between woodlands. As you walk down Featherbed Lane you can also see an example of hedge-laying, an ancient art used to keep fields stock proof. It also helps to prolong the life of the hedge.



5. Conduit Wood

Conduit Wood is one of six woods which make up the Lambourne Estate. An invertebrate survey was conducted in 2010 and found seven nationally scarce insects and one species listed as vulnerable in the Red Data Book. Two of the nationally scarce species are found in Conduit Wood: the Brown Tree Ant and a species of Crane-fly.

6. Jubilee Plantation

Jubilee Plantation is the only planted woodland on the estate. It is believed to have been planted in 1935 to mark George V's silver jubilee. Species in this woodland include Ash, Sweet Chestnut, Hornbeam, Hawthorn, Horse Chestnut and Wild Cherry.

7. Apes Grove

Apes Grove is home to the Estate's only known Wild Service Tree. This species is relatively rare in Britain and is confined to pockets of Ancient Woodland. The fruit of the Wild Service Tree was traditionally used as a herbal remedy for colic, the Latin name *Sorbus torminalis* means "Good for colic". Before the introduction of hops the fruit was used to flavour beer. The bark of the Wild Service Tree has a chequered effect caused by the bark peeling off in places. This is one of the theories as to where the pubs with the name Chequers comes from.



Wild Service Tree. Apes Grove.

8. Soapley's Wood

The walk beside Soapley's Wood is part of a path between the church and Abridge village made by deed of gift to the parish when the original footpath was blocked by the landowner in 1589.

9. St Mary's and All Saints Church and Lambourne Hall

Lambourne Hall was developed from a 16th century building and St Mary's and All Saints Church dates from the 12th century. Evidence of old Norman doors dating back to 1120 AD can still be seen on the north and south walls of the nave. The Cedar in the Churchyard entrance is one of the 50 Favourite Trees. The Church is open during the day for visitors. Please do not enter if there is a service in progress.