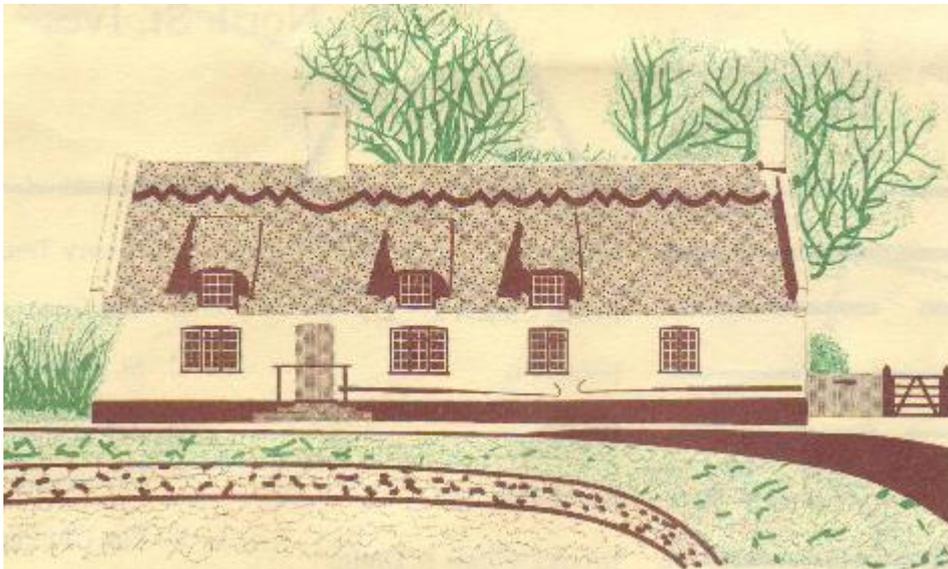


WALKS AROUND

WOODHURST

With Walks To Woodhurst from North St. Ives

Woodhurst is situated on the verge of an elevated tract of table land four miles north of St. Ives. Its footpaths vary from leafy lanes to broad vistas over the Ouse Valley.



This Leaflet is published by Woodhurst Parish Council supported by the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme.

Walk round the village of Woodhurst

The village of Woodhurst was until the 1920s, houses and farms, a shop, a church, a blacksmith and a few pubs built around a road shaped like a squashed ring. Since then five roads with houses on them have been built into the ring. Luckily there has been no road across the ring, or any ribbon development on the roads leading to the village. It is interesting to walk round the village (just about a mile). If you start at West End where the road from the A141 meets the village there are five houses and bungalows facing. The three houses were built in the early 1820s on land outside the boundary of the meadow. Take the left road and round the corner on the left hand side is Cherry Tree House. (A) This building is at least 200 years old and for some time in the middle 1800s was a beer house called 'The Sun', next but one to this is the old blacksmith's workshop.

Walk down the road until you reach The Limes on your left. (B) This house, set back a little from the road, was built in 1843 on land given by Sir John Pelly, Lord of the Manor, to be a school for the education of poor children of Woodhurst and Old Hurst. When the school closed in the 1880s it became a house for the curate from St Ives who looked after the churches of the two villages. It is now a private house. Opposite The Limes is a new close of houses called Harradine Close. An archaeological survey, carried out before the houses were built, found a number of skeletons including one near the road, aligned north/south with the skull buried near the feet. Pottery was also found dating from Roman times. Harradine Farm Cottage and Harradine House are adjacent to Harradine Close. The Cottage was for many years a farmhouse, Harradine House was a public house called the 'Half Moon and Stars'.

The Church of St John the Baptist is on the other side of the road. (C) The oldest part of the church dates from the 12th century. It has an interesting pepper-pot bell tower but unfortunately only one bell remains, dating from 1626. Opposite is 'Church View', at one time a pub called 'The Farmer's Boy' and the next house, St John's House built in the 1860s was built as a pub called 'The Traveller's Arms'. Church Lane, which connects Church Street to South Street is adjacent to St John's House.

St John's Close was built in the 1970s; the Village Hall can be found just on the right in this close. (D) Walk down Church Street, past the Village Pump, (E) now no longer used, until you reach Chapel House on the right. This was built as a Baptist Chapel and School in the mid 19c and remained the Village School until 1963. (F) The following three houses are interesting. The 'Old Post Office' as the name implies was until 1998 the village Post Office. Erin House, next door has an 18c front and a 19c extension at the back. 'Old Farm' was built in the 19c and next to this house are two barn Conversions. Swan Weir, (G) the last house on this side of the road is the oldest house in the village and is dated from the late 16c. The pond in front of the house was not only a source of water for the fields, but also used to wash the cartwheels. The places where the carts entered and left the pond can still be seen. Opposite the pond is 'Horseshoe Cottage' (H) Built in the early 17c this was for many years the 'Three Horseshoes' public house. In the 19 and 20c the Manor Court met there. In 1920s it became a private house. Fire hooks to pull burning thatch from roofs are fixed to the front of the house. To the right of 'Horseshoe Cottage' is the drive leading to the Manor Farmhouse. (I) This is an imposing building, parts of which date to the early 17c although it is mainly from the early 18c.

Continuing around the ring past the pond with Wheatsheaf Road, which leads to the B1040, on the left (this road is relatively new, only about 200 years old) you come to Butt Lane (start of FP3) and the beginning of South Street. This is also known as Back Street. As you walk along this street on your left, past the new thatched cottage called 'Moat Cottage' you come to 'Penny Farthing' and 'Chelsea' (J). This row of what is now two cottages were built in the early 18e. Opposite are Holdich Farmhouse and Holdich

Cottage. Originally this was one dwelling. Built in the early 18th century it is named after Thomas Holdich who died in 1798.

A short distance along South Street is a row of three brick cottages (originally five). When they were being renovated evidence was found of the disastrous fire that swept through the village in 1834. This was the first of four fires that occurred throughout the 19c. Passing Burleigh Lodge, a listed mid 19e house on the right and a modern close of houses you come to Fullards Farmhouse. (K) The Fullards or Fuller family were prominent in the village from the beginning of the 18c to the first part of the 19c. Parts of this house date to this period. Footpath 2, which leads to St Ives, starts in the field opposite this farmhouse. 'The Willows' the next to last house on the left hand side of South Street was built probably about 1800. A small Particular Baptist Chapel built in 1904, demolished in 2005, was between the bungalow and 'The Willows'. This replaced a thatched chapel built in 1799. The final house on this street is Pear Tree Cottage. (L) The deeds for this cottage go back to the mid 18c. Woodhurst has many natural ponds and Ridges Pond is near this cottage on the south side of South Street. Have a rest by this pond on the seat provided by the Parish Council. Then continue to the western corner of South Street and the start of Woodhurst BR 1.

WOODHURST FOOT & BRIDLEPATHS

Bridlepath No 1 leads from the western end of South Street and is the only bridlepath in the parish. It goes in a southerly direction for a short distance before you turn right and follow it to the boundary fence of RAF Wyton. Before 1952 this joined up with what is now the Old Ramsey Road and led to St Ives. However the RAF extended their runway to accommodate the V-bombers and this route to the nearest market town was cut. Look out for muntjak deer when walking here.

Footpath No.2 The first section of this path has recently been re-aligned to its original position and the edges planted with wild flowers, hedging plants and trees. Notice the 'ridge and furrow' on either side, made as a result of the strip method of farming used hundreds of years ago. Go through the kissing gate and across the big field through a hedge and turn left to the spinney. You now have a choice; either go through the spinney back to the village or turn right and follow the field edge to a small bridge. This is where you leave the Parish of Woodhurst and follow FP 6. If you follow this path you will come to Marley Road opposite the Rainbow Superstore; or you can go to the junction with St Ives FP 1 and turn north to walk back to Woodhurst.

Footpath No. 3 This travels south from the eastern end of South Street and is known as Butt Lane. Formerly the old drovers' road to St Ives, this was at one time largely clear of any undergrowth. The hedges and ditches are now full with many elm, hawthorn and blackthorn. About 300 metres along the lane on the right there used to be allotments, originally given to soldiers returning from the First World War. Walk on through the spinney, you can then go right along FP2A and then right on FP2 back to the village, or carry straight on over the St Ives Parish boundary to St Ives FP 1.

Footpath No.4 Known as Church Lane this links Church Street with South Street. Once open for ponies and traps, but now barriers either end restrict this tarmac lane to walkers.

Footpaths Nos. 5 & 6 This path leaves Wheatsheaf Road about 300 metres east of the village, and goes north towards Pidley along the field edges. After 700 metres you will pass Spinney Moat on the left, the origins of which are a mystery. If it is a clear day look right and you should see Ely Cathedral. Turn left at the Brook on to FP 6 and it will take you to the Old Hurst-Pidley road. If you turn right and cross the brook you enter Pidley parish. Follow this path and you come to the 'Mad Cat' public house.

Walks from North St Ives

As parking in Woodhurst is difficult an interesting way to visit the parish is via two circular walks of approx 4 or 8 kms, from north St Ives having parked in the Rainbow car park. Turn right from the car park along Marley Rd to the start of SFP6, continue to the brook, cross, turn left beside the brook to where the path

turns right by a ditch. Continue to a bridge cross onto WFP2; continue to the spinney; here you have the choice to carry on with the 8km walk or return to St Ives on the 4km one. To return, turn right through the spinney then right over bridge to SFP1. Pass through a small wildlife area then along by a hedge and embankment to where the path turns left through a newly planted wood. On leaving the wood turn right down Burley Hill back to the brook. This is an ancient path; in the Pettis survey of St Ives in 1728 it is described as 'the road to Wood Hurst'.

To continue on to Woodhurst village, turn left when you reach the spinney, on beside a hedge, turn right across an arable field. Here you have excellent views of Woodhurst, to front, and Wyton Airfield to your left. Pass through the kissing gate and on to the village where you can follow the walk round the village. To return to St Ives go down Butt Lane WFP3 to the spinney then via SFP1 as 4km walk.

