

Jill Coombes Remembers.....

My first impression of Redditch

In 1986 my husband Derek started a new job at Istel, Grosvenor House, Redditch. We moved to our new house in Oakenshaw South on a new housing estate, in December 1986.

As we didn't know anything about Redditch before moving here we had to come several times to take a good look around the different areas. We used to have our lunch at the Star and Garter in Crabbs Cross or we would have a picnic at the Arrow Valley Lake.

I have to be honest and say that to start with I wasn't very happy about moving as we were living in a smallish village, Barrow-on-Soar in Leicestershire, so was used to having a lot of people to talk to as it was a very friendly community. Our sons were aged 10 and 12 and had many friends in the village.

We chose to send our sons to Dingleside middle school in Woodrow, as it was the nearest to walk to from our house and we knew others from the area were also going there. The Headmaster at the time was excellent and our youngest son soon settled down into school life and made friends.



Dingle Middle School, Woodrow

Image: RLHS-DAR-125-091.JPG from the RLHS Archives



Star & Garter Pub, Crabbs Cross

Image: 2101.jpg from the RLHS Archives

Our older son took longer as he had already started into Secondary school in Leicestershire and had to get used to being in a Middle school, which he was only in for a few months before going to The Leys High School where he did settle very well.

To help me find a few friends I became a volunteer at the Alexandra Hospital, firstly at the Daisy Wheel selling flowers on a Friday afternoon and then in the Coffee Shop on a Monday afternoon. Once I found a job I gave up volunteering in the Daisy Wheel but carried on over the years in the Coffee Shop and I still do 4 hours every Monday morning. It was good to have a hospital which I could walk to as in Leicestershire the nearest A & E was 10 miles away.

We used to shop in Tesco in the Kingfisher Centre on a Saturday morning. I must admit I found the shopping centre a joy to go around as we only had a few shops in the village we used to live in to go to.

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