

Welcome to Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve

This 16 hectare (39 acre) site runs along the eastern banks of the River Chelmer for approximately 2.5km from Valley Bridge down to Victoria Road.

1 Stable Field & 2 Springfield Hall Farm

Stable Field was originally part of Springfield Hall Farm, which at the time of the Tithe Awards in 1839 was surrounded by arable pasture and meadows. Many of the original hedge lines still exist. Stable Field remains 'unimproved grassland' which supports a variety of wildflowers including Pyramidal Orchid and butterflies and bees.

3 Plantation Woods

Warren Mead and Oak Mead contain Willows, Grey Poplar (native) Lombardy Poplar (hybrid) and some Alder. The hybrid poplar is slowly being replaced with British natives such as Ash, Oak, Hazel and Willow.

4 Bishops' Hall Mill & Mill House

The Mill was constructed from brick and timber with an undershot wheel. By the end of the 1900s it had an engine and worked eight pairs of stones. Today only the water wheel shaft, parts of the wheel sluice and the Mill House survive.



Chelmsford Museums

5 Mill Pond

The pond supports a good range of fish including Bullheads and Stone Loaches. White Clawed Crayfish and Great Crested Newts have also been recorded.

6 Bishops' Hall

The Hall stood on the corner of Rectory Lane and New Street. It was used by the Bishops of London as a weekend residence until 1545. Fire destroyed the Hall in 1929.

7 Hoffmann's

Hoffmann's, the UK's first specialist manufacturer of ball and roller bearings, operated in New Street from 1898 to 1970 then as part of RHP bearings until 1989. They supplied steel balls, rollers and rolling bearings for the growing transport industry.

8 Open Water

A series of ponds have been created through Great Mead to benefit amphibians such as frogs and newts and invertebrates including dragonflies and damselflies.

9 Marsh Area

The largest area of marsh is opposite the Riverside Retail Park where Burr-Reed and Lesser Pond Sedge flourish. Mature 'cricket bat' Willows are harvested every 15 to 30 years by a local company to make cricket bat blades.

10 Springfield Mill

One of the prettiest surviving undershot water mills in the area, Springfield Mill is now Riverside Inn.

Heritage & Nature Trail



CHELMER VALLEY



Front cover: Pyramidal Orchid

Heritage and Nature Trail

