



Rickmansworth Urban District Council (UDC) (which included Croxley Green), Chorleywood UDC, and Watford Rural UDC (which included Abbots Langley, Sarratt, South Oxhey and Carpenders Park) did not want to go together, but had no choice. No area wanted to have the name of another part of the new district so a public competition was held and Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) was born.

The Grand Union Canal passes to the south of Rickmansworth. Here it merges with the Rivers Chess, Colne and Gade. After Rickmansworth, the canal follows the valley of the [River Gade](#), a tributary of the River Colne, passing the site of [Croxley](#) paper mill.

Most of TRDC residents are high-earning families, affluent married couples whose successful careers have afforded them financial security and a spacious home in a prestigious and established residential area. While some are mature empty-nesters or elderly retired couples, others are still supporting their teenage or older children.

TRDC is an area which has one of the lowest rates of hate crime, robberies, domestic abuse and violence against another person. It also has low criminal damage, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour.

It has a mixture of business and industry. The main employment areas are at Croxley Business Park, Tolpits Lane, Kings Langley, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth and Leavesden. The finance, business and IT sectors are the largest employment areas and it is also a major centre for the film industry.

The economy is important in generating jobs. Currently local employers generate 37,000 jobs and 1,400 businesses are based here such as Warner Bros, Camelot, VocaLink, Imagination Technologies, Skanska and RES.

Youth Connexions Hertfordshire provides youth work projects and programmes, information, advice, guidance, work related learning, outdoor education and support for young people aged 13-19 (to 24 for young people with learning disabilities). For young people leaving care, support is provided to the age of 21.

TRDC offers Playschemes that are Ofsted registered and the playworkers have undertaken play training, First Aid and Safeguarding courses before they work. It is always coming up with new and exciting play opportunities for children.

Satisfaction with the way TRDC runs things is 9% higher than for Hertfordshire residents overall (64%), and higher than all other individual districts/boroughs within Hertfordshire, when considering their local Council.

## General

Over 240 hectares of UK Woodland Assurance Scheme registered woods.

37,556 residential properties

871 tree preservation orders.

557 homes have installed solar PV.

Of 400 food premises, over 320 are rated at 4 (good) or 5 (very good) for hygiene.

353 buildings in the District are Listed: Three grade 1, 14 grade 2 \*, 336 grade 2.

243 new homes were built in 2015/16.

215 (net) new homes were built between 2015/16.

100% of new residential developments were within 30 minutes of public transport time, a GP surgery and major retail centres, whilst 99% were within 30 minutes public transport time of a primary school exceeding the Core Strategy target of 90%.

92.1% of new homes were built on previously developed land.

85 new affordable homes were completed between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016.

80 plus sports clubs in the District.

79% of new residential developments were within 30 minutes public transport time of secondary schools and 6% were within 30 minutes public transport time of a hospital.

76% of the district is in the Green Belt.

40 plus play areas in the District.

38 schools in TRDC.

27 coaching bursaries awarded in the last 18 months to support volunteers at sports clubs.

22 conservation areas.

19 sites of known archaeological interest.

17 different areas in the district are allocated as public open space.

Domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions rate is 2.4 tonnes per person.

Three scheduled monuments.

5,251sqm of additional employment floor space was created in 2015/16.

Seven local nature reserves.

Seven sports pavilions.

Six purpose built outdoor gyms.

Five Children's Centres

Five skate parks.

Three of our parks have Green Flag status.

Three bowling greens.

Two purpose built parkour areas.

Two parkruns: Rickmansworth Aquadrome and South Oxhey.

## People

Population of 91,700.

94% feel well informed about how and where to register to vote.

81% feel that their local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together.

75% are employed, 3.3% are unemployed and the rest are self-employed

71.6% of adults are active for 150+ minutes.

71% residents are satisfied with the service provided by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in their local area.

61% of residents agreed that public services are working to improve children and young people's well-being.

60% of residents agree that people in the local area pull together to improve the local area.

60% of residents would like to be more involved in the decisions that affect their local area.

1,299 runners have taken part in the Rickmansworth parkrun.

Nearly 1,200 runners (and walkers) completed the South Oxhey parkrun.

Approx. 500 volunteers have given up their time to support South Oxhey parkrun in 2016.

Over £5,500 was raised at the 2016 Sport Relief event in Rickmansworth Aquadrome.

Over 23,500km have been covered by South Oxhey parkrunners - that's the equivalent of a return flight to Hawaii!

## Health

95% of participants surveyed said they would continue with their session (on Get Active programmes).

86% of participants felt they were fitter on post session evaluation (on Get Active programmes).

76% residents claim to do at least 1 hour or more of moderate-intensity physical activity in a typical week, with half (50%) saying that they do two and a half hours or more.

73% rate their health as 'good' with 28% rating it as very good.

55% have never smoked cigarettes, while a further 29% used to smoke cigarettes but don't at all now.

15.9% of adults in Three Rivers are classed as inactive, i.e. they do less than 30 minutes exercise per week.

Over 15 different sports delivered in 2016 as part of the Get Active programme.

Approx. 2,000 residents attended the last six months on Get Active programmes.

Hertfordshire Health Walks is a countywide initiative of free, led walks and is coordinated by Countryside Management Service (CMS). It aims to help promote walking and encourage more people (all ages, backgrounds and abilities) to get outdoors, get more active and reap the benefits.

## Safety

78% said that local public services are working to make the area safer.

71% are satisfied with the service provided by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in their local area.

## **Services**

89% who have used parks and open spaces are satisfied with them.

86% who used sports and leisure facilities are satisfied with them.

81% reported that local public services treat all types of people fairly.

76% are satisfied with the way TRDC runs things.

## **Refuse and recycling**

83% are satisfied with doorstep recycling.

81% are satisfied with refuse collection.

79% are satisfied with the way public land is kept clear of litter and refuse.

71% put out their food pod waste for collection weekly, with a further 11% putting their food waste out fortnightly.

59.4% refuse is recycled.

There are two Household Waste Recycling Centres in the district.

## Places

### Abbots Langley

Is an old settlement and is mentioned (under the name of Langelai) in the Domesday Book. Its village has its very own ghost in the shape of Mary Ann Treble. The lady was a maidservant at the vicarage and died of double pneumonia in 1914. Her spirit is said to haunt the village and be particularly active on All Saints' Day.

Nicholas Breakspeare was born here in approximately 1100 AD. He later became Pope Adrian IV and is the only English person ever to become Pope in history.

In front of the village library, the Parish Council has mounted a large piece of Hertfordshire 'Pudding Stone' on a special brick-built plinth. Contractors building the M25 motorway in 1985-6 found the stone in the parish.

Some of the stone was used in the building of St. Lawrence Church, which dates back to the 12th Century. This exceptionally hard rock is rare and is 50 to 60 million years old.

Buildings at Ovaltine Dairy Farm, Abbots Langley were built in the 1920/1930's; these buildings are of mock Tudor style and have a considerable character that separates itself from local buildings.

The Ovaltine Dairy Farm was utilised by Albert Wander and the Ovaltine factory as a supply of barley, eggs and milk to maintain the Ovaltine factory's output at a time of high demand. The designs of the buildings that are still present were built to imitate the farm King Louis XVI bought for Marie Antoinette.

A small chapel in Hunton Bridge is now used by the stained glass designers and restorers Chapel Studios who have worked on most of the Cathedrals in the country.

The Church of the Ascension, affectionately known in Bedmond, as the Tin Church, is one of only two such churches in the county. The Church was built in 1880, and is an early example of the pre-fabricated buildings that were sent to the Colonies for 'instant' churches.

This church is thought to have been surplus to requirements and was bought for £80 by Mrs Solly, wife of the then Squire of Bedmond, and presented to the village. Over time, many have succumbed to the British weather which has caused them to rust away.

The corrugated exterior of the Tin Church has a spire and a stained glass east window, however, the outside belies the warmth and beauty of the timber-lined interior. It has survived with a good deal of loving care and is now a Grade II listed building.

Abbots Langley has one of the lowest levels of rough sleepers in England.

## **Carpenders Park**

Originally an estate based around a manor house of the same name. This was later a girl's school, Highfields, which was demolished in 1960 to make way for USAF married quarters. These were in turn demolished in 1997/98. The base was also known as Highfields.

The houses and bungalows of Carpenders Park were originally built in the 1930s. There was subsequent development in the 1950s including some council housing built for the Watford Rural District Council. The vast majority of the dwellings, though, are privately owned.

The estate was significantly enlarged in the late 1960s. Many of these later houses have flat roofs and the area gained some notoriety as *Plummers Park*, the setting for Leslie Thomas' '*Tropic of Ruislip*'.

The estate is also home to celebrity actor Christopher Pulford, who was a regular on ITV television programme "The Bill".

The Hartsbourne stream meanders through fourteen acres of mature woodland - the key feature of the Carpenders Park cemetery - and there is a small lake. The cemetery is a lawn type cemetery which means there are no upright memorials allowed; only approved bronze resin plaques set into the ground.

## **Chandlers Cross**

The Grove, referred to as "London's Country Estate", was owned by the Villiers family who sold it in the 1920s. It was then used as a gardening school, a health centre (National Institute Of Nutrition and College Of Dietetics), a riding school, and a girls' boarding school.

It was the wartime headquarters of one of the Big Four consolidated railway companies. It became a management training centre for the British Transport Commission and later British Rail.

Now it is a large hotel with a 300 acre private park next to the River Gade and the Grand Union Canal. It was remodelled by various architects including Surveyor of the King's Works, Robert Taylor on the site of a medieval manor house as a home for the Earls of Clarendon.

Its playful contemporary style and chic spa attract a host of celebrities and, with acclaimed chef Russell Bateman at the helm, so does its fine dining restaurant, "Colette's". The formal gardens were designed by the Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medallist and judge, Michael Balston.

Other features include an 18-hole championship golf course designed by the Californian Kyle Phillips, a spa, a health and leisure club, two large swimming pools, a croquet lawn, tennis courts, an Ofsted-inspected children's play area, a walled

garden, woodland, meadowlands, a wetland area, two lakes, an urban beach and beehives producing Grove Honey.

In 2006, it was the venue of the WGC-American Express Championship golf tournament. It was the venue for the April 2009 G20 London summit. In 2016 it hosts the British Masters. The 2013 Bilderberg Conference took place in the hotel.

In 2015 it was the location of the Boot Camp stage of X Factor 2015.

Its world-class golf course has even attracted Tiger Woods.

## **Chorleywood**

Settlement at Chorleywood dates to the Palaeolithic era when the plentiful flint supply led to swift development of tools by man. The Romans built a village on the ancient site complete with a mill and brewery.

A large influx of Saxon settlers called it 'Ceorla Leah', meaning 'Churls' meadow'. Through Chorleywood runs the line that once divided the Kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex and now divides the counties of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Edward the Confessor gave Chorleywood to the Monastery of St Albans.

By 1278, it was known as 'Bosco de Cherle' or 'Churl's Wood', Norman for 'Peasant's Wood'. Upon the Dissolution of the Monasteries, it passed to the Bishopric of London, recorded by the name 'Charleywoode'.

It became Crown property during the reign of Elizabeth I. The Turnpike Act (1663) gave Chorleywood a chance to exploit its strategic position, allowing locals the opportunity to charge civilians to use the road from Hatfield to Reading.

Chorleywood is most famous for its Quakers. Non-conformists flocked to Chorleywood, promised sanctuary by the locals. William Penn founded the Pennsylvania Colony with settlers from Chorleywood, Rickmansworth and nearby towns in southern Buckinghamshire, having lived and married in Chorleywood.

Chorleywood House, a Regency mansion, was built in 1822 by John Barnes, replacing an earlier house. John Saunders Gilliat, the Governor of the Bank of England in 1883-1885, lived in it. John built The Cedars, in the style of a French chateau.

In 1892, the house was bought by Lady Ela Sackville Russell, eldest daughter of the 9th Duke of Bedford. She modified and enlarged the house, turning the grounds into a model estate with market gardens.

The population was 1,500 in 1897; two years later the railway was extended to Chorleywood on 8 July 1889.

The Chorleywood bread process (CBP) is a process of making dough in bread production. The process was developed in 1961 by the British Baking Industries Research Association based at Chorleywood, and in 2009 was used to make 80% of the UK's bread.

In the 1973 BBC Television documentary, *Metro-land*, Sir John Betjeman described Chorleywood as "essential Metro-land." The 200 acre Chorleywood Common provides a superb recreational area and includes a nine-hole golf course and riding track.

Government statistics show that Chorleywood is the most content place in the country. One of its landmarks is Chorleywood House, the grounds of which are public open space. In 2009 the Chorleywood House Estate was granted the prestigious Green Flag Award as one of the best green spaces in the country. This has been renewed each year since then.

Chorleywood Lawn Cemetery has been tended with care and is possibly one of the most beautiful last resting places in Hertfordshire. The Bishop of St Albans consecrated an attractive extension in 1996 which virtually doubled the size of the original area. Many seats have been donated for visitors who can enjoy this peaceful green oasis far from the noisy world outside.

## **Croxley Green**

John Dickinson devised and patented paper making machinery and in 1830 opened Croxley Mill on Common Moor beside the Grand Union Canal.

Among the many famous brand names of paper made at Croxley were Croxley Script, Colne Valley Parchment and the range of Lion Papers. The Mill closed in 1980 but the Croxley watermark is still used in writing paper.

Around 1837, William Sanson of Croxley Hall Farm brought new scientific methods to watercress growing. The farm included the large 15th century barn known as "Wolsey's slaughterhouse" from its supposed role in supplying the Cardinal's gargantuan feasts at nearby Manor of the Moor, Moor Park.

Croxley Great Barn is a hidden medieval monastic barn situated in Croxleyhall Woods built with timber felled in around 1397 and probably built by Abbott John Moote of St Albans Abbey between 1397 and 1401.

The Barn, probably one of the largest of its type in Hertfordshire, is about 31m long and 12m wide. With its weather boarded bays and aisles, peg hole tiled roof, the barn exudes its place in history.

Sited on private land now owned by St Joan of Arc School in Rickmansworth, access to the building has been limited. However, together with the Three Rivers Museum, access to the barn has been agreed for certain days of the year.

## Eastbury

Northwood Headquarters is based on the grounds of Eastbury Park. In 1939, during the Second World War, the Royal Air Force took over the site for the use of RAF Coastal Command which made use of Eastbury House and created a network of underground bunkers and operations blocks. The house was used as an Officers' Mess though it was subsequently damaged by fire.

In 1953 the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, gained an additional NATO responsibility as Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Atlantic, as part of SACLANT, and the Eastern Atlantic NATO military command structure was established at the Northwood Headquarters.

In September 1971, when the post of Commander-in-Chief Fleet was established, the Royal Navy took over responsibility for the whole site and in 1978 the Flag Officer Submarines also moved his Headquarters to Northwood.

As Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, the site was the controlling Headquarters for Operation CORPORATE, the Falklands War, in 1982.

One of the lessons identified from the Falklands War was that the UK needed a suitable HQ to plan and execute Joint Operations and so the Permanent Joint Headquarters was established on site in April 1996.

In 2002, following a rationalisation, the Commander-in-Chief Fleet moved the majority of his staff to Portsmouth and handed over the Northwood site to the Chief of Joint Operations PJHQ although the Royal Navy Operations Centre remains at Northwood from where all UK maritime operations are run

In 2006 major construction works commenced to improve the functionality of the site: the works, which involved the refurbishment or replacement of many of the key buildings, were carried out under a Private Finance Initiative contract with Carillion. The Queen visited the site on 6 May 2010 to open the main Permanent Joint Headquarters building, part of a £150 million redevelopment of the site.

Joint Forces Command was established on site in April 2012 its role to provide the foundation and supporting framework for successful operations responsible for such things as medical services, logistics, intelligence and the Permanent Joint Operating Bases located overseas.

Today the base is home to the following seven Defence organisations supported by UK military and civilian personnel alongside officers from 26 other nations:

- Joint Forces Command responsible for all joint enablers.
- The Permanent Joint Headquarters responsible for all UK led military operations.
- The Royal Navy Maritime Operations Centre responsible for all UK maritime operations.

- The Standing Joint Force Headquarters which enables the UK to project force with other nations independently of NATO or EU.
- The NATO Maritime Command Headquarters responsible for all NATO maritime operations.
- The European Union Headquarters responsible for counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Indian Ocean.
- HMS Wildfire which delivers and co-ordinates the training of Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve officers and ratings.
- Operations in the Falklands, the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan were all planned and executed from Northwood HQ.

### **Heronsgate** (or formerly Herringsgate)

Is a settlement on the outskirts of Chorleywood, founded by Feargus O'Connor and the Chartist Cooperative Land Company (later the National Land Company) as O'Connorsville or O'Connorville in 1846.

The Chartist Cooperative Land Society was launched by the National Charter Association in 1845 with the aim of resettling industrial workers from the cities on smallholdings, making them independent of factory employers and potentially qualifying them for the vote.

Chartists were invited to subscribe regular amounts towards an eventual £2.50 (£2/10s) share in the venture. Soon the money began to flood in, pennies and shillings at a time, and was deposited in an account held by Feargus O'Connor in the London Joint Stock Bank.

The land was bought on 14 March 1846, the plots allocated by ballot on 20 April 1846 (Easter Monday) and settled on 1 May 1847.

In addition to the 35 plots of land covering 103 acres (0.42 km<sup>2</sup>), a beer house was also provided, now the Land of Liberty, Peace, and Plenty public house (the ban on alcohol which was imposed at that time gave rise to the name).

The National Land Company was wound up by Act of Parliament in 1851. The estate was administered by the Court of Chancery until the freeholds were sold off by auction on 27 May 1857.

From 1936 to 1955, a villa in Heronsgate was the global headquarters of the International Esperanto-League (since 1947 called World Esperanto Association).

### **Leavesden**

Leavesden Aerodrome was an important centre of aircraft production during the World War II. This site was acquired as the large scale hangars needed to

accommodate the production of a huge number of planes required could not be constructed at de Havilland's Hatfield base.

710 Halifax bombers were built at the Leavesden Aerodrome and manufacturing of Mosquitoes soon followed, totalling 1,476 planes built. The two planes were both critical successes for Britain during the conflict.

The former Rolls-Royce factory site is now the site of Leavesden film studios, where the Harry Potter series of films were made. James Bond blockbuster "Goldeneye" and the Star Wars epic "Episode 1 - The Phantom Menace", "Sleepy Hollow" and "Onegin" which saw old St. Petersburg recreated on the backlot.

In 2010, [Warner Bros.](#) announced their intention to purchase the studio as a permanent European base and since have invested more than £100m into the site. The Studios opened for business in June 2012 and is one of the largest production facilities in Europe, helping to place the UK as a centre of film making excellence.

Almost twenty years after the complex was converted from aerodrome to film studios, the newly refurbished studios are one of the largest and most state-of-the-art secure filming facilities in the world.

Leavesden Mental Hospital was founded in 1870 by the Metropolitan Asylums Board as the Metropolitan Asylum for Chronic Imbeciles. The Jack the Ripper suspect Aaron Kosminski was admitted to Leavesden Asylum on 19 April 1894. Case notes indicate that Kosminski had been ill since at least 1885.

The London County Council took control in 1930. In April, 1932, the former St Pancras Industrial School was taken over as an annexe for chronic cases. The hospital closed in 1997. Within this site, the St Pancras Orphanage/Workhouse and the Canadian/Abbots Langley General Hospital were also built.

Since closure in 1997, the hospital has been converted into a private housing estate, Leavesden Court. The development consists mainly of residential apartments, with the charity DEMAND (Design and manufacture for Disability) operating from the building previously used as the on-site chapel. The workhouse, or south side of the estate, is now the Leavesden Country Park (South) and the Arundel Road housing development.

A charity is operating from the building previously used as the on-site chapel.

## **Maple Cross**

A road in Maple Cross was named Bradbery, by the Council in the 1960s, to commemorate William Bradbery the watercress pioneer.

There is a 40 acre nature reserve on Thames Water which includes lakes and wetlands that provide a habitat for wildfowl and nine bird hides. The reserve is leased to the Maple Lodge Conservation Society that was founded in 1983.

The Jackson Studios, now demolished, saw many iconic names in the music industry recording here, including Elton John, Motorhead, Ian Drury, Dr Feelgood, Eddie and the Hotrods, Tom Robinson and the New Seekers.

Many multi-national businesses have offices in Maple Cross. The UK headquarters of construction company Skanska is based here. There were the corporate functions of the combined Cadbury and Trebor Bassett confectionery business who moved to the area in 2000 and have now relocated to another area. Other businesses with offices include Nissan and Renault.

The Thames Water Maple Lodge Sewage Treatment Works are located here. The plant, with its sister site at Blackbirds Farm in Aldenham, serve the whole of West Hertfordshire; an area with a population of 557,000 people.

The plant's claim to fame is its use as a storage facility for perfluorooctane sulphonate (PFOS) used to extinguish the fire at the Buncefield Oil Terminal. Sludge from the plant was also burnt to generate "green" electricity for the Millennium Dome.

The plant was used in 1952 to test diffused aeration technology and a diffused-air activated sludge purification system has been in continuous use since. The cleaned effluent from this process is discharged into the nearby Grand Union Canal.

Sludge settled from the incoming sewage is treated by retention in enclosed heated anaerobic digestion tanks, a by-product of this process being methane gas which is used for on-site electrical power generation. The main product, digested sludge, is "caked" in industrial centrifuges before disposal to land as fertiliser.

## **Mill End**

Notable ancient structure at Mill End was a timber-framed farmhouse called Shepherds Farm, mentioned in a 1294 subsidy roll with a reference to Robert Le Schephard. The subsidy roll of 1534 records the name of Robert Lane.

Tornado Cars used to manufacture kit cars at 90 Uxbridge Road, Mill End. The company sold the cars either factory finished or in component form. The first model was shown to the press in August 1958 and production of cars stopped in 1964.

The new Fairway Tyre Services building on the site is called "Tornado House" as a tribute.

## **Moor Park**

The land upon which the Moor Park Estate stands was historically part of the grounds attached to the Moor Park Mansion.

Moor Park Mansion, Grade I listed Palladian building, set within over 300 acres of landscaped Hertfordshire parkland - originally built in the late 17th Century for the Third Earl of Bedford. It was opened as a golf club in 1923.

The Mansion was used during World War 2 as the headquarters for the 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Corps between 1944 and 1945; the Battle of Arnhem was planned at the Mansion during this time in the room now known as the Arnhem Room.

The Rickmansworth Urban District Council purchased the Mansion and surrounding acres of land in 1937 to stop any further development which was then leased to the golf club. In 1994 the golf club purchased the freehold from Three Rivers District Council and the Moor Park Heritage Foundation was established.

This was set up to protect the chattels in the building such as the three Continental Chandeliers in the Main Dining Room and The Seasons in the Thornhill Room.

Nowadays, Moor Park Golf Club continues its ownership of the Mansion and grounds which has complementary guided tours throughout the year organised by NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Society) volunteers.

Moor Park is a designated Conservation Area.

## **Rickmansworth**

Rickmansworth is the largest town within the District. With a charter dating from 1542, Rickmansworth is now the centre of administration for the District Council.

The area around Rickmansworth was once famous for its extensive watercress beds. The salad plant flourished in the River Chess, a clean, swiftly flowing stream with good gravel beds.

In its time Rickmansworth was a canal- and boat-building centre of some note.

By 1920 the Victoria Hotel, subsequently the "Long Island", (now demolished and transformed into flats), could boast electric lights, a ballroom for 300 and a spacious garage.

The Town Hall became the town's first cinema, the "Electric Picture Playhouse", in 1911.

In the Rose Gardens facing the Council offices, Three Rivers House, you can find the "Lion and Eagle" statue which was erected in 1921 as part of Rickmansworth's war memorial. The statue was cast in bronze and erected on its commemorative plinth on the corner of Ebury Road and Uxbridge Road. It was moved several times over the next seventy years until 1991, when the plinth was put in the churchyard of St Mary's Church whilst the Lion & Eagle was deemed too bloodthirsty for the Church so was placed in its present position.

Basing House is on the site of the house where William Penn, the famous Quaker statesman and founder of the US state of Pennsylvania, lived with his wife Gulielma, for five years after their marriage in 1672.

Penn died in 1718 and is buried at the Friends' Meeting House in the village of Jordans, near Rickmansworth

"The Elms" in the High Street, which now forms part of the St. Joan of Arc School, was a summer residence for the Victorian novelist George Eliot, real name Mary Ann Evans.

Watersmeet is a 515-seat theatre complex owned by the Three Rivers District Council in the town centre. Its auditorium can be transformed from a raked theatre to a flat floor for performances in the round, dancing, cabaret, weddings, indoor markets and craft fairs.

The Rickmansworth Players (affiliated to NODA) is a well-established amateur dramatics society that performs musicals and plays on a regular basis. Rickmansworth Historical Society meets monthly from September to June in the Cloisters Hall.

Rickmansworth is sometimes shortened to "Ricky", as used in the annual *Ricky Week* celebrations, organised by the Rickmansworth Society, funded in 1953 to celebrate the Queen's Coronation. The town's canal history is remembered at the end of the week with the Rickmansworth Festival organised by Rickmansworth Waterways Trust.

The annual *Ricky Road Run* takes place with more than 500 runners. The annual *Victorian Evening*, held in the town centre at the end of November, was changed to *Starlight Evening* in 2011, inspired by the reference to Rickmansworth on the first page of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams: "And then, one Thursday, nearly two thousand years after one man had been nailed to a tree for saying how great it would be to be nice to people for a change, a girl sitting on her own in a small café in Rickmansworth suddenly realized what it was that had been going wrong all this time, and she finally knew how the world could be made a good and happy place. This time it was right, it would work, and no one would have to get nailed to anything."

The Aquadrome covers 41 hectares (100 acres) and includes the Aquadrome Local Nature Reserve, Batchworth and Bury Lakes, open grassland, areas of woodland, car parking, a café and a children's play area. Its boundaries are the River Colne to the north, the Grand Union Canal to the east and south and Stocker's Lake nature reserve to the west.

In July 2009, it received a Green Flag Award for parks and open spaces which meet high standards.

The lakes are old gravel quarries filled with water and stocked with fish but only Batchworth Lake is available for fishing. Some gravel from the site was used to build

Wembley Stadium in 1923. Batchworth Lake is popular for water skiing events and hosts the Rickmansworth Water Ski Club.

Bury Lake is home to Bury Lake Young Mariners (BLYM); a sailing club and Royal Yachting Association (RYA) - recognised teaching establishment.

## Sarratt

Sarratt Parish is the largest within Three Rivers. It is rural with well cultivated farmland, interrupted only by the odd copse and woodland area.

Within the village of Sarratt is the ancient and attractive Church of The Holy Cross.

The village green is often used by film crews as a period setting. The nearby mansion "Goldingtons" was used in the film "Four Weddings and a Funeral".

In some of the early novels of John le Carré, Sarratt was the fictional location of an agent training school and interrogation centre for the British foreign intelligence service.

Le Carré and Mikhail Lyubimov, the former KGB Colonel, contributed to a book published by Village Books in 1999 as a fund-raiser for village charities titled, *Sarratt and the Draper of Watford*.

Sarratt has been used as a location in television and film productions, including:

- ***Murder Most Foul***—(1964 film)—starring Margaret Rutherford as Miss Marple.
- ***The Demon Headmaster***—(BBC TV)—second series of a children's drama series.
- ***Just William***—(BBC TV)—a production of a children's drama series.

## South Oxhey

The 4,000 dwellings, 500 garages and over 100 shops were built by London County Council to rehouse Londoners bombed out of their homes by the Blitz of World War 2. They were taken over by Three Rivers District Council in 1980.

There is a small chapel built in 1612 by Sir James Altham, Judge and Baron of the Exchequer to Elizabeth I. Originally, this was a private chapel to the large residence, Oxhey Place, and it still retains the original door and roof beams.

South Oxhey featured in the BBC television series *The Choir: Unsung Town*. The programme featured a project by Gareth Malone to assemble a community choir in the town by recruiting local residents and encouraging them to take part. A legacy of

the programme was the foundation of two groups, the South Oxhey Community Choir and the South Oxhey Youth Choir.

South Oxhey Park used to be a golf course

Hamper Mill has a long history with a mill being recorded on the site as far back as the Domesday Book; Roman artefacts have been excavated there including part of a trackway. There were two tracks/roads leading from Hamper Mill and Rickmansworth to Watford. It was a grain mill before the 17th century when cloth was manufactured there. In the late 18th century James Smith Paper Company took over the mill.

It was rebuilt in 1793 and made high quality handmade paper. The paper mill caused some controversy in the 19th century after forged stamps were printed there.

South Oxhey playing fields have been under threat on several occasions since the war years when German bombs fell on Oxhey Golf Course and in the adjoining woods. Some of the craters became small ponds, much to the enjoyment of small children from the nearby estate!

When the former golf course was closed on 31 March 1952, it was officially designated the South Oxhey Playing Fields, and it has been a much-appreciated feature of the local landscape ever since, with more than 140 acres of quality parkland and extensive woodland.

Since the early 1950s, several clubs have made their homes at the lower end of the playing fields, including the well-known Oxhey Estates United, Fullarian R.F.C. and Solus C.C.

In later years, a successful 9-hole golf course has become established on part of the 1912-1952 links at Oxhey Park, on either side of Prestwick Road. The Prince of Wales played here a few times getting off the train at Carpenders Park old station

On at least one occasion, the playing fields were the venue for a major cross country championship (January 1965).

## **Famous people**

80s icon Alan Walters was running the old Western public house now called Druids.

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Andrew Ridgeley, co-member with George Michael of Wham! opened up a bar called "92" in Rickmansworth which burnt down and is now a Prezzo.

Bradley Walsh, entertainer, actor, television presenter and former professional footballer, was born and grew up in Leavesden.

Barbara Woodhouse, the dog trainer who presented *Training Dogs the Woodhouse Way* on television in the 1980s, lived at Campions from the 1940s to the 1980s, in Croxley Green.

Brian Conley of 'it's a puppet' fame lives in Ricky. At his peak, he was the highest-paid male entertainer on British TV.

Cardinal Wolsey, owner of the Manor of the More, which was a 16th-century palace near Rickmansworth.

Catherine of Aragon lived at The More, Rickmansworth, after the annulment of her marriage to Henry VIII. She was there for the winter of 1531-1532, before being removed to Huntingdonshire for the rest of her days.

Charles Fraser-Smith's name is linked to the British Intelligence Service during the Second World War. The inspiration for 'Q' in the James Bond books it seems, he was brought up in Croxley Green.

Charles Voysey, the architect, lived in Chorleywood. He designed his own house, the Orchard, and there are several other houses there designed by him.

Chris Brooks, afternoon DJ at Capital Radio grew up in Abbots Langley.

Christopher Pulford, actor from "The Bill", resides in Compton Place, Carpenders Park with his family.

Dave James, author of West Australian historical book 'Climb When Ready', went to school in Ricky (St, Monica's RC School behind the Catholic Church 1955).

The ex-England goalkeeper, David Seaman, lived in Rickmansworth.

David Crighton, mathematician, was educated at Abbots Langley primary school.

David Urquhart MP, Russophile and advocate for Turkish Baths, was born in Rickmansworth.

Francis Russell, 2nd Earl of Bedford, lived in Moor Park.

Edward Russell, 3rd Earl of Bedford, lived in Moor Park.

Edward Skoyles, researcher and quantity surveyor lived in Abbots Langley.

Elizabeth Greenhill, mother of 37 single births and one set of twins lived in Abbots Langley.

Eryl McNally, former Labour MEP, lived in Abbots Langley.

Franklin baronets bought Moor Park and the Manor of Rickmansworth in 1655.

Fred Housego, the 1980 BBC *Mastermind* winner and sometime London black cab driver, lived in Croxley Green.

Gerri Halliwell grew up in Mill End and her half- sister lived in Church Lane.

19th-century novelist George Eliot, pen-name of Mary Anne Evans lived in what was St. Joan of Arc's Convent School and is now St Joan of Arc Catholic School.

George Anson, 1st Baron Anson, Admiral Lord Anson lived in Moor Park c1752.

George Orwell, pen-name of Eric Blair, author, spent some summers in Rickmansworth

George Turnbull, civil engineer (the "*first railway engineer of India*"), retired to Rosehill, Abbots Langley.

Graham Taylor, ex- Watford and England manager, lived in Chorleywood

Sir Guy Calthrop lived in Croxley House, The Green.

Haile Selassie spent the early part of his exile from Ethiopia at Hazelwood, Abbots Langley and at Glen Chess, Loudwater.

Harry Edwin Curtis JP (known as H.E. Curtis) lived in Springwell Lodge, Mill End till his death on 8 December 1948. He had been a Hertfordshire County Council alderman and a chairman of Rickmansworth Urban District Council.

Henry Montagu, 6th Baron Rokeby, soldier, lived at Hazelwood, Abbots Langley from 1838–86.

Harvey Fellows (cricketer) was born in Rickmansworth.

Hugh Kindersley, 2nd Baron Kindersley, lived in Abbots Langley.

Henry Carey, 2nd Earl of Monmouth, is buried at Rickmansworth St Mary's Church.

Jack Smethurst from "Love Thy Neighbour" lives near Chorleywood Common.

James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormonde, lived in Moor Park.

James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth (illegitimate son of Charles II) lived in Moor Park in 1670 and was executed in 1685. He built the current mansion.

Nobel Prize winning Cambridge biologist Sir John Sulston went to York House School when it was in Money Hill.

June 2017

James Cecil, 1st Marquess of Salisbury, probably lived at Cecil Lodge 1760s–80.

James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle, began his curacy at All Saints and St. Hilda's Church Leavesden from 1979 to 1982.

James Vincent Murphy, translated "Mein Kampf" while resident in Abbots Langley.

Jerry Green, Chairman of the most successful amateur rugby club in Britain, Chess Valley RFC, (based at Ricky Sports Club on Park Road) is a survivor of bowel and lung cancer.

Radio actress Jessie Matthews lived in Mill End.

Jimmy Tarbuck used to live in The Drive, Chorleywood.

Julie Felix, American born, British-based folk recording artist lives in Heronsgate.

Joe Lane, former professional footballer, lived in Abbots Langley.

Joan Evans, art historian, historian of mediaeval art lived in Abbots Langley.

John Evans, archaeologist and geologist, was married and buried at St. Lawrence Church, Abbots Langley

John Theodore Tussaud (1858–1943), the great-grandson of Madame Tussaud, lived at The Hawthorns, 17 New Road, Croxley Green in the early years of the 20th century (c1902-1914).

Judy Grinham, Olympic gold medallist, and former world record-holder lives in Abbots Langley.

Ken Willis, lecturer in electrical engineering, used to live in Mill End.

Sir Lawrence Dundas, 1st Baronet, lived in Moor Park.

Liz Kendall, Labour MP, lived in Marlin Square, Abbots Langley.

Malcolm Lesiter was Archdeacon of Bedford from 1993 to 2003, and the incumbent at Leavesden All Saints and St. Hilda's Church from 1973 to 1988.

Manuel Almunia, former professional footballer, lived in Abbots Langley.

Marghanita Laski, journalist and novelist, lived at Abbots House, Abbots Langley, from 1937–45.

Mark Walsh, professional darts player within the Professional Darts Corporation, lived in Abbots Langley.

Martin Kemp and his wife Shirley live in Loudwater estate.

June 2017

Mary Portas went to school in Rickmansworth.

Matthew Thompson, the male model who starred in "Mile High" and the "Nescafe" ad, lived on Chorleywood Road and went to Christchurch school.

Mel C, Sporty Spice, used to play Football for Rickmansworth Ladies.

Michael Gregsten, physicist at the Road Research Laboratory (victim of James Hanratty in the 1961 "A6 murder" for whose death he hanged) lived in Abbots Langley.

Mick Flynn of the New Seekers, now part of My Generation, lives in Heronsgate.

Molly Weir, Scottish actress, used to live in TRDC.

Film actress, Muriel Pavlow, lived in West Way.

Nick Blinko, artist and singer/songwriter/guitarist of Rudimentary Peni, lives in Abbots Langley.

Nick Heywood, Haircut 100, took his driving test in the District.

Nick Moran, actor and director lives in Oxhey.

Nicky Stevens, singer with The Brotherhood of Man, lived in Abbots Road, Abbots Langley.

Paul Carrack, Mike and The Mechanics, lives in Chorleywood.

Paul Field, two-time winter Olympian is from South Oxhey.

Peter Goodwright, 70's comedian, lives in the District.

Pope Adrian IV (c1100-1159), born as Nicholas Breakspear in Bedmond.

Ollie Halsall, influential rock/jazz guitarist and vibraphone player, lived in Abbots Langley and recorded an album titled "Abbot's Langley" in 1980.

Rebecca West, the novelist, gave birth to her illegitimate son by HG Wells, Anthony West (journalist), in Chorleywood.

Robert Carey, 1st Earl of Monmouth, lived in Moor Park 1631–1639 and is buried in Rickmansworth.

Robert Grosvenor, 1st Baron Ebury lived in Moor Park in 1846 and in The Bury from 1879 to 1893.

Robert Grosvenor, 2nd Baron Ebury, lived in Moor Park, 1893–1918.

June 2017

Robert Kindersley, 1st Baron Kindersley, businessman, stockbroker, merchant banker, and public servant, lived at Langley House, Abbots Langley from 1906–23.

Robert Raymond, 1st Baron Raymond, politician and judge, lived at Langleybury, Abbots Langley from 1711–33.

Roger DeCoursey, ventriloquist, lived on the Carpenders Park estate in the 1970s and now lives in Chorleywood.

Ron Tarr, a British actor, best known for playing the part of "Big Ron" in *EastEnders*, lived in Durrants Drive, Croxley Green.

Rose Hill, the grandmother from "Allo 'Allo", lives in Rickmansworth.

Sam Thomas the celebrated yachtsman lives in Mill End.

Sid Kimpton, also known as Gabriel Sibley "Sid" Kimpton or George Kimpton, was an English football player who spent his entire playing career with Southampton and subsequently became a manager in Europe including the France National Football Team lived in Leavesden.

Simon Scott once lived in Grovewood Close, Chorleywood.

Sydney Valentine, actor, lived at Pear Tree Cottage, Sarratt.

Terry Pratchett was born and raised in Chorleywood which he mentions in his book "Good Omens", written with comic Neil Gaiman.

Terry Scott, actor, lived in Croxley Green.

Thomas Butler, 6th Earl of Ossory, was made Lord Butler of Moor Park in 1666.

Thomas Dundas, 1st Baron Dundas, lived in Moor Park and sold it in 1785.

Thomas Greenhill, surgeon to Henry Howard, 7th Duke of Norfolk and 39th and last child of Elizabeth Greenhill, lived in Abbots Langley.

Tim Lovejoy of Sky Sports Soccer AM fame, lived down Valley Road. He went to local schools Christchurch and St. Clement Danes and plays golf at Moor Park.

Tom Cruise owns a house in Moor Park.

Tony Bolton, pop star, used to live just up the hill in Mills End.

Watford manager, Walter Mazzarri, is often seen in The Gate pub in Chorleywood.

Wendy Richard went to The Royal Masonic School.

William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, lived in Moor Park.

June 2017

William Henry Smith (politician), member of the W H Smith station newsagent and bookselling family, lived at Cecil Lodge, Abbots Langley from 1864–70.

Val Doonican lived in Rickmansworth and in one of the big houses along the Batchworth Hill.

Violet Cressy-Marcks, explorer and journalist, lived at Hazelwood (now Hunton Park) from 1930–70.