

BRACKNELL A NEW TOWN FOR BERKSHIRE

Through World War II, 1939 - 1945, damage from bombs and fire caused acute housing shortages, particularly in the big cities such as London. The answer seemed to lie in the New Towns Act of 1946, passed to set up Development Corporations to plan and create new towns wherever it was in the public interest. One of these was Bracknell New Town to help alleviate the housing crisis in West London.

A Development Corporation of eight members was set up, independent of political alliances, to steer the officers through their work. The money to get started was loaned by Government, to be paid back from renting out houses, factories and shops on land leased from the Corporation. The motto of the Development Corporation was "Home, Industry, Leisure", and the aim was to develop a total community.

The New Town for 25,000 people would occupy about 1050 hectares of land on the site and surrounds of Old Bracknell, retaining the existing town centre and industrial areas. As all the new houses were to be offered to people from Brentwood and Chiswick, and more industry was planned in an area where labour was already in short supply, great local hostility to the plan was inevitable. Nevertheless, it went ahead, and the first 50 houses were completed in 1950 in the Priestwood area.

Most land was on lease from the Corporation, the majority of homes were for rent rather than purchase, and organised in neighbourhoods with shops, public house,

primary school, community centre and sites for churches. The way the town grew is shown on the map overleaf. The town's success meant that plans for expansion to a population of 45,000 were made and from 1967 the town's residents were able to purchase properties on a 99 year lease at market value.

Fifty years on the vision for a country town of 25,000 people, relieved of the misery of slum housing, has moved on. Today Bracknell is an influential Berkshire town with a population of about 52,000. Once again, it has outgrown its town centre and comprehensive town centre re-development is currently being considered. For all the people for whom Bracknell represents home and prosperity, after its modest start in the austere post-war years, the New Town is a great achievement.

Leaflets are also available on Easthampstead Conservation Area, the history of Sandhurst and the history of Crowthorne.

For a full list ring 01344 354124 or visit our Website at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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BRACKNELL FOREST THE MAKING OF BRACKNELL NEW TOWN



COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE

T HE MAKING OF BRACKNELL NEW TOWN

The Town Centre was redeveloped following the decision to expand the New Town. Progress was very slow and it was not until 1973 that Bentalls, the first company in Europe to incorporate computerised sales terminals, came to Bracknell. The Point entertainment complex is here.

Quelm Park, built in the 1990's

Whitegrove, built in the 1990's

Temple Park, built in the 1990's

Priestwood was the first of the neighbourhoods to be built. The first house was occupied in August 1951.

Industry was already located at Easthampstead Road and Bullbrook and these areas have subsequently grown greatly. The Corporation aimed to attract employers from West London and rehouse their employees.

Easthampstead was the second neighbourhood to be built. The first houses were occupied in 1957. There is a fine Victorian Church. Point Royal is the only high-rise residential block in Bracknell.

Wildridings had its first homes in 1967 after the decision to extend the new town. These were the first houses to have central heating. Roads and footpaths were laid out to separate pedestrians from vehicles.

Great Hollands closely followed the growth of Sperry who wanted to transfer from Brentford to Bracknell. The first houses were occupied in 1967. More were privately owned and light industry was allowed in the neighbourhood. Traffic segregation is an important feature with the names off Ringmead arranged alphabetically.

Hanworth was begun in 1971, a smaller neighbourhood depending on Birch Hill for some services. It is an attractive, wooded area.

Birch Hill was begun in 1974 and its services, such as a large supermarket, are designed to serve the communities farthest from the town centre. Coral Reef Leisure Pool and South Hill Park Arts Centre are here.

Bullbrook is the third of the original neighbourhoods, begun in 1957 and had the first purpose-built community centre. Lily Hill Park is a most attractive public open space.

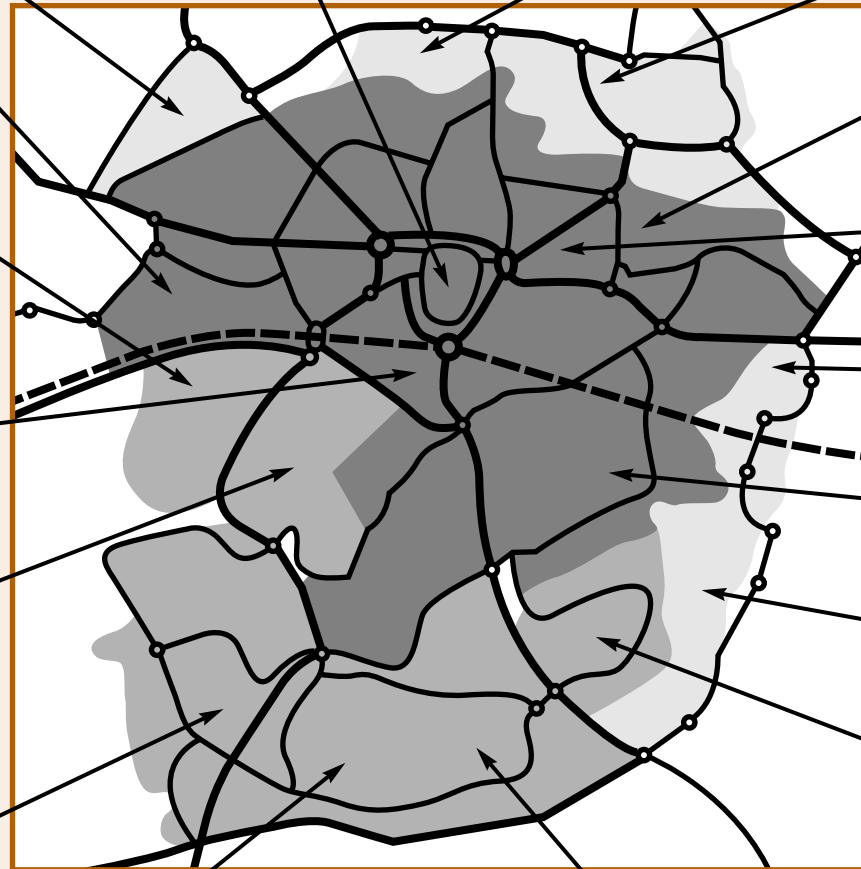
Offices followed industry to the town. The Meteorological Office opened in 1960.



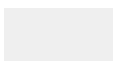
Martins Heron, built in the late 1980's.

Harmans Water is the last of the original neighbourhoods to be built. The first houses were occupied in 1961.

Forest Park, built in the late 1980's

Crown Wood is the last New Town neighbourhood. The first residents came in 1978 and the neighbourhood was completed in 1984.



KEY	
	Built 1950-1965
	Built 1965-1985
	Built 1985-1999