

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

Recently, climate change has brought examples of extreme weather all over the world. Part of the solution to global warming is to use natural energy. Our ancestors harnessed the power of water by means of water mills, thought to have been invented by the Greeks. The Domesday Book of 1086 AD recorded no less than 5,624 watermills in England alone. Most were used to grind wheat. They continued as a prime source of energy until the Industrial Revolution.

The Hundred Parishes has a wealth of these mills, many retained through their conversion into private homes. Several may be seen on Hundred Parishes walks whose descriptions can be freely downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org

On the River Cam, Hinxton once had three water mills. One remains, a 17th-century mill built on the site of an older one mentioned in Domesday as worth 8 shillings. It ceased to operate commercially in 1955 but now works again on days when it is open to the public – the final opening in 2021 is on October 3rd from 2:30pm to 5pm. It can be seen at any time from the outside – and is on our walk number 14.

Linton's watermill on the River Granta dates from the early 18th century and there has been a mill on the site since the 13th century. It stopped working in 1972 and has now been converted into apartments. Walk 109 passes it.

Weatherboarded 18th-century Kings Mill in Littlebury was originally powered by the River Cam and then steam until it stopped working in 1924. Walk number 165, only 1.4 miles, passes Kings Mill during a short exploration of historic Littlebury.

What remains of Great Bardfield watermill can be seen on walks 103 and 104, while the remains of Tilty watermill are on walk 120.

Ken McDonald, Secretary