

# ESSEX FROM THE AIR

Jason Hawkes

The ancient Kingdom of Essex takes its name from the East Saxons who once ruled here. It is the eleventh largest county in England, covering around 1400 square miles (c.3500 sq.km) and with a population of approximately 1.5 million. The landscape of the county is diverse, ranging from wide flat marshland on the indented coastline, to rolling farmland intersected by a number of major rivers.

The county's proximity to London has led to a density of population similar to that of its neighbours, but Essex remains essentially rural with small villages retaining much of their charm and character. The so-called New Towns of Basildon and Harlow are typical of their type, whilst at the heart of towns such as Chelmsford and Colchester there is a great deal of historic interest to attract visitors. Part of the south-east of the county, already containing the major population centres of Southend and Thurrock, is within the Thames Gateway and designated for further development. To the north of the Green Belt, with the exception of major towns such as Colchester and Chelmsford, the county is rural, with many small towns, villages and hamlets largely built in the traditional materials of timber and brick, with clay tile or thatched roofs.

The fascinating aerial photographs in this book are selected to provide the reader with an overview of a variety of landscapes and settlements, with historic sites included. The principal attraction of aerial photographs is that they are literally a bird's-eye view, allowing us to look down on the landscape from a perspective that we never normally see. Such pictures reveal to us things that are normally hidden from view, and often surprise us when we find that what we had imagined the layout of the land to be is in reality quite different. The best practitioners of this genre of photography also strive to capture an aesthetic in the images they take, and these pictures, sometimes quite abstract in appearance, are often strikingly beautiful in their own right.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Jason Hawkes** is one of the country's best-known photographers specialising in aerial photography. From his base near London he travels worldwide to produce images for books, advertising and design. Since 1991 he has provided photographs for major international companies including Nike, HSBC, Ford, Rolex, Toyota and BP. The images in this book and the sister publications in the series were specially commissioned by Halsgrove.

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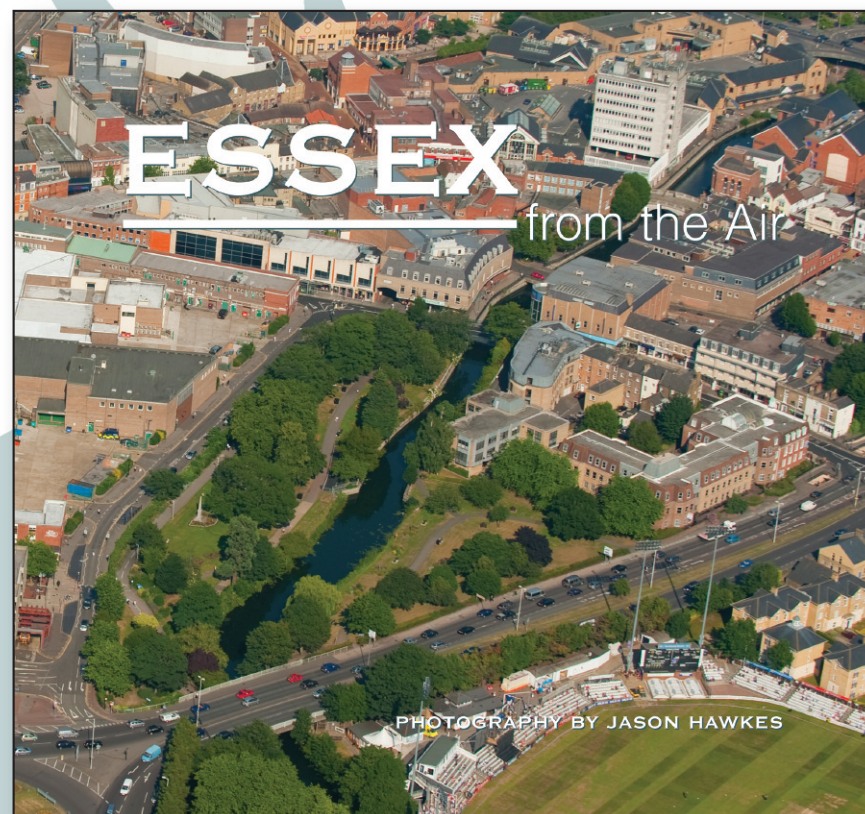
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Bocking windmill is to be found about two miles from the town of Braintree.



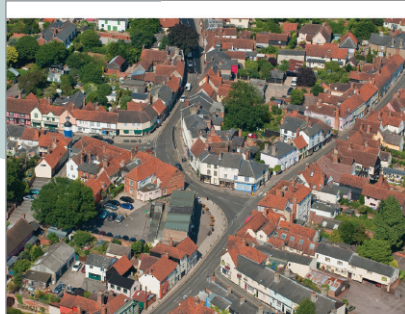
Audley End House, Saffron Walden.



The view across Westmarsh Point into Brightlingsea.



Right: Marshland at Tollesbury Fleet. These areas are important for wildlife.



Above: Situated between Braintree and Colchester, Coggeshall sits on an old Roman road, although the layout of this charming market town owes more to its Saxon settlers.



Right: St Peter and Pauls church, Coggeshall, was built during the 14th century but the tower we see today is a rebuild after the original was bombed during the Second World War.

Example of a double-page spread.



The County Cricket Ground, Chelmsford.