

Bicknacre

A Saxon name, meaning Bicca's peoples clearing.

White Elm Crossroads

It is claimed that a notorious highwayman was executed and buried at the crossroads with an elm stake through his body.

Folks Wood

In ancient times owners of woods defined their boundaries using banks and ditches. Look out for old coppice stools and animal homes along the length of this ditch.

Thrift Wood

Look out for cow-wheat and wild service tree, both indicators of ancient woodland. Pregnant women used to eat cow-wheat flour in the belief that their child would be male.

The Old Salt Road

Salt extraction from sea water was an important industry in the 14th and 15th centuries. This bridleway is the Old Salt Road.

Jacklett's Farm

Home of Roger Joket in 1310, hence the name. A later owner was Edward de Vere, who some claim to be Shakespeare. To be or not to be, that is the question

Many ancient trackways have ancient hedges. Why not try to date a hedge? Pace out 30 strides and count the number of different trees and shrubs (don't include ivy, brambles or climbers). Multiply this number by 100 for a very rough age for the hedge in years, e.g. five species = roughly 500 year old hedge. Look out for blackthorn, hawthorn, elm, ash and oak.

Distance and time taken

Complete Circuit – 5.5 miles (9 km) – 3 hours southern route via Emberson's Wood and Wickham's Farm
5 miles (8 km) – 3 hours

Going

Flat. Wear strong, comfy boots or wellies as bridleways and paths across farmland may be muddy after rain.

Habitat types

Ancient woodlands and hedgerows.

Ordnance Survey Map

Explorer 183.

Refreshments

Pubs in Bicknacre and Cock Clarks.

Local shops and post offices in both villages.

Dogs

Keep dogs on a lead, especially where sheep are grazing around Wickers Farm. Close all gates.

Charity Lane

This is a fine example of a Green Lane, for which Essex is famous. The County has over 800km of these tracks which are no longer roads but survive as public rights of way. Many date back to before the Romans. With a rich variety of trees, shrubs and wild flowers, Green Lanes form valuable wildlife 'corridors' through the countryside.

Healthy Life Essex
www.HealthyLifeEssex.co.uk

Emberson's Wood

An ancient woodland. Useful timber was removed in the past. Birch has now taken over.



Country Walking in Essex

Thrift Wood