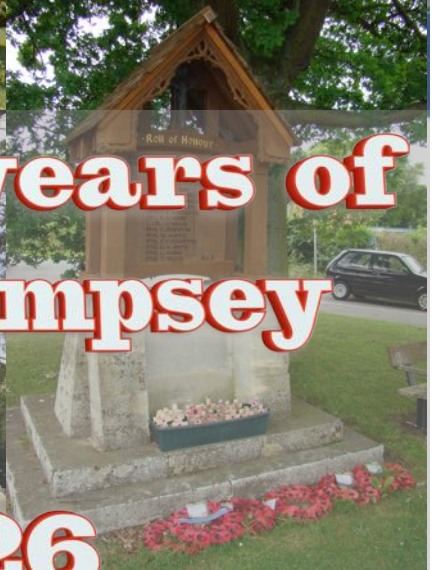




Celebrating 160 years of Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish 1866 to 2026



Foreword

2026 is the 160th Anniversary of the establishment of Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish as a Civic Parish.

If you wanted to go back further, we've been in existence since the 12th Century, hence there are plenty of other anniversary's we could have chosen to commemorate, but we felt that this one was the most relevant; your Parish Council has been in existence for 160 years. People may suggest that some of the Parish Councillors have been around for that long, but whether young or old, their focus is the same now as it was in 1866 and all the years in between, to serve to the best of their ability the best interests of the community.

Thanks must go to several Councillors for sourcing photographs, researching various aspects of history, etc..., but in particular Councillor Martin Pollard who has spent many hours editing it to get it to its final version.

This booklet is a keepsake for every household in Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish in celebration of the 160th Anniversary of our Parish, and we hope that there is something in here for everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Fincher'. The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'K' and a long, sweeping underline.

Councillor Kevin Fincher
Chair, Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish Council

What is a Parish Council

The division into ancient parishes was linked to the manorial system, with parishes and manors often sharing the same boundaries. Initially the manor was the principal unit of local administration and justice in the early rural economy. In the 12th century the parish church replaced the manor court as the rural administrative centre and was able to levy a local tax on produce known as a tithe. This levy was used for roads, poor relief and to repair and maintain the church.

The Highways Act 1555 made parishes responsible for the upkeep of roads. Every adult inhabitant of the parish was obliged to work four days a year on the roads, providing their own tools, carts and horses; the work was overseen by an unpaid local appointee, the Surveyor of Highways.

Poor relief became the parishes responsibility in 1601 with the Poor Law Act, prior to that the poor were looked after by monasteries, until their dissolution. Then in 1672, magistrates were given power to 'survey the poor' and impose taxes for their relief. The parishes appointed overseers and charged a rate to support the poor of the parish, this continued until the establishment of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834.

The parish authorities were known as vestries and consisted of all the inhabitants of the parish however as the population grew it became increasingly difficult to hold an open vestry. In urban parish areas the select vestry "Councillors" (this was a group nominated by themselves) took over responsibility from the community at large which improved efficiency, but established an elite. This group were from the C/E churches which was not representative of the parish and in many cases this led to inefficiency and corruption.

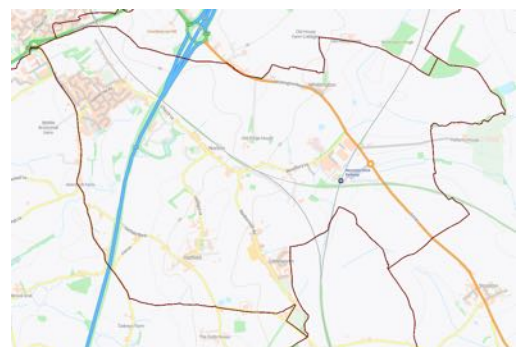
The Poor Law Amendment Act 1866 declared all areas that levied a separate rate could become civil parishes as well. The church rate was abolished in 1868. At this time the term Parochial Church Council was introduced for ecclesiastical parishes.

Civil parishes in their modern sense were established in 1894, by the Local Government Act to take over local oversight of civic duties in rural towns and villages. The Act abolished select vestries, and established elected parish councils in all rural civil parishes with more than 300 electors.

They are the smallest areas of civil administration in England providing the statutory tier of local government closest to the people. NJK Parish became part of Pershore Rural District Council which was formed in 1894 and ran until it was abolished with the local government reforms of 1974 when it became part of Wychavon District Council.

They are corporate bodies and local authorities recognised in law and must meet at a minimum of four meetings a year. One of these meetings must be the Annual Meeting of the council which must be held in May of each year. The chairman or mayor is always chosen at this meeting. Most councils meet ten or eleven times a year.

1866-2026



Parish Profile

The Parish of Norton-juxta-Kempsey is located to the south-east of the city of Worcester. It covers an area of 749 hectares (1850 acres) and is bisected north-south by the M5 motorway (near to junction 7) to the west and by the B4084 to the east. The B4084 provides direct road access into Worcester City and the wider road network to the north as well as access to the market town of Pershore just over five miles to the south east.

It is primarily rural in nature with a number of individual settlements dispersed within the open countryside; each having its own identity. It is home to a population of approximately 2500 (ONS 2022) people. The older settlements of Norton, Littleworth and Hatfield along with the smaller hamlet of High Park off the B4084 are long established and have a strong agricultural heritage with a number of farmsteads and open spaces. There are a few further dwellings developed in the 1990s around Norton Hall, now in use as a Care Home, at Woodbury Park. To the north of the parish near to the boundary with Worcester City is the substantial Brockhill Village development, a settlement that was constructed in the 1990s on and around the site of the decommissioned military Norton Barracks. This settlement is home to the majority of the parish's population with over 60 percent of residents living within it. Most of the residents work in Worcester or Wychavon.

The parish has a rich agricultural heritage and a number of operational farms and farmsteads remain today. The area also has strong military ties as Norton Barracks was home to the Worcestershire Regiment from 1881 – 1962 and prior to its closure was a large local employer. Prominent buildings from this era have been converted into residential accommodation and many of the roads are named after the battle honours of the Regiment.

On the edge of the Parish is the Worcestershire Parkway Station, the County's first new train station to open for around 100 years. Built on the site where the north-south and east-west lines cross at Norton Junction and where there once was a station, Norton Halt, which closed in 1966. It opened on the 23rd February 2020 with the arrival on Platform 3 of the 8.29am to London Paddington train. The station provides direct rail links to London, Birmingham, Cardiff, Nottingham & Bristol with further connections to the North-East and Scotland and to Plymouth and the South-West.

The parish is home to several business premises covering a range of sectors from catering, haulage, education, leisure pursuits, architects, retail and reclamation amongst others; these businesses range in size with some employing 100 or more, whilst some employ fewer than five people. There is one business park at the site of the former Morganite Crucible Works on Woodbury Lane and a number of individual premises dispersed through the parish.

Despite its large population the parish is not home to vast array of community facilities but there are some very important ones that contribute to the quality of local resident's lives. There is a primary school and a separate pre-school in Littleworth, along with a special needs college off Woodbury Lane catering for pupils from both within and outwith the parish.

Local leisure facilities include, a Community Hub in Brockhill (The Sergeants' Mess) and a Sports Club (Shooting, Cricket & Croquet). Situated on the edge of Norton on the way to Littleworth is The Retreat public house and adjoining the settlement of Brockhill Village there is St Peters Garden Centre that has a café and stocks a limited range of basic provisions along with specialist produce.

The Parish Hall at Littleworth provides indoor facilities for local groups, a coffee shop and bar and also has extensive grounds and outdoor recreational facilities including play equipment, a football pitch and a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).

There are two places of worship in the parish, the Church of St James in Norton with its adjoining meeting room, and the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Littleworth now occupied by the Plymouth Brethren. Littleworth has two areas dedicated to allotments and the whole community benefits from access to an extensive network of public rights of way providing direct and easy access to the open countryside.

The Parish Council continues to seek ways to improve the quality of life for residents of the Parish by promoting appropriate housing, access to healthcare, education, transport and leisure facilities, and to maintain the identities of the villages in the Parish within a rural environment.

Norton Juxta Kempsey

Population

2022

2,500

people

57,144,400

 people in England

Rounded to the nearest 100 people

Source: Office for National Statistics – Mid Year Population Estimates

Small area: Output area

Number of households

2021

980

households

23,436,100

 households in England

Rounded to the nearest 10 households

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Age profile

2022

Norton Juxta Kempsey

(England)

0 years

85+

% of all people, 5 year age bands

Source: Office for National Statistics – Mid Year Population Estimates

Small area: Output area

Sex

2022

Norton Juxta Kempsey

(England)

Female **51.9%** (51.1%)

Male **48.1%** (48.9%)

% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics – Mid Year Population Estimates

Small area: Output area

Live births

2023

14

live births

563,561

 live births in England

Source: Office for National Statistics – Mid Year Population Estimates

Small area: Lower layer super output area

Deaths

2023

5

deaths

544,054

 deaths in England

Source: Office for National Statistics – Mid Year Population Estimates

Small area: Lower layer super output area

Ethnic group

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh **1.7%** (9.6%)

Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African **0.0%** (4.2%)

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups **0.8%** (3.0%)

White **96.8%** (81.0%)

Other ethnic group **0.6%** (2.2%)

% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Religion

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

No religion **36.4%** (36.7%)

Christian **55.5%** (46.3%)

Buddhist **0.7%** (0.5%)

Hindu **0.3%** (1.8%)

Jewish **0.0%** (0.5%)

Muslim **0.9%** (6.7%)

Sikh **0.0%** (0.9%)

Other religion **0.2%** (0.6%)

Not answered **5.9%** (6.0%)

% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

General health

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Very good health **54.2%** (48.5%)

Good health **33.5%** (33.7%)

Fair health **9.1%** (12.7%)

Bad health **2.2%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **1.1%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Disability

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Disabled under the Equality Act **12.8%** (17.3%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **87.2%** (82.7%)

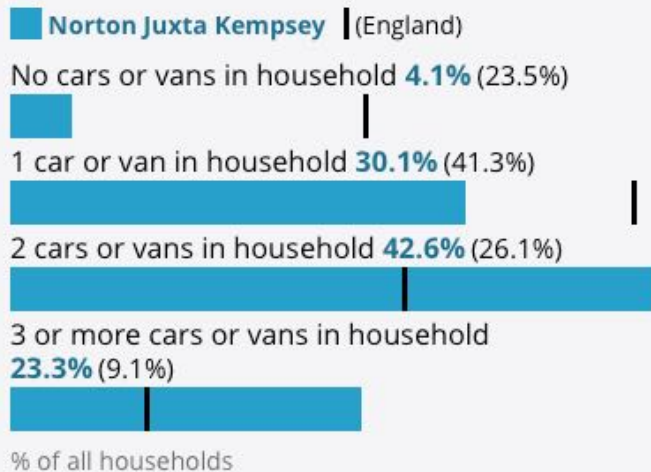
% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Number of cars or vans

2021

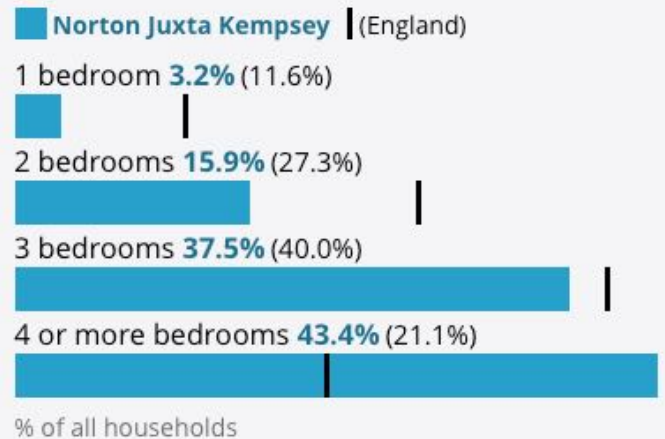


Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Number of bedrooms

2021

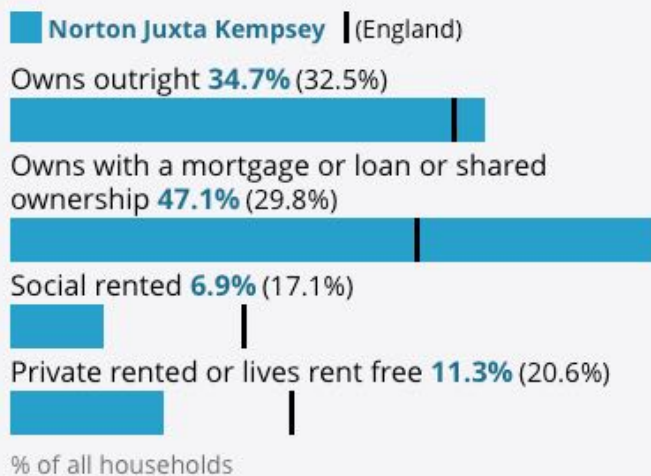


Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Tenure of household

2021



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)

2021



Legal partnership status

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Never married and never registered a civil partnership **28.3%** (37.9%)

Married or in a registered civil partnership **54.4%** (44.7%)

Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership **2.3%** (2.2%)

Divorced or civil partnership dissolved **10.6%** (9.1%)

Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner **4.4%** (6.1%)

% of people aged 16 years and over

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Country of birth

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Born in the UK **94.8%** (82.6%)

Born outside the UK **5.2%** (17.4%)

% of all people

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Household size

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

1 person in household **20.5%** (30.1%)

2 people in household **37.7%** (34.0%)

3 people in household **20.4%** (16.0%)

4 or more people in household **21.3%** (19.9%)

% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Household deprivation

2021

Norton Juxta Kempsey (England)

Household is not deprived in any dimension **64.7%** (48.4%)

Household is deprived in one dimension **26.2%** (33.5%)

Household is deprived in two dimensions **8.6%** (14.2%)

Household is deprived in three dimensions **0.5%** (3.7%)

Household is deprived in four dimensions **0.0%** (0.2%)

% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

History of the Parish

The history of Norton-juxta-Kempsey is rooted in its agricultural past and shaped by major developments in the 19th and 20th centuries, including the arrival of the railway and the establishment of Norton Barracks. Its status changed significantly in the late 18th century when it gained independence from the parish of Kempsey and again following the 1866 Poor Law Amendment Act when civil status for parishes was separated from church parishes.

The name Kempsey has been recorded in various forms over time: as *Kemsei* in 799, *Cymesig* in 977, *Kymesei*, *Chemeshege*, *Kemesige*, *Chemesege*, *Camesi* and *Cameseia* in the 11th century, *Kemeseia* and *Kemeseye* in the 13th century and *Kemsey* in 1615. The current spelling appears to have been in common usage by the time of the tithe plan of 1840.

Medieval origins: Early and manorial history

By the end of the 8th Century - There is a Christian Minster in Kempsey.

Coenwulf the King of Mercia (796-812) gave 30 manses (small holdings) to Abbot Balthun and in return he had to build and repair bridges and roads.

By the end of the 10th Century. The bishops were the lords of the Manor of Kempsey

The area, along with the hamlets of Hatfield and Littleworth, was part of the Bishop of Worcester's vast manor of Kempsey at least since the 10th century. The Bishop of Worcester remained the Lord of the Manor for centuries.

The 11th Century

Ownership of much of the monastic land in Worcestershire, including Kempsey and the surrounding area, had been established by the Bishops of Worcester. The bishops at this time, and until the death of Bishop (St.) Wulfstan in 1095, were Benedictine monks. Their Cathedra (seat) was in Worcester Priory church and they lived in the monastery. They also had palaces and estates all around their diocese, including one in Kempsey.

The Kempsey estate included Norton, Hatfield and Littleworth. Parts of the estate were kept to provide for the bishop and his household and the monks living in the Priory, but much of the rest was let out for rent. The Bishop had a palace in Kempsey; land in Kempsey provided food and recreation for the bishop.

By the middle of the century the county of Worcestershire has been defined.

Danish Viking raids and internal political troubles meant that the Church in Worcester had to work hard to hang on to its land. Records indicate that some of the land they leased out, was lost, some fought for and sometimes regained. Many of these records are still in the Cathedral library.

1066 Battle of Hastings - The Normans conquer England and William of Normandy becomes King.

The Domesday Book of 1086 records that Kempsey with its outlier communities including Stoulton, Mucknell and Wolverton as well as Hatfield, Littleworth and Norton was still in the hands of the bishop who was recognised as the Lord of the Manor of Kempsey.

Norton was defined as being in:

The County of Worcestershire

The Hundred of

The Manor of Kempsey

The Parish of Kempsey

The Bishop of Worcester was the Lord of the Manor

Bishop (later St.) Wulfstan d.1095 was the last surviving Saxon Bishop. He was a frequent visitor to Kempsey.

At the end of 11th century the people of Norton were working the bishop's lands, as they had been before the Conquest, but now the bishop's 'Estate' was called a 'Manor' and he was the 'Lord of the Manor'.

In return for their services the people had somewhere to live and a little land to grow their vegetables, they received the Bishop's protection through his customs, laws and courts. Everybody who held land farmed it as strips of land on the Common Fields. They grazed animals on the Commons.

Around this time a small stone church, dedicated to St. James the Great was built where it stands today, in an area of the estate called Norton. It was simple Chapel of Ease where Mass was said by a priest who travelled from Kempsey; it was not a Parish Church.

The Parish Church was still in Kempsey where everybody on the manor was expected to go for baptisms, weddings, churchings (the blessing of women after childbirth) and burials as well for the Masses that accompanied the many festivals and holy days.

12th century

By the end of the eleventh century the bishop had completed dividing up his lands between the Bishopric and the Cathedral Priory. From his vast estates land was set aside to provide for the monastic community at Worcester Priory. The remainder fed his own household, or contributed a rental income to meet his expenses.

The bishop set up a Rectory in the ecclesiastical parish of Kempsey. (The area of the parish coincided with the area of his Kempsey manor) The Rectory included land and a house for a priest to serve the spiritual needs of the people who lived on the Manor of Kempsey (which included Norton, Hatfield, and Littleworth.)

In return the people contributed their tithes and paid the priest fees for his services. In addition they expected him to care for the chancel of the church, teach the children, give aid to the poor and give hospitality to visitors to the parish.

The Bishop gave the Rectory to the priest of his choice. The first priest was one of the monks of the priory in Worcester. The income of the Rectory would benefit the entire monastic community.

It was quite normal for the Rector to appoint a priest as a vicar or a curate, he would grant him the small tithes and keep the great tithes.

13th century

By the end of this century the small stone church of St. James had been lengthened, and larger windows inserted. It was a time when colourful processions were fashionable in church so more space was needed. Records show that many local men and boys were appointed by the bishop to serve as acolytes in this church.

The people continued to work the land and pay their fees, tithes and taxes but over the century there had been disputes between the people and the priest about who held what land and what the people expected from their priests.

Woodhall and Newlands were growing as sub-manors on the bishop's land in the Manor of Kempsey. The owners of these manors probably still farmed land in the common fields.

The Bishop gave the Rectory to the College of the Holy Trinity in Westbury-on-Trym and the tithes of the people went there.

14th Century

The rectory was back with the monks of Worcester. In the early part of this century the people of the area built a new tower on their church. This must have been an expensive activity, a sign of strength and confidence in the community.

But - by the end of the century the population of the Bishop's Manor of Kempsey had been devastated by the Black Death. Of a population of about 250 only 81 remained to tend the land.

The plague must have spread into Norton, Hatfield and Littleworth. There was no official burial ground around the Chapel of Ease in Norton, burials still had to take place in Kempsey. It's not known whether victims of the plague still had to be carried all the way to Kempsey for burial.

15th Century

The Rectory of Kempsey had again been taken from the Priory in Worcester and given permanently (until the Reformation) to the College of the Holy Trinity in Westbury-on-Trym, near Bristol. This meant that the tithes of the people of Norton, Hatfield and Littleworth went to a community many miles away and they had the right to appoint the priest who served the parish of Kempsey.

The people continued to work on the land for the Bishop of Worcester and his tenants following the rhythms of the seasons as they had always done.

They also followed the seasons of the Church year celebrating and fasting, celebrating and fasting year on year.

16th century

The College of the Holy Trinity had been dissolved as had the Monastery of St Mary in Worcester. Henry the VIII had broken with Rome, Edward had consolidated his father's work: his half sister Mary had re-established links with Rome and her half sister Elizabeth had finally established the new Church of England.

After a turbulent period the Rectory of Kempsey was finally restored to the newly created Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral and tithes reverted to Worcester.

Within the Chapel of Ease in Norton the churchwardens had to find their way through a mass of changing rules and regulations but by the end of the century things had settled down a bit. The old latin missal had finally been replaced by the English Prayer Book, the service was now in English not Latin, there was probably an English Bible and a new communion cup was a legal requirement.

1538 - Parish Records began at St James Church

In the Manor the Bishop of Worcester was still the Lord of the Manor but during the century some bishops had been excommunicated, displaced and one even executed!

Led by Thomas Gower of Wood Hall the local community took advantage of the new situation when petitioned the bishop for Norton to have its own burial ground and succeeded! From 1565 the people of Norton, Hatfield and Littleworth have had the right to be buried in Norton Churchyard.

17th century

1649 - King Charles I, was beheaded and the country torn in half by a Civil War. After the Civil War during Oliver Cromwell's time the Bishop was deprived of his Lordship of the manor of Kempsey. For a short while a Londoner became Lord of the Manor of Kempsey. Perhaps he was a bit surprised by what he found as in his will he left bibles for the bishop's poor tenants

On the Manor of Kempsey the land was probably ransacked as Parliamentary troops made their way across the farmland. It is known that they ransacked churches in the area, pillaging as they went.

1660 - After the Restoration and the kingship returned the Bishops of Worcester were back!

A visitation to the St James' reported the poor state of the church and its goods in 1655.

This had been rectified by 1677

18th Century

The Turnpike Road from Oxford to Worcester and on to Wolverhampton had been opened. Norton had a place on the new fast route to London.

Things were much much more peaceful in Norton in the 18th century.

The people of Norton still worked on the land. On the big open fields the land was farmed in common, as it had been from time immemorial and the Bishop was still the Lord of the Manor. But new, significant families were living in the area. They rented land, and when they could they bought it, to improve production it really needed to be consolidated. Some land within the smaller sub-manor of Newlands, traditionally held by a tenant of the bishop, was later sold off by Lord Coventry in the 19th century.

In 1781 the independent Parish of Norton was created out of the old Parish of Kempsey. The church was a proper Parish Church, St James the Great, and no longer a Chapel of Ease.

19th Century Transformation

For the first forty or so years of this century life continued much as before, but by the end of the 19th century there had been real change

1832 - A Wesleyan Methodist Chapel opened in Littleworth.

1840 - Enclosure: The ancient open fields of Hatfield (1840) and Eastfield (1854), once farmed in common, were enclosed, consolidating land and paving the way for more small farms. The first National Census of 1841 recorded a Parish population of 601. 1845 - Arrival of the railway: The railway arrived in the mid-19th century, first with a north-south line (approx. 1845) on the eastern edge of the parish and then an east-west line through the centre of the village in 1852. This helped local farmers transport their goods and brought soldiers to the area, giving Norton a "fast route to London". Wood Hall is now cut off from Norton village.

1850 - The Methodist Chapel was flourishing in Littleworth and had a Sunday School.

Norton had its own Vicarage and there was a Sunday School at St James' Church 1857 - A day school had opened.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners were the new Lords of the Manor and the church had been restored.

The Barracks had opened for the Worcestershire Regiment and young men from all over Worcestershire came to Norton for training.

1866 - Norton was a Civil Parish as well as an Ecclesiastical parish.

1874 to 1962 Norton Barracks - A garrison village:

The construction of Norton Barracks between 1874 and 1878 transformed Norton into a garrison village. Built on land sold by Lord Coventry, the barracks served as the depot for the Worcestershire Regiment for nearly a century.

Military function: The barracks consisted of a gatehouse and keep, enclosed by a high wall, where new recruits were trained. Roads in the subsequent Brockhill Village development of the 20th century were named after the regiment's battle honours.

Post-military use: The Ministry of Defence sold the site in the 1990s. The barracks building was converted into flats, and the remaining land became the Brockhill housing estate. The historic keep was granted Grade II listed status in 1986.

1885 - There was some employment on the railways for local people and the income of agricultural workers supplemented by work from the Worcester Gloving industry - a cottage industry

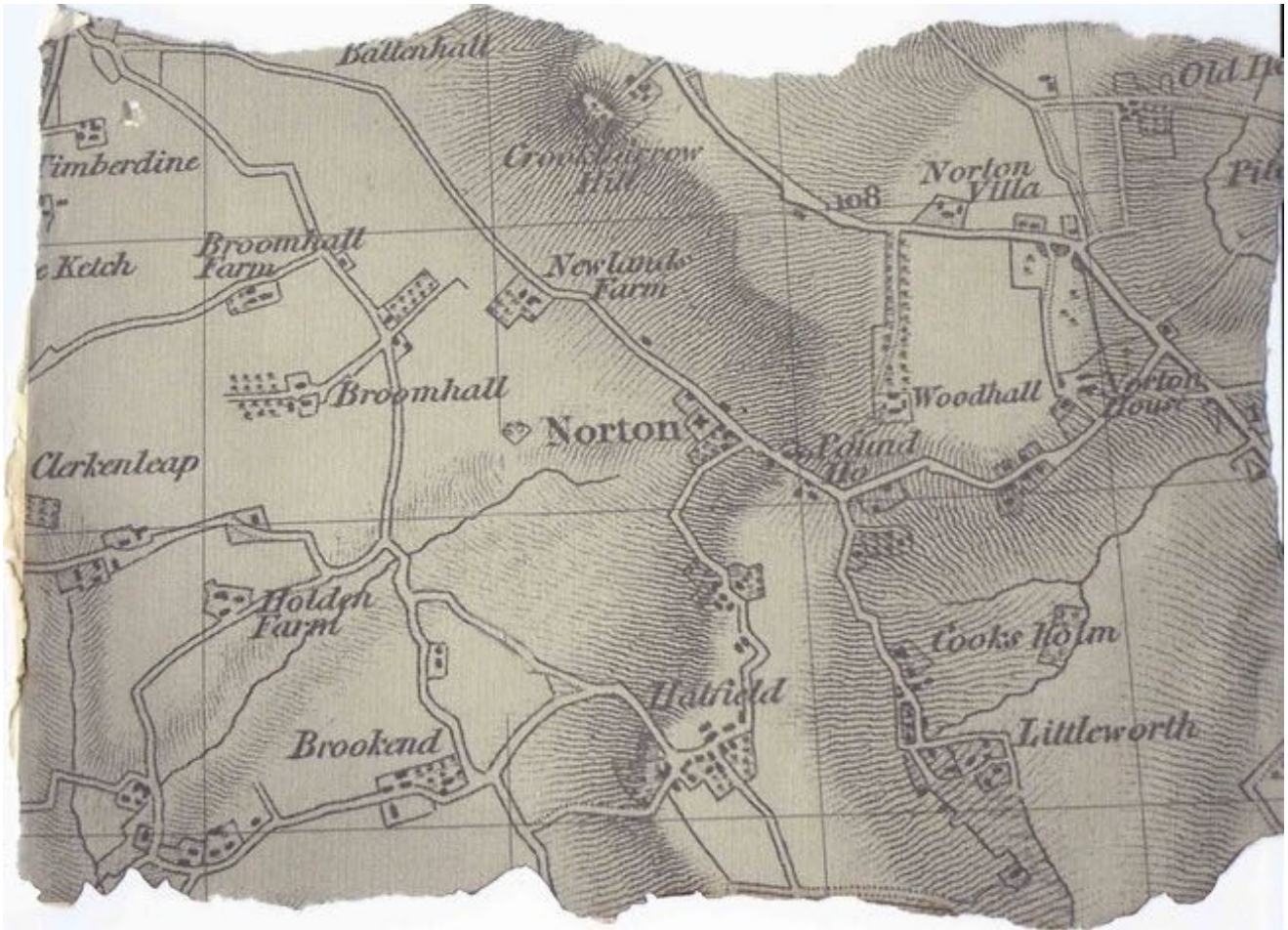
20th and 21st centuries

Industrial activity: In 1939, Morganite Crucible opened its works in the village. The site was sold and became an industrial estate in 2010, though a Morgan-affiliated company remains.

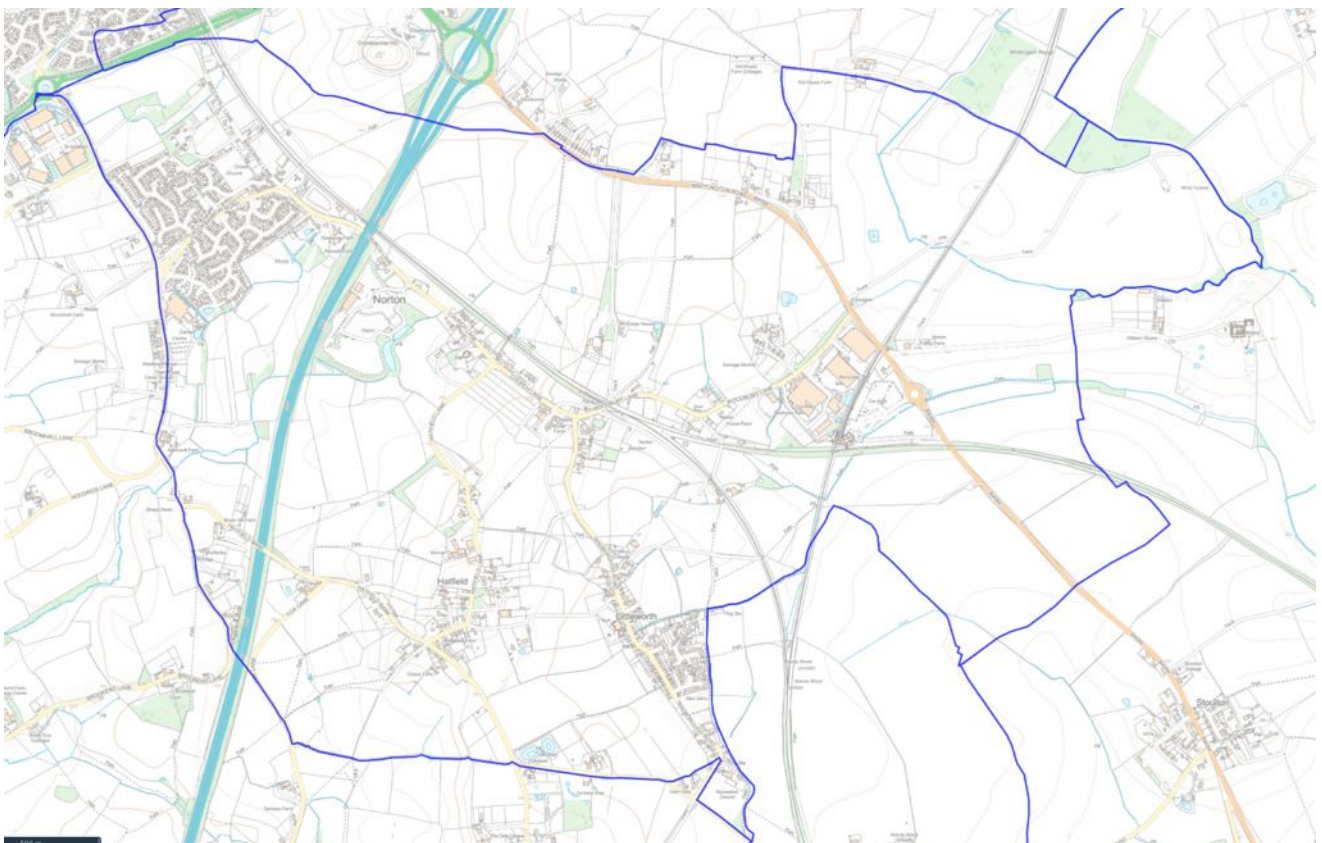
Community and development: In recent decades, Norton-juxta-Kempsey has experienced significant housing growth. The opening of Worcestershire Parkway Station in 2020 and a planned urban extension to Worcester will add thousands of new homes to the area.

Future planning: The Norton-juxta-Kempsey Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in December 2021, sets out specific policies to manage new development, protect green spaces, and address local issues.

Norton c1850



Norton 2025



References to the Parish in Historical Directories

1820 Worcestershire Guide - Samuel Lewis

336 PARISHES.

taining 289 houses, and 1335 inhabitants. It has two hamlets, viz. *Morton-Underhill* and *Cokehill*.

KEMPSEY, 3 miles from Worcester, on the Bath road containing 166 houses, and 845 inhabitants. It has the Chapelry *Norton* and the hamlet of *Stoulton*.

KIDDERMINSTER, see page 247

KINGS-NORTON, 4 miles from Birmingham, this parish is near 34 miles in circuit and contains 524 houses, and 2807 inhabitants. It has a chapel of ease, and a good charity school. There are 2 Fairs, 25th of April, and 5th of September.

KINGTON, 3 miles from Droitwich, containing 26 houses, and 110 inhabitants.

KNIGHTWICK, 8 miles from Worcester, containing 25 houses, and 158 inhabitants. *Doddenham* and *Alton* are hamlets to this parish.

KYRE WYRE, 3½ miles from Tenbury, containing 30 houses, and 165 inhabitants. The hamlet of *Kyre Minor* adjoins this parish, and is noted for the quantity of Wild Saffron growing therein.

LEIGH, 7 miles from Worcester, is a large parish, having rich meadows adjoining the Team, it contains 223 houses, and 1255 inhabitants. *Leigh Sinton*, *Leigh Braces*, *Bransford*, and *Chornel*, are in this parish.

LINDRIDGE, 5 miles from Tenbury, containing 99 houses, and 543 inhabitants. The hamlets of *Knighton* and *Pensax* are in this parish.

LITTLETON SOUTH, 3 miles from Evesham, containing 30 houses, and 116 inhabitants.

LITTLETON MIDDLE, a parish united with the above, containing 40 houses, and 304 inhabitants, with the hamlet of *Littleton North* annexed.

1822 - Worcestershire Delineated by C. and J. Greenwood

Transcription

Norton – a hamlet and chapelry to the parish of Kempsey, hundred of Oswaldslow, lower division, 3 miles S.S.E. from Worcester, and 109 from London; containing 78 inhabited houses. Population, 1801, 337 – 1811, 405 – 1821, 517

Administration

County: Worcestershire, Civil Registration District: Pershore, Probate Court: Court of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester

Diocese: Worcester, Rural Deanery: Worcester, Poor Law Union: Pershore, Hundred: Oswaldslow, Province: Canterbury

1840 Bentley's Alphabetical Directory of 78 Parishes in the County, South of the City of Worcester

NORTON JUXTA KEMPSEY,

Note.—No return of Electors was made from this parish, therefore the inhabitants are disfranchised for 1840.

Formerly a hamlet and chapelry to Kempsey, but long since made an independent parish, is 3 miles S.E. of Worcester, on the London Road, and, with the hamlet of Hatfield annexed, contains 1,805 acres, and nearly 560 inhabitants, in Pershore Union. The living is a perpetual curacy, in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, and incumbency of the Rev. Henry Faulkner, M.A.; the church is an ancient stone edifice, well pewed, and capable of seating 194 persons; the E. window is of stained glass; and there are several excellent marble monuments, in memory of the family of B. Hooke, Esq. of Norton Hall; also, one in memory of G. J. A. Walker, Esq.'s family of Norton Villa. Service once every Sunday, morning and afternoon alternately; Jonathan Barnett is clerk, and there are several charities in the parish belonging to the poor. A Wesleyan preaching room and Sunday school was erected at Littleworth by subscription in 1835, at an expence of £150.; service every Sunday morning at ½ past 10, and 6 in the evening, and on Thursday evening at 7. Here is a circulating library, the books being kindly supplied by Mrs. Walker, of Norton Villa.

Norton Hall, on the S. side of the London road, 3½ miles from Worcester, is the residence of B. Hooke, Esq.; *Newland House* is the residence of Thomas Hooke, Esq. and *Norton Villa*, on the N.E. side of the London Road, is the residence of G. J. A. Walker, Esq.; its grounds

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BENTLEY'S

HISTORY OF

are well planted, and kept in good order; its gardens are celebrated for their fruit, &c. The E. end of the villa commands an extensive view of the B. and G. railway, which passes through the N.E. part of the parish.

Allington Thomas, farmer	Matthews Wm. shoemaker
Barnett Jonathan, parish clerk	Merrell Thomas, beerseller and
Butt Richard, farmer	flour dealer [dealer
Coney William & John, farmers	Peace Frs. farmer and cattle
Faulkner Rev. Hy. M.A. Parson	Roberts Henry, shopkeeper and
Fox Thomas, farmer [age house	coal dealer
Griffiths Mary Ann, farmer	Stanton Wm. and John, farmers
Hall Thomas, wheelwright	Stinton Wm. shoemaker
Hamus Henry, farmer	Sutor Samuel, wheelwright
Handay William, shopkeeper	Sutor Thomas, wheelwright
Harber Henry, blacksmith, con-	Veal William, shopkeeper
stable and shopkeeper	Walford John, shoemaker
Hitchings Sam. farmer and hauler	Walker Geo. Jas. Alexander,
Hooke Benj. Esq. Norton Hall	Esq. Norton Villa
Hooke T. Esq. Newland Hall	Woodhouse John, shoemaker

NORT

NORTON, BISHOP'S (*St. Peter*), a parish, in the union of CAISTON, E. division of the wapentake of ASLACOE, parts of LINDSEY, county of LINCOLN, 10 miles (W. N. W.) from Market-Rasen; containing, with the township of Atterby, 475 inhabitants. The living is a discharged vicarage, in the patronage of the Prebendary of Bishop's-Norton in the Cathedral of Lincoln, valued in the king's books at £9; net income, £185. There is a place of worship for Wesleyans.

NORTON, BRIZE (*St. Brise*), a parish, in the union of WITNEY, hundred of BAMPTON, county of OXFORD, 5 miles (W. S. W.) from Witney; containing 687 inhabitants. It comprises by measurement 4000 acres, of which the principal portion is arable: the soil is rather shallow, and in some parts stone brash; the surface is generally flat. There are good stone-quarries. The living is a discharged vicarage, valued in the king's books at £9. 7. 11.; net income, £165; patrons and appropriators, the Dean and Canons of Christ-Church, Oxford. The tithes were commuted for land and a money payment in 1775. The church contains a beautiful effigy in stone of John D'Aubigny, in the costume of the time of Edward III.

NORTON-BY-BREDON, a chapelry, in the parish of BREDON, union of TEWKESBURY, Middle division of the hundred of OSWALDSLOW, Pershore and E. divisions of the county of WORCESTER, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles (N. E. by N.) from Tewkesbury; containing 287 inhabitants. It is situated on the left bank of the river Avon; and the road from Pershore to Tewkesbury and the Birmingham and Gloucester railway traverse it in a parallel direction, from north to south. The area is 1097a. 30p. To the east of the village, at the foot of Bredon Hill, is Norton House, a handsome Elizabethan structure. The tithes were commuted for land and a money payment in 1814. The chapel, near the centre of the village, is a stone edifice, capable of seating 120 persons. When excavating for the railway, some Romanized-British or early Saxon remains were found, consisting of spear-heads, beads, &c.

NORTON-BY-KEMPSEY (*St. James*), a parish, in the union of PERSHORE, Lower division of the hundred of OSWALDSLOW, W. division of the county of WORCESTER, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles (S. E.) from Worcester; containing 601 inhabitants. This place, which by the adjunct to its name is distinguished from other Nortons in the county, was during the reigns of Henry IV. and V. the residence of the Gowers of Warwickshire, escheators of Worcestershire, of whose ancient seat, Woodhall, little more remains than the stately avenue of elm-trees, that formed the approach. One of this family married a daughter of the house of Dudley, who was styled Lady Dudley of Woodhall; and in the reign of James I., the estate was sold by William Gower to Mr. Stevens, of Newington, in the county of Middlesex, whose tomb is still preserved in the church. The parish is situated near the turnpike-road to Pershore, and comprises by measurement 1846 acres, of which 1157 are arable, 600 meadow and pasture, and the remainder woodland, plantations, and roads. The surface is pleasingly varied, and in many places very picturesque. From the hamlet of Hatfield are obtained beautiful views of the surrounding country, embracing the Bredon and Malvern hills, with the town of Malvern, the Woodbury and Cruckbarrow hills, Worcester cathedral, the spire of

NORT

St. Andrew's church, and other interesting objects. The soil is a rich clay and marl, producing excellent crops of wheat, beans, and peas; and the substratum chiefly blue lias, which is quarried for building, and for burning into lime. The Birmingham and Gloucester and the Oxford and Wolverhampton railways intersect the parish. Norton Hall, the seat of Benjamin Hooke, Esq., an old mansion previously the residence of Thomas Bird, Esq., has been greatly improved and enlarged by the present proprietor. Norton Villa, the residence of George J. A. Walker, Esq., is pleasantly situated on the north-east side of the road, in grounds tastefully laid out, embellished with thriving plantations, and commanding extensive and finely varied prospects: Newland House, the residence of Thomas Hooke, Esq., is also pleasantly situated. The living is a perpetual curacy, in the patronage of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, valued in the king's books at £2. 12. 6.; net income, £100, with an excellent house. The appropriate tithes were commuted in 1841 for £460, and the appropriate glebe comprises 41 acres. The church is a very ancient structure with a tower. There is a place of worship for Wesleyans; a parochial school is supported by subscription, and a Sunday school by Mrs. Walker, who has presented a library for the use of the children attending it. Thomas Knight in 1652, and Elizabeth Stevens in 1668, bequeathed each £100 to the poor.

NORTON-CANES.—See **NORTON-UNDER-CANNOCK**.

NORTON-CANON (*St. Nicholas*), a parish, in the union of WEOBLEY, hundred of GRIMSWORTH, county of HEREFORD, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles (S. S. W.) from Weobley; containing 282 inhabitants. The parish comprises 2072a. 2r. 23p., of which rather more than one-half is arable, and the remainder, with the exception of 90 acres of woodland, meadow and pasture. It is intersected by the road from Hereford to Kington. The living is a discharged vicarage, valued in the king's books at £5; net income, £120; patrons and appropriators, the Dean and Chapter of Hereford. The great tithes have been commuted for £310, and the vicarial for £119; the glebe contains 4 acres.

NORTON, CHIPPING (*St. Mary*), an incorporated market-town, a parish, and the head of a union, in the hundred of CHADLINGTON, county of OXFORD, 19 miles (N. W.) from Oxford, and 74 (N. W. by W.) from London; containing, with the hamlet of Over Norton, 3031 inhabitants, of whom 2629 are in the town. This place derives its name from its northern situation, and appears from its Saxon prefix to have been of some importance at the time of the heptarchy: it occupies a picturesque situation, surrounded by undulated hills, on the road from Oxford to Worcester. The streets are partially paved, and lighted with gas, and there is a plentiful supply of water. Many remains of ancient buildings have been incorporated in the present houses; the most interesting are in a house in the High-street. The woollen manufacture, which formerly flourished, is now reduced to one establishment, chiefly in the horse-cloth and girth branch. The market is on Wednesday; and great markets for cattle are held on the last Wednesday in each month, and the Wednesday next after Dec. 11th; also statute-fairs on the Wednesday before and after the 10th of October.

The charter was granted by James I. in 1607, and under it the officers of the corporation were, two bailiffs,

1851 - Lascelles & Co.'s Directory and Gazetteer of the City of Worcester & Neighbourhood

NORTON.

NORTON, by Kempsey, a small village, three miles south of Worcester, and two from Spetchley station. The population in 1841, was 601.

THE CHURCH is a plain building, with embattled tower and three bells

Rev. H. Faulkner, M.A., perpetual curate. Service, 11 a.m.

Faulkner Rev. H., M.A. Parsonage house

Hook Mrs., Norton hall

Walker George, Esq., Norton villa

Butt Richard, farmer, Woodhall

Day Edward, farmer

Fleet William, shopkeeper, Littleworth

Griffiths John, farmer

Grimley John, tailor

Harber Henry, blacksmith and shopkeeper

Hemus Henry, farmer, Hatfield

Hollington Thomas, farmer, Hatfield

Hooke John, farmer, Hatfield

Hooke Thomas, sen., farmer, Newlands

Hooke Thomas, jun., farmer, Newlands

Matthews Joseph, farmer, Littleworth

Matthews Mrs., farmer

Stanton William, farmer

Sutor Thomas, Wheelwright

1855 - Billings Directory & Gazetteer of Worcestershire

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NORTON.—KEMPSEY.

NORTON JUXTA KEMPSEY.

NORTON is situated about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles S.E. from Worcester, and contained in 1851 a population of 639 inhabitants.

HATFIELD is a small hamlet, about a quarter of a mile S. from the village.

LITTLEWORTH is another small hamlet, distant about one mile S.E. The population of both these places is returned with the parish.

The CHURCH, which is pleasantly situated, consists of nave, chancel, and western embattled tower, containing three bells; the doorway in the north wall (now stopped up) is plain Norman, as is the principal entrance on the south, and portions of the walls belong to the same date. The tower has diagonal buttresses, and the north wall is propped by buttresses of the most unartistical shape. This church, as well as that of the adjoining parish of Stoulton, was formerly a chapel of ease to Kempsey; but it appears that Norton had its christenings, marriages, &c., long anterior to 1269, for at that period the vicar of Kempsey was enjoined not to deprive the inhabitants of Norton of their ancient custom of christenings. The living is a Perpetual Curacy, in the patronage of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester. Rev. H. Faulkner, M.A., Incumbent; Mr. Robert Kings, Clerk. Service—10 30 a.m. and 3 30 p.m.

CHARITIES.—Mr. Thomas Hunt, of this parish, gave £100, to be laid out in land for the use of the poor. Christopher Meredith gave £3 per annum, to purchase Bibles for the Bishop's poor tenants, for Kempsey free school. Mrs. Elizabeth Stevens, late of Woodhall, gave £100, to be laid out in land for the use of the poor of Norton and Whittington. Mr. William Richards left £10 for the poor, 40s. to be paid annually. Mr. Francis Hunt gave 10s., to be given in bread. Thomas Shead gave £5, the interest to be given to poor widows on St. Thomas's day. There are several parcels of land, the rents out of which amount to about £11 7s., to be given to the poor, and for the repairing of the roads.

DIRECTORY.

Capel Alfred, Esq., Woodhall

Faulkner Rev. Henry, M.A., Perpetual Curate, Parsonage

Hooke Mrs. S., Norton Hall

Walker George, Esq., Norton Villa

Allington John, farmer, Boulterly

Allington Thomas, jun., farmer, Strain Bridge Farm

Grimley John, tailor

Harber Henry, blacksmith and shopkeeper

Hooke Thomas, sen., farmer, Newland House

Hooke Thos., jun., farmer, Norton House

Perratt Thomas, farmer, Pound House

Price James, wheelwright

Stanton William, farmer, Norton Court

Viner Thomas, carpenter

Wall James, farmer, brick and tile manufacturer, and coal merchant, Lower House; and at Diglis Wharf, Worcester

Watson Geo., lime manufacturer, quarryman, and beer retailer, *The Retreat*

HATFIELD.

Hook Mr. John, Hatfield Villa

Allington Thomas, sen., farmer, Lower Hatfield

Griffiths John, farmer

Lewis John, farmer

Lowe Richard, farmer, The Grove

LITTLEWORTH.

Fleet William, shopkeeper

Wootton Samuel, carpenter

Walford John, shoe maker

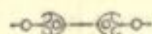
Norton-juxta-Kempsey.

NUR county historian, Nash, says that Norton was one of the chapelries to Kempsey; it is now however in all respects, both civil and ecclesiastical, a distinct parish. Its registers date as far back as 1538, it has its own churchwardens, supports its own poor, has an independent parochial organisation, and is in a different Poor-law Union from Kempsey. Moreover, Norton has its rectorial tithes and glebe land, the term "rectorial" implying that it was at one time not only an independent parish but a rectory. It is now a perpetual curacy, worth £112; Rev. G. Jenkin is the present incumbent. The parish church is an ancient structure, with some Norman doorways and other noticeable features. The building is dilapidated, and there is great need for increased accommodation, but from my knowledge of the excellent incumbent and the parish generally it will not remain so longer than may be compulsory. Sittings in church, 200, of which 70 are free. There is a population of nearly 700, and an acreage of 2,000. Employment of the people chiefly agricultural, but several of the men are railway labourers, and gloving is carried on largely by the women.

There are two hamlets in the parish—Littleworth and Hatfield. At Woodhall, the residence of T. Adams, Esq., was the seat of the Gowers, of Warwick, escheators of this county. The Gowers, being near neighbours, and perhaps tenants, to the Priors of Worcester, fraternised much with them; and we read of Richard Gower keeping Prior Moore's moulting hawks in a cage, for which on one occasion he charged him *iijs. iiijd.* Principal resident landholders in Norton, T. T. B. Hooke, Esq., Norton Hall; T. Adams, Esq., Woodhall; G. J. A. Walker, Esq., Norton Villa; and T. Hooke, Esq., Norton

Grange. The Great Western Railway runs through the parish and has a station in the centre of it.

There is a Wesleyan Chapel at Littleworth. The Dissenters, however, are not bigoted, as most of them frequently attend church on Sunday mornings, and their children are almost invariably baptised in the church. Much good is now being done unobtrusively in the parish, which possesses many good institutions, including a parochial Church of England School, lately enlarged at a cost of upwards of £200; coal and school clubs, &c.



Transcription

NORTON-BY-KEMPSEY, a village and a parish in Pershore district, Worcester. The village stands 1½ mile E of the river Severn, 2 SW of Spetchley r. station, and 3 SSE of Worcester; and is small but picturesque.

The parish contains also the hamlets of Littleworth and Hatfield; and its post town is Worcester. Acres, 1,811. Real property, £3,791. Pop., 661. Houses, 132. Norton Hall is the seat of the Hookes; Norton Villa, of G. J. H. Walker, Esq.; and Wood Hall, of T. Adams, Esq. Bricks and tiles are made.

The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Worcester. Value, £150. Patrons, the Dean and Chapter of Worcester. The church is ancient, small, and plain; has a Norman porch and an embattled tower; and was recently repaired. There are a Wesleyan chapel, and charities £28.

1890 - The Parishes of the Diocese of Worcester - George Miller

NORTON-BY-KEMSEY.

This was a portion of Kemsey Manor; and, in 1556, in the deed allowing burials to take place at the Chapelry of Norton, it is expressly stated to belong to the Parish of Kemsey. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners now hold the manor.

Population.—1821, 517; 1881, 606.

Rateable Value.—1816, £2472; 1833, £1850; 1888, £7222.

Poor Rate.—1776, £81; 1785, £102; 1803, £274; 1888, £614.

Area.—1888, —.

THE CHURCH OF ST. JAMES has a chancel, nave, south aisle, vestry, tower, 3 bells. It was almost entirely rebuilt in 1874. A Norman doorway has been preserved; and there is a small window, deeply splayed, which may be pre-Norman. The font is probably of the 13th century. The south aisle was added at the Restoration. There are monuments to the Hookes', who for many years held Norton Hall and Grange. The reredos was erected in memory of Mr. G. B. Walker.

Digitized by Google

NORTON-BY-KEMSEY.

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This living was a chapelry in the parish of Kemsey, as seen in the Taxatio and Liber Regis.

Value of Living.—1889, £278. *Patron*.—Dean and Chapter.

Register dates from 1538.

Church School.

Church Goods.—1889, chalice and cover, 1677; paten, gift of Fleetwood, Bishop of Worcester, 1677; chalice, paten, flagon, alms dish, gift of Mrs. Adams, 1875.—1552, chalice and paten; pix, brass, with little box of silver within; cross; censer; tynnacle; 2 candlesticks of brass, 1 pair lead; 2 cruets; 3 pairs of vestments; cope surplice; 3 corporas and case; cross cloth, canopy of sarsnett; 3 altar cloths, 2 towels, 3 bells, lych bell, sacristy bell.

The barracks of the 29th Regimental District are in the parish. The Vicar is chaplain.

Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish Hall, is a key community hub located in Littleworth. It is a large, accessible venue available for both private hire and community use.

The building and land is owned by the Parish Council and the site is managed by a Charitable Trust established by a **lease and trust deed dated May 5, 1978**. Its purpose is to provide a village hall for the use of all inhabitants of the parish for meetings, classes, and leisure activities as well as being available for private hire to the general public.

The Parish Hall is a modern facility that serves the contemporary community, rather than being a historic building itself.

Context within Parish History

While the current Parish Hall building and its governing trust are relatively modern, the Parish has a long history, dating back to at least the 10th century when the land was part of the Bishops of Worcester's estate. In 1781, the independent Parish of Norton was created, giving the local church (St. James the Great) full parish status.

In more recent times, as the area has grown and changed (with the closure of the barracks and development of new housing), the need for modern community facilities like the current Parish Hall and its associated recreational areas (play area, tennis court, etc.) became a priority for the Parish Council. The current facility is part of the ongoing effort to improve the quality of life and provide amenities for the residents.

Location & Contact

- **Address:** Norton Parish Hall, Wadborough Road, Littleworth, Worcester, WR5 2QB.
- **Phone Number:** +44 7714 673915.
- **Email:** njkparishhall@gmail.com.
- **Website:** www.nortonparishhall.co.uk.

Facilities & Amenities

The hall offers a range of facilities for various activities and events.

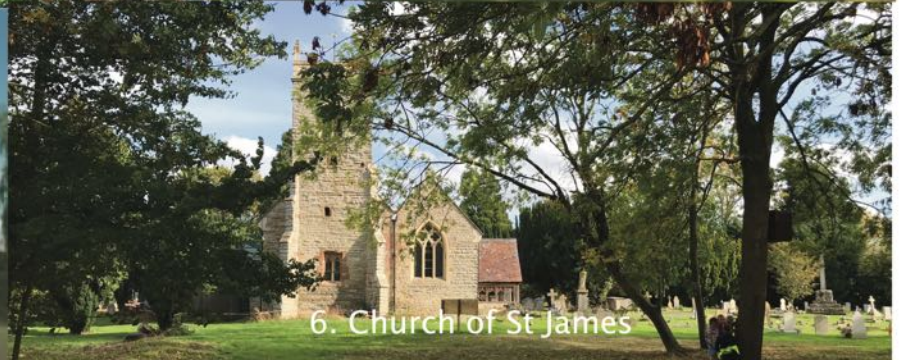
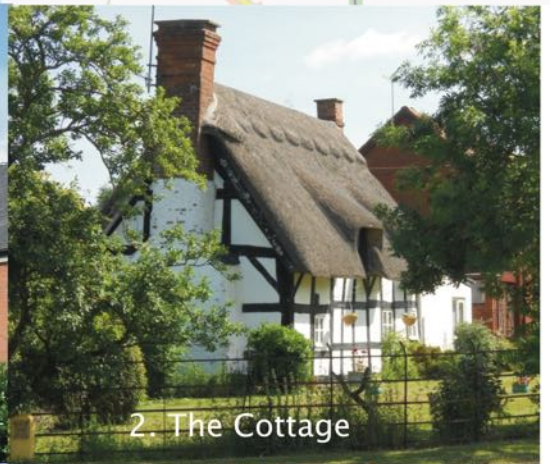
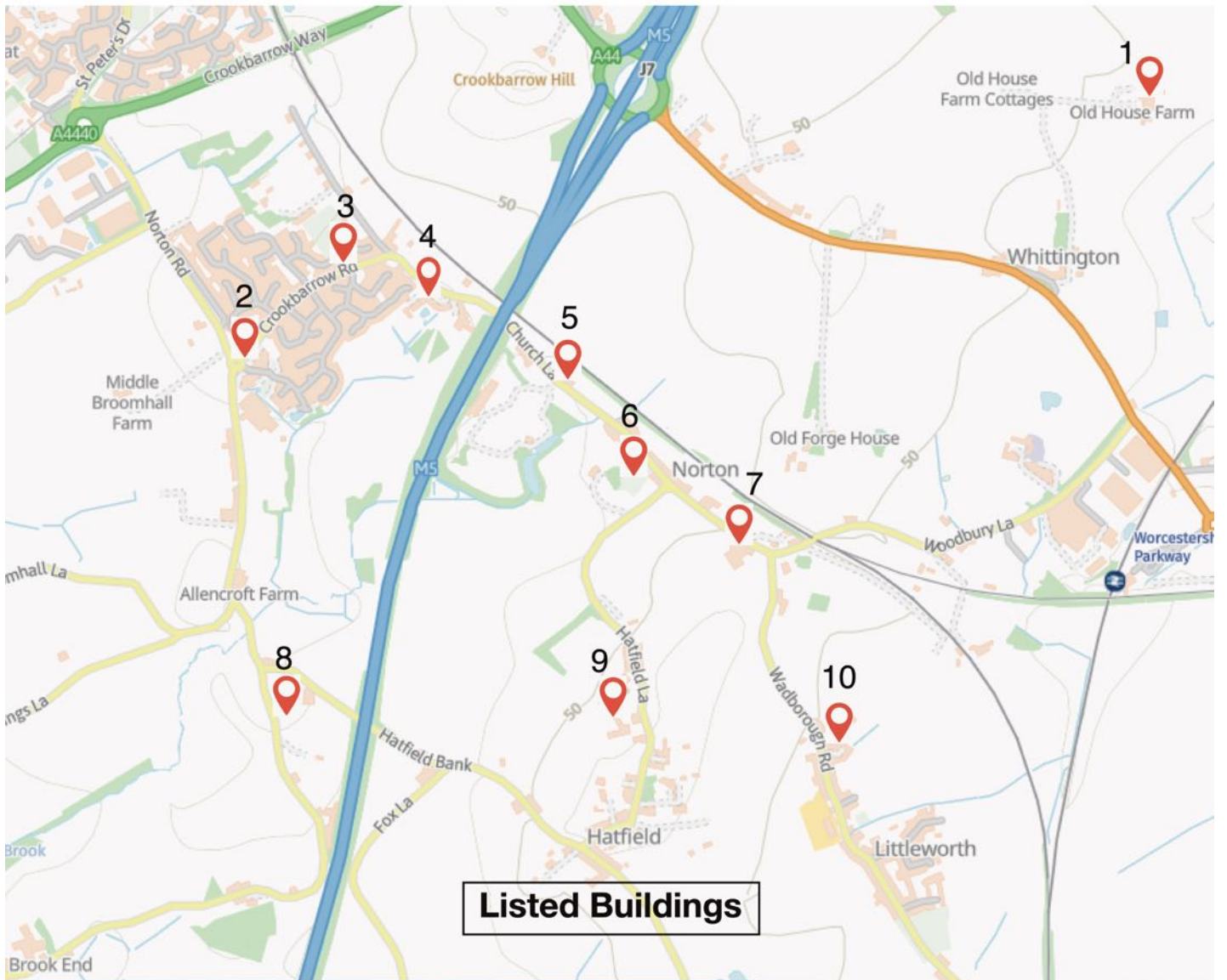
- **Venue Space:** Includes the Freeman Windsor Hall and multi-function rooms, suitable for parties, wedding receptions, and exercise classes.
- **Onsite Coffee Shop/Bar:** A coffee shop/bar is available on-site and can be hired for private functions outside of normal hours.
- **Outdoor Amenities:** The site is equipped with a children's play area, a multi-use games area (MUGA), a tennis court, a football pitch, and open space.
- **Accessibility:** The venue has a wheelchair-accessible entrance, parking lot, and restroom.
- **Parking:** Extensive parking is available, including charging points for electric cars.
- **Other:** Restrooms and baby changing facilities are available. A defibrillator is also installed at the hall.

Booking Information

The hall can be booked online through its website. It is available for hire between 8 am and midnight.









10. Cooksholme Farmhouse



9. Norton Grange



7. Pound House Farmhouse



5. The Black & White Cottages



8. Boulterley Cottage



4. Newlands Farmhouse

Worcestershire Parkway

Worcestershire Parkway is a modern, split-level Park and Ride railway station that opened on February 23rd 2020 as a result of a significant £50 million-plus rail investment in Worcestershire, marking the county's first new station in over a century.

Background and Conception

The idea for a new station at this location had been proposed for decades but was initially mooted around 50 years before its opening. The station was built at the intersection of two major lines: the North Cotswold Line (serving London and the Thames Valley) and the Cross Country route (connecting Cardiff and Nottingham). This gives passengers access to important national destinations without needing to travel into Birmingham.

Modern Facilities

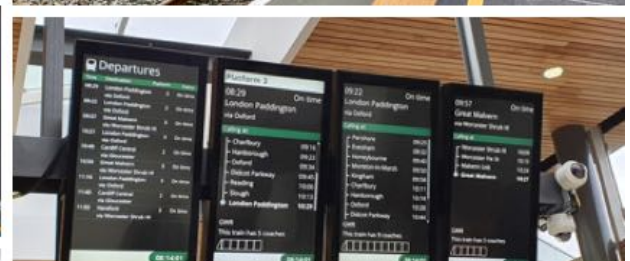
The station features a fully accessible modern station building with a ticket desk, a single platform for Cotswold Line services to London Paddington, and two platforms for CrossCountry services between Nottingham and Cardiff.

Park and Ride

A substantial 500-space car park with secure cycle storage, motorcycle parking, electric car charging, and a bus/rail interchange offers passengers a convenient way to connect to the rail network.

Impact and Success - High Passenger Numbers

The station has seen a significant rise in passenger numbers, exceeding expectations and reaching over two million journeys in its first five years, numbers that weren't expected until year 13 in the original business case. This has caused significant problems with car parking which is often over 90% and sometimes 100% of capacity in mid-week. Plans are underway for expansion of the car park.

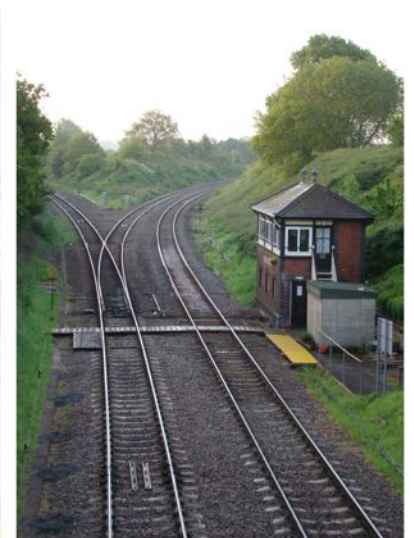


The history of railways in Worcestershire is marked by competition between major companies like Great Western Railway (GWR) and the Midland Railway, with a surge in construction during the “railway mania” of the 1840s. Early development was also shaped by the city of Worcester's desire to be connected to the national network, which it initially by-passed.

The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway (OW&WR): Facing a lack of investment after the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway bypassed it, Worcester backed this new line. Despite being locally nicknamed the "Old Worse & Worse" for its mismanagement, the OW&WR completed its line in stages between 1852 and 1853, establishing Worcester's Shrub Hill as a key station and linking the city to the Midlands

GWR vs. Midland Railway - For decades, the development of railways in the county was influenced by the intense competition between the Great Western and Midland companies. In 1860, the OW&WR merged with the Worcester and Hereford and other companies to form the West Midland Railway. This new company, dominated by the OW&WR, soon amalgamated with its larger rival, the Great Western Railway, in 1863.

Decline, Preservation & Modernisation - The Beeching Report of 1963 led to widespread closures across the rail network, including many lines and stations in Worcestershire. However, preserved railways like the Severn Valley Railway continue to operate on former routes. In the decades since, the county's rail network has seen significant modernisation, including the opening of Worcestershire Parkway station in 2020, to meet the demands of a growing population and economy.



The Norton Sentry



The Worcestershire Regiment Project Group commissioned a life-size statue of a soldier of the Worcestershire Regiment as a permanent and lasting memorial and a reminder that an infantry regiment once lived here.

Installation and dedication

'The Sentry' sculpture was installed in July 2022 to pay tribute to the men who served in the Worcestershire Regiment and who fought in World War I. It stands almost two metres high and was put in place on the land of the old Norton Barracks Depot by the Worcestershire Regiment Project Group in 2022

Upon arrival, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne was met by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Mrs Beatrice Grant, who escorted HRH through an Honor Guard and Colour Party where Civic officials from the County and District were presented.





St James the Great Church

The church consists of a 14th century rebuilt chancel, north vestry, nave with a 12th century north wall, south aisle of four bays, south porch and western tower. Half the existing north wall is early Norman and the original north doorway can now be seen from the adjoining Beechill Room. Of note are the various Stevens burial slabs in the east end. The lancet window to the west of the north doorway and font are both circa 1220 and the bell tower circa 1370. Romanesque sculpture is found in the reset S doorway.

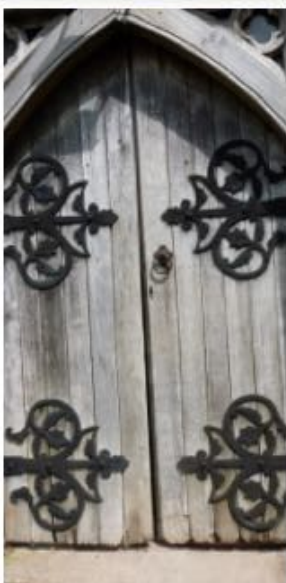
In 1565 the people of Norton petitioned the Bishop for their own graveyard and the Churchyard at St James has been the place of rest for parishioners ever since. In 1788 the independent Parish of Norton was created out of the old Parish of Kempsey. The church was a proper Parish Church and no longer a Chapel of Ease.

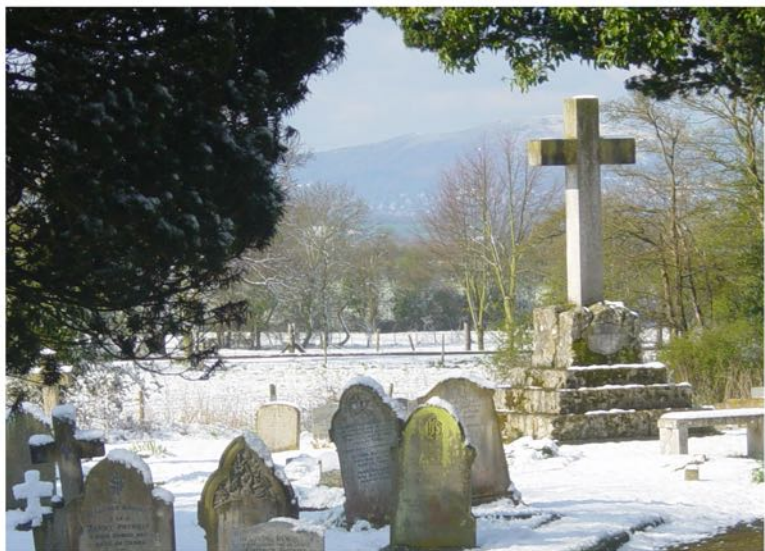
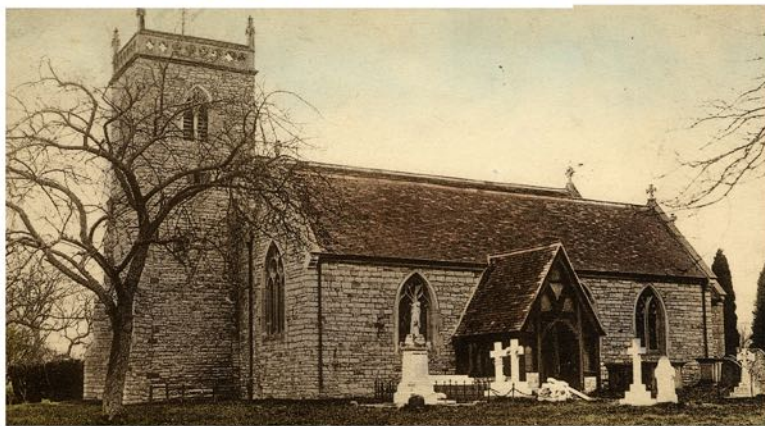
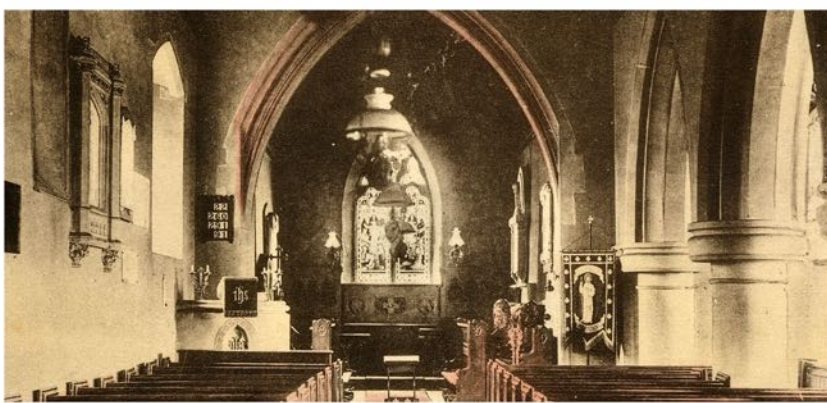
From 1874-75 the church underwent major restoration and rebuilding by W.J.Hopkins and Ewan Christian. The massive Childers Monument south of the porch was erected in 1877 by the Right Hon Hugh Childers PC, MP as a memorial to his wife Emily (1827-75).

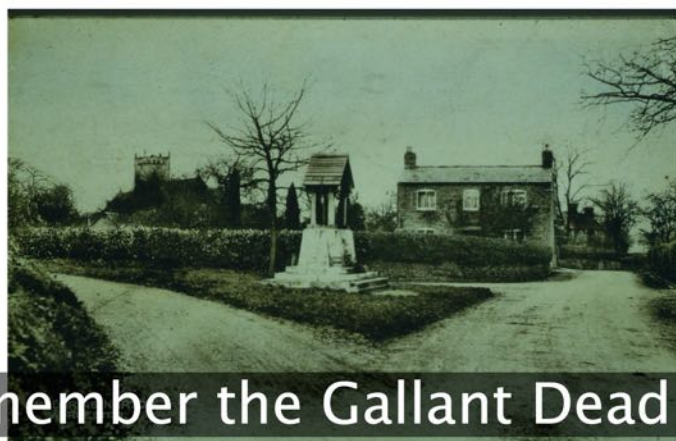
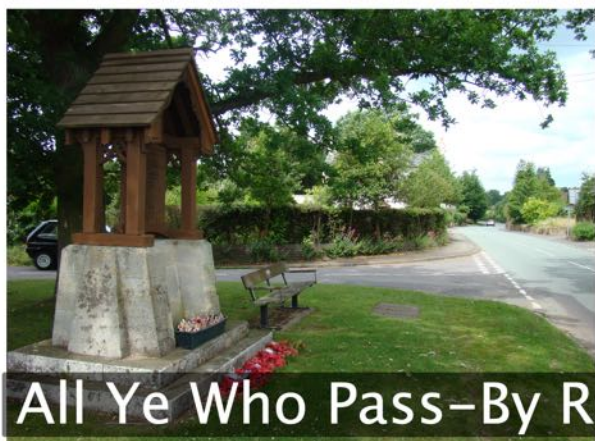
The Church of St James the Great has stood at the heart of the local community for over 900 years and many have a deep connection and affection for the building and all that it stands for. That affection, is not limited to those who live locally but is also shared by many from much further afield, across the nation and indeed the world, by many ex -servicemen and women who served at Norton Barracks from 1881-1962 and knew as St James served as their Garrison Church

On Sundays depot staff and the recruits would muster for church parade and march to Norton Church for the morning service, often accompanied by the Regimental Band.

Because of the close connection between the regiment and the church St James is home to a number of Battalion Colours of the Worcestershire Regiment and the Churchyard contains the graves of several 'Worcesters' who died while serving at the depot or who settled in the area on completion of their service and lived out the rest of their lives close by, some of them in the village itself.







All Ye Who Pass-By Remember the Gallant Dead

The Worcestershire Regiment

The Worcestershire Regiment traces its history back to Farrington's Regiment formed in 1694 and Charlemont's Regiment raised in 1701, later the 26th and 36th respectively. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries these regiment saw service in the Low Countries, North America, India, the Peninsula and France. Worcestershire Regiment of Militia was formed out of the County Militia in 170 and maintained its separate identity until being incorporated into the Worcestershire Regiment in 1881.

During World War 1 battalions of the Regiment fought in France, Flanders, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, Macedonia and Italy. The regiment expanded to 22 Battalions and won a total of 585 gallantry medals, 9 Victoria Crosses, 70 Distinguished Service Orders (with 12 bars), 288 Military Crosses (36 bars) and 227 Distinguished Conduct Medals (8 bars). After the war the Regiment was reduced to a peacetime establishment of 2 regular and 2 Territorial Army (TA) battalions until the outbreak of the Second World War when it expanded again to 8 battalions.

These battalions saw service across the globe. In the western hemisphere they fought in Eritrea, the Western Desert (Tobruk) in North Africa and in North West Europe. Soldiers of the 1st Battalion were the first Allied troops to fight on German soil at Geilenkirchen on the 18th November 1944. In the East, soldiers of the 2nd and 7th battalions fought in the Burma Campaign, at the battle of Kohima and the capture of Mandalay.

After the War the Regiment was reduced to one regular and one TA Battalion which was based at Norton Barracks from 1960 to 1962. The regiment saw service in Malaya during the conflict with the Malayan National Liberation Army the armed wing of the Malayan Communist Party which sought an independent communist republic. They were also part of United Nations operations in Cyprus, and on garrison duty in Germany, Trieste, the West Indies and Gibraltar.

The regiment amalgamated with the Sherwood Foresters in February 1970 to become the 1st Battalion Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (WSFR), an infantry regiment that was part of the Prince of Wales's Division. Since which time they have served as a demonstration batallion at the School of Infantry in Warminster, formed part of the British Garrison in Germany and completed operational tours in Northern Ireland, Belize, Central America and Cyprus.

On September 1st 2007 WSFR were absorbed into the Mercian Regiment along with the Cheshire and Staffordshire Regiments. The Mercian Regiment's formation was announced in December 2004 as part of the restructuring of the British Army.



Worcestershire Regiment Timeline 1661 to 1970

The table below shows some of the main events throughout the history of the Worcestershire Regiment from its formation to its amalgamation with the Sherwood Foresters Regiment in 1970.

1661	Foundation of the British Regular Army.
1694	First parade of Farrington's Regiment at Norwich, 1st June.
1702	Lord Charlemont raised his regiment in Ulster.
1706	Ramilies - First battle honour of the Regiment.
1746	29th attacked by Red Indians. "The Ever-sworded 29th"
1747	Rearguard action at Lauffeld. Possible origin of Regimental motto "FIRM".
1751	The two Regiments numbered 29th Foot and 36th Foot.
1770	The Boston Massacre.
1773	Earliest known use of motto FIRM by 36th Regiment.
1777	Earliest known use of Star badge by 29th Regiment.
1781	County titles introduced - 29th (Worcs) Regiment and 36th (Herefordshire) Regiment.
1784	29th (Worcestershire) Regiment authorised to retain the Star badge on their pouches.
1791	Royal Windsor presented to 29th (Worcestershire) Regiment.
1794	The Glorious First of June.
1797	Earliest known use of the Royal Lion badge by the 29th Regiment.
1808	Rolica - 29th Foot and 9th Foot capture heights from the French.
1811	Albuhera - Ensigns Vance and Furnace save the Colours.
1839	Fusilier title offered to 29th Regiment.
1848	Sobraon - 29th Foot and 10th Foot meet in captured trenches (Sikh Wars).
1877	Valise Star assimilated to that of the Coldstream Guards.
1881	29th and 36th amalgamated into the Worcestershire Regiment.
1900	South African War - 3rd and 4th Battalions raised.
1909	The Naval Crown awarded to the Regiment.
1914	War declared August 4th.

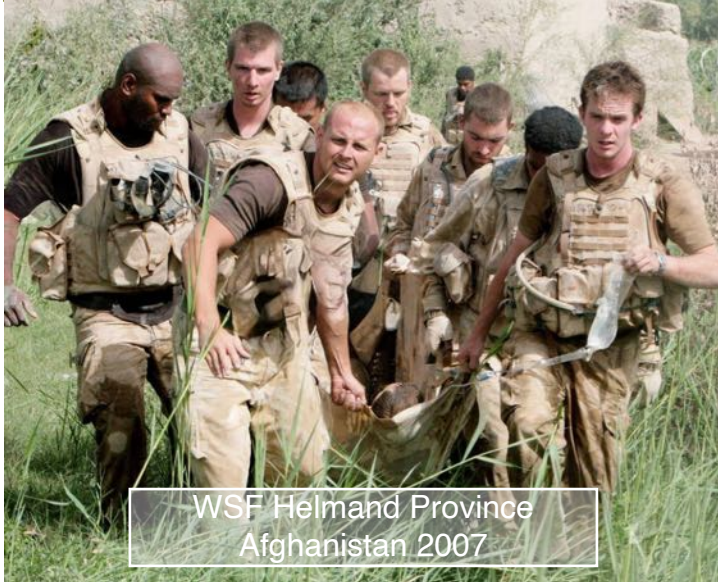
- 1914** Gheluvelt, October 30th.
- 1915** The 1st Battalion at Neuve Chapelle.
The first V.C-Lieutenant James in Gallipoli.
- 1916** Private Turrall wins the V.C. at La Boisselle.
Lieutenant Bennett wins the V.C. on the Somme.
- 1917** Private Dancox wins the V.C. at Poelcapelle.
- 1918** Major Roberts wins the V.C. at Pargny.
Captain Crowe wins the V.C. at Neuve Eglise.
Colonel Grogan wins the V.C. at the Aisne.
Armistice Day- 11th November.
- 1922** 4th Battalion disbanded.
- 1923** 3rd Battalion disbanded.
- 1930** New Colours presented to the 2nd Battalion at Plymouth.
- 1938** 1st Battalion moved to London to take over custody of the Tower of London.
- 1939** The new Militia raised.
1st Battalion in Palestine.
2nd Battalion on foreign tour in Punjaub.
War declared-3rd September.
- 1940** 7th and 8th Battalions evacuated from Dunkirk.
11th and 12th Battalions raised.
- 1941** 1st Battalion took part in the campaigns in Eritrea and Abyssinia.
- 1942** 1st Battalion in the Western Desert. Tobruk.
- 1943** 1st January, 11th Battalion disbanded and posted to 1st Battalion cadre.
12th Battalion became 179 Field Regiment R.A.
- 1944** 1st Battalion landed in North-West Europe.
2nd and 7th. Battalions invaded Burma.
- 1945** March 19th, Capture of Mandalay; 2nd Battalion.
1st Battalion in Germany.
8th, 9th and 10th Battalions entered into "suspended animation."
- 1946** 1st Battalion moved from B.A.O.R. to Trieste in C.M.F.
7th Battalion in India.
- 1947** 1st Battalion move to Pola in Yugoslavia.
2nd Battalion entered into "suspended animation" on 26th March.
7th Battalion becomes the Territorial Army division of the Regiment.
1st Battalion move back to Germany in May.
- 1950** 1st Battalion in Malaya.
- 1957** 1st Battalion in Belize, British Honduras following political coup in Guatemala.
- 1970** Worcestershire Regiment and The Sherwood Foresters Regiment amalgamated.



The Commerative Garden
at St Peters GC



The 4th Batallion marching towards the
trenches at Aceheux 28 June 1916



WSF Helmand Province
Afghanistan 2007



The 7th Regiment with Japanese Flag
Captured on Mount Popa 16 April 1945

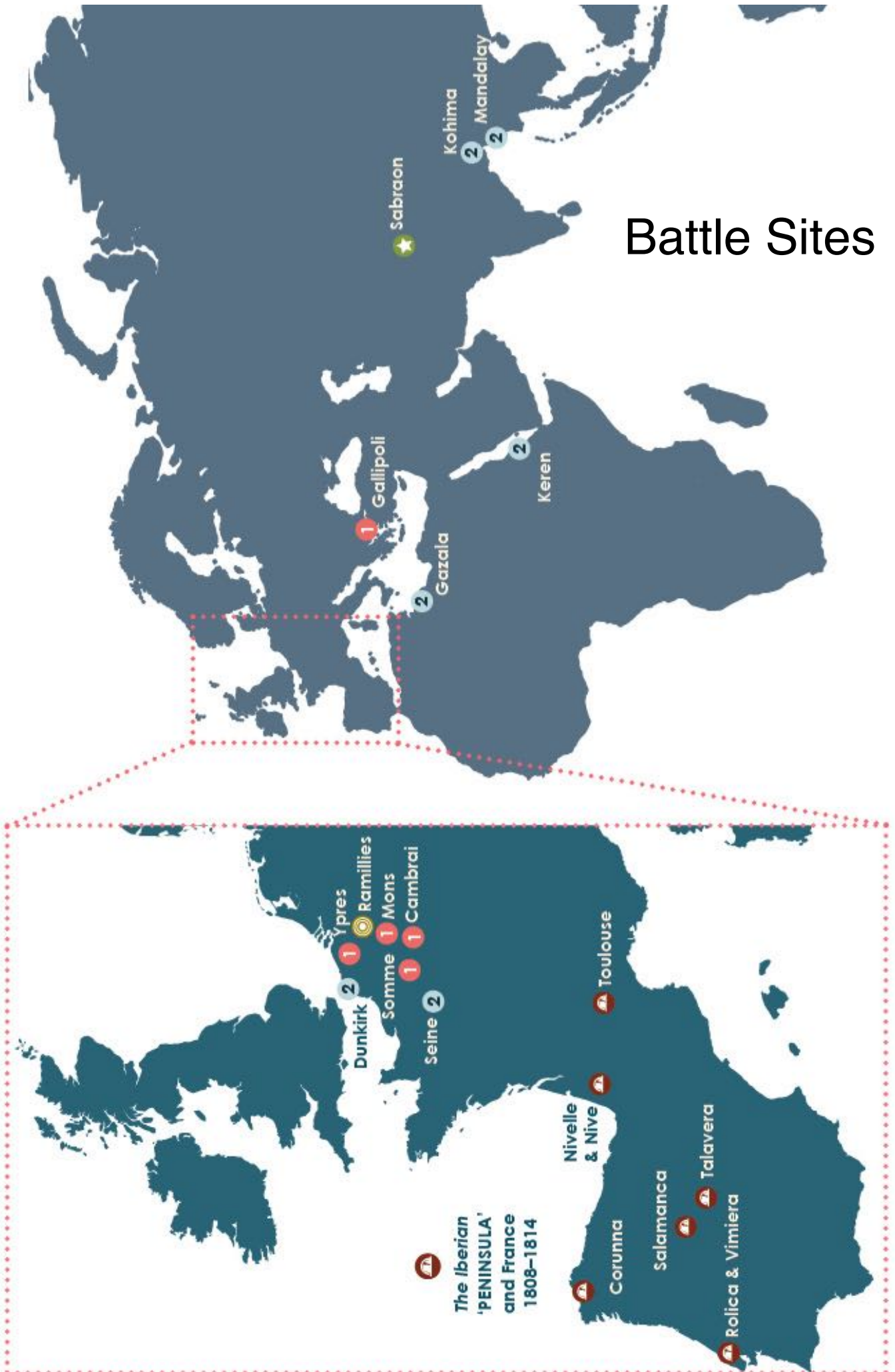


Battle of Albuera 1811



The Colours

Battle Sites



Street Names and the Battles

When the Brockhill Village site was built around the Keep, Wychavon District Council were keen to keep some connection with the Worcestershire Regiment. The regiment suggested the names of some of their battle honours so there will still be some sign of the fact that the regiment once occupied the place.

The street names are from battles the Worcestershire's fought in:

Cambrai Drive - There were two major battles near the French town of Cambrai in which six battalions of the regiment took part. Cambrai is noted for the first use of tanks in significant numbers. During the battle they successfully supported the infantry assault and severely affected the morale of the defending German army.

Corunna Close - In 1809 the 36th Regiment retreated over 250 miles of mountainous country in Spain and stood to fight at Corunna. After having to repel repeated attacks the French were defeated and most of the British troops were able to embark safely for England, though their commander Lieutenant General Sir John Moore was killed.

Dunkirk Drive - The 7th and 8th Battalions of the regiment took part in the retreat to Dunkirk in France in 1940. In the face of sustained German pressure during which many were killed or captured, many members of the British Expeditionary Force along with thousands of other allied soldiers were famously evacuated from the port and surrounding beaches by an armada of small ships.

Gallipoli Drive - From the spring of 1915 until January 1916 the 4th and 9th Battalions of the regiment fought in the bitter nine-month campaign against entrenched Turkish forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula in the Dardanelles, before finally being evacuated to Egypt.

Gazala Drive - The 1st Battalion occupied and held a defensive position along the coast road in a bid to hold up the enemy during the battle of Gazala in North Africa in May and June 1942. Against Field Marshal Rommel's famed German Afrika Corps they fought a spirited action before withdrawing into Tobruk.

Keren Drive - After two previous battles had resulted in stalemate, the 1st Battalion was part of the 29th Indian Brigade which captured a strongly held Italian position in the mountains of Eritrea after bitter fighting during the Third Battle of Keren in March 1941.

Kohima Drive - The 7th Battalion was heavily involved in the successful defence of the Indian town of Kohima against strong Japanese forces at the start of the Burma campaign in 1944. Noted as the turning point of the Japanese offensive into India, the battle led to the abandonment of the Imphal Ridge by the Japanese and the relief of Imphal. The National Army Museum voted this as Britain's greatest battle.

Mandalay Drive - During the British drive into Burma in 1945, the retreating Japanese army were strongly entrenched in defensive positions in and around the Burmese city of Mandalay. The 2nd Battalion of the regiment was instrumental in expelling the Japanese from and liberating the city and, along with the 7th Battalion, played a major role in both the defence of India and the campaign in Burma.

Mons Drive - The 2nd and 3rd Battalions having landed in France and advanced into Belgium as part of the British Expeditionary Force in August 1914, took part in the fighting retreat from Mons in the face of the German advance in August and September 1914.

Nive Gardens - After the battle of Nivelle in late 1813, towards the end of the Peninsular War, the French General Soult had formed his defences around the town of Bayonne. The 36th crossed the River Nive in southern France from west to east to attack the French army defending the town. Amid fierce fighting they were forced to re-cross the river to frustrate an attack threatening their left flank, a daunting manoeuvre at that time.

Nivelle Grove - After the British had taken the town of San Sebastian, the 36th helped to secure Wellington's right flank by capturing a key fortification in southern France during the battle of Nivelle in November 1813. This led to the defeat of the French and the retreat of their army.

Peninsula Road - This honour was awarded to both the 29th and 36th in recognition of their contribution during the Peninsular War fought in Portugal, Spain and France from 1808 to 1814.

Ramillies Drive - This was the regiment's first battle honour. Farrington's Regiment, later the 29th, was part of the Duke of Marlborough's army which took part in the attack on Ramillies during this battle in the War of the Spanish Succession in Flanders in 1706. It was later said to be the battle which decided the fate of the Netherlands.

Regiment Close - Most of the houses in this street were built for married men on staff of the depot.

Rolica Fields - The 29th and 36th were involved in this, the first battle of the Peninsular War in Portugal in 1808, a battle in which both regiments were destined to play a major part. The 29th Regiment led the attack on the heights of Columbeira on 17 July during which Lt-Col George Lake, their commanding officer, was amongst those killed. With additional forces brought up in support, this action was instrumental in defeating the French.

St. Helena Court - Not a regimental battle, but the willow tree in one corner is alleged to be a cutting taken from the tree near Napoleon's grave in St. Helena.

Salamanca Drive - The 36th fought at the battle of Salamanca during the Peninsula War under Wellington in 1812. Arriving on 17 June 1812 they immediately commenced operations against the forts at Salamanca. Meeting fierce French resistance the battle lasted until 22 July when the enemy finally fled.

Seine Close - In August 1944, following the allied advance from Normandy Operation Neptune, the crossing of the River Seine began. In XXX Corps the 43rd Division was given the task of crossing at Vernon. As part of that formation the 1st Battalion was the first complete unit to cross the river against stiff German opposition and secured their objective by reaching Vernonnet. By 28 August they had consolidated their position and were able to resupply and attend to the wounded.

Sobraon Crescent - The 29th fought in this battle against the entrenched Sikhs during the conquest of the Punjab India in 1846. The 29th supported by two native battalions, dashed towards the ramparts which the Sikhs had erected. After two unsuccessful charges, the 29th succeeded in reaching the first Sikh trenches. The enemy suffered terrible carnage and by the end of the battle had lost some 10,000 men and 67 guns. The British losses were also heavy, suffering 2,383 killed or wounded, among which the 29th casualties numbered 186 out of a total strength of 552.

Somme Crescent - Ten battalions of the regiment were involved in the many battles fought along the River Somme in France during 1916 and 1918. The battles of the Somme saw some of the fiercest fighting of the war with the British suffering some 60,000 men killed or wounded on the first day 1 July 1916.

Talavera Road - The 29th under Wellington captured a strategically important hill in Spain from the French in this battle in the Peninsular War in 1809. During the battle both sides lost about a quarter of their men, causing Wellington to say, 'Talavera was the hardest fought battle of modern times'.

Toulouse Drive - The 36th were participants in the battle of Toulouse, the final battle of the Peninsular War and fought on French soil. After fierce fighting in which the British and French suffered combined casualties of nearly 8,000 men. General Soult, the French commander, signed an armistice thus ending the war on 17 April 1814. Toulouse proved to have been a tragic waste of life and a battle that need never have been fought as, after the battle, news was received that Napoleon had abdicated four days earlier.

Vimiera Close - This was the second battle in the Peninsular War in 1808 following which Sir Arthur Wellesley, later Lord Wellington, wrote of the 36th, 'the regular and orderly conduct of this corps throughout the service, and the gallantry and discipline in action have been conspicuous. The 36th is an example to the army'.

Ypres Close - Ten battalions of the regiment were involved in the numerous battles around the Belgium City of Ypres. Forming a salient surrounded on three sides and heavily shelled by German forces throughout. Ypres did not fall during the First World War. The regiment was involved in battles around Ypres in 1914, 1915, the notorious third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) in 1917 and again in 1918.

A Brief History of Norton Barracks

In 1872 the War Department purchased the 20 acres site for £3,500, and work on building the barracks was started in December 1874. By May 1877 the new Norton Barracks was completed and handed over to the Worcestershire Regiment on the 17th December 1877.

These Barracks would now accommodate the depot companies of the 29th and 36th Regiments. Each Regiment was assigned a block of buildings, over the doorway of which was painted the name of the officer who raised the particular regiment. Some of these names remain as parts of the current building eg. "Albermarle" and "Farrington".

The barracks consisted of a gatehouse "Keep" with offices on one side and officers' quarters on the other side, two large barrack blocks for the accommodation of soldiers, cookhouse, and two married quarters blocks, and a hospital. The area was enclosed by a 10 ft. high wall, some parts of which still exist on Brockhill Lane. The estimated cost of the contract was around £65,000.

The "Keep" had underneath the entrance a large tank capable of holding some 20,000 gallons of water supplied by the City of Worcester. From this tank water was pumped by steam power into two cast iron tanks at the top of the "Keep", which supplied the whole barracks with water. The rest of the Keep was used for stores.

In the centre of the barracks was the parade ground with buildings all round it. The office block was built for the District Commander's H.Q., The Worcestershire Militia Battalion and Company H.Q's, engineers, paymaster and Depot companies of 29th and 36th Foot. At the end of the office block was the Sergeants' Mess, the men's canteen and reading room. The officers' quarters block provided accommodation for the Quartermaster, an Officers' Mess and single officers' quarters.

The two barrack blocks were two storeys high and consisted of four rooms, each to accommodate 28 soldiers, and a small room adjoining each barrack room for an N.C.O. Behind the barracks blocks was a cookhouse and bath-house. A drill shed was provided on the North side of the parade ground.

On the East side were two married quarters blocks providing accommodation for 31 married men and an infant school. Behind the married quarters blocks was a laundry with drying and ironing rooms. In the South-East corner was a hospital providing accommodation for 28 patients, surgery, kitchen and an isolation ward. Stabling was also provided for the horses.

To the North of the barracks and outside the wall was 9 acres for training and camping.

Early in 1878 the H.Q. of 1st and 2nd Militia Battalions The Worcestershire Regiment were moved from their Regimental Depot in St. George's Square, Worcester, to Norton Barracks. The training of the Militia recruits (which consisted of 55 days preliminary drill) was carried out at Norton Barracks continuously throughout the year.

Several organisational changes took place in the 1880s but the training of the Regular and Militia recruits went on side by side until 1900.

In 1900 as recruiting was good, and The Worcestershire Regiment was ordered to raise two new Regular Battalions and the Depot was now short of accommodation for the number of recruits under training and two new blocks were built behind the two existing ones. The rooms were much smaller than in the original two blocks, holding ten men to a room. At the same time a mobilisation store, gymnasium and Sergeants' Mess were built on the North of the parade ground.

The outbreak of World War 1 in 1914 had created a great wave of patriotic feeling and men rushed to enlist and recruiting offices were filled throughout the country. The Militia Units moved out and the Depot expanded its role to train the many new recruits. The barracks was so overcrowded many of the men had to sleep rough.

In 1915 the barracks performed a crucial role in the development of what was then new and leading edge technology when it was chosen as the Army's base for wireless training. The Royal Engineers set up the Wireless Training Centre Worcester (WTC) and the unit became crucial to the war effort.

In 1939 the function of the Depot was still to train recruits and administer the regimental home. Initially the number swarming into the barracks was so great that the old Jam factory (later Morgan Crucible) was requisitioned and a hutted camp built which included large Officers' and Sergeants' Messes, two other ranks cookhouses, two parade grounds and garages.

In 1940 a large hutted camp was built across the road from the keep which was later at the end of the War an American unit.

One aspect particularly associated with Norton Barracks was cricket played on the shady seclusion of the green field within the Barracks. After World War I the annual cricket week was held during mid-July. Cricket waned during World War II, to be revived in 1946, and since 1947 the week has been held during the last week in June.

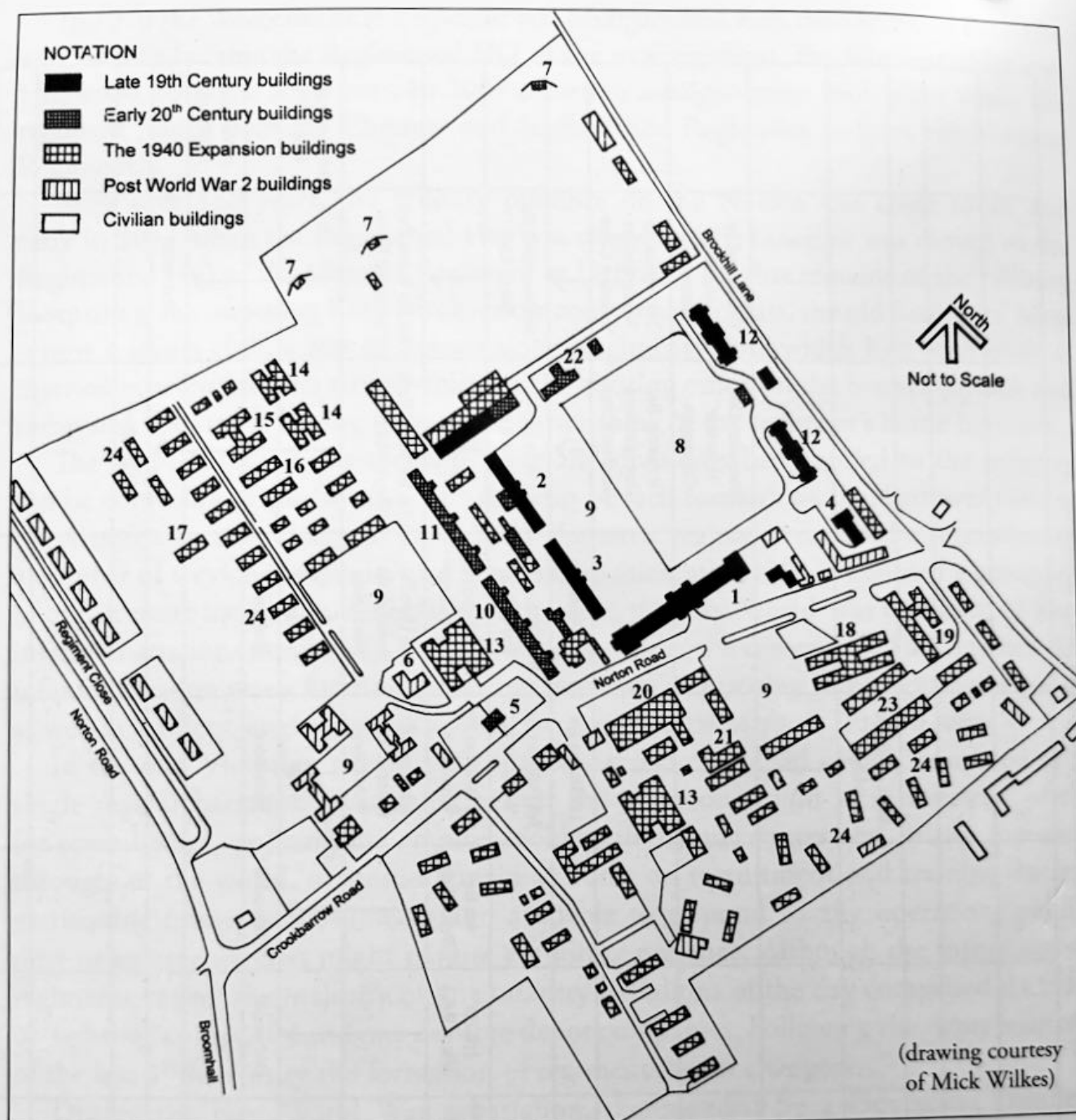
Recruit training ended at the Barracks in 1959, but the Regimental HQ was established in the officers mess to there right of the keep. The regimental museum which had been established in 1933 also remained until 1970 when it was transferred to Worcester Museum.

In 1970 the Worcestershire Regiment amalgamated with the Sherwood Foresters to form the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment which established its depot at Battlesbury Barracks in Warminster. The Worcestershire Regiment Museum collection moved to the Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum in 1970. At around the same time 14 Signal Regiment (Satellite and Heavy Radio) moved onto the site and remained there until they were disbanded in 1977.

Left vacant for a decade In 1987 the keep was sold to property developers for conversion into apartments in thr Keep building and other parts of the site developed as what is now Brockhill Village. Part of the site is owned by Worcester Norton Sports Club which is the home of Cricket, Shooting and Croquet Clubs. In 2023 Worcester Norton Community Interest Company obtained a lease on what had been used as a cricket clubhouse and changing rooms and some parts of the grounds. Since then nearly £2 million pounds has been spent on renovation of the buildings into what is now a Community Hub renamed as The Sergeants' Mess in honour of its historic function. New cricket changing rooms, youth room, multi-use games area and outdoor gym have also been established.

The last remaining occupied building was the Regimental Archive built in 1940 on the site of what is now St Helena Court. The archive moved to Worcester Territorial Army HQ in 2011 and the buidling subsequently demolished, so ending the Worcestershire Regiment's presence

One incident caused quite a stir locally after information arose that a woman named Suzy Lamplugh, who had famously disappeared in July 1986, was buried at Norton Barracks. Based on the evidence, the police began a search for her body in 2000 and again in 2001. Investigators wanted to dig on the site but because of the extensive development of Brockhill Village it proved to be impossible.



The Development of Norton Barracks

Key to numbers on the plan

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 The Keep | 9 Parade Grounds | 17 Bath House |
| 2 Charlemont Block | 10 Higginson Block | 18 Single Officers' Qtrs |
| 3 Farrington Block | 11 Jacob Block | 19 Officers' Mess |
| 4 Hospital | 12 Other Ranks Married Qtrs | 20 Junior Ranks Club |
| 5 Regimental Cottages | 13 Cookhouses | 21 NAAFI |
| 6 RC Chapel & C of E
Church Hut | 14 WOs & Sergeants Living
Qtrs | 22 Sergeants' Mess |
| 7 Butts | 15 WOs & Sergeants' Mess | 23 Motor Transport Garage |
| 8 Cricket Ground | 16 Drill Sheds | 24 Living Huts |





The New Building C1850



Ariel Photo C1945



Ariel Photo C2025



Archives Building



Bike Sheds



1990 - 3yrs after



Barrack Hut



Charlemont



Cookhouse



The Square



Guardroom



Barrack Huts



House Quarters



Farrington



Gym



Rear of Keep



Chapel



The Sergeants Mess



Rear of Charlemont



Cookhouses



Parade Ground



The Sergeants' Mess, Cadets' Mess and Worcester Norton Community Interest Company

The Sergeants Mess is a Grade II listed, beautifully refurbished, facility set in the heart of our parish on Brockhill Lane overlooking the Gordon Jones Memorial Ground cricket pitch. There is a choice of different sized rooms and the bar area to hire, along with a brand new kitchen, access to a store room with 20 trestle tables and over 100 folding chairs, as well as an AV system - its a great venue for parties, exercise classes or meetings.

The Cadets Mess, also available for hire, is self-contained in a separate part of the building and is complete with disabled access and toilet, kitchenette, dart board, pool and air hockey table and AV system.

The site has its own parking including disabled access, external toilets, a car charging point, a hard surface multi-use games area with football goals and basketball hoops, an outdoor gym area, patio areas with seating and complete with beautiful views of the cricket pitch and Norton Barracks.

The main building was originally built in the 1920's to accommodate the ever growing needs of the Worcestershire Regiment and was at that time used as the Sergeants Mess. Following the purchase of the site by Worcester Norton Sports Club Ltd (WNSCL) the building became their clubhouse with adjacent changing room facilities.

During the 2010's it became apparent that the building was not self sustaining financially and was gradually declining in condition and discussions began on how to raise funding to renovate the facilities. In 2019 a new opportunity arose for grants from monies held by Wychavon District Council and provided by property developers in the area for local amenities (known as S106 grants).

In order to gain access to this public money WNSCL had to change its structure from a private company to one with an "asset lock" to protect any investment for the long term and for community benefit. The new structure was proposed and accepted by WNSCL members during the summer/autumn of 2020.

The Worcester Norton Community Interest Company Ltd (WNCIC) was formally registered at Companies House on the 18th December 2020. By the end of the first quarter of 2021 a period of intensive activity had taken place with an initial project grant of £60k to kick off the project. Heritage, bat and drainage reports were commissioned, architects appointed, a business plan prepared and discussion with solicitors regarding a lease had commenced. Also in this period the company structure, articles and formal documents were established.

Quarter 2 2021 saw formal grant applications made, planning permission granted and building controls approved. A professional project manager was appointed and a Drainage, Electrical & Structural feasibility study completed including ground survey, to inform the production of a cost plan to satisfy the need for more detailed costings.

The project then reached a hiatus when the detailed cost estimates were way over the 2019 outline cost plan due to the massive rise in construction costs over that period (estimated at 44%). This situation forced several iterations of the construction plan and additional funding sources needing to be obtained to reach an affordable solution. There had also been difficulties agreeing a lease regarding which parts of the site were included as the shooting club had expressed a wish to not be part of the WNCIC. Eventually a compromise was reached with the shooting club, bottom field and the semi-detached house on the top field being excluded. A 40 year lease on the rest of the site was finalised on the 18th August 2023.

Following the lease signing detailed work on the tender and appointment of contractors took up the remainder of the year. The construction project commenced in January 2024 and the completed building was handed over to the WNCIC at the end of August. The formal opening ceremony took place on the 12th September 2024 conducted by Major General Mark Armstrong JP, Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Edith (Jane) Price (nee Dalloway), daughter of Sgt Alfred "Curly" Dalloway and Gwen Parkin, wife of Sgt Gordon Parkin.

The building has been renamed the Sergeants Mess in honour of its heritage, and each of the rooms has been named after local men who were former sergeants serving in the Worcestershire Regiment - "Dalloway" "Parkin" and "Cubberley".

Since that time the CIC has managed with a combination of their own funds and further grant opportunities to improve and add to the facilities. Over £100K was spent completing the unfinished part of the building now renamed The Cadets Mess with a focus on youth usage. A new outdoor gym available for free public use, external public toilets, external seating, additional block paving and equipment for the multi-use games area have been provided.

Kevin Fincher, chair of the Worcester Norton Community Interest Company, said: "A huge thank you to Wychavon, other funders, my fellow directors, volunteers and the wider community for their dedication, support and tenacity to turn what was a semi-derelict sports club into a wonderful community hub."

Cllr Rob Adams, executive board member for strong communities, culture and sport, said: "I'm delighted we've been able to support this committed group of volunteers to create something which is not only a fabulous community asset but a fitting tribute to the memory of the servicemen and families of the Worcestershire Regiment."

What is a Community Interest Company?

A community interest company (CIC) is a type of company designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good.

A CIC has primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners.

The assets of WNSCL will be transferred to WNCIC on a 40 year lease and those assets and profits must then be permanently retained within the CIC and used solely for community benefit (this is called an asset lock). Should the CIC cease to exist then the assets can only be transferred to another organisation which itself has an asset lock, such as a charity, or another CIC. This "asset lock" is a compulsory feature of the CIC structure and is overseen by the CIC Regulator.

Importantly, a CIC can access public funding and grants that are not available to a private limited company as the asset lock offers security that any public investment will be for the benefit of the community and not for individuals.

What are the objectives of Worcester Norton CIC?

The Company will provide venues to facilitate and enable sport, leisure and recreational activities, accommodate all ages, genders and abilities and to encourage wider use of the venue.

Who are the directors of WNCIC?

The directors have been appointed from the sports currently played on the site, the local parish council and from the local community. All are unpaid volunteers who are dedicated to building a vibrant and successful community hub. They will seek to co-opt other directors to bring additional skills to the company as necessary.



Official Opening of the Sergeants Mess
12th September 2024

Left to right

Front - Jane Price, Major General Mark Armstrong JP, Gwen Parkin. (see previous page)

Middle - Rob Adams, Wychavon District Cllr, Sam McMichael, CIC Director, Kevin Fincher CIC Chairman.

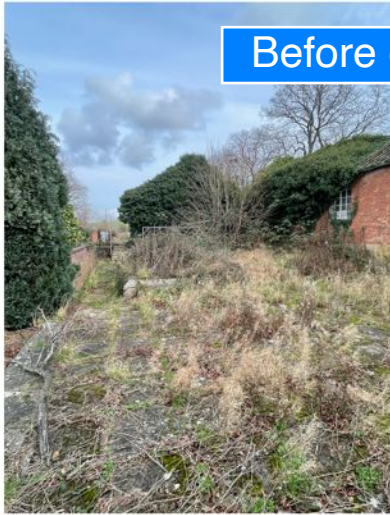
Rear - CIC Directors - Martin Pollard, Rob Goodman and Marc Burrow



Before inside



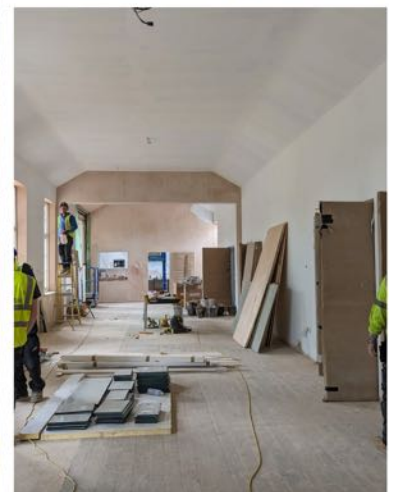
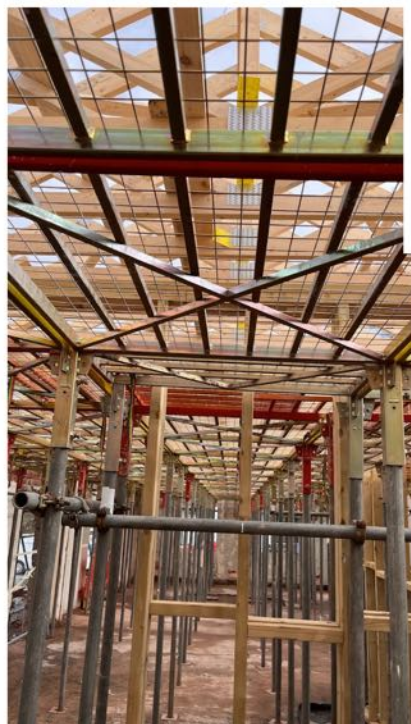
Before outside



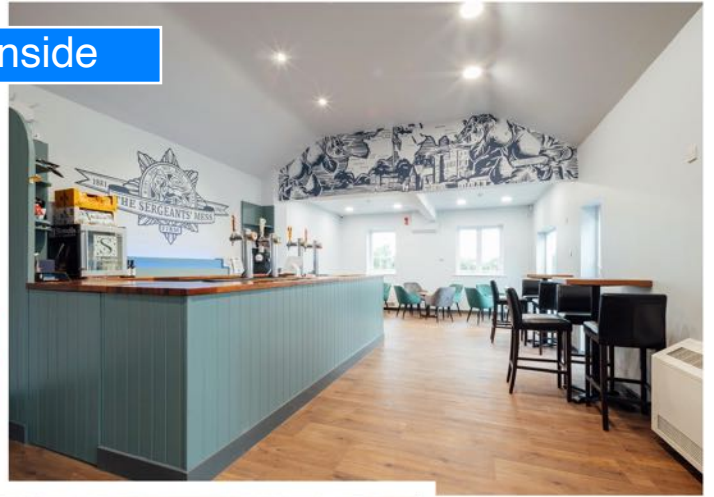
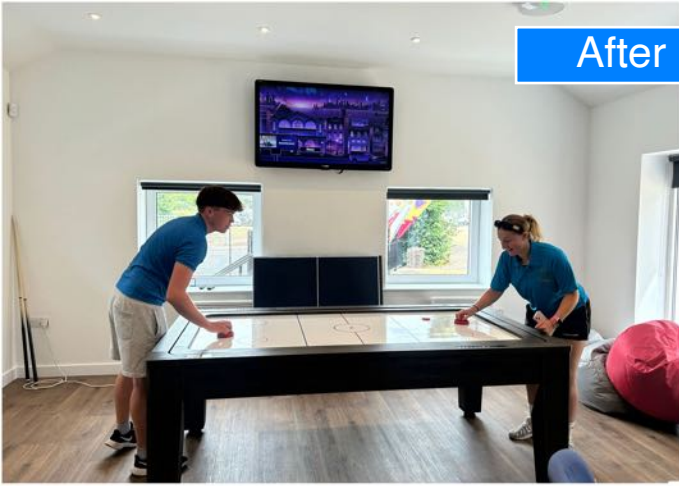
Demolition

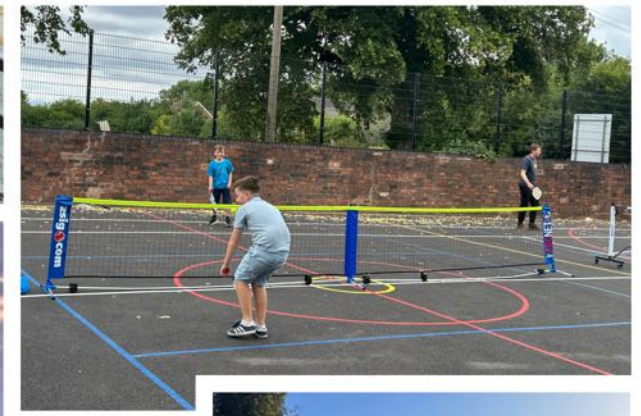
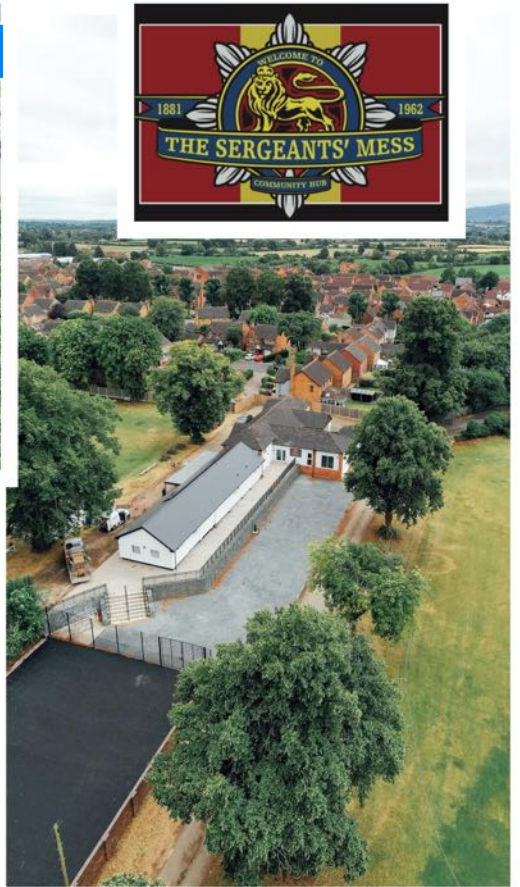


Construction



After inside





Parish Sporting Venues - Old & New

Worcester Norton Sports Club Ltd

1983 saw a major development for the Norton Barracks site when a hockey club joined forces with a cricket club and a shooting club to become Worcester Norton Sports Club Ltd (WNSCL)

Worcester Hockey Club

The Hockey Club continued to thrive for the next 20 years but the advent of artificial grass surfaces meant that a change of venue was necessary so in 2002 the club severed its connection with WNSCL and with the support of Worcester City Council established themselves at Nunnery Wood Sports Complex.

Worcester Cricket Club

Worcester Cricket Club (WCC) aka Worcester Norton Cricket Club (not to be confused with the county side Worcestershire) were founder members of WNSCL on the Brockhill Lane site from its inception and until recently were the custodians of the clubhouse and adjacent facilities. Following the formation of Worcester Norton Community Interest Company (WNCIC) to enable access to funding for what had become a rundown and semi-derelict building the club are now a resident club under the terms of the long term lease obtained by WNCIC. Brand new changing room facilities are also part of the extensive development of what is now a Community Hub renamed the Sergeants Mess.

WCC are a Clubmark accredited club for adults and young cricketers, playing in the local Worcestershire leagues. They run three Saturday sides, a Sunday development team, a midweek evening eleven and numerous youth teams from Under 9 to Under 19 age groups. All-Stars and Dynamos cricket for children aged 5 to 10 is held at the Club on Friday evenings throughout the summer.

Worcester Norton Shooting Club

The Worcester Norton Shooting Club was formed in 1983 and participated in the purchase of 15 acres of the original 60 acre site from the Ministry of Defence; the Sports Council provided the funding subject to its exclusive use as a Sporting Facility.

The history of shooting on the site can be traced back to 1749 when it is documented as an area for training and shooting practise used by several local militia units and is listed by Sport England as "a site of Historical Interest; shooting connections are some of the longest documented use of any in the country".

Founder members established the use of the original two 30 yard Gallery Ranges which then formed the basis of the Shooting Club. Funding to build more ranges was assisted by holding floodlit Clay Pigeon Shoots, which developed into a major Midlands event, attracting National British Champions in a serious competitive environment. Funding was also provided by NRA and local Council grants and loans, culminating in the opening of the ranges in 1987.

The membership of Worcester Norton Shooting Club - of all sections - currently exceeds 450. The club maintains an active participation in local, national and international events covering a wide range of disciplines including Air and CO2 Rifle and Pistol, Small Bore, Full Bore, Gallery Rifle (underlever), Muzzle Loading Rifle and Pistol, Practical Rifle and Practical Shotgun. Recent additions to activities seen on the ranges have included cannon, archery and crossbow shooting.

Worcester Norton Croquet Club

In 1974, five friends with lawns of suitable size were invited to take a partner each, in order to play croquet doubles on home lawns. The lawns were of varying shapes and sizes, and much fun was had negotiating these irregularities.

Each season, ten matches were played home and away, on Sundays, and lunchtimes were much enjoyed!

Towards 1980, it was felt that they needed to play a more formal game on a regular 35 x 28 yard lawn. To this end, a disused bowling green at Perdiswell was hired, owned by Worcester City Council. This provided one full sized lawn, plus a strip for practice. Unfortunately, mowing costs provided by the City were too high and so an alternate site was sought

In 1982, the Club won a national competition, The Longman Cup. In the same year, two of the members discovered an unused piece of land at Norton Sports Club site. It was sloping and had a telegraph pole in its centre. Having negotiated its lease, the redundant telegraph pole was removed and contractors hired to level the ground, provide drainage, add suitable top soil and seed the whole area. Thus, by 1986 the club were able to play on new lawns. By this time, the club had admitted ladies and were about 18 strong.

In 1984, the South West Croquet Federation was formed, comprising 40 Clubs with the idea of playing inter-club matches. The Federation was divided into three areas (in order to avoid excessive travel) and the club became the most northerly Club in the Northern Section.

The Club thrived over the following years and, in 2010, Cecil Duckworth one of the club's founder members (he was also the former owner of Worcester Warriors Rugby Club) donated a Portacabin (which had been used as a site office at the Rugby Club) for use as a Club House. This is still in use in 2025 providing social and kitchen facilities.

The Club has developed over the ensuing years, and we have introduced new forms of the game including Golf Croquet in addition to the traditional Association Croquet form of the game and this has attracted new members to the sport.

The Club continues to flourish thanks to enthusiastic volunteers, who help to maintain the excellent quality of the lawns, provide excellent catering and the pleasant surroundings of the Club, offering a warm welcome to both old and new members.

Worcester Sorcerers Baseball Club

Established in 2018, Worcester Baseball Club is a founding member of the West Midlands Baseball League, catering to both new and experienced players. The club is located at Norton Parish Hall, providing a full diamond with a 120ft wide backstop and a newly erected full-sized batting cage for training and matches.

No matter your skill level or background, Worcester Baseball Club welcomes anyone aged 16 and above of any gender to join our team - whether you're an all-star or a complete beginner.

If you're interested in joining a friendly and inclusive team, feel free to get in touch and begin your baseball journey.



The Jam Factory

In 1917 a jam and canning factory was built on Woodbury Lane, opposite the Deakin family home, Norton Hall.

- Operation: Deakin's, which started as jam makers, ran the factory at Norton and also had a second one at Toddington. They grew their own fruit on surrounding land they owned.
- Construction: The bricks used for the building were produced by a nearby brickworks, also acquired by William Deakin. Cans for the factory were supplied by a company in Worcester that later became part of Metal Box Company Ltd.
- Military use: After the jam factory was sold in 1936, the Army requisitioned the site during the 1940s to serve as an extension of the nearby Norton Barracks.
- Later use: After the war the site was eventually taken over by Morganite Crucible, a manufacturing company with a long history of making crucibles and other refractory products.
- Closure : Manufacturing at the site declined and was transferred to other parts of the group. It continued in a limited form as Morgan Advanced Materials and subsequently all that remains is Molten Metal Products, a distributor of Morgan products.
- Re-development: In 2002, the factory buildings were demolished, including a 200ft chimney, to make way for redevelopment. The 10.5-acre site was redeveloped by Alfred McAlpine and Hortons' Estate into an industrial park with distribution, warehousing, and production facilities. It has become a key part of the Worcestershire Parkway development area.



Mary Jane Deakin (née Hartley) during the building of Deakin's Norton Canning Factory

St Peters Garden Centre - (History and photographs kindly supplied by them)

Tony Blake moved to Hereford with his family, from London in 1978. He had been working in the Horticulture industry throughout his career and at that time was working for a well-known production nursery in Hereford. Tony always dreamed of running his own business...



Tony's wife, Janet, spotted a piece of land in Worcester, Pear Tree Farm, a disused Pig Farm and the ideal spot to set up his own production nursery. In desperate need of some TLC, Tony embarked on the mission of making the land usable.



There were a few old buildings, including the weaning shed where The Potting Shed Restaurant now sits.



The Nursery Opened. It was a production nursery, growing in-bulk, and supplying plants to landscapers, developers & councils throughout the UK. One of the first major pieces of work at the site was to create a reservoir to allow watering of the plants.

Although the Nursery was doing well and growing in size, there was spare land available. The obvious choice was to build a Garden Centre to take advantage of the stock being produced in the Nursery. At that time there was very little else in the area. 'St. Peters' was only just being built.



In 2000 the first of the major developments was completed. It more than doubled the internal space, and significantly modernised the outdoor space. The car park was moved and increased in capacity, as well as moving the entrance deliberately into the plant area. The original weaning shed was also linked with the other buildings allowing the restaurant to move into a bigger and better space.



St Peters Garden Centre is now run by the second generation of the Blake family, by William. After a successful career in logistics, he joined in 2013 to start the process and learn the ropes of running the garden centre.



In recent years we've extended and added to key areas of the business, including enlarging the plant area and major extension of the indoor retail space. This meant we could give our interior department a proper home, put houseplants in a much more prominent position, and re-lay out the rest of the space in a much better way.

One of the largest developments so far has been our very popular restaurant The Potting Shed. After gaining a reputation for serving hearty breakfasts, fantastic lunches, and the very best homemade cakes, it was struggling to cope with demand. We extended and added an additional Barista bar & cake counter.



Since 2015 we've made huge progress at the garden centre, we've added a commemorative garden in recognition of The Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters Regiments, this sits next to another one of our major developments, Poppy's Farm.

In 2018 we were presented with the opportunity to create our very own "Blake's Butchers", our mission is to provide high quality, great value produce that's locally sourced and sits perfectly next to our very own Blake's Farm Shop.



During 2020 we embarked on the process of turning the area around our lake into a "relaxing space where adults and children can enjoy an adventure into wildlife and nature". Poppy's Farm is now host to Poppy's Cafe serving lunches, snacks, teas & coffees, the Nature Trail, and our beautiful Yurt where we host numerous Events and Afternoon Teas, as well as being open to hire for private events. Over the last few years, Poppy's Farm has gained a reputation where children can learn, explore, and meet our animals.





Our thanks to the many people who have contributed their photographs and information to produce this booklet.
Apologies for any errors that it may contain.