

1. THE WAR MEMORIAL AND ST. BARNABAS

The walk begins at the War Memorial beside St. Barnabas Church. Although not part of the original Brentham plan, the church is a fine building, designed by Ernest Shearman and consecrated in 1916.

2. THE WOODFIELDS

Start walking southward up Woodfield Road. The first houses built by Ealing Tenants Ltd. in 1901 were 71 - 87 Woodfield Road, known as Vivian Terrace - sound late-Victorian housing. Keep on past a few later houses and turn left into Woodfield Crescent. Soon there is a view to the north, down Woodfield Avenue, with terminal towers to the end houses on both sides. These bear stone plaques inscribed with dates and 'ETL' standing for Ealing Tenants Ltd. The street has a very unified character - with matching terraces along both sides. Woodfield Crescent itself is more varied. Between numbers 24 and 25 there is a stone plaque inscribed "Ealing Tenants Limited 1904". Here, and in the eastern houses of the next street, Brunner Road, can be seen the first traces of a new interest in design. "Arts and Crafts" character is evident in the woodwork of the porch roofs and in the massing of the houses. Look particularly at the unusual roof, porch and windows of the corner house, 38 Winscombe Crescent.

3. THE GARDEN SUBURB

From Woodfield Crescent walk south up Winscombe Crescent past short terraces on the right and highly original semi-detached houses on the left. At the point where Winscombe Crescent turns left, there is a fine group of houses, numbers 2 to 14, which beautifully demonstrate the character of garden suburb design. These houses are in a uniform style with a very considered massing, avoiding monotony and creating a small and intimate group. Some of these houses have been sensitively extended. Continuing along Winscombe Crescent, the block comprising numbers 1 to 7 is one Brentham building known to have been designed by Parker & Unwin. These were the architects who laid out Hampstead Garden Suburb as well as the later curved streets of Brentham.

4. BRENTHAM WAY

Continuing east, we meet Brentham Way, in which the first 5 houses are detached, two of them linked by a brick arch and commanding good views north. Detached houses are rare on the Brentham Estate, almost all of which were built with two or three bedrooms. Brentham Way then runs north. The first houses on the right have their own special character, using patterns of bricks and tiles. The houses on the west side have interesting roof designs and one has been particularly well extended. Soon we meet the end of Woodfield Crescent and, to the east, Fowlers Walk, part of the third building phase, designed by G L Sutcliffe. Fowlers Walk has the only cul-de-sac on the Brentham Estate and one of the first in British planning history. Brentham Way is the only real 'avenue' on the estate, although an intimate scale is achieved by dividing the street into sections. They have varying character, with the ends of the short terraces extended forward, defining miniature localities. This avoids a monotonous continuity of the street. Three quarters of the way down Brentham Way turn left into a broad footpath running west to Brunner Road. Here, between the houses, as elsewhere on the estate, there were allotments, with a network of paths between the privet hedges.

5. LUDLOW ROAD AND RUSKIN GARDENS

Turn left on Brunner Road and you join Pitshanger Lane. Right opposite is No 223, which bears a plaque marking it as the home of tennis legend Fred Perry. Walk west along Pitshanger Lane for one block, between houses from the transition phase of the estate - late Victorian houses beginning to adopt Arts and Crafts details. Then turn right into Ludlow Road. Here is where garden suburb design was developed to its full potential, most especially at the junction of Ruskin Gardens and Ludlow Road. These houses, the work of F C Pearson, are grouped into intimate clusters by means of layout and design character. Pearson uses roof form, window form, rendering, brickwork and tiles to give each group a distinctive character. Curiously, the 4 houses in Ruskin Gardens all face out of their own street, but they are unified by their similar projected windows. However some of Pearson's detail is quite gross and some of his roof lines uncomfortably broken, and some houses in Ludlow Road have had convenience sacrificed for visual effect. In two blocks the end houses have been distorted into a slanting shape, a parallelogram, and then given octagonal corner towers so that there are rooms with no right angles - interesting, but perhaps difficult to furnish.

6. MEADVALE ROAD AND THE BRENTHAM INSTITUTE At the end of Ludlow Road turn right along Meadvale Road until you reach Neville Road. These streets show more inventive terrace compositions, all uniting a small group of houses to make blocks big enough to contribute to the civic scene, yet small enough to remain domestic in character. Returning westwards along Meadvale Road, we pass on the right the Brentham Club. This was originally the social and cultural institute and is where Fred Perry learned to play tennis. The building is now a community centre and sporting club. It is a fine building, designed by Sutcliffe in rich red brick, with delicate windows and a creatively designed tower, all with something of the character of post-Medieval German architecture. The small green opposite the club is named after the estate's founder, Henry Vivian.

7. DENISON ROAD, HOLYOAKE WALK AND NORTH VIEW

From the Brentham Club, look up Denison Road but then move west to Holyoake Walk and North View. The houses in these streets are the work of Sutcliffe. His architecture is more regular and disciplined than that of Pearson, using simple brick and roughcast, with a little half-timbering. Pearson was more ingenious, but quite often clumsy, while Sutcliffe's work is simpler, safer and more honest. The junction of Holyoake Walk with North View is particularly pleasing. Here also is Holyoake House, built as small flats for single and elderly people, its larger scale giving the area a focal point and a little contrast. At the end of Holyoake Walk, turn left into Pitshanger Lane, and back to St. Barnabas Church.

How to get there:

E2, E9 from Ealing Broadway (to St. Barnabas Church)
Ealing Broadway (Central/District Lines)

Written by Clive Hicks. Produced by the Brentham Society. www.brentham.com

A Brentham Walk

Brentham Garden Suburb

The Pioneer
Co-partnership Suburb



The Brentham Garden Suburb was built in three stages between 1900 and the First World War, with a few houses added later. It was inspired by the work of Henry Vivian. The innovative aspect of its inception was social, in that this was the first housing built under the co-partnership system, a part of the co-operative movement. There was in it an element of reaction against the tenement buildings being built elsewhere, as well as an effort by working people to manage for themselves, without the well meaning contribution of the great and the good. The intention was to build sound, light and airy houses, well equipped and with good gardens.

The co-partnerships went on to build thousands of houses all over the country until the role of housing provision was taken over by local authorities between the wars.

The first phase of the Brentham Garden Suburb was thus conventional building of the late Nineteenth Century aspect, but this was changed when the estate was expanded in 1905.

The architects Parker & Unwin were engaged to create the layout of the enlarged estate along new lines, with varied designs springing from the ideas and designs of William Morris, Philip Webb and Norman Shaw, but originally from late Tudor vernacular building. These architects had already designed New Earswick (near York) for Joseph Rowntree and they went on to much larger projects. One of the buildings is thought to have been designed by Parker & Unwin, but most of the houses of this stage were designed by F. Cavendish Pearson.

The third phase, from 1911, was designed by G. Lister Sutcliffe and thus has a rather different character.



8 Holyoake House



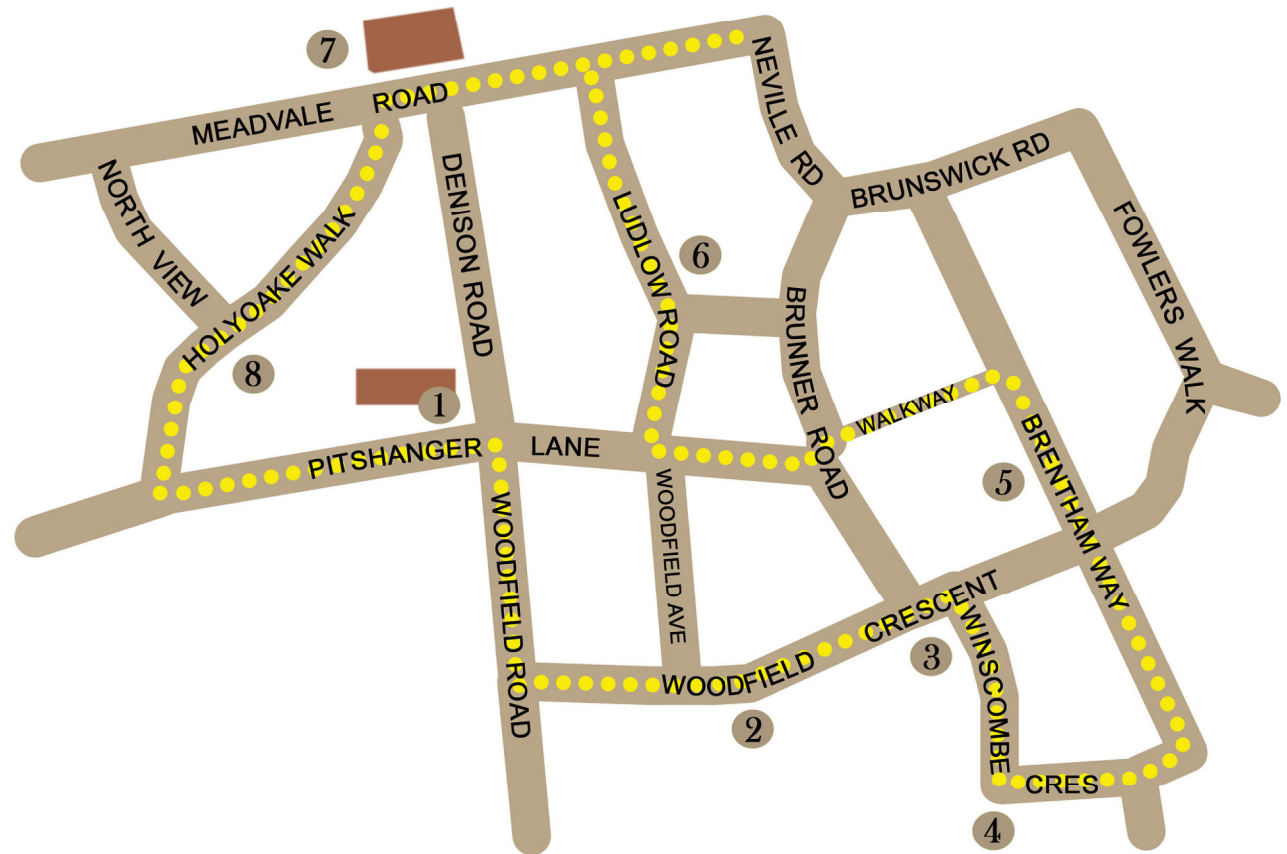
7 Brentham Club



6 Ludlow Road



5 Brentham Way



1 St Barnabas Church



2 Woodfield Crescent



3 Winscombe Crescent



4 Winscombe Crescent