

Day Visit - Anglesey Abbey and The Manor House, Hemingford Grey

Friday 5 June 2026

The coach will depart from Simonds Depot (Oak Drive, Diss, IP22 4GX) at 9 a.m., going first to Anglesey Abbey and then onto to Hemingford Grey, returning to Diss at approximately 6 p.m.

Anglesey Abbey and Lode Mill

Anglesey Abbey is believed to have been founded by Henry I in 1135 as a hospital and was converted in the early 13th century to an Augustinian priory. This was dissolved in 1536 and it had a succession of owners until it was bought in 1926 by the 1st Lord Fairhaven (1896-1966) and his brother. Lord Fairhaven was a wealthy American and originally bought the house for its proximity to the racing at Newmarket. He had the means to indulge his passion for collecting art: tapestries, paintings, silver and books.

He was also deeply interested in garden design and created one of the most significant 20th century gardens in England, creating 'rooms' and even buying Lode Mill as a visual backdrop. He died in 1966 and the house was then acquired by the National Trust.



NT Anglesey Abbey House ©Justin Minns

The Manor House, Hemingford Grey

The Manor House, built c.1130, beautifully placed beside the Great Ouse, is thought to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited homes in Britain. Most of the Norman house remains intact despite various changes over nine centuries. It was bought by Lucy Boston, a single mother, in 1939, for £2,500, and is now lived in by Lucy's daughter-in-law, Diana Boston.



The Manor House - Norman Front

Lucy took much of the house interior back to its original form. She also laid out the wonderful garden, famous today for its irises, old roses and topiary work.

Lucy is known as the author of the [Green Knowe stories](#), which became some of the best-loved children's novels of the earlier 20th century. She is also remembered as a designer and maker of patchwork quilts, many of which you will see in the house.

A member of the family takes you around the house, still much as it was in Lucy's day, describing how the rooms were used, the paintings, and the room where she entertained World War II airmen with gramophone record recitals. The 1930s EMG gramophone is demonstrated on the tour. You will also see Lucy's exquisite patchwork up close.

Practical information:

The cost per person is £57. This includes parking at Simonds, coach travel, entry to the Manor House, cream tea (scone, sandwiches, cake, tea or coffee) and driver's tip. National Trust members have free entry to Anglesey Abbey. If you are not a member, the cost is £18.05, which is payable on the day. The cost does not include any refreshments at Anglesey Abbey.

You will need to be able to manage stairs at both houses.