



Finding a new home town



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Redditch Ringway - note it ends at Grosvenor House

Image: GHC-1347 from the RLHS archives.

My first view of Redditch was from the A435 on Gorcot Hill as I drove to the town for a job interview in 1986. The job was my "Dream Job" with the newly formed Istel Automation working in the application of computers in automated factories. I don't know if my mind was dreaming, the view of Redditch was not as I had expected, but I missed the exit onto the Coventry Highway and I found myself at Mappleborough Green.. I was heading for the strangely named Moons Moat Industrial Estate, and I knew not why it was so called.

So I found my way back, no sat navs in those days, and underwent what was a confirmation interview. During the course of the day my new boss drove me into the company's other offices in Grosvenor House, remarking on a deserted Redditch Ringway that "It's always this quiet on weekdays".

A few weeks later I travelled from Leicestershire by train to Redditch to start my first day, returning home in the evening by company car and so started several months of a 100+ miles daily commute.

It was then that I realised I was perhaps selfishly uprooting my young family to a new life in a town I did not know.

Soon we started coming back on Saturdays or Sundays house hunting. I would collect a list of possible properties during the week with three or four viewing's at weekends. Although the major development of the new town had come to and end, there were still quite a few new housing developments in progress and we had already sussed out possible schools for our 12 and 10 year old sons.

Our visits also enabled us to explore the town and lunch was normally spent with either a picnic in Arrow Valley Park or a meal at the Star and Garter in Crabbs Cross. We were also impressed by the Kingfisher Shopping centre, not realising back then the disdain of locals at the loss of their beloved Evesham Street.

We eventually settled on a new build house in Oakenshaw South, the property we still live in today. Our house was only half built when we first saw it. It would be the last to be completed of the 28 being built on Newton Close although the double garage had been built as a site secure store and the site was filled with the workmen's port-a-cabins and piles of waste materials.

The house was completed in October/November, I can't remember exactly when, so after having carpets and curtains fitted I stayed week nights in an empty house not wanting to move the boys until the school term ended in December giving them time to settle before starting their new school, Dingleside.

Sadly, the dream job disappeared when Istel lost its franchise for the US sourced computer system we were selling so after a couple of years I changed jobs again. By then the family had settled and Redditch was our new home so, despite more job changes until I eventually retired in 2009, we have not moved again. Redditch proved a good choice for our children to grow and mature in and we are all happy to call it our home.

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