

Benger Trails

Short Walk to Draycot Cerne and back



This is a walk from the Village Hall, to the Draycot Park entrance, to Draycot Cerne, and return.

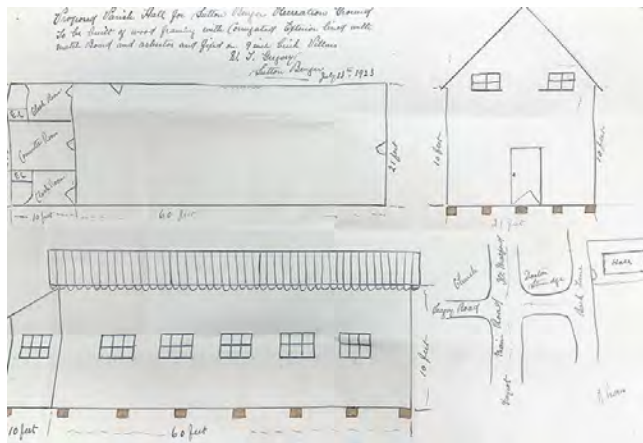
Trail Length 2.6 miles

Duration About 60 minutes



Map Courtesy of Google Maps

1. Village Hall and Recreational Ground



Sutton Benger's Old Village Hall used to be where the car park is today. The New Village Hall was opened in 2000 after a major fund-raising effort.

The image shows the original hand drawn plan used to build the old Village Hall in 1923. Note the reference to 'Doctor Sturridge'. The doctor's surgery used to be in the Bell House, from the 1840s for about 100 years. You can still see where the entrance to the surgery used to be, in the brickwork on Bellside.

Recreation Ground



Before 1920, there was no Hall and no Recreation Ground. There used to be an orchard where the Bell Piece houses are. There was a kitchen garden next to the orchard. It belonged to the Bell House, home of the village doctor. This is where the doctor's surgery is today.

In March 1920 there was a big Auction of the entire Draycot Estate. Eight acres of land from Queen's Field was donated for a recreation ground.

The photograph shows a carnival on the Recreation Ground, probably in the 1930s.

Old Village Hall



After a fund-raising effort by the local villagers a Village Hall was opened in November 1923 by Lady Cowley. It only took Mr Gregory, the Sutton Benger wheelwright and carpenter, 3 months to build, with volunteer help, at a cost of just £300.

New Village Hall



Throughout the years the Village Hall was well-used but by the 1990s the Old Village Hall was not big enough for the needs of the village. The New Hall was built in 2000 at a cost of over £250,000 as a 'Millennium Project' after a major fund-raising project in 1997-1999 by a small group of villagers.

The New Village Hall was formally opened by local MP, James Gray, on 28 October 2000.

World War II



Sutton Benger Village Hall has been used for many functions and events over the years. The photograph shows one of the many functions that was held for the local community in the village hall just before and during the Second World War.

Back Lane - Chestnut Road



Sutton Benger has a village layout which is typical of many medieval villages: a High Street with a parallel Back Lane (now Chestnut Road) and a crossroads beside the 13th century Parish Church. The open area around the central crossroads used to be much bigger, forming a sort of 'village square'. The Tithe Map of the village from 1839/1840 also shows that Back Lane did not quite join up with the High Street originally.

Chestnut Road was still known as Back Lane in the 1950s, when it was still a natural-surface lane. It was re-named in the 1960s when new houses were being built on the south side of the village. This re-naming became official on 12 January 1967.

Barringtons' Taxis and Petrol Station



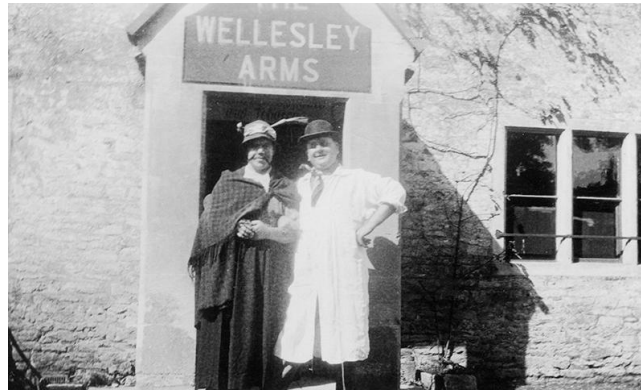
Most of the older houses on the south side of the High Street used to have gardens which extended all the way to Back Lane / Chestnut Road. There were very few houses along Back Lane until 50 years ago.

In the 1920s there used to be a taxi firm run by the Barrington family, roughly where No 11 Chestnut Road (The Stone House) is now. There was also a petrol station / garage on the corner of Chestnut Road / High Street, where Chestnut Grove is now.

Next On The Trail

Leave the Village Hall and walk past the school, along Chestnut Road to the high street; carefully cross the main road and continue walking to the Wellesley Arms.

2. The Wellesley Arms



The Wellesley Arms public house was built in the late 18th century. It was originally a coaching inn, like the Bell Inn at the far end of the village. At the beginning of the 1800s, more than 200 years ago, it was called the Tylney Arms Inn. At that time the Lords of the Draycot Manor were the Tylney Long family. They married into the Wellesley family in 1812, and in the 1840s the pub name changed to the Wellesley Arms. It has kept the same name ever since, even though the Lord of the Manor became Lord Cowley in 1863.

The black and white postcard captioned 'JJ Hunt Calne', with people standing in front of The Wellesley, dates from 1904-1910; the landlady at this time was Mrs Louisa Sharp, who continued running it after it was bought by Wadworths following the 1920 Auction. With acknowledgements to JJHuntArchive for allowing us to use this photograph; see <https://jjhuntarchive.weebly.com> and also *JJ Hunt's Wiltshire Camera: One Hundred Historic Photographs of Marlborough and District*

Standing in the doorway of the pub in one of the photos from the 1930s are (left) Oliver Heath, the Park Lane Baker, and (right)

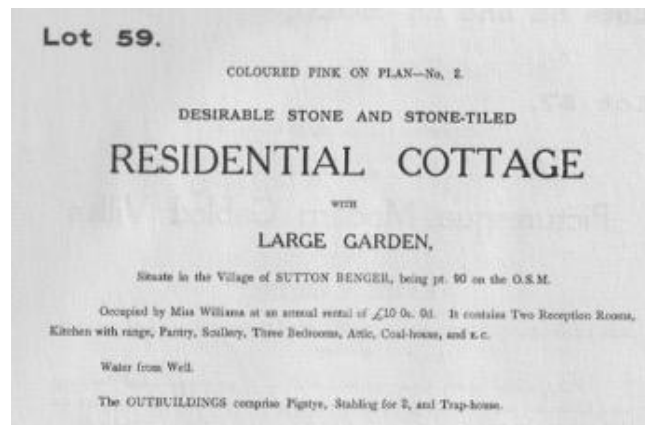
Graham Olds, the butcher. They are taking a break from the fancy dress parade at one of the village carnivals.

Across the road from The Wellesley, 100 years ago, there were two other farms in the village. Straight across the road was Arms Farm, named after the pub, and further along the road towards Draycot Cerne is Gate Farm.

Can you help? Can you date the photos from the cars parked outside? Or do you have any other old photos of The Wellesley Arms that you would be happy to share? If so, please get in touch at:

Hello@bengertrails.co.uk

8 High Street



8 High Street, Rose Cottage, is a Grade II Listed Building. It was built in 1782, probably for Edward Russ. The date is shown in a crest over the front door, hidden by the ivy - it can be seen in the black & white photograph from the early 1900s

It was Lot No. 59 in the Draycot Sale in 1920.

6 High Street - Appletrees





The house now known as 'Appletrees', at 6 High Street, Sutton Benger, is a Grade II Listed Building; it was built in the mid-1860s. From the 1940s to the early 2020s it was the home of the Gardeners, who owned French Gardens, behind the house.

This house replaced one on the same plot, but which was closer to the road; it is shown on the 1808 and 1840 maps. (It is at #55 on the 1840 map). The house was occupied in 1808 by William Collins, and in 1840 by his son Isaac Collins; they were described as 'nurserymen'. The occupant of the new house in the 1870s was Thomas H Green, a 'Gardener', who lived at a 'House, Garden and Nursery'. It seems likely that the occupants of this house have always had some connection to the Draycot Estate gardens and nursery.

The 1920 Sale Catalogue describes the property as follows: 'Charming Residential Cottage in Chalet Style. With extensive walled-in gardens, well stocked with fruit trees.' After the house and land was sold it was bought by Henry Harris, Nurseryman, who ran it as a commercial nursery, with a retail shop in Chippenham in the 1920s and 1930s.

2-4 High Street - Box Cottages



In the early 1800s there was only one house at the location of Box Cottages; it was known as 'Box Bush' and also as 'the cottage near Spencers'. The attached 1808 map shows the western end of Sutton Benger - note that East is at the top with North to the left. #215 is The Wellesley Arms (then known as The Tylney Arms), and #218/219 are at the corner of French Gardens Lane. Box Bush is at #211, and the house at #213 was demolished to make way for Appletrees - which also took the empty plot at #212.

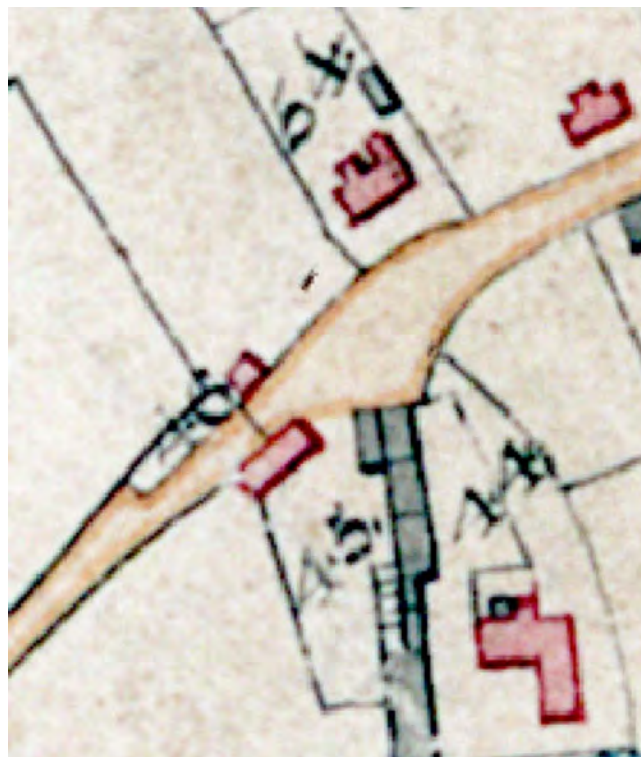
William Messiter, who died in 1800, was a painter and decorator, and rented several properties in the village. His son William Messiter (1771 – 1835), also a painter, was tenant of the cottage 'near Spencers' (aka 2/4 High Street); but then sub-let it to John Reeks of Dauntsey in March 1811.

It is possible to trace the house through various tenants and sub-tenants over the next 50 years, as the house becomes more commonly known as 'Box Bush'. But the property reverted to the Lord of Manor in 1835 when William Messiter died.

In 1851 the only occupant was Frances Hunt, aged 85, a widow. But there are two families living there in 1861: John Withers and Mrs

Anne Miles. A set of leases from 1862 shows that they were each renting 'a House & Garden on the site of Box Cottage.' It therefore seems that the old 'Box Bush' house had been demolished to make way for a new pair of Estate Cottages at some time between 1851 and 1861.

The Toll House



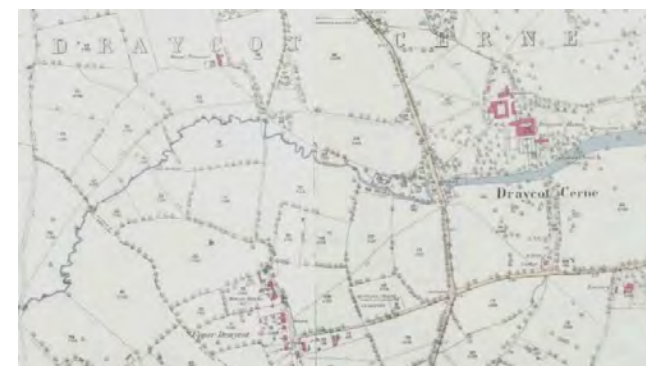
Gate Farm, Gate Court and Gate Cottage get their names from the fact that there was a Toll Gate to the west of the village during the 1800s, when the High Street was part of a Turnpike road from Bristol to Oxford. Throughout that time there was a small Toll House on the north side of the road. The house, in the field immediately west of 2-4 High Street (Box Cottages), was demolished in the 1880s when the Turnpike system ended.

The toll gate can be seen on the 1839 map as a line across the road between #45 (now Gate Cottage) and #46 (the Toll House).

Next On The Trail

Continue along the footpath on the north side of the road; pause after the new houses beyond Gate Farm, opposite the large detached house known as Cowley Cottage (and before the house known as The Paddocks). You are leaving the old Parish of Sutton Benger and entering the old Parish of Draycot Cerne.

3. Draycot Cerne





The parish of Draycot Cerne used to be separate from the parish of Sutton Benger, until it was added to Sutton Benger in 1934. The boundary line can still be seen as the hedgerow to the south of the main road, between Gate Farm and Lake Farm. There used to be two hamlets: Upper Draycot and Lower Draycot. The latter was north of the main road, and south of Draycot House, but was removed in the 1870s. As can be seen from the 1885 map, the village was still called Upper Draycot until the early 1900s, but it eventually adopted the parish name of Draycot Cerne.

There was originally a similar boundary line to the north of the road, as can be seen on the 1840 map; the old fields Number 48 (in Sutton Benger) and Number 107 (in Draycot Cerne) have now been merged to create one larger field, and the boundary hedgerow has disappeared.

Sutton Benger, as well as both Lower Draycot and Upper Draycot, was part of the Manor of Draycot from shortly after the Dissolution of the Monasteries at the time of Henry VIII. For 400 years, until the estate was sold at auction in 1920, nearly every house in both parishes was owned by the Lord of the Manor of Draycot, and nearly every resident worked for him in one way or another.

Next On The Trail

Continue along the footpath on the north side of the road; carefully cross the road just after the entrance to Lake Farm, and look across the road towards Draycot Park.

4. Lower Draycot



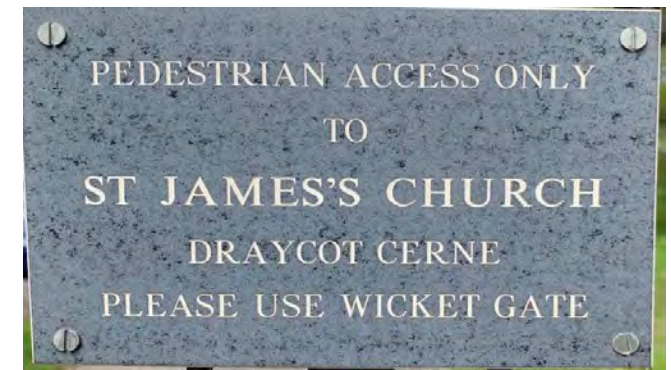
Lower Draycot was a hamlet that included several houses, plus the Draycot Rectory, which stood between the main Sutton Benger road and Draycot Park lake until about 1880. Lord Cowley re-landscaped his parkland in the 1870s in order to create a new entrance to his Manor House from the road and across the lake. He removed the houses and built new ones for the occupants in Upper Draycot. He also built a new Rectory at the top of the hill, to the south side of the main road.

The map of the parkland in 1885 shows the new changes, with no trace of Lower Draycot remaining. There is a new Lodge / gate house, plus a new road and bridge over the lake to Draycot House. There is also the new Rectory, as well as the Mortuary Chapel (built in 1881).

Next On The Trail

Continue along the footpath on the south side of the road; pause just before you reach the entrance to Draycot Park on your right, and look through the gates to see if you can make out St James' Church in the trees.

5. St James' Church



A church has stood in Draycot Park since the late 12th century. It can just be seen, looking through the Lodge gates, at the end of the drive, through the trees

St James's Church is now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust; a detailed booklet about the building can be obtained from their website.

<https://www.visitchurches.org.uk/visit/church-listing/st-james-church-draycot-cerne.html>

Or by email to:
info@nationalchurchestrust.org

The church can also be seen from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which cross the parkland, but please note that the majority of the parkland, and Draycot House itself, are private property. The sign on the Lodge gates refers to the 'wicket gate'; this is now just a stile to the left (west) of the Lodge in the hedgerow. You are advised to have a PRoW map with you if you wish to make your way to the church.

Next On The Trail

Continue along the footpath and pause again after you have passed the Lodge, before you reach the road sign for the M4.

6. Draycot Lodge / Front Lodge - The Entrance to Draycot Park



The Lodge, on the main road from Sutton Benger to Draycot Cerne, is actually the 'new' entrance to Draycot Park and House. The 'old' entrance used to be from the west, on the Stanton road (today's B4122). It is one of four 1800s lodges around the estate, and is referred to in various documents as 'Draycot Lodge' or as 'Front Lodge'. The other lodges

were Scotland Lodge (on the road from Stanton to Seagry), Slates Lodge and Plains Lodge (both on the B4122).

Nesta Heath remembered life in Draycot Cerne and Sutton Benger as a child in the 1920s / 1930s. *'There were lodges at all the entrances to the house, Front Lodge being on the main road where the butler Mr Rich lived with his wife and son, Arthur.'* (Nesta Heath, *Life and Herbing*, p. 18).

Note that the PRoW opposite Front Lodge, signposted on the south side of the main road, will take you across the fields towards Roward Farm and eventually to Kington Langley.

Francis Kilvert

The Rev. Francis Kilvert, of Langley Burrell, wrote about ice skating on the lake with the Awdry family in the winter of December 1870.

For more about Langley Burrell, and about Francis Kilvert and his Diary, see <http://langleyburrell.org>

The Old Rectory, Lower Draycot

Draycot Cerne used to be two small hamlets. The village that is now Draycot Cerne was called Upper Draycot, while Lower Draycot lay between the main road and Draycot House.

The lodge and driveway did not exist before the mid 1800s; there was just a track that only went as far as the lake, and there was no bridge over the lake to Draycot House and St James's Church. Either side of the track were a few houses and the original Draycot Rectory. The Rectory can be seen at Number 96 on the map, with an additional Glebe House at No 98.

All the houses in Lower Draycot, including the Rectory, were demolished in the 1860s / 1870s to enable Lord Cowley, the new Lord of the Manor, to re-landscape his Park. The 'Old Rectory' on the main road was built to replace the one which had been demolished. Four pairs of new houses were also built in Upper Draycot between 1869 and 1874 for the previous inhabitants of Lower Draycot.

The original Rectory would have been a large, substantial stone building; The Rector in 1841 was Henry Barry and his wife

Elizabeth, who had been born in Sutton Benger. There were 17 people living in the house at the time of the Census, including servants, Revd. Barry's mother-in-law, and other extended family. Henry Barry's daughter Emma later became a minor Victorian author, as Emma Newby, and had several novels published.

Living there in the 1850s, 60s and 70s were the Reverend Charles Awdry, with a similar-sized household, including (in 1851) 8 children, a governess and 5 servants.

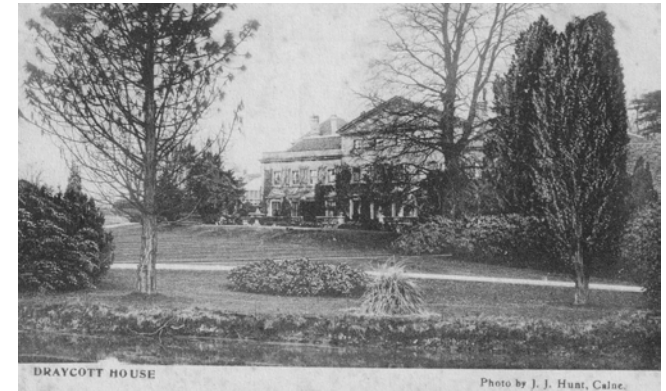
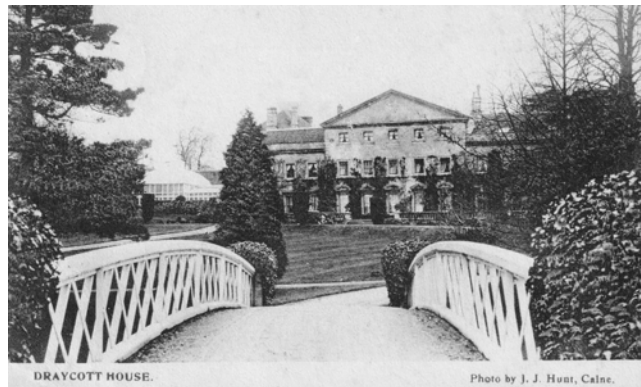
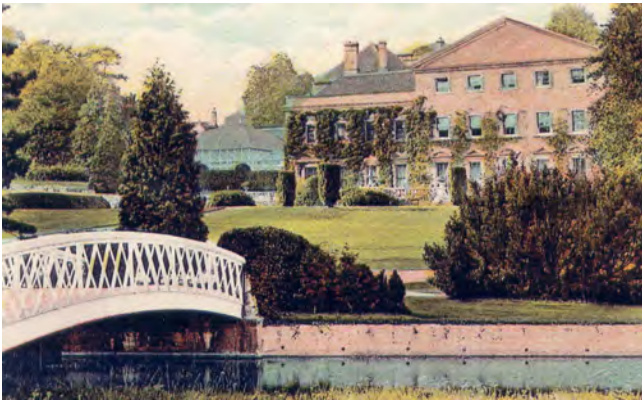
There were also at least 6 other houses, outhouses, barns etc, which were removed from Lower Draycot; however, the families who had to move were undoubtedly moving to newer houses.

Next On The Trail

Follow the footpath along the main road towards the crossroads. Pause if and when it is safe to do so and look back across the park towards Draycot House.

7. Near Draycot House





A medieval manor house in the parkland, north of the lake and about 500 metres north of the main road. It was replaced in the late 1700s by a grander, fourteen-bay house with a Georgian facade. This house stood between the church and the farm buildings (coloured black on the 1840 map).

With thanks to George Barbour for use of the photos from the JJ Hunt archive; these can be dated to 1904-1910, which is when JJ Hunt was active in Calne.

See <https://jjhuntarchive.weebly.com> for more old photos of Wiltshire.

The house and contents were sold as part of the 1920 Draycot Estate Auction. The house gradually deteriorated, and no use could be found for it when the park was sold to a group of three farmers. It was demolished 1952-1954, and was replaced by the new

Draycot House, which stands behind the old laundry block, to the north west of the old Draycot House.

NOTE: Although the church can be seen from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which cross the parkland, the majority of the parkland, and Draycot House itself, are private property. You are advised to have a PRoW map with you if you wish to make your way to the church or walk across the parkland.

For more on Draycot House and its history, please see:

Hand of Fate: The History of the Longs, Wellesleys and the Draycot Estate in Wiltshire by Tim Couzens

Next On The Trail

Please take care whilst in this busy high traffic flow location.

Follow the footpath towards the crossroads; pause before going round to the left (and before the 'end of weight restrictions' road sign. Look down the road towards Chippenham and you will see the entrance to the driveway leading to Roward Farm on the left.

8. Near Roward Farm



THE COMPACT ATTRACTIVE
ROADSIDE DAIRY HOLDING
In the Parish of DRAYCOT, known as
“ROWARD FARM”
Exceedingly well situate on the side of the Main Road.

THE VERY COMFORTABLE FARMHOUSE
Faces South-West and looks out upon well-timbered pastures, and contains Entrance Hall, Drawing-room, Dining-room, Kitchen with range, Back Kitchen, Pantry, Dairy, Cellar, Cheese-room, Five Bedrooms, and Attic.

ORCHARD AND KITCHEN GARDEN.

THE ADEQUATE OUTBUILDINGS
Well situated around the yards, comprise Two Four-bay **DUTCH BARNS**, Barn, Cart-horse Stable for 5, Nag Stable, Implement Shed with Granary over, Trap-house, Three Pigstyes, Meal-house, Calving Houses, Hay-houses, etc., and

TIE-UP ACCOMMODATION FOR SIXTY COWS,
WHICH TOGETHER WITH THE
RICH DAIRY LANDS

The entrance to Roward Farm is about 150 metres from the Draycot crossroads towards Chippenham, along the Draycot Straight.

According to the Victoria County History, the farm dates back to around 1625, and the original farmhouse dated back to the early 1600s.

It was Lot 20 in the 1920 Draycot Auction; the farmer in the 1930s was called R Howard - almost the same as the farm itself.

The Draycot Straight and the 1773 Map





A map of Kington Langley, created in 1773 to show the land recently purchased in that parish by Sir James Tylney Long, shows the old route that villagers would have had to take to Avon Mill. This was one of three mills on the Draycot Estate at that time: Draycot, Kellaways and Avon. (Seagry Mill was added later). That track still exists today as a Public Right of Way, just to the south of Great House.

The map also shows the 'new' road - the road we call 'The Draycot Straight'. The road was created as part of the Chippenham Turnpike system in the late 1760s / early 1770s; in fact, the map shows that there were still no hedgerows along the roadsides in 1773. An old photograph, probably from the 1900s, describes the road as 'The Langley Road'.

It is still possible to walk the original 'old road' along Public Rights of Way from Kington Langley to Draycot Cerne.

Turnpikes



Draycot crossroads in the 1800s was a major junction of 'main roads'. The 'Pucklechurch to Christian Malford' turnpike was part of the main road from Bristol to Oxford; it followed the line of the B4122 from Stanton to Draycot, then through Sutton Benger and Christian Malford.

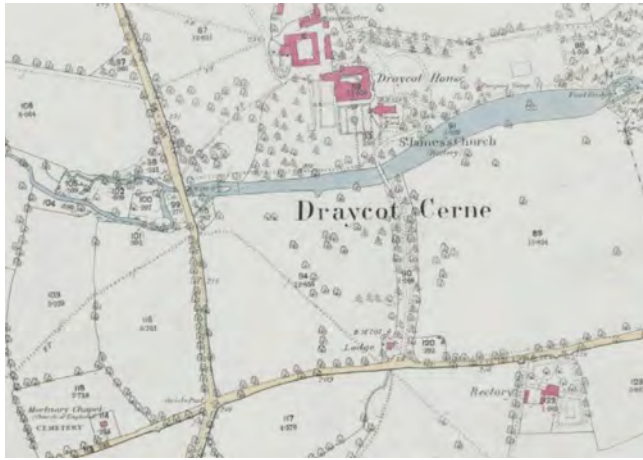
As can be seen from the 1808 turnpike map, the Draycot Straight was part of a network of Chippenham turnpikes, and connected Bath and Chippenham traffic with the road to Oxford. There was probably a turnpike gate just south of the crossroads, close to the lane leading to Roward Farm.

Note that the map still shows a 'road' to the west of Draycot, linking it with Kington St Michael.

Next On The Trail

9. Near Draycot Mill





Draycot Mill was only usable in the winter months, when water levels were high and the current was strong.

Draycot Mill eventually stopped working in the second half of the 1800s and was eventually demolished. Other mills, on the main River Avon, were still in operation in the 1900s: Seagry Mill, Christian Malford Mill, Avon Mill and Kellaways Mill.

Draycot Mill was located approximately 150 metres north of the Draycot crossroads, where the B4122 drops down into the dip and a watercourse runs under the highway. There are no traces of the original buildings, although the mill race can still be found in the middle of the trees, west of the road; but note that there is nothing visible from the Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

Domesday Book refers to a mill at Draycot in 1086, and it was probably on the same location. Records throughout the following centuries refer to other mills on the estate, but this was probably the main one. A 1773 county map shows it as 'Draycot Mill' with a second, unnamed, mill at the eastern end of the lake in Draycot Park. The second mill was possibly short-lived as it does not appear on any other maps. Other records indicate that

The 1840 map showing Draycot Mill on the west of the Stanton Road also shows the location of the original village of Lower Draycot on the south side of the lake in Draycot Park. The houses, including the old rectory for St James' Church, were cleared in the late 1800s to create a more open parkland, and the villagers were moved to new houses in Draycot Cerne.

The 1885 map shows that the Mill had already disappeared, and so had Lower Draycot. This contrasting image shows the new parkland, the new rectory on the south side of the main road, and the new Mortuary Chapel.

Draycot Cerne Crossroads



Note that the bench at the crossroads commemorates the coronation of King George VI.

Next On The Trail

10. Draycot Mortuary Chapel



The lane from the crossroads to Draycot Cerne used to be part of the main road from Chippenham to Sutton Benger, and onwards to Swindon. Until 1770 the main road

followed a tortuous route from Kington Langley to Draycot Cerne (then known as Upper Draycot) and then to Swindon via Sutton Benger. The 'Draycot Straight' (or New Road) was built as part of the Turnpike from Chippenham, and created a much-needed direct route, by-passing Upper Draycot village. It is still possible to walk the route of the old road along footpaths to Kington Langley.

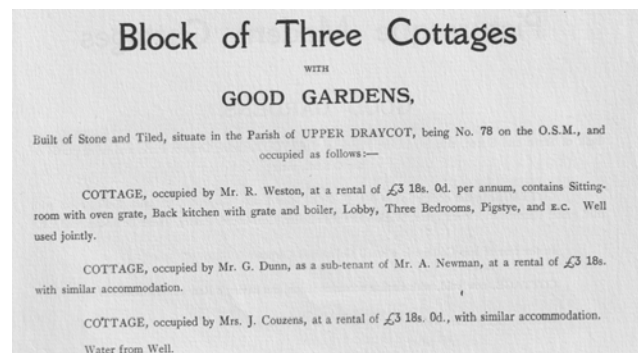
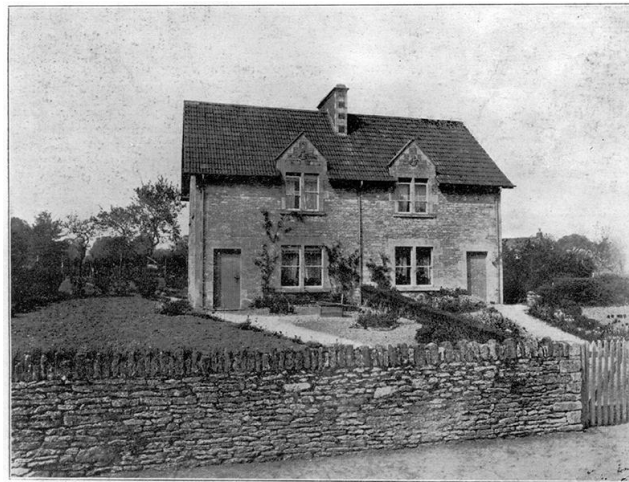
Lord Cowley, of Draycot House, donated land for a cemetery here, and paid for the building of the small mortuary chapel, or chapel of rest, in 1883. This was at about the same time as the relocation of the Lower Draycot houses to Draycot Cerne.

The chapel was renovated in 2015, including a re-roofing after the original stone tiles had been stolen, and was transferred to new Trustees.

Next On The Trail

Carry on walking along the lane to Draycot Cerne, and turn left at the T junction. Pause in front of the row of 3 houses on your left.

11. Upper Draycot



The Parish of Draycot Cerne originally consisted of two hamlets, the smaller of which was Upper Draycot.

Lower Draycot included the church and rectory and several houses, and was in the parkland. It lay between Draycot House and the main road to Sutton Benger. The hamlet of Lower Draycot was demolished in the

1870s to allow Lord Cowley to landscape his park. Only the church of St James' remains standing.

Lord Cowley built some extra houses in Upper Draycot, similar to those on the High Street in Sutton Benger, and the villagers were given new homes.

The 1920 Ordnance Survey map still showed the name of the village as Upper Draycot, but it became known as Draycot Cerne from around that time.

The Old Road from Chippenham





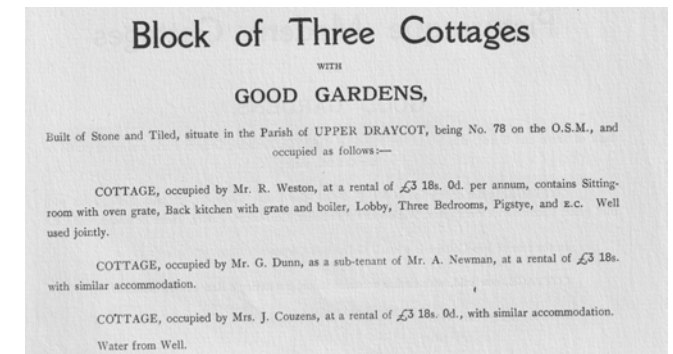
The Draycot Straight was a new road created in the 1760s to bypass Upper Draycot. Originally, the road from Chippenham to Sutton Benger followed a tortuous route from Kington Langley, through Upper Draycot (now Draycot Cerne) to the Draycot crossroads. The majority of that road still exists today as usable footpaths, although they can be quite boggy after rain. The 'new' road can be seen on the 1773 county map, complete with what appear to be Toll Gates at either end. The fact that the road has a dotted outline means that there are no hedges along it, suggesting that it is still new.

Sir James Long's map of his Kington Langley estate, also 1773, marks the road as 'New Turnpike Road to Draycot' with the original road marked as 'Old Road to Draycot'. The old road out of Kington Langley is still known today as Sutton Road.

Evidence that the road post-dates the fields alongside it can be seen by looking at the field patterns on the OS map, or by looking at an aerial view of the area using any mapping program.

Note also that the 1808 turnpike map still shows a 'road' to the west of Draycot, linking it with Kington St Michael.

Draycot Cottages



The majority of the older houses in Draycot Cerne date from the later 1800s, when the village was relocated from Lower Draycot. Some of the construction dates can still be seen in the crests in the eaves.

The details from the 1920 Auction Catalogue describing a 'Block of three cottages' were of Lot 41, the houses on the corner of the lane.

The photo of the pair of houses, and details of the 'Picturesque Modern Cottages', are of Lot 43; this is the pair of houses on the B4122, just north of the brook. They were built in 1903-1905.

Next On The Trail

Walk back towards the other end of Draycot Cerne, and stop by the large house on the left called The Grey House.

12. Draycot School (The Grey House)



Schoolhouse with Cottage adjoining

POSSESSING A

VERY PLEASING FRONT ELEVATION,

AND HAVING

GOOD GARDENS,

Both being Stone-built and Stone-tiled, situate in the Village of UPPER DRAYCOT, near to the Manor House, and being pt. 73 on the O.S.M.

SCHOOLHOUSE, occupied by Miss Limbrick, at a rental of £2 per annum, containing Entrance Hall, Kitchen with oven grate, Sitting-room, Back Kitchen with boiler, Scullery, Two Bedrooms, Two Attics, Schoolroom and Cloakroom, Outhouse, &c.

COTTAGE, occupied by Mr. Ed. Honey, at a rental of £5 per annum, on a monthly tenancy, containing Kitchen with oven grate, Back Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Attic, Coal-house, Figstye, and &c.

This lot draws water from well on Lot 36.

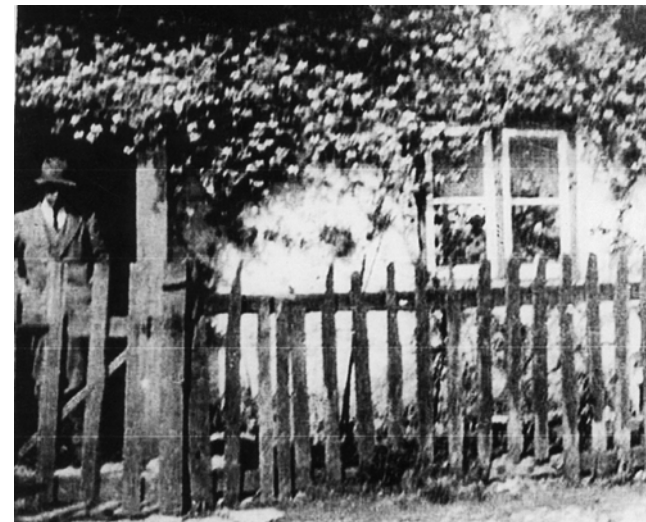
The Grey House in Draycot Cerne was originally the village school, and was built in 1794-95, on the site of Longden's smallholding. Unlike Sutton Benger, which only had a school from the 1800s, partly funded by the church, the Draycot school had been funded by Lady Long from the early 1700s. There was a resident headmaster / schoolmaster for many years, and the Estate gangmaster (in charge of the labourers) lived in the cottage at the north end.

Draycot School closed in 1903, after which children attended school in Sutton Benger.

Nesta Heath, in her book 'Life and Herbing in Sutton Benger' records how children from the farms to the north, such as Mount Pleasant, had to walk cross-country through Draycot Park and down French Gardens Lane to get to school; as she says: 'Not a nice journey on cold wet winter's mornings, and again in the late afternoon.'

The photos show the building in 2022, and in 1920 when it was sold in the Draycot Estate Auction. It was Lot 35 in the Catalogue. The adjoining cottages were sold individually, as Lots 36 and 36A.

Mount Pleasant Farm





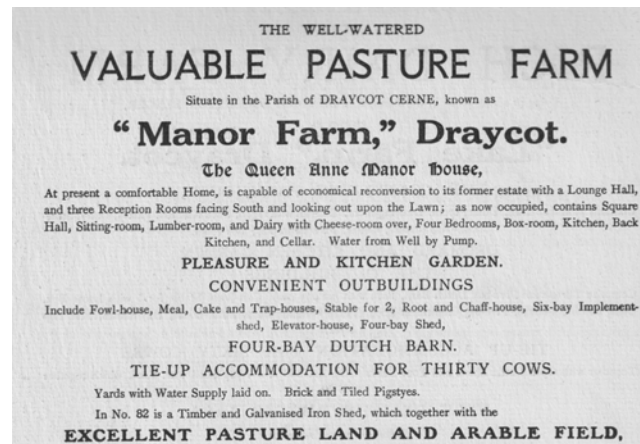
According to the Victoria County History, Mount Pleasant Farm was built between 1773 and 1808. It was originally glebe land, often combined with nearby Draycot Mill. Part of the Glebe was exchanged in 1879 and the remainder was sold by the church to Lord Cowley in 1894 and became part of the Draycot Estate. It was Lot No 7 in the 1920 Draycot Auction but did not sell straight away. The farmland was later sold piecemeal and added to neighbouring farms; the farmhouse was sold separately in 1923.

The farmhouse was a small thatched cottage with a white fence in front; it can be seen in the old black and white photographs, which probably date from the 1930s. It was demolished in the 1940s / 1950s when it became uneconomical to repair / rethatch the roof, and the land was divided between the neighbouring farms.

Next On The Trail

Continue towards Manor Farm at the end of Draycot Cerne.

13. Manor Farm, Draycot Cerne



Manor Farmhouse, Draycot Cerne, is a Grade II Listed Building; it was built in about 1700.

The Dovecote at Manor Farm is also a Grade II Listed Building. It is early 18th century and is also a Scheduled Monument. The reason for the Listing is as follows:

The dovecote at Manor Farm, Draycot Cerne, survives comparatively well and retains many of its original features. It is particularly unusual in that it is situated over a privy which still has internal fittings.

The Farm was Lot No 5 in the 1920 Draycot Estate Auction.

Next On The Trail

Walk back up the lane to the crossroads; very carefully cross the road and then follow the footpath up the hill and past the entrance to Draycot Park. Carefully cross the road, and pause on the footpath opposite the driveway to Lake Farm, before Draycot Rectory.

14. Lake Farm



RICH DAIRY FARM

Lying in a ring fence in the Parishes of DRAYCOT and SUTTON BENDER.

KNOWN AS

“Lake Farm,” Draycot.

THE CONVENIENT FARMHOUSE

Contains Entrance Hall, Dining-room, Drawing-room, Kitchen with range, Back Kitchen, Pantry, Dairy, Store-room, Wash-house, Cellar, Five Bedrooms, Box-room,

ORCHARD AND KITCHEN GARDEN.

THE OUTBUILDINGS

Comprise Three-span Five-bay Dutch Barn, Barn with granary over, Cart-horse Stable for 5 with Loose Box, Chaff and Root-house, Five-bay Implement Shed, Three Weaning Bays, Bulls'-house, Hay-houses, Five Pig-styes,

TIE-UP ACCOMMODATION FOR SIXTY COWS.

Together with Open Cattle Sheds and Four Yards. On No. 169 is a 7-bay Shed with Yard, which together with the

VERY HEALTHY PASTURE LAND



Lake Farm is about 400 metres south of the main road.

According to the Victoria County History, 'the east—west range of Lake Farm was built in the 17th century or earlier'. It is a Grade II Listed Building.

The Electoral Registers show that Lake Farm was home to William Richard Arthur Pole Tylney Long, Viscount Wellesley, from 1840 to 1843; he was heir to the Draycot Estate and fortune. Subsequently, the Electoral Registers from 1846 to 1857 show that he was resident at 'Lake or Home Farm'. This may indicate that Lake Farm was also known as Home Farm at this time, or it may possibly indicate that Viscount Wellesley used both locations as his residence.

By the time he inherited and became 5th Earl Mornington in 1857 the Estate finances were in a bit of a mess and the fortune was very much depleted. He never married, and died 6 years later, in 1863, leaving Draycot to his cousin, Lord Cowley.

The farm was Lot 4 in the 1920 Auction; it was initially withdrawn from the Auction but sold after it was put up for sale again in 1923.

The photographs include views taken in the 1990s of Lake Farm and the Lake Farm Barn. Some of the farmland is now used for a 'solar farm', which can be seen from the bridleway between Gate Court and Chissell Brook.

Next On The Trail

Carry on for 20 yards along the footpath and pause opposite Draycot Rectory.

15. Draycot Rectory



The 'Old Rectory' on the main road between Draycot Cerne and Sutton Benger was built between 1880 and 1881, after the tithe exchange of 1879. It replaced the earlier rectory which stood in Lower Draycot, between the Draycot Park lake and the main road. The original rectory was demolished, together with the rest of the Lower Draycot hamlet, to allow Lord Cowley (Henry Richard Charles Wellesley, 1st Earl Cowley) to landscape his Park. Lord Cowley (1804-1884)

had inherited the Draycot Estate after the death of his cousin, Lord Mornington, in 1863.

Draycot Church (St James's Church) closed in 1993; it is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. The Rectory is now a private house.

Alongside the footpath, in the old metal railing, is the remains of a gateway. This was one of about a dozen gates around the boundary to Draycot Park, about half of which can still be found today. Opposite, in the hedgerow left of the Rectory, is an identical gate which used to be the entrance to the Rectory, before the new gates to the right were installed.

Next On The Trail

Carry on walking along the footpath to Sutton Benger, past the Wellesley Arms, to return to the Village Hall either along the High Street or via Chestnut Road.