

## Loddon sightseeing tour

The centre of Loddon is a Conservation Area, with buildings from several centuries, some grand and others built for people who worked in the vicinity.

Many have changed their use over the years.

On this tour some of the various houses, business premises and religious buildings are pointed out.

More information about them, and about Loddon's history can be found in books and leaflets in the library.

What better place to start than at the heart of Loddon, where Holy Trinity Church dominates the scene as it has done for the past 500 years.

With carved stone, flint flush-work and a fine tower, it stands majestically in a huge churchyard.



Leaving the churchyard and turning south past The Terrace (formerly Barclay's Bank), can be found the old 17th century 'Institute'

This was probably also a house originally, but has been used as a Working Men's Institute, a Roman Catholic Chapel, a Labour Exchange, and a restaurant.

It is now a shop and beauty salon.

Past the 1950's fire-station and the row of 18th century doorways we come to The Angel, said to be the oldest of the Loddon inns and frequented by the workmen who were building the Church.

At the back of the yard a small smoke-house was used to preserve meat and fish.

Notice the next house with steps to the front door, the archway, and fanlights over the doors of the terrace beyond.





On Farthing Green, Aelfric Modercope, Saxon Lord of the Manor, stands on his pedestal, surveying the length of the High Street.

His hand rests on the ancient poorbox, which can be seen in in Holy Trinity Church.

Bearing left into Beccles Road, we pass Farthing Green House.

Built in the 18th century, with additions in the 19th, it was previously called Bank House and home to the local agent for Gurney's Bank before a "new" bank was built on the corner of Church Plain (what is now The Terrace restaurant)

Until 1974, when South Norfolk Council was established, it was the offices of Loddon Rural District Council.



On the other side of the road, Loddon House dates from about 1716.

In its early days it was used as, what at the time, would have been described as a 'lunatic asylum'.

The group of dwellings after No 5 Beccles Road were converted from the old maltings and oast house.

The thatched cottage further along was once a baker's shop.





Continuing along Beccles Road the bridge crosses Loddon Run, on its way to join the River Chet.

The tall first house in Norton Road was once the Police House, complete with lock-up cell for offenders.

The small pair of garages opposite at one time stored the horse-drawn fire-engine.

Norton Road and then Mill Road lead to Pye's Mill Road and the picnic area by the River Chet.

Further along Beccles Road, past the housing estate (built on the site of the former Express Plastics factory) is the Loddon Industrial Estate.

This diverse group of businesses in well-designed buildings just off the A146, provide employment for many local people.



Retracing your steps along Beccles Road and back over the bridge crossing Loddon Run is a small development of houses with two converted from the former Fox and Hounds pub on the corner of Low Bungay Road.

Turning a short distance along Low Bungay Road can be found a group of bungalows for elderly people, built in 1963 by architects Tayler and Green.

In the 1990s they were among the first post-war community buildings to be listed, Grade 2.

Retrace your steps to Beccles Road and return to Farthing Green



Turning left briefly into High Bungay Road is another large red brick Victorian house, and a corner shop (butchers) and converted church-room in 'Victorian-Adam' style.

Nearby, Saxon House in Kitten's Lane is a group of flats for elderly people, built in 2000 on the site of the former Brownes Garage.



Facing Farthing Green, a terrace of four small town houses, partially converted from the frontage of the former Brownes Garage, completes the setting for the village sign.

On the way back along High Street to Church Plain a mixture of dwellings and businesses present their various facades.

The Primitive Methodist Chapel, which sits next to the Post Office, was built in 1900.

It later became an Infants School but is now a community building called The Hollies and is run under the protection of the Loddon Buildings Preservation Trust.



The Swan, with evidence of its Tudor history at the rear, presents an imposing 18th century façade with Victorian modifications.

Once a coaching inn, and still offering accommodation, it has been a centre of social activity for centuries, hosting in its time a magistrates court, auctions and public meetings.

The Old Town Hall, was built 1870 when The Swan was found to be too small for many public events.

It was used for civic ceremony, public entertainment, and the Magistrate's Court.

The back of the building is now used by an indoor bowls club.

The front part, formerly housing a hairdresser and Tourist Information, has been converted into accommodation for The Swan.



Bugden House, next door, on the corner of George Lane, is another very old house.

Note the blocked windows on the upper floor.

Turning into George Lane we find St John's Church, built by Wesleyan Methodists in 1893.

The adjacent buildings are the Lecture Hall (rebuilt in 1923, after a fire in 1918 during its use as a wartime hospital), and the Old Chapel, dating from 1835.

Further down George Lane and also to the north is most of the other post-war housing developments, some as recent as the mid 1990s.





Retrace your steps and turn left onto Bridge Street where can be found the red-brick gabled farmhouse of Street Farm

Probably built in the early 18th century, is set back from the road, now used in part by delicatessen and cafe.

Its rear garden became part of Garden Court, with houses built in the early 1980s.

Gilbert's Barn, part of the original farm, which lies in Garden Court, is dated 1833 in the gable and now comprising four dwellings, has thatch on one side of its roof and pantiles on the other.

At the bottom of Bridge Street and astride the bridge over the Chet stands Loddon Mill.

No longer working but a well-preserved example of a fine old wooden water mill.

It was converted to steam power about 1888, after Wood, Sadd, Moore & Co, seed and wool merchants and millers, established their business.



The road ahead leads to the adjacent village of Chedgrave, probably an earlier settlement than Loddon, with domestic architecture from several periods and a church with its original ornate Norman doorway.

Returning south and across the road from Loddon Mill, at the riverside, Loddon Staithe and its adjoining boatyards present a constantly changing scene of activity in all seasons.

Here are boats and birds, anglers and sometimes artists.





The narrow roadside of Bridge Street back to the town centre is lined with terraces of small Victorian houses.

Prospect Place and Canonbury Place were built in 1870 and 1887 to provide accommodation for the people who worked nearby.

The road passes the King's Head which vies with The Angel as being the oldest pub in Loddon, before passing some recently built flats that replaced a building that was in its time a Bank and then a Police Station.

Passing the printing works and the Co-op you find yourself returned to Church Plain.



On the north side of Church Plain the imposing flint building, dating from the late 1850s, was originally the local school with the headmaster's house at the end.

It now contains the Library and Parish Council office.

Next door, Mornington House has a crow-stepped gable and a Tudor-style chimney, and next to that the bow-window belongs to a building which was formerly the Surgery.

The lane continues into the area which was Loddon's original market place.

The Tour finishes back at the Church.

For more information about the places mentioned, and about Loddon past and present, a wealth of material is available at the Library.