

HARVINGTON'S HERITAGE

There are one Grade 1 and 23 Grade 2 listed pre-Victorian buildings in Harvington. Historic England, the new name for English Heritage, states: *"All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most of those built between 1700 and 1840. Particularly careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945. A building has normally to be over 30 years old to be eligible for listing"*. The map below, which includes most of the village, dates to 1837. This would therefore include structures such as the hop kiln, the Coach and Horses, the Hop Pole and a number of other structures around the village that are at present not graded.



The 1837 map above indicates distribution of most of the properties then existing.

Until the eighteenth century Harvington consisted entirely of timber framed, mostly thatched farmhouses and cottages, set upon a Bidford Blue Lias stone base. The two buildings that did not conform to this format are the church of St James the Great, dating from the 12th century, and the, now ruinous, possible fifteen century dovecote. Many of the surviving cottages are set on banks of once sunken lanes thereby having an extended stone base on the road side.

This quiet unchanging scene interspersed with farm land began to change with the construction of the large brick-built Rectory and the stone-built Grange. 1780 to 1837 saw the construction of the two large Georgian properties Dalkeith and Langton; the hop kiln, Church house, a revamp of the old Coach & Horses, the Golden Cross and the Hop Pole.

In Victorian and Edwardian times the village expanded with houses on Crest Hill, Station Bank and up Village street towards and beyond the cross hands. All this expansion did not however did not spoil or damage the historic part of the village.



In the early years of the 20th century Harvington was a place of beauty, a rural idyll visited by photographers and artists alike.



This scene lasted until the 1930's when properties and land in the historic part of the village was purchased by the Council. Many of the old timber-framed cottages, some dating to the early 1500's were demolished to make way for social housing.

From the 1950's onwards there has been much filling in of the open spaces in the village and considerable expansion along Village Street and Leys Road.

Despite the losses and huge expansion the village still retains, in parts, an atmosphere of tranquillity. The Victorian additions to the village should now be considered an asset to the village and there is an argument for

listing some of them such as The Cedars, the School and even the later Village Hall, which go to make the Village Green. The village is already beginning to take on a aura of urbanity with street lighting, pavements and yellow lines, which should be resisted if we are to retain the remaining historic properties with their traditional rural surroundings.

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