

Along Baker Street, The Royds Conservation Area and return

From the traffic lights at the junction of Mutton Lane and Baker Street walk down the right-hand (West) side of Baker Street.

Pound Farm House

No.37 is an early 19th century house, now a Grade II listed building, and probably takes its name from the Manorial Pound which was located at the junction of Mutton Lane and Darkes Lane. Built from grey brick with a slate roof, the house appears to have once had windows all along the right-hand side as well as the front. Whether these windows were removed because of the window tax, first introduced in England in 1696 and repealed in 1851, or were just a design feature is not known. Nor is it confirmed that the building was actually a farmhouse.

Continue along Baker Street to

St. John's Methodist Church

From 1800, Methodist services were held in a barn at Darkes farm until a church built at the Hatfield Road opened in 1883. St John's Methodist Church on Baker Street was built in 1941 to replace the 1883 church which was then sold. The stained glass window in the chancel, by Goddard & Gibbs, was installed in 1972. Later additions to the church complex were made in 2005.

Cross Heather Way and continue walking along Baker Street. Note 53 Baker Street: the first example of a distinctive style of architecture: more about this later.

Continue along Baker Street crossing Elmfield Road and The Shrublands and turn right into SanTERS Lane.

A short distance along SanTERS Lane is Rydal Mount, built in 1879, now apartments, but once the home of Barclay and Marguerite Barrowman. Barclay was born in 1896 in Glasgow. After graduating from Glasgow University, he joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve serving as a surgeon in World War 1. After gaining a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Tropical Hygiene he moved to British Malaya and in 1937 was appointed personal physician to the Sultan of Selangor. His career included service with the Royal Army and acting as adviser to the Australian Military Forces. Retiring due to ill health in 1947, Barrowman returned to Potters Bar where he died in 1978. Barclay and his wife Marguerite whom he married in 1928, are buried in St. Mary's Churchyard, Mutton Lane.

Marguerite wrote 'Life as remembered from Rydal Mount (1905-1927)' which is published by the Potters Bar Historical Society.

Retrace your steps along SanTERS Lane, turn left to cross Baker Street at the crossing.

Pope Paul School

To your right is a small development of houses, Great Slades, and the entrance to Pope Paul Roman Catholic School. Opened in 1967, the school now caters for 210 pupils aged from 4 to 11 years.

Turn left along Baker Street towards Mutton Lane then turn right into Oakroyd Avenue.

Conservation Areas

The Royds Conservation Area was designated in 2000 and covers all the houses in Oakroyd and Elmroyd Avenues and Closes, and numbers 48-86 and 53-63 on Baker Street. It is one of two Conservation Areas in Potters Bar.

The Royds

The Royds Estate was built in the 1930s by Edward Hicks, a prolific local builder. By all accounts Hicks was an excellent salesman. His sales pitch included a no obligation tour of the estate, with pick up by aeroplane from any airport, or car from any location. He also offered his own mortgage services. In addition, there were no road or paving charges, all the properties were Freehold, registered with HM Land Registry, and there were no tithe rents to be paid. All this combined to make living in the area an attractive prospect. Many of the smaller types of houses were under £1,000 to buy, although a garage was an optional extra which cost another £50, reflecting the much lower level of car ownership at the time.

Rumour has it that plans for some of the properties were acquired from South Africa. True or not, the unique 'colonial' style of the properties supports this notion!

Oakroyd Avenue

Walking along Oakroyd Avenue, the first part of the Royds estate to be built in 1932, you can see the variety of designs available.

No. 3 follows the distinctive detached 'bungalette' style seen at 53 Baker Street. This design features a large veranda style porch supported by an elegant Tuscan or brick column. Oriel, gable and semi-circular windows, different finishes and a choice of 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms gave buyers opportunities to customise their homes.

Cross Kingsland, which is not part of the Conservation Area, continue along Oakroyd Avenue and turn right into Oakroyd Close.

Nos. 6 and 12 Oakroyd Close retain the original Hicks style garage doors which have glazed upper panels. Many garages now have replacement doors or have been completely rebuilt or repurposed. No 27 has the 'keyhole' porch entrance and an interesting parapet.

Retrace your steps, turn right and continue along Oakroyd Avenue to the turning circle with its vista of 'bungalette' style houses.

Return along Oakroyd Avenue, turn right onto Baker Street, noting the George V pillar box at the corner. Turn right into Elmroyd Avenue.

Elmroyd Avenue

Elmroyd Avenue was built in 1934 and has a layout and houses similar to Oakroyd Avenue. Flowering cherry trees set in grass verges line the avenue, making it especially attractive in Spring. Like Oakroyd Avenue, Elmroyd Avenue retains many original lamp posts, although the top lighting sections have been replaced.

On the right hand side, between numbers 31 and 33, the narrow track, now overgrown and barred by a modern locked gate, leads to a rectangle of land between Elmroyd and Oakroyd Avenues. Originally allotments, this area is protected from housing development by a covenant signed by current home owners at the date of purchase. The covenant also stipulates that they should maintain the land and, amongst other things, not use it for an airstrip or aeroplane manufacture!
Examples of Hicks' two-storey detached houses are number 50 which, although modernised, retains the feature brickwork and number 52 with its keyhole doorway to the porch.

Retrace your steps along Elmroyd Avenue and turn right onto Baker Street. The first house on the right is actually 2 Elmroyd Avenue and is another of Hicks' designs showing a semi-circular porch supported by Tuscan columns.

Continue along Baker Street towards Mutton Lane to return to the start of the walk.

This walk was documented as part of a series of self-guided town walks to celebrate the Diamond Anniversary of the Potters Bar Society in 2021.

The Potters Bar Society
Founded 1961
Affiliated to:
The Campaign to Protect Rural England,
London Green Belt Council,
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The Potters Bar Society

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Diamond Anniversary Walk 5

Baker Street and The Royds Conservation Area

***Protecting the character and
amenities of Potters Bar***