

# **The Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire.**

(Charity Commission Regd. No. 204048).

## **A History**

**Including notes on:**

**The Tilehurst Inclosure Act 1811,  
The Award 1817,  
common rights,  
the Inclosure movements in England,  
support for the poor and the poor laws,  
land tenure.**

Written for the Trustees of the Charity, 1999.

Revised 2009.

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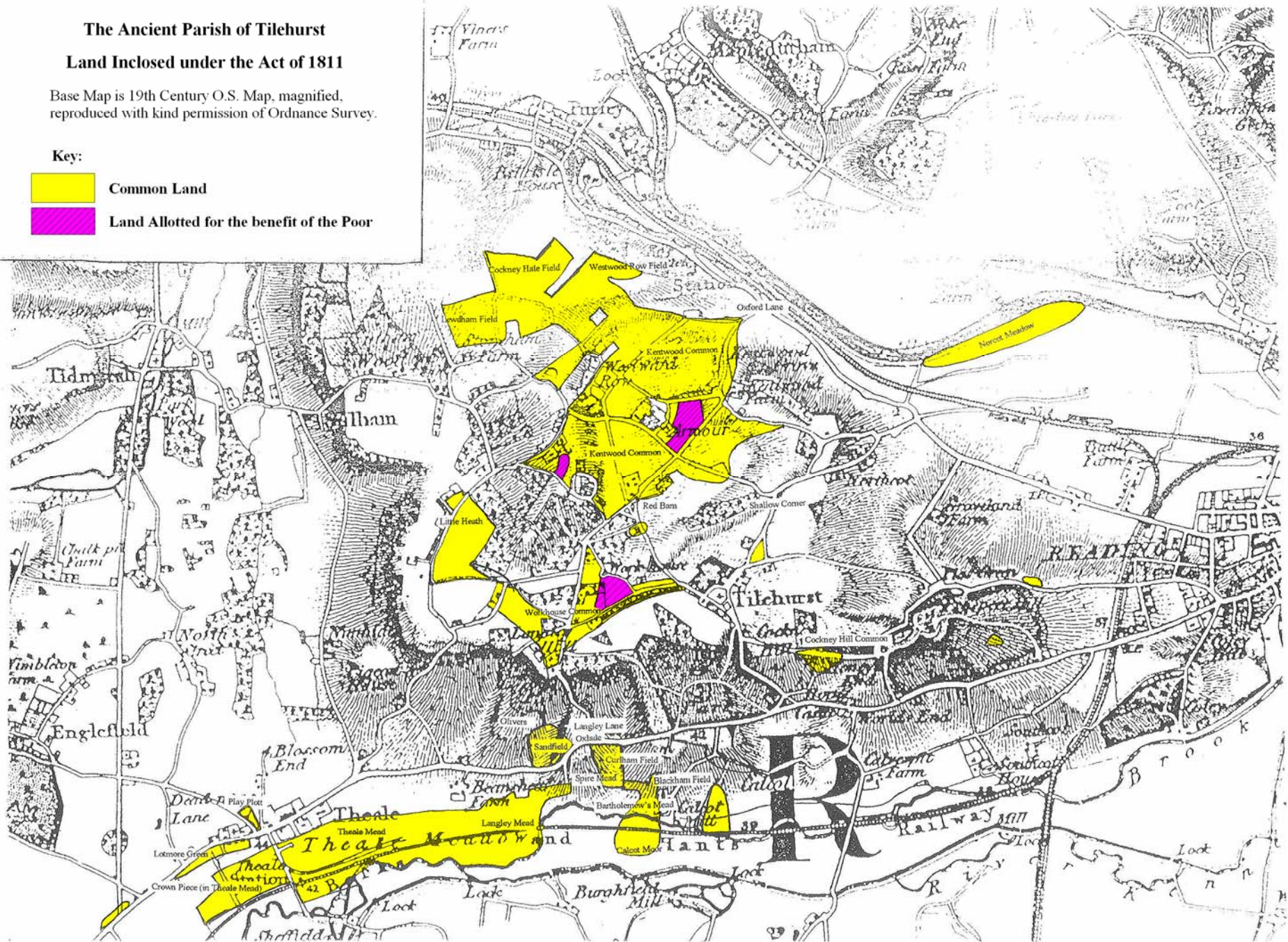
## The Ancient Parish of Tilehurst

### Land Inclosed under the Act of 1811

Base Map is 19th Century O.S. Map, magnified,  
reproduced with kind permission of Ordnance Survey.

#### Key:

-  Common Land
-  Land Allotted for the benefit of the Poor







The old Tilehurst National School, on School Road, where Trustees' meetings were held for many years.



The 'Parish Chest' at St. Michael's Church, Tilehurst, in which the Inclosure Award would have been placed for safe-keeping.

A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire



The Victoria Recreation Ground from Armour Road, looking north toward the Chiltern Hills.



The 'pavilion' at the Victoria Recreation Ground.





Typical allotment scenes.





The entrance to Armour Hill allotments.



The car park at Armour Hill allotments.





Accessible allotment plots and associated facilities at Polsted Road allotments.





Chapel Hill allotments.







Livestock on the Polsted Road allotment site.





## Introduction

The ancient Manor and Parish of Tilehurst included the present Parishes of Tilehurst, Holybrook and Theale, and those parts of the Borough of Reading known as Tilehurst, including St. Michael's, St. Mary Magdalen's and St. George's ecclesiastical Parishes.

An Inclosure Act of 1811<sup>1</sup> and the consequent Award of 1817 led to the allotting and inclosing of over 900 acres (365 hectares) of common land, fields, meadow and common wastes in the ancient Parish<sup>2</sup>.

The main areas inclosed were:

Calcot Mead.....	approx. 27 acres	(11 hectares)
Cockney Hale Field (near Westwood Row) .....	21 acres	(8.5 hectares)
Kentwood Common .....	148 acres	(56.6 hectares)
Langley Lane (Hill).....	65 acres	(26.3 hectares)
Little Heath .....	27 acres	(11 hectares)
Norcot(t) Mead(ow), by the Thames .....	29 acres	(11.7 hectares)
Theale Mead.....	128 acres	(51.8 hectares)
Westwood Row Field.....	76 acres	(30.8 hectares)
Workhouse Common (also known as Tilehurst Common).....	80 acres	(32.4 hectares)

The Act and the Award allotted three parcels of land at Kentwood and Workhouse Commons, extending to some 26 acres (10.5 hectares), to be held and managed to provide fuel for the poor of the Parish. This is the basis of the Poor's Lands Charity. Some of this land has been sold, and the proceeds invested to provide an income.

Originally the land was let for agricultural purposes, but more recently for allotment gardens. The Charity also owns the land on which the Victoria Recreation Ground stands, and this is rented by Reading Borough Council.

Rents of the Poor's Lands were originally used to buy fuel, but increasing use of electricity and gas instead of solid fuel, since the 1970s, has led to the income being used to provide

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<sup>1</sup> 'Inclosure' is an old spelling of 'enclosure', and is used in this work where it seems historically or textually appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Waste, in this context, refers to land which is neither privately owned, nor cultivated in the open common fields nor common meadows for grazing and hay. Wastes were usually used as common grazing, and many people had the right to collect fuel and other materials by custom and practice, either long established, and therefore considered legal, or recent.

grants for various purposes for those in need, hardship or distress who are resident in the ancient Parish.

The Charity operates under a Scheme dated 1982, given in Appendix A.

Early chapters examine the history and management of the Charity, whilst later chapters give notes on the social and historical background of the enclosure movement.

A map and statistical information are also included.

Some parts of this work incorporate the language of earlier documents which may seem strange to modern readers.

## **Units and Conversions**

All measures (except in Appendix F) are given in both imperial and metric.

40 perches (p) = 1 rood (r).    4 roods = 1 acre (a).    1 acre = 0.405 hectares.

20 hundredweights (cwts) = 1 ton.    1 ton = 1.016 metric tonnes = 1,016 kilograms.

All moneys are given in Pounds, Shillings and Pence (£ s. d.) and in decimal currency (£ p).

12 pence (d.) = 1 shilling (s. or /-).    20 shillings (20s. or 20/-) = £1.    1/- = 5p.



## Chapter 1. The Act and the Award

The Trustees of Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity are the successors to the Trustees set up under an Inclosure Act of 1811. For several centuries, common land, both open fields cultivated in strips and common waste (uncultivated land), had been enclosed and divided into larger parcels, each under single ownership. From the middle of the eighteenth century, an Act of Parliament for each Parish or Manor made the process more formal, fair and transparent. From about the end of that century, most Acts provided some land in trust for the poor, in compensation for loss of the common waste, which they used to gather fuel, and possibly for grazing. The Tilehurst Act covered the Ancient Parish, which included not only what is now Tilehurst Parish, but also the Parishes of Holybrook and Theale and much of West Reading. Each Act set out the framework for the enclosure, and appointed Commissioners to oversee the process. The land involved was then surveyed and valued, and divided and allotted to the various proprietors in proportion to their previous landholding and rights. The result was reported in an Award, which was a legal document, giving formal rights of ownership and occupation.

“An Act for Inclosing Lands within the Parish of Tilehurst in the County of Berks” (51 Geo. III, c. 141) received Royal Assent on 31st May 1811.

This Act allowed for the dividing, allotting<sup>3</sup> and inclosing of the extensive common fields, meadows, commons and waste ground within the Ancient Parish of Tilehurst. John Blagrave, as Lord of the Manor of Tilehurst, owned the soil and mineral rights of the commons and wastes, whilst others had an interest in them through the exercise of common rights by proprietors of land in the common fields or by occupancy of certain long established dwellings. These rights would have been recorded in the Roll of the Manor Court, or established by long usage. Many residents did not have legal common rights, but may have used the common for grazing, fuel and other purposes through custom and practice. It was usual, on enclosure, for rights which could be proved to have been held for a period, often 20 or 25 years, to be accepted as equivalent to those which could be proved legally. However, many people living in the Parish would have had no legal or acceptable right to use the common, and would therefore have received no allotment of land.

Two Commissioners, John Trumper of Harefield in the County of Middlesex, Gentleman, and John Slade of Aston Upthorpe in the County of Berks, Gentleman, were appointed under the Act to carry out the inclosure. Trumper was an experienced Commissioner, having carried out many inclosures before, but unfortunately, he died on or about 6th October 1816, before the work was completed. Accordingly, Samuel Collett of Wolverton in the County of Southampton, Gentleman, was selected in his place by a meeting of the interested parties. There was provision for an Umpire to be appointed should the two Commissioners disagree. They did not. William Church of Abingdon, a very experienced land surveyor, was appointed to admeasure and value the land. A Clerk was also appointed.

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<sup>3</sup> Allotting and allotments are the terms used, on inclosure, for the allocation of pieces or parcels of land to various individual proprietors. The context should make clear the difference between allotments in this sense and allotment gardens.

The Act specified (*inter alia*):

- A meeting to receive claims from those expressed an entitlement and allotment of land.
- That the proceedings should be kept in a book, to be kept in the Parish Church of Tilehurst (now kept in the Berkshire Records Office), together with a plan showing the various allotments to the interested parties.
- All notices of meetings, decisions and other matters were to be affixed to the main door of Tilehurst Parish Church.
- Powers for the Commissioners to assess their costs and to charge them, by distress and distraint, if need be.
- A right of appeal to the County Assizes for anyone who felt aggrieved at the allocation of allotments.
- Authority for the Commissioners to extinguish or suspend rights of common (which they did on 1815), to grant licences for the use of the commons thereafter and to fine those who used the commons without such a licence.
- Powers for the Commissioners to make new roads paths and drains, alter existing ones, and to scour drains.
- Three guineas (£3/3/0 = £3.15) was to be paid to Commissioners and Clerk for each day's attendance together with any expenses incurred, and for the Surveyor to be paid a reasonable sum for his pains, trouble and expenses.

All the land held in common, that was land containing the property of two or more persons within one fence in fields or enclosures, together with the unfenced commons or wastes, were to be allotted as follows:

- The value of buildings or trees on any land was not to be taken into account in the valuation and allotment, but could either be removed or compensation paid.
- Ownership of any previous enclosures of field land or encroachments on the common which had been quietly and peaceably enjoyed for 20 years before the Act would be confirmed.
- To the Surveyor of Highways<sup>4</sup> for watering places for cattle and public stone, gravel and clay pits.
- To the Lord of the Manor in recognition of his rights and interest in the soil of the commons and wastes. This was one sixteenth, by value, of the whole.

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<sup>4</sup> The Surveyor of Highways was elected by the Parish Vestry, and raised a rate to pay for the upkeep of the Parish roads



- To the Rector, a piece of ground adjoining the road from the Church to Northcott (Norcot).
- To the Lord of the Manor, the Rector, the Churchwardens and the Overseers of the Poor, as Trustees for the poor of the Parish. The Lord of the Manor and the Rector could appoint proxies to act on their behalf.<sup>5</sup> This was one sixteenth, by value, of the whole of the commons or wastes. This is the origin of Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity. The land was either to be let or used for growing wood for fuel, and any income was to be used to obtain fuel for the poor who were legally settled in the Parish. This allotment for the poor was in addition to the land on which the workhouse stood.<sup>6</sup>
- To be sold to pay the expenses of obtaining and carrying out the Act, including surveying and completing and repairing public carriage roads.
- The residue "to be divided, set out and allotted to persons entitled to rights and interests in the commons in such quantities, shares and proportions deemed to be just compensation and satisfaction for and equal to their several respective lands, grounds, rights and other interests, due consideration being given to the quantity, quality and convenience of the situation".
- Any rights or interests sold prior to the execution of the Act would be transferred to the purchaser.
- Allotments might be exchanged prior to the final execution of the Act, any costs being borne by the parties involved.
- Allotments made in respect of rights or property which was leased were to be made to the owner, with the tenant having use for the remainder of the lease.

The Act states that all the decisions of the Commissioners and a record of all meetings should be recorded in a book. A further document, held in the Berkshire Records Office, is the Award. It starts with sworn statements of John Trumper, John Slade and William Church that they "will execute and perform the several powers and authorities vested and reposed in them ... according to Equity and in good conscience and without favor or affection prejudice or partiality to any person or persons whatsoever".

These are followed by a record of the Meeting to appoint Samuel Collett as a replacement Commissioner and his sworn statement.

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<sup>5</sup> There were two Overseers of the Poor in each Parish, elected annually. They were responsible for collecting a rate to provide 'pensions' for those who were unable to work, and short term financial support for others, as and when necessary. See Chapter 10.

<sup>6</sup> Situated roughly between Landsdown Rd. and Portland Gardens on one side, and Park Lane on the other.

The body of the Award starts with a list of those involved:

John Slade; Samuel Collett; John Blagrove of Calcot Park Esquire (Lord of the Manor of Tilehurst); the Revd. William Wise, Doctor of Divinity; the Revd. Robert Nares, Clerk; the Revd. Henry Dukinfield, Clerk; the Trustees of a certain Charity called Allen's Charity; Richard Stephens of Southcote, Esquire; William Stephens of Aldermaston; the devisees of John Stephens Esquire deceased; William Stephens the Younger of Reading, Esquire; Robert Webb of Tilehurst, Gentleman; Anthony Gilbert Storer of Purley, Esquire; William May of Burghfield, Esquire and Elizabeth his wife; Mary Lyne of Burghfield, Spinster; Richard Webb of East Woodhay, Gentleman; Thomas Humphreys of Theale, Baker; Ann Webb of Beenham, Widow; Elizabeth Keep of Aldermaston, Widow; John Engleberts Liebenrood of Prospect Hill Tilehurst, Esquire; Richard Powlett Wrighte Benyon of Englefield House, Esquire; and Atkins Edwin Martin Harden of Tilehurst, Labourer.

The purpose and method of execution of the Act is then recited.

John Blagrove Esquire was Lord of the Manor of Tilehurst and owner of the soil and also seized of divers parts of the said lands. The Revd. Thomas Sheppard D.D. was Patron of the Rectory of the Parish of Tilehurst and Martin Joseph Routh D.D. was Rector and Vicar entitled to the Tythes both great and small.

The open common fields were divided up in accordance to the holdings of the proprietors, so that each had a convenient parcel or parcels of land, instead of a number of strips spread around the Parish. The open common land was divided between all who had rights to use the common. These included not only proprietors of land in the fields, but also the occupants of certain long established dwellings in the parish.

John Blagrove, the Lord of the Manor, and other significant landowners were desirous that the commons should be "divided and inclosed and specific parts and shares thereof allotted to the several persons interested therein".

An allotment was made to John Blagrove, equivalent to one sixteenth in value of the whole in compensation and satisfaction for his rights and interests in the soil. This allotment was all that parcel of land lying on Workhouse Common, extending to 34 acres, 3 roods and 10 perches (about  $34 \frac{3}{4}$  acres or 13.9 hectares).

An allotment was made to Martin Joseph Routh, and his successors as Rector of the Parish of Tilehurst, of a triangular piece of approximately one acre (1 acre, 1 rood and 15 perches, or 0.5 hectare) known as Tuckers Green bounded by the roads leading from the Church to Northcott on the South West and to Grove Lands on the South East and by lands in the occupation of Richard Parker on the North

The provision for the poor was as follows:

"And the said Commissioners do hereby also set out allot award and confirm unto the said John Blagrove as Lord of the Manor of Tilehurst and the said Martin Joseph Routh Rector of the said Parish and the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poor of the said Parish of Tilehurst, and to the Lord or Lady of the Manor, Rector Churchwardens and Overseers of the Parish of Tilehurst for the time being, as



Trustees of the poor of the same parish. All those three said Allotments or parcels of Land next hereinafter described (that is to say)

No: 1. One Allotment or parcel of land being No: 1 on the plan lying adjacent to the Workhouse containing 9 acres 1 rood and 12 perches ( just over 9 ¼ acres or 5.75 hectares) bounded by the Workhouse and an inclosure belonging to the same by a Garden and Allotment belonging to John Beckingham by the public Road No: 12 and by the Allotment of the said John Blagrove No: 24.

No: 2. One other Allotment or parcel of Land lying on Kentwood Common near the Swilly containing 3 acres 2 roods 35 perches (nearly 3 ¾ acres or 1.51 hectares) bounded by the old inclosed Gardens in Tilehurst by allotment to William Watlington Solomon Smith Caleb Stacey and William Lyford respectively by other old Inclosures by the Road No: 7 and by the Allotments to Warden and Fellows of Winchester College and William Sadgrove for his purchase of Thomas Lovegrove respectively. The Boundary fences of which Allotment shall be made against the said public Road and against the Allotment to the Warden and Fellows of Winchester College.<sup>7</sup>

No: 3. And one other Allotment or parcel of land lying on Kentwood Common near Harmoor containing 15 acres 2 roods (15 ½ acres or 6.07 hectares) bounded by the public Road No: 3 by the eighth Allotment to George Henry Crutchley by the public Roads Nos: 2 and 4 by the Allotment to the Honorable Jane Maitland and her Trustees Richard Beckley John Biggs and Jane Parr respectively. The Boundary fences of which Allotment shall be made on all parts.<sup>8</sup>”

The Trustees of Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity are the successors to these Trustees, and the land allotted has either been sold to raise capital for investment, or let to provide income.

The Commissioners sold some land to cover the costs of obtaining and carrying out the Act. Obtaining an Act was an expensive process, involving local solicitors and Parliamentary Agents who were based in London.

The residue of the common was allotted to those having rights and interests over it, according to the value of their property in the Parish. Many allotments were small, half an acre or less, often situated by a road and representing allotments related to cottages.

Common land at Calcot and on Kentwood Common was allotted to Allen's Charity, which owned land in the Parish, in five pieces, totalling 15 acres and 28 perches a bit over 15 acres or 6.15 hectares). The Reverend Robert Nares, Clerk, Reverend William Wise, Doctor of Divinity and Reverend Henry Dukinfield, Clerk, being listed as Trustees. Chapter 7 gives brief information on Allen's Charity.

Among the allotments were:

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<sup>7</sup> This land was adjacent to Chapel Hill, and is so referred.

<sup>8</sup> This land adjoins Kentwood Hill and Armour Hill and the bottom of Polsted Rd. It includes what is now the Victoria Recreation Ground.

- The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Reading – 18 ½ acres (7.3 hectares) at Theale Mead and 5 ½ acres (2.2 hectares) at Little Heath.
- The Warden and Fellows of Winchester College – four parcels totalling about 14 acres (5.7 hectares), mainly at Cockney Hale Field and Kentwood Common.
- John Blagrave (in respect of his rights of common rather than his ownership of the soil) – 31 parcels, 141 acres (57.1 hectares), with the larger parcels being at Calcot Mead, Langley Meadow and Workhouse Common. In addition he had many smaller allotments, some less than ¼ acre. Presumably these were on account of cottages that he owned.

In all, 81 people or bodies received a total of 203 separate allotments.

Further allotments were made to 13 people who purchased the rights of others, notably William Watlington who purchased 10 allotments of some 50 acres (20 hectares) in all, mainly on Kentwood Common with other parcels at Little Heath and Westwood Row Field.

Other allotments were made as a result of exchanges. In many cases, the land given in exchange for an allotment was outside the area inclosed by the Act, some not even in the Parish of Tilehurst.

The largest exchange involved Allen's Charity which exchanged land at Calcot and Kentwood Common for 53 acres (21.5 hectares) by the Thames. There were several other exchanges of 20 acres (8 hectares) or more. A schedule of the allotments, including sales by the Commissioners and exchanges, is given in Appendix G

## **Chapter 2. The History and Administration of the Charity**

The original Inclosure Act appointed Trustees to hold and administer the land for the poor, and to arrange for the them to receive fuel. These Trustees were the Rector, the Churchwardens, the Overseers of the Poor and the Lord or Lady of the Manor (for the time being). The present Trustees are their successors, although changes have been made over the years, following changes in the organisation of local government. The Rector is still a Trustee, ex officio, and the others are one each nominated by Theale and Tilehurst Parish Councils and Reading Borough Council, together with three co-opted Trustees. Originally the purpose of the Charity was to provide fuel for the poor, and this continued until the 1960s, since when grants for a wider range of goods and services have been made. Part of the income of the Charity comes from rents of the land still held, including allotment gardens, a builders' yard and the Victoria Recreation Ground. Most of the rest of the income comes from interest and dividends on money received from the sale of land for residential development.

The first available minute is dated 21st November 1937. The Revd. F.G. Sherwood was in the chair, and the Secretary was Mr. E.J. Woodeson. The meeting, as others at this time, was held in the Old National School Room, also known as Church House. This was in School Road, more or less where Lloyds Bank is now. The School was closed in 1906, but the building was used for Church meetings and events until its redevelopment in the 1960s. The school moved to Norcot Road (the site is now Cornerstones and adjoining dwellings). A charge of 2/6 (12½p.) was agreed for the use of a room in 1939. In the 1970s, meetings were held, usually quarterly, at the Rectory, the Rector being Chairman of the Trustees, and from 1980, meetings were generally held at the home of the (new) Chairman.

Following legislation, the investments of the Charity were transferred from the Official Custodian of Charities to the Trustees in 1992. This gave the Trustees complete control over their investments, subject to the maintenance of their Capital Funds (Permanent Endowment) and to taking suitable professional advice. Eventually in 1996, a local stockbroker was approached to advise. This change added to the responsibility and workload of the Trustees.

In April 1941, it was agreed to increase the Secretary's salary (probably including expenses) from £10 10s. 0d. (£10.50) to £21 p.a.

At the meeting on 14th April 1944, Mr. Woodeson's resignation as secretary, on account of age and inability to carry on duties, was accepted with regret. Mr. Fortune who had previously deputised for Mr. Woodeson in his absence had originally wished to act as secretary, but in the event, did not wish to apply.

Mr. C.W. Langley, a Churchwarden, and therefore a Trustee, was appointed. In April 1945 it was reported that the Charity Commission had advised that Mr. Langley could not be both a Trustee and paid Secretary, but that he could cease to be a Trustee and continue as Secretary. He served as Secretary until 1947, when he left the district.

Mr. Albert Illsley was then appointed Secretary, initially for one year at a salary of £15, a post he held until 1993, when he was nearly 90. Mr. Illsley was from a long-established Tilehurst family and was both a tireless worker for the Charity and the village, and a mine of information. He lived in the Polsted Road/Armour Road area all his life. His 'expenses' were increased from £25 to £50 in 1975, and to £75 in 1982. The September 1993 meeting was the last attended by Mr. Illsley, who had held this office for 46 years. He was replaced by Mr. Oliver Jenks, who was still acting at time of writing (2009). Annual expenses on postage, telephone and photocopying had, by then, risen to about £275, the sum expended being claimed in arrears rather than a lump sum being paid.

In the early years of the Charity, until the 1950s and 60s, the Trustees usually met only once a year, in or around November, to arrange for fuel deliveries or coal tickets for those in need. However, as grants were offered for a wider range of benefits, some urgent, meetings began to be held quarterly, and now are held six or seven times a year. In addition to grant making, meeting time is also taken up with allotment garden and other property management issues.

In 1959, the Trustees considered a draft 'Scheme' drawn up by the Charity Commission which would become, in effect, the constitution and rules for managing the Charity. A further draft, adopting standard Charity Commission conditions was discussed and agreed in 1975, and this, too, came to naught. A new draft was considered February 1981 and the current scheme was finally agreed and sealed in 1982, having been published for public comment. The new Scheme of management for the Charity highlighted the aim of making grants to those individuals in need hardship or distress, rather than to other organizations. It also broke away from the original purpose of using funds to pay (solely) for fuel for the poor. The text of the Scheme is given in Appendix A.

In 1984, it was agreed that the Charity Commission be asked to allow the merger of the Charity with Wheat's Charity, a small local Charity set up in 1731, to provide overcoats for poor men. This Charity is described more fully in Chapter 7. The merger took place in June 1985.

In the late 1930s, there was considerable discussion on Tithes (also known as tythes). Originating in Mediaeval times as a payment of 10% of produce, livestock and labour, to the Rector for the church, it soon became a charge on agricultural produce only. By an Act of 1836, tithes payments to the Rector were commuted into a cash payment, known as Tithe Rent based on the price of corn. This Act also set up a Tithes Commission to oversee the administration. The Tithe Act of 1891 made the Tithe rent payable by the land owner rather than the tenant, hence the Trustees were liable to pay tithes for the land that they owned. Tithe Rent was abolished by an Act of 1936, which introduced Tithe redemption payments. These were administered by the Tithe Redemption Commission and the money collected went to the Crown rather than to the Rector and the Church. The Trustees paid Tithe Redemption charges until 1977, starting at £2 4s. 1d. (£2.20) p.a. and rising to £3.79 for the last few years. Tithe Redemption payments could be paid off with a lump sum, and all such payments came to an end in 1996.

Land has always been the basis of the Charity's income, whether from rent or sale proceeds. The Trustees have a duty to make the best possible use of their assets, and, subject to a long term view, to maximise their income. Consequently, the use of their land has been long been under review. Sales of land for residential development have allowed the Trustees to



build up a financial investment, the interest of which has formed a major part of their income in recent years, whilst retaining other land to provide a rental income and possible future sale.

Land at the corner of Armour Road and Kentwood Hill, owned by the Charity, had been let as the Victoria Recreation Ground since before 1900, and for many years, the rest of the Charity's land has been used as allotment gardens, having previously been let for grazing. Land adjoining Kentwood Hill has probably been allotment gardens since after the first world war, and, over the years, enclosed areas became used as piggeries, smallholdings with livestock and two builders yards.

In November 1938, a complaint was received about the use of the land leased by Mr. Champion, who rented 8½ acres (3.5 hectares) from the Charity at Halls Road. It was alleged that he "was using it as a dumping ground for all manner of rubbish and besides being unsightly was detrimental to the land which was intended to be used as agricultural land only". Solicitors were instructed, and they wrote a 'strong' letter, but there was no reply. In February 1941, the Trustees considered a letter from the County Agricultural Executive Committee stating that Mr. Champion had failed to comply with directions issued by the Committee (under the War Regulations) requiring the land to be brought back into a state of cultivation. The Committee had decided to apply to the Minister of Agriculture to terminate the tenancy with a view to letting the land to Mr. Mitchell of Park Farm, which was adjacent. The Secretary was asked to reply favourably. In April, it was reported that the Minister had agreed to terminate Mr. Champion's lease, and with the agreement of Mr. Mitchell, a lease to Mr. R. West of Halls Farm was proposed at the sum of £14 p.a., with the first year rent-free because of the poor state of the land. Action was proposed to try to recover dilapidations and damages from Mr. Champion. There is no record of the result of this action. In April 1947, it was reported that Reading Borough Council had issued a compulsory purchase order for just over 8½ acres (3.5 hectares) of land at Park Lane/Halls Road, which would have included the land leased by Mr. Mitchell, in order to build a Council Housing Estate. Some of this land was formerly part of Workhouse Common, and also part of the land on which the workhouse stood. The Trustees agreed to accept this without appeal, and solicitors were instructed, the Charity Commission having already been consulted by the Secretary. The capital receipt of £600 would not have passed through the Trustees' hands, but have gone directly to the Official Custodian for Charities who managed investments for Charities at that time. In 1950, investment income rose from £1 13s. 8d. (£1.68) to about £13 in 1951 and to £24 in 1952, the additional investment being in 3½ % War Loan. In 1955, a further £3,400 is recorded as being received on account of the sale of this land. The investment income from this does not show in the accounts until 1958/9, when an additional £182 was received.

In March 1943, six pieces of land at Chapel Hill were discussed. They were very poor and swampy. Mr. Paice of Little Heath offered £2 p.a., with a year rent-free to allow for the cost of fencing. Mr. Paice later withdrew his offer, and the land was let to Mr. Leddington of Normanstead Road at 20/- (£1) p.a., to run heifers.

In 1944, the Trustees agreed to give notice to Mr. Leddington and to offer the lease to Mr. Readman of Maybough Corner. However, it was not until 1946 that Mr. Leddington quit, because he was not well enough to attend to the land. It was consequently let to Mr. T. Smith of Chapel Hill at £2 p.a. In 1961, a plot of land at Chapel Hill was sold to Mr. Leslie A. Fawkes for £3,000. By November, the money had been received and invested in 5½ % Treasury bonds, 2008-12. Investment income rose by £195 to about £400. In 1970, it was agreed to sell a further plot of land at Chapel Hill for £24,000 or higher offer, the

purchaser to pay all legal costs and the costs of getting vacant possession. Several minutes are missing from the records of the following years, but the sale seems to have been completed in 1972.

In 1976, it was agreed to give notice to Mr. Wickens to vacate land at Chapel Hill in order to provide more allotments. The Secretary reported to the meeting in March 1977 that an offer had been received for this land from Armour House Development Company, either in cash or in exchange for land off Chichester Road with a cash adjustment. It was decided not to accept this offer. It was then agreed to try to persuade Mr. Wickens to vacate the said land before 29th September 1978 by offering him cash compensation. The May 1978 meeting had before it a cash offer of £40,000 for part of the land from Armour House Developments, with the remainder of the land to be laid out as allotments complete with paths, sheds, fencing and water at the developer's expense. It was agreed that this be referred to the Charity's professional advisers, and, as a consequence, the September meeting agreed to this offer, together with compensation of up to £100 to be paid to the present tenant to vacate the land, if this was necessary.

The land proposed for allotments was initially let to the developers, and was still so in May 1979, when a further six months lease was requested. This was agreed in the sum of £50. There is no mention in the minutes of the new allotments being laid out, but presumably this was done at the end of the ensuing six month. This allotment site at Chapel Hill is still in use, and consists of 6 full size allotments and a further small plot let as half an allotment. A small strip of one allotment was sold to a neighbour in 1995 to allow him vehicular access to the rear of his property.

The Trustees have long been aware of their responsibility to maximise the assets and income of the Charity. In 1999, The Trustees' Surveyor was consulted about the possibility of selling some of the land for development, and a Report was duly received. As a result, it was agreed that a Planning Application should be made for residential development over some land fronting onto Kentwood Hill and a smaller piece fronting Armour Hill. At that time, the Kentwood Hill site consisted of several allotment gardens, a derelict piggery, a small enclosed builder's yard (covering one allotment garden space) and a larger yard occupying a site equivalent to several allotment plots. The Armour Hill site in question, much of which was on a steep slope, consisted of three or four allotment plots, another derelict piggery and some waste ground. The allotment holders were relocated onto the main site at Polsted Road and elsewhere at Armour Hill, there being sufficient vacant plots for all who wished to accept one. Claims for compensation for sheds, greenhouses, fruit trees &c. were accepted and paid. A Planning Application was submitted, but later withdrawn, partly because of a highly organised opposition supported by the local M.P. and Councillors, who were from the ruling Party on the Council, and partly because of the cost of pursuing the Application, which would almost certainly have gone to Appeal. Following this, a ten year Option-to-Purchase Agreement was agreed with a national developer. The Agreement included a payment of £40,000, about half of which was used to cover relevant expenses already incurred, and also an annual payment of £1,000 to compensate for the maintenance and insurance of the site. By the time of writing (2009), the developer has not submitted a Planning Application. At around this time, the Trustees received notice from the Council that there was asbestos on the site and, as a result, the two derelict piggeries were flattened, the asbestos roofing removed and their sites fenced off.

## Chapter 3. Help for the Poor of the Parish of Tilehurst

The Act included, in its provisions, an allotment of land, the income from which was to provide fuel for the poor of the parish. This was to compensate for the loss of the common right of estovers (gathering of fuel). The land allotted was to be equal to one sixteenth in value of all the commons and waste grounds inclosed. The Trustees specified in the Act were empowered to let the land for a term up to twenty one years with the rent payable in four equal quarterly payments. The rents and profits were, from time to time, be laid out in purchasing fuel for distribution amongst the poor inhabitants of the parish of Tilehurst who shall be legally settled therein<sup>9</sup> and occupying lands or tenements under the value of Ten Pounds<sup>10</sup>. Any land not let out should be used for sowing furze (gorse), planting wood and cutting fuel for distribution, along with any fuel bought, according to rules set by the Trustees. Any overplus (surplus) of moneys received should be applied to the relief and benefit of the poor in a way determined by a majority of the Trustees.

The Trustees have always had complete discretion over the people who received help from the Charity, provided only that they were in need, hardship or distress and, in the early days, were legally settled within the area of benefit. Originally, the Trustees included the Overseers of the Poor, who would be well aware of those in need. They were responsible for the administration and distribution of the Parish Poor relief, under the Poor Laws<sup>11</sup>. Those receiving help would have been mainly those no source of income because of age or inability to work. Some would be unable to work at all, because of illness, disability or injury. Others would be in need because of lack of paid work, either temporarily or in the longer term, most agricultural employment being both casual and seasonal. Because of the working of the Poor Law and Settlement Acts, help would seldom be given to families who were not established in the Parish. Those in need who did not have a right of settlement, would often receive very temporary help from the Overseers before being transported back to their Parish of settlement. In recent years, the Trustees have normally defined 'need' as being in receipt of state welfare benefits, confirmed by receipt of a covering letter from a Social Worker, District Nurse or other professional person. Following the repeal of the laws of Settlement, grants were made to any qualifying person living within the boundaries of the 'Ancient Parish'. Today, few applications for grants are received from pensioners or those unable to work for medical reasons. Many applicants are single parents, both those who are young and unsupported, and less so, those who are older and no longer have the support of a spouse or partner. Another group of applicants are those who are seeking to build or rebuild

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<sup>9</sup> Parishes were responsible for relief (financial support) for the poor, and normally would only support those who had rights of settlement, that is were born in the Parish, or had very strong links with it. Poor who were the responsibility of another Parish might be refused financial help and possibly be returned to their 'home' Parish. In some cases Parishes issued certificates promising to bear any relief should it become necessary, and this allowed a worker to gain work in another Parish without being a potential financial burden on it. See Chapter 10.

<sup>10</sup> This refers to the Land Tax valuation – much the same as a modern rateable value. Ten pounds was roughly the annual income of an agricultural labourer.

<sup>11</sup> More information about the Poor Laws and their application is given in Chapter 10.

their lives after periods in hospital, rehabilitation or leaving the family home, or who are refugees from other countries.

Accounts in Charity Commission Reports for the 19th Century show income from rents of £30 to £40 per annum, with coal as the only outgoing except for land tax. In 1835, coal was 28/- (£1.40) per ton, and was bought from Giles Ayres. There are no other records for this period, but presumably the disbursement of the Trustees' income carried on through the period. In 1937, when coal tickets for 4/- (20p.) were issued, 145 tickets were given to those living in Tilehurst and 103 to those living in Theale, to a total cost of £50 2s. 0d. (£50.10)<sup>12</sup>. Distribution of tickets continued until 1959, and in 1960, the grant was 10/- (50p.) or 1 hundredweight (cwt.), whichever was less, to a total cost of £74 15s. 2d. (£74.76). In the intervening years, the value of the tickets fluctuated, as did the total sum expended. No record of the number of tickets issued exists after 1944. The arrangement was for a Trustee to attend at Tilehurst Village Hall, and another in Theale, at an advertised time, for the poor to collect tickets.

By 1960, the number of tickets issued in both villages had fallen to between 140 and 150. More households were using gas and/or electricity instead of coal, and in 1965, the grant was 2 cwts. (about 100kg.) of coal or a cash sum of £1 5s. 0d. (£1.25) in lieu, a total of £244 16s. 8d. (£244.82) being spent. In 1970, the grant was 2 cwts. or £21, to a total of £309 10s. 4d. (£309.52).

At a meeting on 26th November 1971, the Trustees agreed that:

"No coal tickets would be issued in future. The reasons being:

1. Coal merchants are not willing to deliver small quantities of fuel.
2. The ever increasing cost of smokeless fuel.
3. The few persons who are in real need.

It was agreed to send out notices to this effect to all persons who had in the past received a coal ticket or cash in lieu."

However, the accounts for the winter of 1971 show expenditure of £124 2s. 6d. (£124.12) for issue of coal in Theale. No special fuel grants are shown after this, but a minute of 1974 shows that Trustees from Theale were still issuing coal tickets, from different funds under their control, and it was agreed that half the costs should be met by Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity. A schedule of recorded expenditure on fuel is shown in the table below.

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<sup>12</sup> At this time, coal was sold 'loose' in sacks of 1 cwt, (that is one hundredweight, equivalent to about 50 kg.). 4/- (20p.) was roughly the cost of 1cwt.



A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

Poor's Lands Charity, issue of coal tickets &c.1937-1972

Year	R.P.I. (1963=100)	Total spent on coal tickets	Value of ticket	No. of tickets issued	
				in Tilehurst	in Theale
1937			4/-	-	-
1938	33	£49.00	4/6d.	145	103
1939	34	£55.00		136	110
1940	38	£54.00	5/-	135	115
1941	42	£65.00		135	107
1942	45	£62.00		140	115
1943	47	£61.00	5/-	130	111
1944	47	£61.00	5/-	134	111
1945	49	£57.00	6/-	127	101
1946	51	£68.00	6/-	-	-
1947	54	£55.00	5/-	-	-
1948	57	£59.00	5/-	-	-
1949	59	£55.00	4/6d.	-	-
1950	61	£51.00	4/-	-	-
1951	67	£44.00	4/6d	-	-
1952	73	£49.00	5/-	-	-
1953	75	£52.00	5/-	-	-
1954	76	£52.00	5/-	-	-
1955	80	£48.00	5/-	-	-
1956	84	£47.00	7/6d.	-	-
1957	87	£68.00	8/-	-	-
1958	90	£72.00	8/-	-	-
1959	90	£62.00		-	-
1960	91	£48.00	10/- or 1 cwt, whichever less	-	-
1961	94	£79.00	1 cwt	-	-
1962	98	£77.00	1 cwt	-	-
1963	100	£108.00	1 cwt	-	-
1964	103	£79.00	2 cwts	-	-
1965	108	£247.00	2 cwts	-	-
1966	112	£237.00	2 cwts	-	-
1967	115	£286.00	2 cwts or 25/- toward electricity	-	-
1968	121	£275.00	2 cwts or 30/-	-	-
1969	127	£312.00	2 cwts	-	-
1970	135	£309.00	2 cwts	-	-
1971	148	£190	Theale only	-	-
1972	159	£124	Theale only	-	-

No more coal tickets seem to have been issued after 1972.

From 1959/60, income rose due to investment of the proceeds of the sale of land. By this time, the number of coal tickets issued each year had declined, and the Trustees had more funds available. Consequently, from 1960/61, grants were made to individuals for purposes other than for fuel. A grant of £10 was made to someone wishing to train as a nurse, with a further £5 for books, if required. There were also two other grants on the recommendation of Dr. Booth. The amount spent on such grants grew year by year. In 1975, it was agreed that a letter be sent to responsible persons in the areas, pointing out the help available from the Charity. It was also decided to explore the possibility of using some of the money raised from sales of land to buy more land for allotment gardens. Enquiries were made about land at Beansheaf, but came to nothing.

It was agreed at the (annual) meeting on 10th November 1959 to make a weekly allowance of 5/- (25p.) to each of the occupants of the Mary Lyne Almshouses<sup>13</sup> and also to pay the cost of their electric light and heating and to give a clothing allowance. The total cost was estimated to be about £100 p.a. In addition it was agreed that a contribution of £200 be paid to the Trustees of the Almshouses towards the cost of alterations. During this period, grants and loans were made to various other Charitable organisations, mainly for building work. The organisations helped in this way were: Mary Lyne Charity, for the Almshouses; Tilehurst Church Lands Charity for the Church Cottages; Theale Village Hall and Club; Tilehurst Village Hall; St. Michael's (Tilehurst) Scouts and 95th. Scouts. Interest free loans were also made to the Mary Lyne Charity, Church Lands Charity and Theale Village Hall and Club, all for various building works<sup>14</sup>. In 1981, an interest-free loan was also made to a couple, the husband being disabled, to buy a house suitable for his disabilities. This followed a detailed report from the Social Services Department. The loan was finally repaid in 1997, several years after the husband's death, when the wife moved into specialist accommodation for the elderly.

In February 1981, there was correspondence between the Chairman of the Trustees and the Charity Commission about the giving of grants to other organizations, which was considered to be outside the aims of the Charity. The Chairman and another Trustee agreed to meet representatives from the Charity Commission on 22nd July. Following this meeting, a letter was received from the Charity Commission stating that no action would be taken regarding past grants to Scouts and Village Halls and pointing out that this type of grant must not be repeated in the future.

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<sup>13</sup> The Almshouses were built in 1851, and a Charity named after Mary Lyne of Burghfield was set up to run them. There were six almshouses, for single women, over the age of 60 years, resident in the Parishes of Tilehurst, (including Theale), and Burghfield. The Trustees were the Rector of Tilehurst, the Vicars of Theale and Burghfield and the Churchwardens of the three Parishes. The weekly allowances continued until 1980, when £800 was paid out. The funds available to Mary Lyne's Charity became insufficient to keep the almshouses in good condition and to refurbish them, and they were transferred to the Reading Consolidated Almshouses Charity in 2005. They were then sold, and the proceeds will be used, with other money, to provide further accommodation for the Reading Charity. They were bought by a property developer, who renovated them and offered them for sale.

<sup>14</sup> A full list of such grants is given in Appendix E.

During this period, grants were given to a few individuals for a variety of purposes, including contributions toward the cost of higher education, holidays for children &c. The Charity bought an electric wheelchair which was loaned out. The major use of funds was in making grants to other local organizations, as described above. Following this, grants for a much wider variety of purposes were made, e.g. electrical goods, flooring, a shower, school field trips, holidays (for the disabled and for poor families with children), and funeral expenses. This type of grant continues to the present day, with more emphasis on household requirements, electrical goods in particular. Furniture requests are usually passed to Christian Community Action, a local Charity which collects unwanted furniture, and passes on good quality items to those in need for a very small charge. By a special agreement, these charges are invoiced to Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity for qualifying applicants. Holidays and School uniform are paid for when funds allow. Medical services and requirements used to be covered by grants, but requests are now referred to specialist Charities so that this Charities limited funds may be more widely used. Over the years, grants have also occasionally been made to help the payment of arrears of rent and utility bills, but only where the contribution possible will make a significant difference. The Trustees are not allowed to make grants for anything for which may be paid for by central or local government funds, nor may they make grants toward fines. An analysis of grant applications in recent years and of grants made, is given in Appendix F.

## Chapter 4. The Victoria Recreation Ground

This Recreation Ground, situated on the corner of Armour Road and Kentwood Hill belongs to the Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity. The land has been used as a recreation ground for many years, being opened to commemorate Queen Victoria's 60th Jubilee in 1897. Prior to 1900, it was managed by the Trustees of Tilehurst New Recreation Ground. In May of 1900, Tilehurst Parish Council (which would not have had the same area of responsibility as the present Tilehurst Parish Council) resolved unanimously at a Special Meeting:

“That this Council forthwith take over the Tilehurst New Recreation Ground from Messrs. Wheeler and Hollier, the Trustees, for the remainder of their lease, provided they are willing to transfer such ground subject to the same rent and conditions and provided that the consent of the Poor's Land Trustees to such transfer can be obtained”.

Certainly, the land was let to the Parish Council, and later to Reading Borough Council, as its successor, for use as a public recreation ground. The Council are required to maintain the hedges, fences and gates. Any buildings erected may only be used as a pavilion or changing rooms or for other approved activities. The area is about 4 acres, 2 roods and 20 perches (just over 4 ½ acres or 1.9 hectares).

A lease dated 26th July 1918 to the Aldermen and Burgesses of the County Borough of Reading by the Trustees, records a rent £16 3s. 9d. (£16.19). This lease was replaced by a further one in 1939 at the same rent, payable quarterly.

The lease specified that the Trustees' approval was needed for buildings and certain other matters. In 1938, it was reported that an electric transformer had been erected, without permission, and the Secretary was instructed to write to the Council. No response is recorded. In 1941, the Council requested to build an air raid shelter on the site, and this was agreed. A request in 1942 to build a hut to house a Nursery caused concern. The Trustees were very anxious that the land be retained as a recreation ground, and plans &c. were asked for. There is no further record of this proposal, and there is no such building on the site.

During the summer of 1943, the council had allowed the recreation ground to be used for an amusement park, with roundabouts &c. This was thought to be contrary to the lease, and the Secretary was requested to write accordingly. On the other hand, from the 1990s, the recreation ground has been used, with the permission of the Trustees, to hold the annual Tilehurst Show organised by the Tilehurst Residents and Community Association (TRACA). In 2008, TRACA members felt unable to continue to run this event, and it was reported that from 2009, the Show will be run by and in aid of The Friends of The Royal Berkshire Hospital. However, it now appears that there will be two shows in 2009!

In 1949, the Council asked to buy a small piece of land at the Victoria Recreation Ground for road widening. This was agreed subject to their being no cost to the Trustees, no reduction in rent and replacement of the hedge.

A further new lease, for 21 years from 29th September 1955 was agreed, at a rent of £25 p.a. By 1979, the rent had risen to £250, under a new lease; in 1983 it was raised to £750, and in



1992 to £1,000 p.a. The lease expired in 1997 and, at time of writing, negotiations on a new lease had not been completed, although both parties wished to continue the arrangement. Legally, the lease is still in force. It may be terminated by the Council, but not by the Trustees. The rent is still £1,000 p.a.

Should the Borough Council decide not to renew the lease, the Trustees would need to find another body to manage the Recreation Ground, as their powers and activities are limited by law, and they have no powers to manage it themselves.

In 1980, Tilehurst Cricket Club received permission to build changing rooms next to the pavilion, and in 1982 the Council sought permission to demolish the old pavilion on the West side of the Recreation Ground. The matter was urgent, and the Trustees endorsed the Chairman's decision to allow this. At some stage, two metal containers were converted into a pavilion and changing rooms on the site. In the early 1990s, it was hoped that a proper pavilion would be built, but the Council's funds did not allow this, and the existing provision was refurbished. The metal containers are still in place (2009), and were refurbished by the Council in 1994.

Correspondence dated 1991 suggests that the running costs of the Recreation Ground, including maintenance of a cricket square, were about £20,000 p.a.

In 1991, discussions took place about the future management of the ground. This was at the initiative of Tilehurst Football Club which, together with Tilehurst Club Football Club and Tilehurst Cricket Club, were regular users of the ground. The perceived problem was that the condition of the pitches and of the pavilion were such that they did not meet the standards necessary for playing a higher level of competition.

Meetings were held with the Borough Council and the Trustees of the Charity, and an Eight Point Plan was produced. Under this plan, the Clubs would take over the booking of pitches and the collection of fees. Public access would be restricted on match days, and some pitches would be roped off. Improvement of the changing facilities was seen as a priority, but no funds were available. There was considerable local public outcry, especially from the Armour Road Residents' Association, at the loss of public access and the restriction of access for children. Many objectors were under the impression that the ground was held in Trust for the people of Tilehurst, whilst in fact, it is held, as an investment, for the benefit of the poor of the Parish. Nothing seems to have become of this Plan.

In 2001, a band of travellers broke into the Recreation Ground, and camped until removed by the Council. A further incursion occurred in 2004, and a great deal of rubbish, including a burnt out caravan, was left. Some rubbish was also dumped on the Charity's land, and this had to be cleared at the Trustees' expense. Following this, earthworks and installation of posts were carried out to prevent vehicular access to other parts of the Charity's land.

During the early years of the twenty first century, there were improved communications between the relevant Council officer and the Clerk to the Trustees. This prevented misunderstandings over the use of the Recreation Ground for non-recreational activities and other matters. Requests from both the Trustees and the Allotment Society led to the Council erecting an eight feet high (2.3 metre) fence between the Recreation Ground and the Charity's adjoining land. This greatly reduced access to the allotments by youths who had been causing occasional, but very annoying, vandalism and theft. Unfortunately a dispute between the Trustees and the Council over the closure of additional and unauthorised

entrances to the ground has yet to be resolved, although promises have recently been given. The Trustees are keen to ensure that the Recreation Ground is recognised as private land to which the public have limited access, rather than a public open space.

## Chapter 5. Allotment Gardens

Albert Illsley, for 47 years Clerk to the Trustees and a member of a longstanding Tilehurst family, made a Statutory Declaration about the allotments in 1984. He says that his Grandfather had an allotment at Kentwood Hill many years before the 1914-18 war, but there is no record of when there were first allotments there. The allotments at Armour Hill and Polsted Road were laid out in 1920 on land previously let to Mr. Armstrong, who used it to graze horses for a delivery van. The allotment plots at Kentwood Hill, and some at part of the Armour Hill area, were closed in 1998 and the tenants relocated onto the main site at Polsted Road and the adjoining Armour Hill site. There were, at this time, sufficient vacancies to offer plots to all who wanted them. Compensation for sheds, fruit trees &c. was paid to those who requested it.

There are now six allotment plots at Chapel Hill. These were set out, with concrete paths and sheds, by developers who purchased the rest of the Charity's land here in 1978.

In 1995 a Tenants' Committee was set up to look after the interest of allotment holders, and to facilitate communication with the Trustees, as landlords. In 1999, a formal association, The Tilehurst Allotment Society, was set up by plot-holders. Members have been very active in improving the main site, notably by putting in many more water points, mowing the main paths and generally encouraging members to keep the site tidy. Since 2000, they have also arranged skips for the removal of hard rubbish from the site, in conjunction with the Council's Reading Rescue scheme. Their work is much appreciated by the Trustees and their Clerk, who has responsibility for managing the allotment sites. In 2007, the Society obtained various grants, and one plot was divided into eight accessible plots for disabled and elderly people. The facilities associated with these plots include a concrete parking area, a suitably adapted water point and a large shed.

In 1921, the Trustees obtained the "Grant of a perpetual right of way over a private road known as Polsted Road, Tilehurst, Reading" from James Hissey of Loddon Farm, Earley for a consideration of £8. The Trustees who were party to the agreement were Henry Barry Blgrave, the Revd. Henry Richard Cooper Smith, Rector, Edward Bunce, Benjamin Bullen Hosford, James Smith, Edgar Thorne Shorney (of Sonning) and Edward Blatch and William Flowers, both of Theale. The agreement "grants unto the Trustees their successors and assigns full and free right and liberty for them and either of them and their tenants and servants in common with all others having the like right at all times hereafter by day or night with or without horses or other animals carts carriages or other vehicles of any description for all purposes connected with the use and enjoyment of the said land....." that is all the land now used for allotments at Polsted Road, Armour Hill and Kentwood Hill. Polsted Road is an unmade and unadopted road and, from time to time, complaints are received from residents about traffic and speeding. Both the Trustees and the Allotment Society repeatedly stress to allotment holders that care should be taken on this road.

Over the years, the main concerns have been security and water.

Hedging, fencing and gates have been one of the major expenses in managing the allotments. A gate was installed at Chapel Hill in 1937, at a cost of £2/4/6 (£2.22). In 1943, it was reported that a fire had burnt a hedge at Armour Hill, and there was a fear of cattle entering

from neighbouring land. Being war time, it was necessary to obtain permission from the Agricultural Committee to buy barbed wire but, in the event, the tenant of the adjacent allotment made temporary repairs and the matter is not referred to again.

In 1947, two new gates were installed at Kentwood Hill, and it was agreed that a fence and gate at Chapel Hill be repaired. In 1950, two more gates were authorised, for Kentwood Hill and Armour Hill, and in 1951, it was agreed that two iron gates be bought for Kentwood Hill. A further £15 was spent on repairing fences at Chapel Hill in 1953, whilst two years later, a further £22 was spent on repairs at Kentwood Hill. New gates at Polsted Road and Armour Hill were authorised at a cost of £20 in 1957, and two new gates at Kentwood Hill in 1960. It is not clear whether these various gates at Kentwood Hill were authorised, but not erected, or whether there was a problem with damage.

Locks and keys were authorised for Polsted Road and Armour Hill in 1962, to prevent the track being used as a public right of way. Locks and keys were provided again in 1975, to stop petty pilfering. The tenants were charged £1 each for a key. Rumour has it that locks never lasted long, in part because tenants forgot their keys and forced the locks.

Following vandalism and thefts, and fear of incursion by travellers' caravans, new gates were purchased for the Polsted Road and Armour Hill entrances in 2005, with the full support of the Society's committee, and keys were issued for an £8 returnable deposit. The vehicular gates were to be kept locked, except when in use, with the pedestrian gates left unlocked (except on Christmas Day), and this has been respected by allotment holders. A new lock was also provided for the Chapel Hill site, which had always been kept secure. The problem of the public using the path from Polsted Road to Armour Hill has continued, and has led, from time to time, to complaints about petty pilfering, petty vandalism and fouling by dogs. Attempts to prevent use has continued, and signs were erected in 1994. Over Christmas 1998, the gates were locked and signs were placed on the gates explaining that this was in accord with the new agreement with tenants. One of these was removed and replaced with another notice, saying that the closure was against the wishes of the tenants and the local community. Christmas locking has continued, to close the path for one day a year, to support a submission to the Council, negating any presumption of a public right of way.

In 1963, £141 was spent in renewing a fence between the allotments and the Victoria Recreation Ground. The minutes do not indicate why the Trustees paid for this rather than Reading Borough Council, the lessees of the recreation ground. Following requests from both the Society and the Trustees, the Council erected an eight feet high (2.3 metre) fence along the boundary of the Recreation Ground in 2007. This greatly reduced access by youths, and thus reduced vandalism, which had become a major irritant.

In 1985, the hedge at Kentwood Hill was cut at a cost of £100, and in the same year, a further £100 was spent on fencing at Chapel Hill. £360 was spent on hedging in 1986, presumably at Armour Hill.

The hedges at Kentwood Hill were cut back again in 1996 at a cheap price obtained from a group of tenants.

Water in various forms has been a continuous problem. There are several springs in the Polsted Road/Armour Hill area, and these are a mixed blessing, useful in dry years, but a nuisance in wet ones. Much surface water flows onto the allotment site from Polsted Road in wet weather. A spring on the Polsted Road site caused considerable marshiness in 1998,



and a working party of tenants laid land drains to divert the water into the Withies, the wooded area on either side of the small brook which runs from South to North between the Kentwood Hill and Polsted Road/Armour Hill areas. In 1960 there were complaints that the resident of the last house in Polsted Road (No: 33) had blocked the drains so that the surface water ran off the road onto the allotments. The road was not adopted by the Local Authority (it still is not in 2009), so no action could be taken. This problem has continued over the years. Long-standing allotment tenants say that the ditch used to run along the boundary of the house in Polsted Road and the allotments to the Southwest corner of the allotment site, then down the western boundary to Armour Hill. Certainly this was a major cause for concern raised by the Tenants' Committee in 1998, as the problem still existed.

In 1944, mains water was laid on at Chapel Hill, whilst there was still a single tenant there, without permission, but no action against the tenant seems to have been taken. In 1947, a request for mains water at the Charity's allotment sites led to an estimate of £95/16/0 (£95.80). No funds were available for such a large expenditure. If financial help could have been obtained, a scheme would have been considered, but rents would have had to be raised. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Agricultural Committee to see if a grant could be obtained.

In 1975, a quotation of £572.90 was accepted for a water supply to the main site, with a tap and tank at each of Polsted Road, Armour Hill and Kentwood Hill. As a consequence, rents were raised from 25p. to £1 per annum, to be reviewed after the first year's water rate was known. Since then, water rates have been the major charge against allotment rents, but there is no mention in the minutes of further rent increases until 1982 when rents were raised to £4 to cover the cost. For several years, one of the tenants at Kentwood Hill, whose premises were originally a smallholding and then developed into a builder's yard, has had his own water supply. From 1995, the Tenants' Committee, and later the Society, using volunteer labour, and funds from Community Grants from the Borough Council to buy materials, made a number of new water points, giving easy access to a water supply for every plot. Water was installed at Chapel Hill as part of the new allotments laid out in 1979 by the developer who bought some of the Charity's land there.

There are 43 allotment plots at Polsted Road. At Armour Hill there are 43 plots, and an area of orchard and grass running down to The Withies. Below the track, adjoining the road, there is a further area which has only been partly let for a number of years. The three tenants using this area were relocated in 1998 to free the land for a proposed development. There were 28 allotment plots at Kentwood Hill, together with several enclosed areas which were originally small holdings and a piggery. One of the enclosures has been used as a builder's yard for many years, and another two have been used sporadically for various purposes including storage and light industry. The allotment tenants were relocated from Kentwood Hill in 1998, for the proposed development, and at time of writing (2009) the land is unused.

There seem to have been problems for many years in keeping the allotments let. Albert Illsley said that, in 1920, when the main site was first set out, plots were allocated by lot, but some people managed to arrange convenient exchanges. His father by exchange, obtained a plot right by the Polsted Road gate, which was convenient as the family lived in Polsted Road. Albert 'inherited' this plot, and it is now worked by his son-in-law.

In 1947, the Tilehurst and Southwest Reading Allotment Association complained that some of the allotments were not being cultivated. It was reported that the secretary (Mr. Albert Illsley, newly appointed) had already warned some tenants. Over the years it seems that there has seldom been sufficient demand to let all the allotments. This meant that, not only were unlet plots uncultivated, but also that it was difficult to put pressure on tenants who did not cultivate properly. This changed from about 2001, when demand increased considerably.

The closure of the Kentwood Hill and some of the Armour Hill allotment sites in 1998 led to a different situation. It was possible to relocate elsewhere all the displaced tenants who wished to continue, so that no-one had to be deprived of a plot. Also, a number of new tenants were offered plots, so that all plots were let. At this time, there was a waiting list of some 15-18 people, but demand may have been artificially boosted as a great deal of publicity was raised by the 'Save our Open Spaces' group. This group aimed to keep the areas proposed for development as open space and advertised, by a number of methods, for people to request allotments to protect the site.

It is difficult to trace the history of rents on these sites, but the indications are as follows:

- 1975: increased from 25p. to £1 p.a. to pay for water rate
- 1982: increased to £4 to cover the cost of water
- 1984: increased to £5
- 1994: increased to £6
- 1997: increased to £10, but remaining at £6 for those on pension or State benefit, with a charge for use of a hose pipe of £10 per plot.
- 1998: increased to £20. Those on Pension or Benefit were invited to apply to the Charity for a grant to pay £10 of the rent.
- 2002: £25, and £15 for half plots
- 2005: £30, and £20 for half plots
- 2008: £36, and £21 for half plots
- 2009: proposed at £40, and £24 for half plots

The six allotments at Chapel Hill have always been let, and there is a small waiting list of people living near-by. Rents for these plots, where there were better facilities, were £7.50 in 1991, raised to £8.50 in 1994 and brought in line with those of the other sites at £10 in 1997.

Waiting lists have varied over the years. In 2001, all plots were let and there was no-one on the waiting list. Numbers waiting rose slowly to 12 early in 2007, over 30 later in the year and over 50 at the end of 2008. Demand for allotments is subject to a number of factors. Demand increases at times of economic hardship, and has probably been exacerbated in 2007-8, because of publicity for organic food and for increased consumption of fruit and vegetables. Because of the waiting list and low turnover of tenants, the Trustees decided to

let only half plots for a year from September 2008, but even then, only five people from the waiting list were satisfied.

Now that there is a significant waiting list, the Trustees consider that there is scope to raise rents further, to maximise the charity's income.

In recent years, there has been a multiplicity of sheds and buildings on the allotment sites. Most are 'home-made', and they range from small wooden shacks, through greenhouses to large enclosures of corrugated iron sheeting. There have also been wire enclosures for small livestock, which in the 1990s have included a goat, geese and fowls. This was not always so. In 1944, Mr. Cox of Chapel Hill was refused permission to have a building for his pony. This was probably on pasture, rather than allotments, but the Trustees decided that all their tenants should be written to, saying that no buildings should be erected without permission. In 1947, permission was given for a shed on the allotments, and it was agreed that it should be no larger than 6 x 4 feet. Many buildings now are much bigger than this !

Rats have been a problem from time to time. In 1950, the Rodent Officer agreed to poison rats in the pig sties for £1 10s. 0d. (£1.50), but the owner of the pig sties refused to give permission to lay poison or to pay, probably to the consternation of his neighbours. Consequently, the matter was dropped. There continue to be rats on site, but there is no record of further formal complaints.

Having capital available from the sale of land, in 1976/77, the Trustees agreed to look for land for new allotments. Enquiries were made about land at Beansheaf, but to no avail. In 1976, it was agreed that Mr. Wicks, an agricultural tenant of land at Chapel Hill be given notice to quit so that the land could be used to provide more allotments. Later it was agreed to offer him compensation. In the event, the land was sold for development and the new allotments laid out by the developer.

In the early 1990s, a neighbour of the Chapel Hill site bought a narrow strip of land to provide vehicular access to his property. Similar requests were received, later, from neighbours in Polsted Road and Armour Hill, but these were left on the table, pending decisions about the future use of other parts of the Charity's land, and the neighbour moved.

Since 2005, Health and Safety Inspections have been carried out by the Trustees, twice yearly. Members of the Allotment Society's Committee have been invited to join the Trustees. This has not only led to better relations between plot-holders and Trustees, but has also led to the removal of several hazards, especially broken sheds and greenhouses, open water tanks, blocked paths and a general tidying of the site.

## Chapter 6. Trustees

Under the Tilehurst Inclosure Act of 1811, the Trustees of the land allotted and inclosed for the benefit of the poor of the Parish were: The Rector and Churchwardens, the Lord or Lady of the Manor and the Parish Overseers. With the formation of Parish Councils in 1894 and the abolition of the post of Overseer in 1927, the Trustees became The Rector and Churchwardens of the Parish Church of Tilehurst, the Lord or Lady of the Manor and two representatives each from the Parish Councils of Tilehurst and Theale. In 1982 a formal Scheme for the Charity was agreed with the Charity Commission. By that time, the ancient Parish of Tilehurst had been split into two civil parishes, Tilehurst and Theale, and much of the Parish had been incorporated into the Borough of Reading. The Charity was then administered by the following Trustees: the Rector of Tilehurst, one nominee each from Reading Borough Council, Theale Parish Council and Tilehurst Parish Council together with up to three other Trustees co-opted by the existing Trustees. Under the Scheme, the area of benefit of the Charity was extended to include the whole of the Borough of Reading. In practice, the Trustees now only consider applications from the preferred area of benefit, which is to the west of the Reading West railway line, that is more or less post code areas RG30 and RG31, and Theale. By agreement The Earley Charity, a similar foundation, take applications from the rest of Reading.

The only records of Trustees to hand are from the Minutes, which are available from 1937. Not every change of Trustee is recorded, nor is there a complete record of absences, so any list of Trustees from this source is, inevitably, approximate. The Lord of the Manor in 1811 was John Blagrave of Calcot Park, and presumably the Lordship remained in that family for the duration of the right to be a Trustee.

The Rectors of Tilehurst for the relevant period have been:

Martin Joseph Routh.....	inducted 1810
John William Routh (Nephew of M.J.Routh).....	1855
Henry Richard Cooper-Smith .....	1905
Frances Gordon Sherwood.....	1934
Oliver Douglas Harvey .....	1953
Peter de la Poer Beresford-Pierce .....	1962
George Lanyon Hacker .....	1971
John Sefton Tilston (died in office) .....	1980
David Raymond Russell Seymour (not Rector but Priest in Charge)..... (who declined to be a Trustee, as he was only Priest in Charge during an interregnum).	1984
Clive Morlais Peter Jones .....	1985



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Frederic William Dawson .....1994  
John Arthur Rogers .....2007

A lease of 1918 records the following Trustees:

Henry Barry Blgrave of Calcot Park, the Lord of the Manor of Tilehurst; the Revd. Henry Richard Cooper Smith D.D., Rector of Tilehurst; the Churchwardens, Benjamin Bullen Hosford Doctor of Medicine and Edward Bunce Registrar of Births and Deaths; the two Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of Tilehurst, Edgar Thorne Shorney farmer and Ephraim Tompkins of the Laundry; and the two Overseers of the Parish of Theale, Edward Blatch brewer and John Iredale Turton grocer.

An agreement of 1921 shows the same Trustees except that James Smith, coach builder, had replaced Mr. Tompkins, and Mr. Flowers, grocer, replaced Mr. Turton. Another document shows:

1925–1927 Cooper-Smith, Barnett, Blatch, and Carling.

1928–1930 Cooper-Smith, Carling, Mason, Richardson and Fortune.

Among long-serving Trustees, the retirement of Mr. Cordery, representing Theale is given in the minute of May 1979. He had served 32 years since April 1947. A unique minute of January 1987 states that the Chairman is to write to Revd. T. Lee, who had not attended for over a year, and according to the rules was no longer a Trustee. A similar letter was sent to another Trustee in 2007, only to discover that he had left the district some time before without informing the Charity.

A list of Trustees since 1937, other than Rectors, in recent years is given in Appendix C.

## Chapter 7. Wheat's and Allen's Charities

### Wheat's Charity

A report on Charities in Tilehurst Parish, dated 30th. June 1837 says of Wheat's Charity:

“A memorandum of the date of 1799, in the handwriting of the Rev. Dr. Chandler, then Rector of the Parish, records that since 1731, a charity of the yearly produce of £1 10s. (£1.05) had been left by Mr. Wheat, for three great coats to be given to the poor people of the parish of Tilehurst, the said money issuing out of an estate in Silchester, which was then the property of Mr. Lyford, surgeon, of Basingstoke, by whom the said charge was then paid. The above land at Silchester is now the property of \_ Lyford, esq., of Basingstoke, who pays the sum of 30s. annually to the clergyman of this parish, by whom it is laid out in the purchase of two greatcoats, which are given by him to two poor men selected by himself as most deserving.”<sup>15</sup>

The Parliamentary Commissioners' Report of 1906 says:

“The rentcharge of 30s. (£1.50) is now paid by Mr. Henry Thornton of Beaurepaire Park, Basingstoke, the owner and occupier of the land containing 65a. 3r. 15p. (26.6 hectares) known as Hall's Farm in Silchester and Pamber, out of which this charge issues. It is collected every two or three years by the Churchwardens, who, together with the Rector, administer the Charity.

The income is expended in the purchase of reefer coats, costing from 10s. to 17s. each (50p. to 85p.) which are given to aged men who are past work, selected by the Trustees on the recommendation of the clergy. The benefit of the charity is confined to the civil parish of Tilehurst, nothing having been given within living memory to inhabitants of Theale or St. George's.

In 1897 eight coats, costing £4 9s. (£4.45), were distributed, in 1899 five costing £3 4s 7d (£3.23), in 1902 five costing the same amount, in 1903 two costing £1 10s (£1.50), and in 1905 two costing £1 9s 10d (£1.49), leaving a balance of £1 5s 9d (£1.29) in the hands of the Churchwardens, besides two years' payments which had not yet been collected.”

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<sup>15</sup> A rent charge is an annual payment to a person who has no other legal interest in the land, that is, they neither own the land or have any use of it or control over it. It is neither a formal rent under a lease, nor a ground rent for a long leasehold property. Rent charges were introduced in 1290, as a way of maintaining, under the feudal system, an income from land which had been sold freehold. In later years, rent charges were often set up as a way of bequeathing money to a charity in perpetuity. Under an Act of 1977, rent charge holders were given power to redeem the rent charge for a lump sum of about 17 times the annual charge. It also stated that all rent charges would be extinguished on 22nd July 2037.

In the 1950s, the charge continued to be paid, but the only payment was one of £10 in 1958. Later, collection of the 'rent' seems to have been overlooked, and correspondence exists asking the owner of the land for several years' payments. Further correspondence shows the same situation in the 1970s.

In the 1980s, the rent was due from Mrs. P.M. Hall of Church Farm, Bramley. She died in 1984, and her successor, Mr. R.E. Hall was asked whether they wished to continue annual payments or to pay a lump sum to redeem them. The latter course seems to have finally been agreed., but does not seem to have happened.

A Scheme was issued for the Charity, dated 5th March 1985, showing assets of the rentcharge and £80.06 in the bank, and making formal the merger with Poor's Lands Charity. This was because of the small sums involved and the difficulty of collecting and administering the funds. The Poor's Land accounts for 1985 show a figure of £83.02 from the transfer of these assets. No further receipts, other than £1.50 in 1986 are noted in the accounts. The Minute of September 1985 requested the Secretary to write to the Charity Commission for advice about a suitable sum to redeem the rentcharge. In June 1986, it was reported that the advice was £15.20, so the Chairman agreed to visit Mr. Hall to ask for £20. By the next meeting, no contact had been made, and there is no further mention in either Minutes or Accounts.

Some years later, as a last resort, the Clerk visited the area and discovered the names of the current occupants. After several letters, the rent charge was redeemed for the sum of £37.50, being the sum suggested by the Charity Commission a few years before.<sup>16</sup>

## **Allen's Charity**

Allen's Charity is mentioned in the 1817 Award as receiving allotments on inclosure.

In his will, dated 2nd February 1731, John Allen left £1,000 to buy land in Trust for the three ancient Parishes in Reading of St. Mary, St. Giles and St. Laurence.

Nine tenths of the clear annual rent from the land was to be used for:

“placing and putting out forth Apprentices three poor boys or ladds not under the age of 15 years and upwards whose parents are inhabitants of one of the said Parish of St. Mary's one other of the Parish of St. Giles' and the other of the Parish of St. Laurence in the Town of Reading aforesaid to such handicraft trade or other occupation in London as shall be approved by the said three Ministers for the time being and the parents of such boys or ladds or the major part of them”.

The other tenth was for the Ministers for their care and trouble in performing the Trust.

In 1736, 43 acres (17.8 hectares) were bought in Calcot.

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<sup>16</sup> This figure includes compensation for future years (roughly 17 times the annual charge plus any arrears), as recommended under the 1977 Act.

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As part of the Tilehurst Inclosure Award, this land was exchanged for some 60 acres (24.3 hectares) between the main Oxford Road and the Thames, including the farmhouse and a large part of the farm known as Little Johns.

Some of the land later was sold to the Great Western Railway, and the remainder was sold in 1957, the proceeds being invested.

Since 1860, the apprenticeships could be in Reading as well as London. The Charity is currently administered, under a Scheme dated 6th July 1959, as an educational Charity.



## Chapter 8. A History of Inclosures

The present land use and landscape of lowland Britain is of relatively modern introduction. Attitudes to land ownership and the ever increasing need to produce food have caused major changes over the centuries. Increasing agricultural efficiency has been beneficial to large landowners and farmers, but also, at times, caused hardship to smaller farmers and landless labourers. At the time of the major enclosure movements, the majority of the population lived off the land. With increasing population, gone were the days when every countryman had his own little plot of land and a few pigs and fowls. Most were landless labourers, and their wellbeing depended on the weather, on the price of food<sup>17</sup> and on the availability of work. It was to help people such as these that land was set aside to be let to provide an income to buy fuel for the poor. Hence the foundation of the Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity, and others like it.

Since Saxon times, most of the land of lowland Britain had been cultivated on a communal basis. The fields were divided into individual strips, but labour, oxen and tools were to some extent shared. The use of each field was controlled by the Manor Court, and although a husbandman may have 'owned' a strip, he had to cultivate, crop and graze it in the same way as his neighbours. Meadows were also divided into strips, but use of them was often redistributed by lot each year. In addition, any uncultivated land or waste was used communally, subject to rights established and controlled by the Manor Court<sup>18</sup>.

This system was relatively fair, but seen as inefficient, particularly by the land owning class and by the larger farmers. By the fifteenth century, common land, particularly waste, was being enclosed. Early enclosure usually involved taking areas of land into single private ownership to keep sheep for wool, which became the basis of a major industry over much of England.

During the latter part of this period, there were popular risings against enclosure, and in 1489, an Act was passed to limit its scale and the associated evictions and rural hardship, because arable farming, at this time, offered about five times as much employment as sheep farming. As well as loss of employment, there was a loss of common rights like estovers (gathering fuel)<sup>19</sup> and grazing. Many of these rights had been established through custom and usage, so there was little chance of legal redress. During the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, which covered most of the sixteenth century, there was considerable concern about the conversion of arable to pasture, and the consequent rural impoverishment and unemployment,

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<sup>17</sup> Until the advent of turnpikes at the end of the eighteenth century and of railways, in the mid nineteenth century, the availability and cost of food was dependent on the level of local harvests. There were a number of very poor harvests around 1800, and poverty and starvation were widespread.

<sup>18</sup> As mentioned in a previous note, the word waste is be used to describe land other than fields or meadows over which a number of people had rights of various kinds. Relics of these wastes are now usually known as commons. The soil and the timber belonged to the Lord of the Manor.

<sup>19</sup> People did not have an absolute right to gather fuel where they willed. They could collect dead wood, and lop and top from felled trees, but the cutting and removal of standing trees, furze (gorse), fern (bracken) of turf would be controlled by the Manor Court, usually on a rotational basis.

increased rents and rural depopulation. This was at a time of increasing population and, for some, increasing wealth. As in other times of war and domestic change, there was a need to provide sufficient food and other agricultural produce to ward against possible shortages. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Acts of Parliament and other steps were taken to try to increase the amount of arable land and corn production. The scale of sheep farming, in many areas, was so extensive that food had to be 'imported' from other parts of the country. In the 1630s, fines were introduced for enclosures for grazing, unless the land was returned to arable. Gonner reports that some 600 people, mainly in the Midlands and Lincolnshire, were fined a total of £56,812, but expresses doubt about whether it was all collected.<sup>20</sup>

The Mid sixteenth and the seventeenth century saw improvements both in farming methods and in transport of produce. New crops began to appear and there were initial attempts to relate the crops to both soil and markets. Increasing population and urbanization led to greater demand for food and raw materials from the countryside. However, at the end of the sixteenth century, much of England still consisted of uncultivated common, heath, moor, fen and forest, and enclosures were made for more efficient food production. The seventeenth century saw a widespread and generally gradual increase in the enclosure of common fields as well as other common land, whilst in some areas this increase was very marked. The dissolution of the monasteries and the consequent introduction of new Lords of the Manor hastened this process.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were large scale enclosures in the Midlands, East Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk, mainly for animal husbandry, particularly sheep. In Southern England, there was much less enclosure at this time.

At the end of the seventeenth century, there were several attempts to pass Inclosure Acts, which would have clarified the procedures and provided some safeguards. In the event, no such Act was passed until 1801, whilst in 1845, a further act was passed which did away with the need for a specific Act of Parliament for each Parish's or Manor's inclosures. These early attempts at enactment were due, in part, to the increase in actual and threatened legal actions to 'persuade' objectors. Previously enclosure could take place without the knowledge or consent of the commoners and other interested parties, whilst, in other cases, the threat of legal action was enough to secure the agreement of poorer and less powerful landholders and commoners.

From the seventeenth century, private Acts of Parliament began to be used to facilitate specific inclosures, but their use only became the norm from about 1750. In 1769, oaths were introduced for the Commissioners who directed the enclosure and distribution of the land. Although the Lords of the Manors and larger landowners obviously had considerable influence and power, it seems that, the Commissioners, as a rule, tried to act in a fair, if in a rather rough and ready way. Some people seem to have made a career of acting as Inclosure Commissioners, and a Mr. Davis is reported to have been Commissioner for 16 different schemes in the Thames Valley area.!

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<sup>20</sup> Gonner, E.K.C., *Common Land and Inclosure* (1966 edn., f.p. 1912).

The number of Inclosure Acts is as follows:

1740-1759	151	} mainly in the Midlands and East of England, for pasture
1760-1779	776	
1780-1799	548	} mainly in the South, for improved corn production
1800-1819	996	

In the eighteenth century, there was a further development of new crops, like turnips, clover, and new grasses, new machines, new crop and livestock management and disease control. This led to increasing standards of crop and livestock breeding, and greater production of higher quality produce. Even where common fields were retained, new crops, particularly roots like turnips for feeding livestock, were introduced. A parallel with this was the development of woodland management, which also required enclosure and protection from grazing animals. By about 1750, about half of the manorial land had been enclosed, and, following this, the periods of maximum enclosure were 1760-1780 and 1790-1810. These were times of high food prices, at least in part due to the wars against the French, and to a series of disastrous harvests. High prices for farm produce allowed landowners and farmers to make considerable capital investment in agriculture.

The second half of the eighteenth century showed a decline in the number of yeomen (owner-occupiers) and other small farmers who could not compete with larger farmers and had not the access to capital for fencing and ditching the land granted to them under Inclosure Acts. On the other hand, larger holdings became consolidated, many were rented out on new leases, and there was an increase in the availability and take up of loans and mortgages for new farm buildings, fencing and other capital expenditure.

The Board of Agriculture reported (date unknown, but by implication, toward the end of the eighteenth century) that the average inclosure at that time involved 1,162 acres, and that the average costs (overall) were:

Obtaining an Act.....	£497
Survey and valuation.....	£259
Commissioners' and general expenses .....	£344
Fencing &c.....	<u>£550</u>
Giving a total of .....	£1,650

If we look at the Tilehurst Inclosure Award, a sum of £5,634 was raised by sales to meet expenses, excluding fencing, and drainage which were the responsibility of the persons to whom allotments were made.

The 1801 Act was an enabling Act which set out the general principles which were to be considered in each local Act. It specified that the following should usually be considered: public and private roads, fencing, drainage, which was often disrupted by changes in the

pattern of land ownership, the arrangements for Commissioners and so on. It also allowed for stone, clay and gravel pits and quarries to be provided for road maintenance and for use by the local people. Around this time, Acts began to make provisions for the poor who lost rights of estovers (gathering fuel) and possibly grazing, and to protect the position of those with small holdings. By 1845, the pace of enclosure was slowing, and the Act of that year set up a more centralised organisation for new inclosures. Acts of 1866 and 1876 prevented further large scale enclosure, largely through pressure from middle class urban groups like the Commons Preservation Society. This led to the protection of a small number of large commons like Epping Forest in Essex and Ashdown Forest in Sussex.

The three main effects of enclosure were on farming methods, on rural life, and on the landscape. It is often difficult to distinguish which was cause and which was effect. For example, improved methods of cultivation and new crops led to pressures for enclosure, and enclosure allowed them to be used to a greater extent.

Farming under the common system had many advantages. There was a sensible crop rotation in the common fields, there was often a degree of co-operation, not only with the Lords crops, but also between other landholders. Common grazing over the stubble and fallow led to manuring of the soil in preparation for the next crop. All commoners had a stake in the land, and, subject to human nature, had an interest in good husbandry. In Mediaeval times, each Manor would have produced most of its own requirements, and with poor roads, transport of goods to and from markets would mostly be on a local scale only.

However, the common system was very restricting, and any new methods or crops could only be by mutual agreement or concession. In the common fields, soil exhaustion became a problem, leading to lower production. Similarly, stock levels were not controlled in many Manors, and the right of grazing was sometimes extended by custom and practice to those who did not have a formal right. This led to overstocking and a decline in animal health, and impoverishment of the wastes.

The system was also subject to problems caused by slovenly and unscrupulous farmers. In the fields, trespass, encroachment on another's strip, pilfering and other problems did occur, and weed seeds from inadequate neighbours strips fell on the strips of the conscientious, as they do in allotment gardens today. Similarly, overstocking led to poorer animal health, and lack of care made this worse. Again, the problems of the poorest husbandman spread to the stock of the better. As the power of the Manorial Courts weakened, so control of both cultivation and grazing became more difficult.

Enclosure removed many of the restrictions set on agriculture by the common field and grazing system. Areas of cultivation became larger, by consolidation of strips, and the removal of the balks between the strips gave extra land. Consolidation gave rise to more compact holdings which could often be 'ring-fenced', and cultivated as one piece. Fields, as we know them today, arrived following enclosure. This allowed new methods of cultivation and the introduction of new crops and new rotations. There is no doubt that enclosure caused a marked increase in agricultural production. It also allowed specialization of crops suited to the soil and topography and to the markets available. Thus, enclosure allowed the development of commercial dairying, stock rearing, market gardening and fruit growing, for example. This in turn, hand in hand with developments in science, led to improved plant and animal breeding.

There is no doubt that, in England, this allowed the development of agriculture into a major national industry, as opposed to one based on small family farms, and also to the development of forest and woodland management.

The earliest and largest scale example of enclosure leading to specialization was for sheep, and large areas of the Midlands and East of England were enclosed for sheep runs, and a huge wool industry developed which became one of the principle industries of the country for several hundred years. Even in Berkshire, Jack (Winchcomb) of Newbury in the time of Henry VIII, is reputed to have had 100 looms in one room with two men to every loom and many others working elsewhere, spinning, fulling and dyeing. There is a further story of Thomas(Coles) of Reading, in the time of Henry I, who was one of the great clothiers of the day, others being situated in Gloucester, Salisbury, Worcester, Exeter, Southampton, Kendall, Halifax and Manchester. "Every one of these kept a great number of servants at worke, spinners, carders, weavers, fullers, dyers, sheermen and rowers, to the great admiration of all those that came to their houses to behold them".<sup>21</sup>

Enclosure is largely responsible for our 'natural' English landscape. Following enclosure, fields, hedges, enclosed woods and forests, drained fens and marshes and open downland became possible. Fields became of workable size, regular in shape, and bounded often by a hedge, bank and ditch. Only in mountainous and moorland areas do sheepwalks with common grazing still exist to any extent today. As a consequence of the consolidation of holdings and the concentration of control into fewer hands, farmsteads were built outside the village centres where they had traditionally been. Enclosure and the consequent disruption of the life of the poor, coupled with the draw of employment in towns led to the destruction of many cottages and shacks previously used by squatters and others.

Today's commons bear little resemblance to their predecessors, the mediaeval wastes. Some, like the New Forest and Epping Forest strike a delicate balance between the continuing rights of commoners and the demands of public recreation. Enclosures and encroachments by squatters in past times have interrupted the continuity and extent of these ancient commons. Many commons, like Ashdown Forest in Sussex, have been fenced, not for enclosure, but to protect the commoners grazing stock from road traffic. Many modern commons are small areas which easily become used for recreation or smothered with woody growth, as at Bucklebury Common in Berkshire, others remain as little more than place names.

Enclosure had a marked influence on the pattern of rural life. Early enclosures for sheep would have reduced the opportunities both for an independent self-supporting lifestyle, but also for employment. Sheep require 1/5 of the labour of arable farming on the same area of land. Set against this is the fact that much of the common land enclosed for sheep would not have been arable, but meadow, wood or waste. The growth in sheep and the wool industry would have caused a great change in the nature of rural employment. Wool became the basis of a very large-scale cottage industry.

Later enclosures for arable created considerable employment, in the first instance, as there was a need for new roads, fences, hedges, ditches and drainage. Whilst the perceived

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<sup>21</sup> Deloney, T., 'The Most Pleasant and Delectable Historie of John Winchcombe' and the same author's 'Thomas of Reading' in *Shorter Elizabethan Novels*, London, 1929.



wisdom is that enclosure was a major cause of rural depopulation and poverty<sup>22</sup>, Gonner and others dispute this.<sup>23</sup> Gonner suggests that the effect was localized, and depended on a number of factors including the nature of the soil and the use to which it was put. Dairying and market gardening, for example, are relatively labour intensive, whilst stock rearing is less so. On the other hand, the larger farms being created would have needed less labour overall.

The three classes most affected by enclosure were the small farmers, those with no land, but having rights on the waste and the landless poor.

Small farmers were often priced out of the market by the high cost of fencing and draining their allotments of common land - these activities would be prescribed by the Inclosure Act. Such works would be necessary before considering any costs of cultivation and land improvement, which could be high. As a result, many small farmers sold their allotments, and the land became added to larger holdings, either freehold or tenanted. Annual and casual farm tenancies declined, and longer-term tenancies, as we know them today, became more widespread. Farmers of larger holdings were able to benefit from the greater availability of loans and mortgages. It should be mentioned that Mingay disputes the contention of Gonner (and many others) that there was a significant decline in the number of small farmers as a result of enclosure.<sup>24</sup> Small farmers would have received a small allotment of land in lieu of their holding in the common fields, and in lieu of rights to use the waste, but probably lost the ability for self-sufficiency. Not only was their land unable to support them, but they also lost rights of grazing and estovers (gathering fuel &c.). By and large, they became landless day labourers on low wages. Wages were low because there was no minimum wage legislation and because the poor law arrangements offered a kind of Income Support.<sup>25</sup> Thus farmers had no compulsion or even incentive to pay a living wage. Much employment was seasonal. Thomas Hardy's *Tess*, for example, joined the staff of Dairyman Crick in the summer, and then joined Marion at Flintcombe Ash, lifting swedes and turnips in the winter to feed the sheep.<sup>26</sup> The poor, before enclosure, were often able to subsist by various means and many depended on the common for grazing a few animals and for fuel. Those who lived in old-established dwellings would have had legal common rights, but others who had rights established through recent custom and practice would not

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<sup>22</sup> Hammond, J.L. & Hammond, B., *The Village Labourer, 1760 – 1832. A Study of the Government of England before the Reform Bill* (1919 edn., f.p. 1911); Neeson, J.M., *Commoners, Common Rights, Enclosure and Social Change in England, 1700 – 1820* (1993); Snell, K.D., *Annals of the Labouring Poor. Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660 – 1900*, (1985).

<sup>23</sup> Gonner; Shaw-Taylor, L., 'Labourers, Cows, Common Rights and Parliamentary Enclosure: the Evidence of Contemporary Comment, 1760 – 1810', *Past and Present* 171 (1999); Jenks, O.C., 'Parliamentary Enclosure in Berkshire, 1723 – 1883, and its Effect on the Poor', Unpublished Thesis, University of Reading (2005).

<sup>24</sup> Mingay, G.E., *Enclosure and the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, (1973 edn., f.p. 1968).

<sup>25</sup> Notably the Berkshire Justices' 'Speenhamland System' of 1795; transcript available in the Berkshire Record Office.

<sup>26</sup> Hardy, T., *Tess of the Durbervilles*, first published in London, 1891.

have been entitled to any allotment of common land.<sup>27</sup> Some inclosures, by Act or other means, made allowance for the poor.

Some of the poor whose homes were encroachments or squats on common land would have lost them, although the Tilehurst Act, and others, recognized the right of those who had held such a parcel of land for 20 years, but they were required to pay for the value of the land for their allotment, although the value of any buildings etc. was not charged. Also, in Tilehurst land was set aside to provide either fuel or money to buy fuel for the poor. However, there is a great psychological difference between gathering your own fuel, at will, and receiving charity to pay for it.

The concept of landlessness has been considered a significant factor. Attempts to overcome it and to bind rural families to the land led to the introduction of Council allotment gardens and, later, of County small-holdings which were set up in the first half of the 20th. Century. Private, and later, Council allotment gardens were set up from about 1830.<sup>28</sup> One of the earliest was at Bucklebury, where there was no Inclosure Act. Here, part of the waste was set aside, in 1830, to provide gardens for the poor, which are still in use.

Whatever and whenever the enclosures took place, there was a considerable upheaval in rural life. It is suggested that this is a major cause of rural depopulation and the drift to the towns. Certainly the bonds to the home Parish were broken by the abolition of common rights and there was prejudice against the new systems. In many areas, unemployment or underemployment would also have been a problem. However, the industrial revolution was a major factor in drawing people to towns for work and this would have complimented the 'pushing' effect of rural problems. Problems in rural areas caused by enclosure would also have been significant in the 'selection' of those who migrated to the towns. It should also be noted that the industrial revolution and its aftermath corresponded with a rise in population and in national wealth, and thus, even more pressure for more efficient food production.

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<sup>27</sup> The decline of the power of the Manor Courts led to many families using the wastes, although they had no legal common rights. Inclosure Commissioners usually granted allotments of land in lieu of rights which could be proven to have been exercised for 20 years or more. This inevitably gave rise to very small allotments of land often less than ½ an acre many of which were sold very soon after their allotment.

<sup>28</sup> A detailed history of allotment gardens is given in Burchardt, J., *The Allotment Movement in England, 1793 – 1873*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2002.

## Chapter 9. Inclosure in Berkshire

Gonner suggests (*inter alia*) that the pattern and timing of enclosure depended on the soil and topography and the nearness of markets for agricultural produce.<sup>29</sup> This obviously applies over England as a whole, with marked differences between, say, the Southwest, the Midlands, the North and East Anglia.

He suggests that enclosure in Berkshire also occurred differently in three distinct regions:

1. The North and West, much of which is now in Oxfordshire, where there are extensive chalk-lands. Here there was little enclosure until about 1800, and the enclosures then were to grow wheat, with a considerable increase in the acreage of barley and oats as well.
2. The East, where enclosure and agriculture was affected by the nearness of London as a large urban area with a demand for food of all kinds. Much of this area was in the old Royal Windsor Hunting Forest. The soil was sandy and poorish. Settlement and agriculture had been much influenced by Forest Law.<sup>30</sup> Enclosures were generally earlier than in the West, with a wider variety of produce grown.
3. The Central, Thames Valley, area, which included the Kennet Valley, and Tilehurst. Here, as in the West, most enclosures were after 1800. Most parishes here had meadows by the river, fields in the lowlands, with fairly steep hills leading up to commons and wastes on the hill tops.

The earliest enclosures in the County were in or before the 16th. Century. In 1517, 1.39% of the land was enclosed.<sup>31</sup> Many of the early enclosures were in the Abingdon/Wantage areas, and there were further enclosures here in the 17th. Century.<sup>32</sup>

Gonner quotes Ogilby's *Brittannia*, a road book dated 1675. Ogilby appears to have travelled the main roads of the country, describing the land on either side. The Bath Road, for the whole of its length in Berkshire, is shown as closed, rather than open. This means that it was hedged or fenced, and Gonner suggests that closed roads indicate that the land surrounding has been enclosed at some stage. Certainly, the Tilehurst Inclosure Award Map of 1817 shows that very nearly all the common land then to be enclosed was away from the Bath Road, and much of the land in the Parish was not subject to inclosure at this time, so there must have been earlier enclosures in the Parish.

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<sup>29</sup> Gonner.

<sup>30</sup> Forest Law was designed to protect deer and other game for hunting. Because of this, there were many restrictions on forest dwellers which did not apply elsewhere.

<sup>31</sup> I have been unable to determine what percentage this represents, whether of total land area, or more likely of original common lands, but the figures are given so that they may be used comparatively if not specifically.

<sup>32</sup> Wordie, J.R., *Enclosure in Berkshire, 1485 – 1885*, (2000).

Over Berkshire as a whole, the 19th. Century enclosures led to an increase in production of barley and oats without the corresponding decrease in wheat production which was evident in some areas of England. Earlier enclosures were nearly all from common fields rather than from commons and wastes, and were usually related to the markets developed through urban growth. There is no evidence, as there is in some Counties, of any relationship between the scale of enclosure and level of population before 1800, but thereafter, as enclosure increased, so did population.

Enclosure and population growth may have been a cause of the increase in the Poor Rate expenditure (an indicator of the level of poverty). Among the Counties, the rates in Berkshire were above average until about 1800, when they increased considerably to nearly the highest level of all the English Counties. The average Poor Rate expenditure for 1748/49/50 was 3/4 (17p) per head of population, and rose to 15/6 (77p.) in 1803 and 26/8 (£1.33) in 1813, well above the rate of inflation.

Some authors suggest that the Inclosure process led to increased poverty<sup>33</sup>, but a study of 19 parishes in Berkshire and Oxfordshire found that this was not universal, and in some Parishes the poor rate was reduced<sup>34</sup>. The relationship between Inclosure and the level of poor rate obviously depended greatly on local circumstances.

Eight Parishes in the present Berkshire<sup>35</sup> still have large areas of common, derived from the ancient wastes. Grazing and other rights are restricted to Commoners, those occupying certain dwellings. Among the best known are Greenham Common, managed by West Berkshire County Council, Bucklebury Common, Snelsmore Common and the Cookham Commons, the latter managed by the National Trust as successors to the Lord of the Manor. 24 Parishes in 'new' Berkshire had Inclosure Acts which made allotments for fuel for the poor. This includes almost all of the Parishes in the old Windsor Royal Forest. Most of these Charities deriving from fuel allotments on inclosure have been incorporated into other local Charities, or have such a small income that they can give little help to the local poor. Only those which have sold land for development in the second half of the twentieth century have sufficient funds invested to provide significant help. The Tilehurst Charity is one of these. Others include the Earley Charity and the Woodley and Sandford Poor's Land Charity, both of which rose from the Sonning Parish inclosure and the Sunninghill Fuel Allotment. The Ufton Nervet Fuel Allotment has allowed gravel extraction from its land, and now has large investments.

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<sup>33</sup> The Hammonds and Snell, for example.

<sup>34</sup> Shaw-Taylor and Jenks.

<sup>35</sup> Until 1974, the County of Berks included much of what is now South Oxfordshire, including Wallingford, Abingdon, Wantage, Faringdon. In 1811, it also included parts of what is now Oxford City.

## Chapter 10. The Poor Law

“The poor are always with us” is an old saying, and true, because poverty is a relative concept. However, it is hard for us in twenty first century Britain to envisage a time when a large number of families in rural England were little, if any, better off than many families in rural Africa today. Long periods of seasonal unemployment were the norm. There was no pay or allowance for time lost due to the weather or for sickness or other personal reasons. The diet of most rural workers consisted of little more than bread, perhaps with a little cheese and lard. Meat, if it could be afforded, would be eaten once a week at most. In years of bad harvest, and there were many around 1800, the price of bread would rise considerably. Poaching, and petty theft of things like turnips and potatoes from the fields, or wood for fuel was commonplace, when times were bad.

From the time of Queen Elizabeth I, until into the twentieth century, support for the poor was the duty of the Parish and its officers, the Parish being the main administrative body for local government. This meant that the Parish had to raise a rate to provide funds for pensions (or continuing financial support) or ‘outdoor relief’, casual payments for help on a day to day basis in case of illness, injury, unemployment &c. The decision making body of the Parish was the Vestry, a committee which included all owners and occupiers of property over a certain value. The Vestry appointed, annually, two Churchwardens<sup>36</sup> and two Overseers of the Poor, with one of each retiring each year. They also appointed a Surveyor of Highways to see to the roads and bridges in the Parish. Any Vestry member could be called upon to fill one of these posts, and most Overseers would have been farmers, shopkeepers or craftsmen. Gradually, from the mid nineteenth century, responsibility for the poor and other Parish business was taken over by other bodies covering several Parishes, and later, the County, District and (civil) Parish Councils.

The Poor Laws aimed to provide a minimum basic income for those unable to earn a living.

The Trustees appointed under the Tilehurst Inclosure Act included the two Overseers of the Poor, an office defunct since 1927, and their job was to raise a poor rate and to disburse it as they felt fit. At each annual Vestry meeting, the Overseers would present their accounts, audited by the Rector, or some other educated person, and hand over any cash in hand to the new Overseers. The interpretation of the Poor Laws varied considerably in severity over the years. From time to time, ratepayers and Parliament felt that life was too easy, and the conditions became stricter. As an alternative to ‘outdoor relief’ workhouses were built to house those in need, and again, conditions of entry, and conditions within the house varied with time and governor. At times, ‘the workhouse test’ was severely applied, meaning that conditions in the house must be much more severe than those outside, but the Governor had to take in anyone who asked. A major Act in 1834, for example, tried, unsuccessfully, to eliminate outdoor relief altogether, and make relief available only by entering the workhouse.

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<sup>36</sup> Churchwardens are still appointed by the Vestry, and anyone on the electoral roll of the Parish, Church member or not, could attend and vote, even though Churchwardens no longer have any civil responsibilities. This arrangement has survived, even though Churchwardens are responsible for and to the Church, which has its own committee, the Parochial Church Council.

This apart, men and women were separated, and some kind of work was usually expected. Parishes also owned cottages to house the poor. In some cases, people surrendered their cottage to the Parish in exchange for a lifetime pension and on their death, the parish could use the house for another family. Old Age Pensions were introduced in 1909, and the National Insurance Scheme, to provide support in case of sickness or unemployment in 1911. Following the second world war, the National Insurance and National Health Acts laid the foundation for the welfare system that we have today.

Many Inclosure Acts, especially those after about 1800, made allotments of land to Trustees for the benefit of the poor. This was seen as compensation for loss of use of the common wastes. By implication, and in some cases, by the Act, this benefit was to be over and above any Parish relief.

Parish relief was influenced by the provisions of the Settlement Act of 1697, under which each person had a 'home' parish, their Parish of settlement. This was usually the Parish of birth, but settlement could be obtained by long residence, by occupation of a dwelling of a taxable value of £10 or more<sup>37</sup> or, for women, by marriage. Only those settled in a Parish were eligible for relief; anyone from another Parish would be refused, and possibly returned to their home Parish. This could be overcome by the use of certificates, by which the home Parish would guarantee any relief payments granted elsewhere. The application of settlement rules cast a significant shadow on rural life. Some Parishes very actively discouraged the settlement of workers from elsewhere, or only permitted employment contracts of less than a year, so that settlement could not be gained, the object being to keep the Poor Rate as low as possible. Problems also arose when families migrated to towns in search of work.

Although Parishes were the mainstay of local government, their actions were overseen by the Justices of the Peace of the County. One of the duties of the Justices was to co-ordinate relief and labourers' wages. In 1795, a year of poor harvest, the Berkshire Justices met at the Pelican Inn in Speenhamland (the inn was originally on the outskirts of Newbury, but is now near the town centre on Oxford Street). The famous Speenhamland system is the best known, but not the first or only system of its type.<sup>38</sup> It set a level of relief based on the number in the family and the price of bread, making this a minimum income for the family. In effect, many families received relief, even though the breadwinner was working, thus subsidising the farmers' wage bills. We may see, in this system, the origins of Income Support.

Under an Act of 1894, Civil Parish Councils were set up, taking over some of the work of Churchwardens and Overseers. It also set up Urban and Rural District Councils, County Councils having been set up in 1888. All were elected by those entitled to vote in Parliamentary elections. In 1930, County and District Councils took over the remaining roles of both Overseers and Guardians.

The Tilehurst workhouse stood between Park Lane and Portland Gardens. The land on which it stood was allotted to the Trustees for the Poor under the Inclosure Act. From the eighteenth century, Parishes joined together to form Poor Law Unions, managed by elected

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<sup>37</sup> £10 was roughly the annual wage of an agricultural labourer at that time.

<sup>38</sup> Transcript available in the Berkshire Record Office.



## A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

Guardians of the Poor, to share the burden. Unions often built a central workhouse, and the Bradfield Union, including Tilehurst, was at Waylands. Following the closure of workhouses, this became Waylands Hospital. The site has now been developed for private housing.

## Chapter 11. Land Tenure

The English system of land tenure has its origins in the feudal system. Technically, all the land belonged to the Crown, and each Lord of the Manor held his land from the Crown. In turn, the Lord's tenants and bondsmen held their title from the Lord. Holding land imposed a set of duties, the Lord, for example, would be liable to raise a troop of soldiers at the King's command, and to entertain the King and his Court, as they travelled round the country. On the other hand, all his tenants owed feudal dues to their Lord. This could include service as a soldier, but more commonly was labour service for so many days a year on the Lord's land, and a proportion of the crops from their own land holdings. As time went on, these feudal dues increasingly became discharged by money rents and other payments. Feudal tenure of this kind (but not rent!) was finally abolished by the Law of Property Act of 1925.

In time, land was let on a basis agreed by the Manor Court, and the landlord and the tenant had recourse to this Court in case of litigation. Gradually, Manor Court decisions in this field were upheld in the King's Courts. Agreements for tenure were very much local arrangements, and there was some variation from Manor to Manor and from district to district, and many were on a year to year basis.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, many people had a kind of tenure known as **copyhold**. Originally, copyhold was a life tenancy, sealed by a copy of the agreement in the Rolls of the Manor Court. As time went on, copyholds often became for up to three lives. The agreement specified a relatively large initial payment and a small annual rent which did not normally vary throughout the live of the copyhold agreement. On the death of the first and any subsequent lives, a payment called a **heriot** was demanded and also a further payment called **relief**, to allow the next life to take over the copyhold, but there would be no change in rent. The usual heriot was the copyholder's best beast. One can imagine that landlords saw this system as inflexible, and as tying up land for a long time at low rent. During these centuries, there was a marked change from copyholds, as they expired, to leases for a term of years with the rent subject to periodic review, depending on economic circumstances. Some men were able to buy or gain their freedom from most of the feudal dues, and to hold their land as their own, but certainly in the early days of this system, feudal dues, albeit less than tenants or bondsmen, could still be called for.

This tenure became known as **socage**, and had many similarities to modern freehold, although some socage arrangements were for one or more lives, or were **entailed**, meaning that the land could only pass to direct heirs; failing this, it reverted to the original owner. Entailing was commonly used by landowning families to prevent their heirs selling land to pay gambling, high living and other debts.

Leasehold and copyhold tenants had rights to use the surface of the soil only, the subsoil, mineral rights, and often timber rights being retained by the landowner.

The Law of Property Act of 1925 introduced only two forms of tenure:

1. **Fee simple** absolute in possession, that is freehold, and
2. **Leasehold** for a term of years absolute.

The Act also allows for **easements**, the rights of others over things of intrinsic value, like rights of way, light, water, support for buildings, electricity cables &c. It also allows for **profit a prendre**, the right for others to take game, fuel &c.

## Appendix A. Charity Commission Scheme for the Charity

Sealed 4th May 1982

184(S)

82.

Royal County – Berkshire

Ancient Parish – Tilehurst

Charity – Poor's Lands.

L5.

204,048 A/1.

Stamp 50p

Scheme including appointment of Trustees and vesting in Official Custodian for Charities.

### C H A R I T Y   C O M M I S S I O N .

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In the matter of the Charity known as the Poor's Lands, in the Ancient Parish of Tilehurst, in the Royal County of Berkshire, comprised in an inclosure award dated the 26th February 1817 made in pursuance of the Act of Parliament of the year 1811 51 Geo.III c.cxli and a Scheme of the Charity Commissioners of the 14th June 1960; and

In the matter of the Charities Act, 1960.

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THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES HEREBY ORDER that the following Scheme be approved and established as the Scheme for the regulation of the above-mentioned Charity:-

### S C H E M E .

1. Administration of Charity. – The above-mentioned Charity and the property thereof specified in the schedule shall be administered and managed subject to and in conformity with the provisions of this Scheme by the body of Trustees hereinafter constituted.
2. Vesting. – The land specified in the said schedule is hereby vested in the Official Custodian for Charities for all the estate and interest therein belonging to or held in trust for the Charity.
3. Investment of cash. – Subject to any further direction of the Charity Commissioners all sums of cash now or at any time belonging to the Charity, other than sums of cash needed for immediate working purposes, shall be invested in the name of the said Official Custodian.
4. Area of benefit. – In this Scheme the expression “area of benefit” shall mean the Borough of Reading and the Parishes of Theale and Tilehurst, in the Royal County of Berkshire with a preference for the area of the Ancient Parish of Tilehurst.

TRUSTEES.

5. Trustees. – The body of Trustees shall consist when complete of seven competent persons being

One Ex-officio Trustee,  
Three Nominative Trustees and  
Three Co-optative Trustees.

6. Ex-officio Trustee. – The Ex-officio Trustee shall be

The Rector for the time being of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Michael, Tilehurst

7. Nominative Trustees. – Except at first as hereinafter provided the Nominative Trustees shall be appointed as follows:

One by the Reading Borough Council,  
One by the Theale Parish Council and  
One by the Tilehurst Parish Council.

Each appointment shall be made for a term of four years at a meeting convened and held according to the ordinary practice of the appointing body. The chairman of the meeting shall cause the name of each person appointed to be notified forthwith to the Trustees or their clerk. The person appointed may be but need not be a member of the appointing body.

8. First Nominative Trustees. – The following persons shall be the first Nominative Trustees and subject to the provisions hereinafter contained for determination of trusteeship shall hold office as if they had been appointed by the respective appointing bodies under this Scheme, for the following periods respectively:

As appointee of the Reading Borough Council –  
Florence Teresa Day, of 70 Westwood Road, Tilehurst, Married Woman,  
For four years from the date of this Scheme;

As appointee of Theale Parish Council –  
Ralph Aidan Gray Thomson, of 9 Blossom Lane, Theale, Retired Caterer,  
for two years from the date of this Scheme;

As appointee of Tilehurst Parish Council –  
Raynor Charles Rudland, of 63 Littleheath Road, Tilehurst, Civil Servant,  
for four years from the date of this Scheme.

9. Co-optative Trustees. – The Co-optative Trustees shall be persons who through residence, occupation or employment, or otherwise have special knowledge of the area of benefit.

10. First Co-optative Trustees. – The following persons shall be the first Co-optative Trustees and subject to the provisions hereinafter contained for determination of trusteeship shall hold office for the following periods respectively:

Anne Early, of 80 Oak Tree Road, Tilehurst, Occupational Therapist, and  
Kenneth Parker, of 1 Heathfield Avenue, Tilehurst, Civil Servant,  
both for five years from the date of this Scheme;

William Martin, of 134 Meadow Way, Theale, Civil Servant,  
for three years from the said date.

11. Future Co-optative Trustees. – Every future Co-optative Trustee shall be appointed for a term of five years by a resolution of the Trustees passed at a special meeting of which not less than 21 days' notice has been given and may be so appointed not more than one month before the end of the term of an existing Co-optative Trustee expires with effect from the date of expiry but so that the latter shall not vote on the matter.

12. Declaration by Trustees. – No person shall be entitled to act as a Trustee whether on a first or on any subsequent entry into office until after signing in the minute book of the Trustees a declaration of acceptance and of willingness to act in the trusts of this Scheme.

13. Determination of trusteeship. – Any Nominative or Co-optative Trustee who is absent from all meetings of the Trustees during a period of one year and any Trustee who is adjudged bankrupt or makes a composition or arrangement with his or her creditors or who is incapacitated from acting or who communicates in writing to the Trustees a wish to resign shall cease thereupon to be a Trustee.

14. Vacancies. – Upon the occurrence of a vacancy the Trustees shall cause a note thereof to be entered in their minute book at their next meeting and in the case of a vacancy in the office of [a] Nominative Trustee shall cause notice thereof to be given as soon as possible to the proper appointing body. Any competent Trustee may be re-appointed.

#### MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF TRUSTEES.

15. Ordinary meetings. – The Trustees shall hold at least two ordinary meetings in each year.

16. First meeting. – The first meeting of the Trustees shall be summoned by the said rector or if he fails for three calendar months after the date of this Scheme to summon a meeting by any two of the Trustees.

17. Chairman. – The Trustees at their first ordinary meeting in each year shall elect one of their number to be chairman of their meetings until the commencement of the first ordinary meeting in the following year. The chairman shall always be eligible for re-election. If at any meeting the chairman is not present within ten minutes after the time appointed for holding the same or there is no chairman the Trustees present shall choose one of their number to be chairman of the meeting.

18. Special meetings. – A special meeting may be summoned at any time by the chairman or any two Trustees upon not less than four days' notice being given to the other Trustees of the matters to be discussed, but if the matters include an appointment of a Co-optative Trustee then upon not less than 21 days' notice being so given. A special meeting may be summoned to take place immediately after an ordinary meeting.

19. Quorum. – There shall be a quorum when three Trustees are present at a meeting.

20. Voting. – Every matter shall be determined by the majority of votes of the Trustees present and voting on the question. In case of equality of votes the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote whether he or she has or has not voted previously on the same question but no Trustee in any other circumstance shall give more than one vote.

21. Minutes and accounts. – A minute book and books of account shall be provided and kept by the Trustees. Statements of account in relation to the Charity shall be prepared and transmitted to the Commissioners in accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act, 1960, except if and in so far as the Charity is excepted by order or regulations.

22. General power to make regulations. – Within the limits prescribed by this Scheme the Trustees shall have full power from time to time to make regulations for the management of the Charity and for



the conduct of their business including the summoning of meetings, the appointment of a clerk, the deposit of money at a proper bank and the custody of documents.

#### PROPERTY.

23. Management and letting of lands. – The Trustees shall let and otherwise manage all the lands belonging to the Charity. The Trustees shall not without the sanction of the Commissioners or a competent court create any tenancy wholly or partly in consideration of a fine or for a term ending more than 22 years after it is granted or for less than the best rent obtainable.

24. Leases. – The Trustees shall provide that on the grant by them of any lease the lessee shall execute a counterpart thereof. Every lease shall contain covenants on the part of the lessee for the payment of rent, the proper cultivation of the land and all other usual and proper covenants applicable to the property comprised therein and a proviso for re-entry on non-payment of the rent or non-performance of the covenants.

25. Sale. – Subject to the consent of the Commissioners the Trustees may sell the whole or any part of the said land and may do and execute all proper acts and assurances for carrying such sale into effect.

26. Proceeds of sale. – Unless the Commissioners otherwise direct the Trustees shall pay over the clear proceeds of any such sale as aforesaid for investment in trust for the Charity in the name of the said Official Custodian.

27. Discharge of restrictions. – Any land let or sold as aforesaid shall be discharged during the period of the letting or upon completion of the sale from any restrictions as to the use thereof imposed by or under the above-mentioned Act of the year 1811 and any other enactment relating to inclosure.

#### APPLICATION OF INCOME.

28. Expenses of management. – The Trustees shall first defray out of the income of the Charity the cost of the maintenance and upkeep of the property of the Charity and all other charges and outgoings payable in respect thereof and all the proper costs, charges and expenses of and incidental to the administration and management of the Charity.

29. Application of income. – (1) Subject to payment of the expenses aforesaid the Trustees shall apply the income of the Charity in relieving either generally or individually persons resident in the area of benefit who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons.

(2) The Trustees may pay for such items, services or facilities by way of donations or subscriptions to institutions or organisations which provide or which undertake in return to provide such items, services or facilities for such persons.

(3) In exceptional cases the Trustees may grant relief to persons otherwise eligible therefore who are resident immediately outside the said area but in the opinion of the Trustees ought nevertheless for sufficient reason to be treated as if resident therein or who are located for the time being within that area.

30. Restrictions. – In applying the income of the Charity the Trustees shall observe the following restrictions:

(1) They shall not apply any part of the income directly in relief of rates, taxes or other public funds but may apply income in supplementing relief or assistance provided out of public funds.

## A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

(2) They shall not commit themselves to repeat or renew the relief granted on any occasion in any case.

### GENERAL PROVISIONS.

31. Appropriation of benefits. – The appropriation of the benefits of the Charity shall be made by the Trustees at meetings of their body and not separately by any individual Trustee or Trustees: Provided that the Trustees from time to time may appoint two or more members of their body to be a committee for dealing with any cases of emergency but all acts and proceedings of committees shall be reported in due course to the Trustees.

32. Trustees not to be personally interested. – No Trustee shall take or hold any interest in property belonging to the Charity otherwise than as a Trustee for the purposes thereof and no Trustee shall receive remuneration, or be interested in the supply of work or goods, at the cost of the Charity.

33. Questions under Scheme. – Any question as to the construction of this Scheme or as to the regularity or the validity of any acts done or about to be done under this Scheme shall be determined by the Commissioners upon such application made to them for the purpose as they think sufficient.

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### S C H E D U L E .

The following land situate at Tilehurst in the Royal County of Berkshire:

1. Land containing 4.5 acres or thereabouts having frontages to Armour Road and Kentwood Hill known as Victoria Recreation Ground subject to and with the benefit of a lease for 21 years from the 29<sup>th</sup> September 1976 at a yearly rent of £250 created and reserved by a lease dated the 26<sup>th</sup> February 1979.
2. Land containing 5.6 acres or thereabouts at Kentwood Hill now let as allotments to various tenants at yearly rents amounting together to £342.
3. Land containing 0.4 of an acre or thereabouts at Chapel Hill now let as allotments to various tenants at yearly rents amounting together to £18.

The following investments standing in the name of the Official Custodian for Charities:

16,293.63 Income Shares in the Charinco Charities Narrower-Range Common Investment Fund.

12,214 Income Units in the Equities Investment Fund for Charities.

£10,960 cash on deposit with the National Savings Bank Investment Branch (Account No. 138 025 592).

£4,003.16 cash on current account at the branch of Lloyds Bank Limited at Market Street, Reading.

This schedule is made up to the 20th October 1981.

Sealed by Order of the Commissioners this 4th day of May 1982.

N O T E

This note has no legal force as part of the scheme but indicates ways in which income may properly be applied for the relief of people in need.

Relief in Need

1. Charities for relief in need operate in the same field as statutory social services. Trustees who administer such charities should not normally give aid until they are satisfied that the potential beneficiary has obtained all the relevant statutory benefits to which he has a claim and should be careful to avoid abating the statutory benefits. Trustees should accordingly acquaint themselves with the system of social benefits, the effect upon such benefits of grants from charitable sources, and the gaps in statutory provision which can be filled by charitable services or facilities for those in need. Leaflets describing the statutory benefits available for the elderly, disabled, sick, unemployed, those on low incomes and single parent families can be obtained from local offices of the Department of Health and Social Security.

2. By consulting officers in the local Social Security offices and in the Social Services Department of the local authority trustees will be able to learn what assistance and services these authorities can give in particular circumstances whether by way of special grants or otherwise and may also discover people living within the charity's area of benefit who have needs which the statutory services do not meet in full. In this way trustees can also ensure that an allowance from the charity or the provision of some item or facility will not affect any statutory benefits.

3. It is for the charity trustees to decide whether need exists in any particular case. The receipt of statutory benefits may be an indication of need but is not a decisive factor in itself. People receiving such benefits may need additional help from charitable funds. But it must be borne in mind that those who are not receiving statutory benefits may also need help.

4. Charity trustees proposing to give immediate aid in cases of emergency should take into account any arrangements made by the statutory authorities to provide essential services in such an emergency and should ascertain, so far as circumstances permit, that emergency relief is not available from public funds.

5. Trustees may either pay directly for the benefits they provide, or give money to beneficiaries to pay for benefits, or they may make arrangements for the benefits to be provided by other organisations in return for subscriptions or donations.

6. The scheme gives the trustees a wide choice in the sort of relief that they give out of the income of the charity so long as the need is clear. Relief must be given only to assist people who are eligible under the scheme, must be related to the need in each case, and must be reasonable in the circumstances, taking into account any relief available from other sources. Some examples follow and others may occur to trustees:

i. Grants of money in the form of –

- (a) weekly allowances for a limited period to meet a particular need,
- (b) special payments to relieve sudden distress,
- (c) payment of travelling expenses for visiting people in hospitals, convalescent homes or similar institutions, or in children's homes, or in prison or other correctional establishments, particularly where more frequent visits are desirable than payments from public funds will allow; and payments to meet consequential expenses of accommodation, refreshments, child-minding etc.,

## A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

- (d) payments to other charities accommodating those in need in the area of the charity such as almshouses, or homes or hostels for the residence or care of old, infirm or homeless people,
  - (e) payments to assist in meeting electricity and gas bills,
  - (f) payment of television licence fees.
- ii. The provision of items either outright or, if expensive and appropriate, on loan, such as –
- (a) furniture, bedding, clothing, food, fuel, heating appliances,
  - (b) washing machines for widows with large families or radio or television sets for the lonely, bedridden or housebound.
- iii. Payment for services such as house decorating, insulation and repairs, laundering, meals on wheels, outings and entertainments, child-minding.
- iv. The provision of facilities such as –
- (a) the supply of tools or books or payment of fees for instruction or examinations or of travelling expenses so as to help the recipients to earn their living, or,
  - (b) arrangements for a recuperative holiday or change of air.

Further examples follow of the sort of additional help that can be given when those in need are also sick, convalescent, disabled, handicapped or infirm, whether mentally or physically:

- v. Grants of money in the form of –
- (a) special payments to relieve sickness or infirmity,
  - (b) payment of travelling expenses on entering or leaving hospitals, convalescent homes or similar institutions, or for out-patient consultations,
  - (c) payment towards the cost of adaptations to the homes of the disabled,
  - (d) payment of telephone installation charges and rentals.
- vi. The provision of items either outright or, if expensive and appropriate, on loan, such as –
- (a) food for special diets, medical or other aids, nursing requisites or comforts,
  - (b) invalid chairs for the disabled, handicapped or infirm.
- vii. The provision of services such as bathing, exchange of library books, foot care, gardening, hair washing, shaving, help in the home, nursing aid, physiotherapy in the home, reading, shopping, sitting-in, tape-recording for the housebound, travelling companions.
- viii. The provision of facilities such as arrangements for a period of rest or change of air or to secure the benefits of any institution or organisation or to provide temporary relief for those having the care of the sick or handicapped person: help for relatives and friends to visit or care for patients: transport.

## Appendix B. Chronology of Events with Population Data

Year.	Tilehurst Parish Population	Significant events.
c.1600		Several Poor Law Acts, placing responsibility for the poor on the Parish, initiating the appointment of Parish Overseers of the Poor, who would raise rates to provide 'outdoor' relief and to build and maintain workhouses.
1662 & 1697		Settlement Acts allowed only those 'settled' in a Parish to receive relief from it.
1714		Turnpike road from Reading to Theale opened.
1722		Knatchbull's Act, encouraging the building of workhouses and the formation of Unions, managed by elected Guardians of the Poor.
1727		Opening of the Kennet Navigation from Reading to Newbury.
1731		Founding of Wheat's Charity to provide overcoats for poor men in Tilehurst. Founding of Allen's Charity to provide apprenticeships for lads in Reading.
c.1750		It became the norm for inclosures to be by Act of Parliament.
1759		Blagrave family bought the Manor of Tilehurst and built the present Calcot House.
1767		Building of the Workhouse in Tilehurst.
1782		Gilbert's Act, all able bodied paupers claiming relief were to go to the workhouse.
1795		Introduction of the Speenhamland system, a kind of parish income support.
1783	1058	(Shortly before the opening of the Barracks.)
1801	1358	General Inclosure Act - set down general principles for individual Inclosure Acts.
1810		Kennet & Avon Navigation opened to Bristol.
1811	1521	Tilehurst Inclosure Act.
1815		Common rights on the commons in Tilehurst extinguished.
1816		Sonning Inclosure Act, Award 1820, including the Liberty of Earley, which gave rise to the Earley Charity which shares Reading as an area of benefit with the Tilehurst Charity.
1817		Tilehurst Inclosure Award.
1819		Opening of Tilehurst National School in School Road.
1821	1760	
1831	1878	
1832		Formation of Theale Ecclesiastical Parish.
1834		Poor Law Amendment Act - an attempt to tighten the regulations and abolish outdoor relief. Specified a very spartan workhouse regime.
1835		Tilehurst workhouse closed and Bradfield Union Workhouse (Waylands) opened.

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Year.	Tilehurst Parish Population	Significant events.
1836		Tithes commuted to a rent charge related to the price of corn.
1840		Great Western Railway reached Reading.
1843		Opening of the Bradfield Union workhouse.
1847 & 1871		Acts to create some Government supervision and regulation of poor relief.
1851	2188	Opening of the Mary Lyne Almshouses.
1854/5		Rebuilding of St. Michael's Church.
1867		Opening of the Reading Union workhouse in Oxford Rd., later to become Battle Hospital.
1871	2418	According to the Victoria County History, Kelly's Directory says 1556.
1880		St. George's Church built, rebuilt in present form in 1886.
1882		Opening of Tilehurst Station.
1885		Samuel Wheeler opened potteries at Kentwood Hill. S. & E. Collier opened potteries at Grovelands. Both previously had potteries at Coley. There was also a smaller pottery on Honey End Lane. Reading Borough boundaries extended to include Grovelands and Southcote. Reading received County Borough status, independent of Berkshire.
1888		Introduction of County Councils.
1889		Over 2,000 inhabitants of Tilehurst are now in Reading Borough. Opening of Park Lane (Board) School.
1891	4408	
1894		Local Government Act created District and (civil) Parish Councils. Opening of Tilehurst Village Hall. Opening of Blagrove Recreation Ground.
1897		Opening of the Victoria Recreation Ground. Mains water came to Tilehurst.
1901	6899	
1906		National School closed, Norcot School opened.
1909		Old Age Pensions introduced.
1911		National Insurance Act introduced sickness, unemployment and maternity benefits. Extension of Reading Borough boundaries to include much of Tilehurst.
1919		First regular motor bus service to Tilehurst.
1920		Allotment gardens set out at Polsted Rd. and Armour Hill. The Kentwood Hill site was set out earlier.
1927		Abolition of the office of Overseer of the Poor.
1929		Local Government Act, powers of Guardians transferred to County Councils.
1932		Erection of Tilehurst water tower.
1937		First available Poor's Lands Charity minutes and accounts.



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Year.	Tilehurst Parish Population	Significant events.
1944		Water connected to Chapel Hill allotments. Mr. Woodeson resigned as Secretary, having served since before 1937. Mr. Langley took over as Secretary until 1947.
1946/7		National Insurance and National Health Acts.
1947		Compulsory purchase order for land at Halls Rd. (Workhouse Common).
1947		Appointment of Albert Illsley as Clerk to the Trustees, until 1993.
1959		Weekly grants made to almshouses at the Mary Lyne almshouses, until 1980, and fuel bills paid. Grants were also beginning to be made for goods other than fuel.
1966		Last pottery in Tilehurst closed.
1970		Last coal tickets issued in Tilehurst.
1971		Opening of M4 to Reading and beyond.
1972		Sale of land at Chapel Hill, originally part of Kentwood Common. Reading lost independent status, and became, administratively, part of Berkshire again. Last coal tickets issued in Theale.
1975		Water connected to Polsted Rd., Kentwood Hill and Armour Hill allotments.
1978		Sale of further land at Chapel Hill.
1979		New allotments set out at Chapel Hill.
1981		Grants to other organisations ceased.
1982		New 'Scheme' for Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity adopted.
1985		Merger of Wheat's Charity with Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity.
1993		Appointment of Oliver Jenks as Clerk to the Trustees.
1995		Allotment Tenants' Committee set up.
1998		Allotments at Kentwood and some at Armour Hill closed, and the tenants relocated. Reading regained independent status, separate from Berkshire.
1999		Tree Preservation Order placed on certain trees on the Charity's land. Tilehurst Allotment Society formed for the Charity's tenants. Old piggeries demolished and asbestos sheeting removed.
2000		Option to Purchase Agreement signed with Wimpeys to cover the land where allotments were closed in 1998.
2001		Rent charge by which Wheat's Charity derived its income discharged by a one-off payment.
2003		Gates and locks provided at all vehicular entrances to the Charity's allotments. Unlike previous gates, these were kept locked by tenants.
2005		Mary Lyne Almshouses Charity wound up and the assets transferred to Reading Consolidated Almshouses Charity. Health & Safety Inspections of Allotments sites started.
2007		Special plots for the disabled together with ancillary facilities provided by Tilehurst Allotment Society on the Charity's land.

## Appendix C. List of Trustees since 1937

The table below gives the details of Trustees of Tilehurst Poor's Land Charity since 1937. The list does not include the *ex-officio* Trustees, the Rectors of Tilehurst, who are listed separately in Chapter 6. The details are as recorded in the Minute Books and elsewhere (no Minute Books are available for the years before 1937).

Name	Of	Representing	Appointed or first mentioned	Resigned or last mentioned
Mr. E. Blatch	Theale	Theale P.C.	1937	1953
Mr. Flowers	Theale	Theale P.C.	1937	1946
Mrs. Whitehead		Tilehurst P.C.	1937	1945
Mr. C. Morgan	Calcot	Tilehurst P.C.	1937	1945
Mr. Mason		Churchwarden	1938	1945
Mr. Payne		Churchwarden	1938	1943
Mr. Whichelow			1941	1942
Mr. Langley		Churchwarden	1944	1945
(Mr. Langley then became Secretary to the Trustees.)				
Mr. A.J. Morton		Churchwarden	1944	1955
Mr. L. Lambrick	Hall Place Farm	Tilehurst P.C.	1946	1948
Mr. F.J. Barber		Churchwarden	1947	1964
Mr. E.J. Cordery	Englefield Road, Theale	Theale P.C.	1947	1979
Mr. A. Bowler		Theale P.C.	1947	1969
Mr. Girdler			1951	1954
Mr. Fletcher			1952	1952
Mr. R.C. Willan	Halls Road		1955	1955
Mr. W.G. Tooley Hawkins	Calcot		1955	1955
Mr. P. Townend	Oak Tree Road	Churchwarden	1956	1967
Mr. F. Farrington	Halls Road		1960	1960
The Revd. B.H. Kingsley			1962	1962
Mr. Moriarty	Norcot Road	Churchwarden	1965	1971
Mrs. A.J. Hoysted	Calcot	Tilehurst P.C.	1965	1965
Mr. Lightfoot			1967	1967
Mrs. Gill			1967	1968
Mr. E.H. Stears	Calcot		1968	1968
Mr. H. Hopkins		Churchwarden	1968	1971
Mr. R.H. Merrick	High Street, Theale		1970	1976
Mr. R.C. Rudland	Little Heath Road		1970	1981
Mr. L. Miles	St. Michael's Road	Churchwarden	1974	1975

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Name	Of	Representing	Appointed or first mentioned	Resigned or last mentioned
Mr. J.D. Morgan	Pegs Green Close	Churchwarden	1974	1974
Mr. H.F. Lane	Crescent Road	Churchwarden	1975	1976
Mr. E.J. Hickman	Mandeville Close	Churchwarden	1976	1979
Mr. J.A. Leach	Volunteer Road, Theale		1976	1978
Mr. K. Parker	Heathfield Avenue	Churchwarden	1978	1983
Mr. A.G. Thomson	Blossom Road, Theale		1978	1983
Mrs. A. Earley	Oak Tree Road	Churchwarden	1979	1981
Mrs. F.T. Day	Westwood Road	a. Reading B.C. b. Co-opted	a. 1981 b. 1987	a. 1987 b. 2004
Mr. W. Martin	Meadow Way, Theale		1981	1982
Mr. T. Peel		Churchwarden	1981	1982
Mrs. M.I. Dilks		Tilehurst P.C.	1982	1985
Miss. J. Lawrence		Co-opted	1982	1984
Mr. R.J. Head	Childrey Way	Co-opted	1982	1987
Mr. (later Revd.) T. Lee	Calcot, then Bradfield		1983	1987
Mrs. J.M. Voke	Meadow Way, Theale	Theale P.C.	1984	1999
Mrs. C. Gibb	Langley Hill	Co-opted	1984	1988
Mrs. D.P. Lucy	Ridgemount Close	a. Tilehurst P.C. b. Co-opted	a. 1985 b. 2004	a. 2002 b. Date
Mrs. J. Lovelock	Brooksby Road	Reading B.C.	1986	1998
Mr. C.R. Cairns	Crescent Road	Co-opted	1988	Date
Mr. D. Lewis	Wendover Way	Co-opted	1989	1991
Mrs. S.M. Lavers	Corwen Road	Co-opted	1993	2000
Mrs. D.E. Lawrence	Beattie Drive	Reading B.C.	1998	2000
Dr. S.A. Windsor	Church Street, Theale	Theale P.C.	2000	2006
Ms. V.M. Lloyd		Reading B.C.	2000	2001
Mrs. S.E. Baker	Longridge Road	Co-opted	2000	Date
Mr. C.S. Maskell		Reading B.C.	2001	2003
Mr. R. Mackenzie		Reading B.C.	2003	2005
Mr. D.J. Lovegrove	Skilton Road	Tilehurst P.C.	2005	Date
Mr. R. Hughes	Cockney Hill	Reading B.C.	2006	Date
Mr. D.G. Hayden	Chestnut Close, Theale	Theale P.C.	2007	Date

## Appendix D. Summary of Annual Accounts, 1938-2008

### Table of Annual Income and Expenditure, 1938-2008

Year	R.P.I. (1963 = 100)	Income (£)					Expenditure (£)						Income less Expend. (£)
		Invest- ments	Rent – Victoria Rec. Gr.	Rent – Allotment &c net of expenses	Other	Total Income	Admin	Coal	Grants	Large Grants	Other	Total Expend.	
1938	33	2	16	58	2	78	16	49			3	68	10
1939	34	2	16	55	7	80	14	55			11	80	nil
'Other Income' included repayment of Tithes by the rector, usually £4 per year until 1950. 'Other Expenditure' is about £4 per year for Tithe redemption until 1979.													
1940	38	2	16	60	5	83	18	54			7	79	4
1941	42	2	16	56	2	76	15	65			2	82	-6
1942	45	2	16	46	20	84	27	62			5	94	-10
1943	47	2	16	62	4	84	24	61			5	90	6
1944	47	2	16	62	7	87	26	61			7	94	-7
1945	49	2	16	50	4	72	6	57			4	67	5
1946	51	1	16	56	4	77	35	68			4	107	-31
1947	54	2	16	55	4	78	20	55			4	79	-1
1948	57	2	16	63	4	85	19	59			5	83	2
From now on, all rents are from allotments.													
1949	59	2	16	55	4	77	20	55			4	79	-1

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Year	R.P.I. (1963 = 100)	Income (£)					Expenditure (£)						Income less Expend. (£)
		Invest- ments	Rent – Victoria Rec. Gr.	Rent – Allotment &c net of expenses	Other	Total Income	Admin	Coal	Grants	Large Grants	Other	Total Expend.	
1950	61	2	16	35	4	57	19	51			4	74	-17
1951	67	29	16	47		92	18	44			3	65	27
1952	73	24	16	35		75	18	49			3	70	5
1953	75	24	16	39		79	18	52			4	74	-5
1954	76	24	16	46		76	19	52			4	75	1
1955	80	24	16	44	2	86	19	48			4	71	15
1956	84	40	28	35		103	41	47			4	92	11
‘Administration Expenditure’ in 1956 included £21 Estate Agent's fees.													
1957	87	24	25	45		94	20	68			4	92	2
1958	90	24	25	19		68	20	72			4	96	-28
1959	90	206	25	39		270	21	62			4	87	183
Increased investment income follows sale of land at Halls Rd.													
1960	91	206	25	38		269	21	48		213	4	286	-17
1961	94	206	25	32		263	22	79		99	4	204	59
1962	98	303	25	19		347	23	77	20	98	4	217	128
For details of payments in "Larger grants" column, from 1960 to 1981, see Appendix E.													
1963	100	401	25	21	6	453	23	108	47	99	4	281	172
1964	103	401	25	-185		241	23	79	35	68	4	209	32
1965	108	401	25	32		458	26	247	80	107	4	464	6
1966	112	401	25	34		460	35	237	35	123	4	434	26
Secretary's fee/expenses raised from £15 to £ 25.													
1967	115	401	25	1		427	32	286	37	103	4	462	-35
1968	121	397	25	31		453	33	275	50	87	4	449	4

A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

Year	R.P.I. (1963 = 100)	Income (£)					Expenditure (£)						Income less Expend. (£)
		Invest- ments	Rent – Victoria Rec. Gr.	Rent – Allotment &c net of expenses	Other	Total Income	Admin	Coal	Grants	Large Grants	Other	Total Expend.	
1969	127	401	25	7		433	38	312	40	153	4	547	-114
1970	135	401	25	10		436	32	309	45	301	4	691	-255
1971	148	401	25	35		461	38	190	36	100	4	368	93
1972	159	835	25	-113		747	36	124	35	715	113	1,023	-276
1973	173	1,866	25	25	232	2,148	25		75	325	4	429	1,719
‘Other Income’ in 1973 was a tax rebate. Investment income increase follows sale of land at Chapel Hill.													
1974	201	499	25	10	4,905	5,439	56		67	1,627	4	1,754	3,685
‘Other Income’ in 1974 is from sale of land.													
From 1973 to 1980 there were several changes of accounting year and some of the figures given represent 15 month or other periods and it is not convenient to quote figures for 1975.													
1976	291	3,138	25	146		3,309	60		322	4,172	577	5,131	-1,822
Allotment rent included £45 key deposits. Secretary's fee/expenses raised to £50 p.a. ‘Other Expenditure’ included £573 to supply water to the allotments.													
1977	337	4,677	25	-50		4,652	61		833		4	1,125	3,427
1977 was the last year of Tithe Redemption payments.													
1978	365	4,199	6	82		4,287	63		1,069	3,527	12	4,671	-384
Rents of allotments increased from 1978 as water laid on; rent income quoted is net of water rates and other expenses.													
1979	414	3,265	613	-154	65	3,789	68		489	1,670		2,227	1,562
‘Other Income’ was interest on a loan, and is from now on unless stated otherwise. Rent of Victoria Recreation ground includes arrears of increase in rent.													
1980	488	5,615	250	277	230	6,372	118		1,110	5,600		6,828	-456
‘Other Income’ in 1980 was loan interest. This continues for a number of years.													
1981	546	4,359	250	218	1,716	6,443	180		2,429		1,256	3,865	2,578
‘Other Income’ in 1981 was repayment of loan. Other expenditure was an interest-free mortgage to a disabled couple, repaid in 1995. Accounting period now from Jan. to Dec.													

A History of the Poor's Lands Charity, Tilehurst, Berkshire

Year	R.P.I. (1963 = 100)	Income (£)					Expenditure (£)						Income less Expend. (£)
		Invest- ments	Rent – Victoria Rec. Gr.	Rent – Allotment &c net of expenses	Other	Total Income	Admin	Coal	Grants	Large Grants	Other	Total Expend.	
1982	593	6,065	312	132	330	6,839	200	5,857				6,057	782
1983	620	6,662	125	198	271	7,256	197		6,095			6,292	964
Most of 'Other Income' in 1983 and 1988 is loan repayments – for details, see notes in separate table of Larger Grants, below.													
1984	651	5,020	1,125	104	165	6,414	309		5,642			5,951	463
'Administration expenditure' in 1984 included £96 Solicitor's fees.													
1985	691	5,225	750	30	250	6,255	247		4,617			4,864	1,361
'Other Income' in 1985 included £85, the assets of Wheat's Charity on amalgamation.													
1986	714	5,572	750	331	168	6,821	829		7,681			8,510	-1,689
'Administration Expenditure' in 1986 included Solicitor's fees of £634													
1987	744	5,970	750	296	165	7,181	175		6,467			6,642	539
1988	781	9,000	750	664	200	10,614	192		5,528			5,720	4,894
1989	841	7,179	562	398	165	8,304	231		10,716			10,947	-2,643
From 1989, a decision was taken to use, for grant-making purposes, the accumulated annual surpluses which had built up.													
1990	921	7,753	937	145	1,650	10,385	199		13,251			13,450	-3,065
'Other Income' in 1990 was repayment of loan.													
1991	975	7,880	750	-51		8,579	235		13,671			13,906	-5,327
1992	1,015	7,912	812	-313		8,411	273		12,557			12,830	-4,419
1993	1,046	8,961	1,000	-211		9,750	175		8,329			8,504	1,264
1994	1,061	9,059	1,000	342		10,401	228		11,408			11,636	-1,235
1995	1,083	7,496	1,000	145		8,631	310		9,167			9,477	-846
1996	1,113	11,077	1,000	-231	1,177	13,013	353		9,066			9,419	3,594
'Other Income' in 1996 was redemption of a mortgage issued in 1981, net of fees &c.													



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Year	R.P.I. (1963 = 100)	Income (£)					Expenditure (£)						Income less Expend. (£)
		Invest- ments	Rent – Victoria Rec. Gr.	Rent – Allotment &c net of expenses	Other	Total Income	Admin	Coal	Grants	Large Grants	Other	Total Expend.	
1997	1,135	7,409	1,000	284		8,693	200		9,712		2326	12,238	-3,545
'Other Expenditure' in 1997 was for a land survey of the main allotment site.													
1998	1124	8,831	1,000	741	60	10,632	432		6,323		3,183	9,938	694
'Other Expenditure' in 1998 is largely concerned with the consequences of a decision to seek planning permission for part of the allotment site, including fees, compensation, cultivation of allotments &c.													
1999		7,959	1,000	611	2,496	12,132	895		7,950		8,793	17,638	-5,506
2000		5,874	1,000	855	2,803	10,532	1,065		19,541		588	21,194	-10,662
2001		10,805	1,000	1,375	10,538	23,718	973		22,795			23,768	-50
2002		6,900	1,000	1,162	2,570	11,622	938		14,182			15,121	-3,499
2003		7,955	1,000	936	2,192	12,343	530		15,180			15,710	-3,367
2004		7,779	1,000	-336	2,430	10,869	572		14,740			15,312	-4,443
2005		6,927	1,000	123	3,200	11,250	203		16,383		1,058	17,644	-6,384
2006		6,253	1,000	209	3,200	10,662	333		10,847			11,180	-518
2007		7,204	1,000	703	5,472	14,379	231		12,701			12,932	1,447
2008		8,386	1,000	1,112	3,200	13,698	495		13,036			13,531	-167

## Appendix E. Grants to Other Organisations, 1960-1981

Year	Recipient	Grant (£)	Purpose / Notes
1960/61	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	99	Allowances
1961/62	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	98	Allowances
1962/63	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	99	Allowances
1963/64	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	68	Allowances
1964/65	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	107	Allowances
1965/66	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	123	Allowances
1966/67	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	103	Allowances
1967/68	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	88	Allowances
1968/69	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	97	Allowances
1969/70	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	123	Allowances
1970/71	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	100	Allowances
1971/72	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	219	Allowances
1972/73	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	219	Allowances
1973/74	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	325	Allowances
1974/75 (15mo.)	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	127	Allowances
– do. –	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	1,000	Chimneys
– do. –	Church Lands Charity (Church Cottages)		Preparations to accommodate unsupported mothers
1975/76	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	222	Allowances
– do. –	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	2,200	Decorations
– do. –	95th Scouts	1,750	
1976/77	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	227	Allowances

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Year	Recipient	Grant (£)	Purpose / Notes
1977/78	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	227	Allowances
- do. -	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	600	Repairs
- do. -	Church Lands Charity (Church Cottages)	250	Repairs
- do. -	Theale V. H. & Club	500	Grant
- do. -	Theale V. H. & Club	1,300	Loan
- do. -	Tilehurst V. H.	650	
1978/79	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	670	Allowances
1979/80 (15mo.)	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	800	Allowances
- do. -	Church Lands Charity (Church Cottages)	300	Loan
1980 (all)	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	800	Allowances
- do. -	Mary Lyne Charity (almshouses)	3,300	Loan for repairs to roof, repayable at £175 p.a.
- do. -	St Michael's Scouts	1,500	Grant
1981	Disabled individual	1,255	Interest-free loan to help buy house
1982 onward	No further large grants.	-	

## Appendix F. Analysis of Recent Applications and Grants, 2001-2008

The information in the above table is based on information given by applicants, which may not be clear, complete or correct.

A blank implies data for the year in question was not collected or has not been analysed.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>General Statistics</b>								
Total number of applications considered	102	106	121	122	125	114	115	109
Grants offered	76	84	83	93	90	88	78	77
Outside area of benefit	6	10	23	14	18	14	10	15
Referrals to other agencies and charities	3	4	10	9	5	4	11	4
Applications refused	9	5	0	1	9	3	9	4
Applications withdrawn	8	1	2	3	1	1	3	2
Additional information sought, but not provided			7	2	4	4	4	5
Grants not taken up			5	16	11	2	12	6
Total grants offered	76	84	83	93	90	88	78	77
<b>Applications by Goods/Services Requested</b> (a grant may cover items in more than one heading)								
Electrical goods	19	34	45	53	61	48	59	50
Furniture, beds, carpets &c.	8	16	22	28	19	23	29	20
Clothes, mainly for children	9	4	1	3	6	4	5	6
Baby goods	2	3	1	3	0	3	2	2

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	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Arrears of rent or payment for essential services	4	0	1	2	3	0	3	3
House repairs/decorating material	6	4	2	2	3	12	3	6
Educational/youth grants	1	6	1	4	0	7	7	16
Setting up home	23	11	9	7	7	11	2	6
Holidays, particularly for sick/disabled	5	3	3	0	0	1	0	0
Others – a great variety	8	8	9	2	10	8	14	3
<b>Applications by Parish/Area</b> (* applications from Theale and Holybrook are usually referred to another Charity)								
Tilehurst		38	45	63	42	54	65	51
West Reading		26	22	26	38	15	17	32
Southcote		17	25	17	16	26	21	9
Calcot		3	2	1	2	2	1	3
Theale*		2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Holybrook*		1	4	3	1	1	0	0
<b>Applications by Category of Applicant</b>								
Applications from organisations rather than individuals		4	0	3	1	1	1	2
Applicants with young children		41	53	66	64	57	60	60
Single parents (according to the information given)			50	54	45	47	52	58
Applications from other single young persons (single persons from 2008)		6	2	4	2	40	1	27
Old age pensioners (according to information given - probably more)			7	3	4	7	7	3
Applications pending		93	8	8	7	7	3	2
<b>Applications by Referring Agencies</b>								
Social services/housing support (Council Depts.)					40	27	17	29
Mental Health Team (R.C.M.H.T.)					20	4	2	6
Christian Community Action					24	24	33	27

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	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Family Support Centre					8	8	7	4
Associations/Charities for specific health problems					6	0	2	0
R.S.H.P. (for single homeless)					3	2	3	1
Refugee Support Group					9	7	14	17
Citizens' Advice Bureau					2	4	0	2
Health Visitors/surgeries					6	8	13	7
R.E.A.P. (Resettlement Agency)					1	3	3	1
Other agencies					2	16	15	12
Self referrals					6	5	7	4

## Appendix G. Schedule of Individual Allotments under the 1817 Award

Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
<b>As Lord of the Manor - Manorial Rights</b>					
John Blagrave			34.3.10	Workhouse Common	
<b>For the Poor</b>					
		1	9.1.2	adjacent to the Workhouse	
		2	3.2.35	Kentwood Common, near the Swilly	
		3	15.2.0	Kentwood Common, near Harmoor	
<b>To the Surveyor of Highways for Gravel, Stone and Clay Pits</b>					
		1	1.2.16	Kentwood Common near Shallow Corner	
		2	0.2.8	Kentwood Common by Oxford Lane	
		3	0.1.14	Theale Meadow	
<b>To the Surveyor of Highways for Public Watering Places</b>					
		1	0.0.2	near Kentwood Farm	
		2	0.1.20		
		3	0.0.28	Workhouse Common	
		4	0.0.16	Horn Castle	
		5	0.0.14	Church End Lane	
<b>Following Purchase by Auction</b>					
John Sherwood of Aldermaston		1	10.0.0	by the Pangbourne Road	£720
		2	10.0.0	near Kentwood Farm	£520
		3	10.0.0	by the road leading to Westwood Row, opposite Atkinson's Barn	£540
		4	18.0.0	by the Chalk Pit	£800
		5	12.0.0	near Harmer Ponds	£610
		6	10.0.0	near Harmer, including the Cricket Ground	£630

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
		7	10.0.0	near Westwood Row	£860
		8	13.2.0	adjoining No. 7 above.	£610
<b>Following Purchase by Private Contract</b>					
William Watlington			5.0.16	Kentwood Common	£250
Anthony Gilbert Storer		1	1.1.8	Kentwood Common	£72 6s.
		2	0.1.17	Kentwood Common	
William Bartholemew			0.2.2	Kentwood Common	£21 15s.
<b>In Exchange for the Extinction of Rights and Interests</b>					
Allen's Charity		1	6.2.38	Blackham Field	
		2	1.1.8	Curlham Field by the Bath Road	
		3	4.1.16	Calcot	
		4	0.1.14	Calcot or Cuckolds Row	
		5	2.0.32	Kentwood Common	
Richard Allen			0.1.16	Theale Mead	
William Avery			0.0.30	adjoining the Cottage and garden on Workhouse Common	
Atkins Edwin Martin Atkins Esq.		1	0.1.26	Theale Meadow	
		2	1.3.20	Theale Meadow	
		3	8.2.32	Crown Piece in Theale Meadow.	
		4	0.1.35	near the Roe Buck	
		5	4.1.8	Kentwood Common	
John Blagrave Esq.		1	14.2.0	Westwood Row Field	
		2	27.1.38	Calcot Field and Calcot meadow	
		3	2.1.6	Theale Mead	
		4	25.0.1	Langley Meadow	
		5	0.0.32	Horn Castle	
		6	0.0.30	adjoining his kitchen garden	
		7	0.0.16	Park Lane adjoining his old inclosure	
		8	3.2.12	Workhouse Common	



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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price		
		9	0.1.8	Church End Lane			
		10	0.1.12	Church End Lane			
		11	3.1.27	Calcot Green			
		12	4.1.35	Calcot Green			
		13	0.2.16	Calcot Green			
		14	0.1.5	West Lodge by the Bath Road			
		15	0.0.24	Calcot Row			
		16	0.0.16	Langley Lane			
		17	1.1.34	Theale Green			
		18	0.0.20	Little Heath			
		19	3.2.3	Workhouse Common			
		20	0.2.16	near Hall Place			
		21	0.0.24	Kentwood Common near Symond's shop			
		22	3.3.0	Little Heath			
		23	10.3.18	Workhouse Common			
		24	17.2.4	Workhouse Common			
		25	0.0.20	Workhouse Common			
		26	0.0.14	Workhouse Common			
		27	0.3.8	Kentwood Common near Kentwood Rd			
		28	0.0.16	Beansheaves			
		29	1.1.30	Shallow Corner			
		30	1.1.38	Langley Mead			
		31	1.1.20	Calcot Moor			
		Richard Powlett Wrighte Benyon Esq.		1	7.0.32	Theale Meadow	
				2	0.1.24	Green Lane by the Bath Road	
				3	1.2.37	Widmore Common	
				4	4.0.12	Little Heath	
		William Bartholemew			7.0.2	Kentwood Common adjoining Kentwood Rd	
		George Botham			0.2.22	Theale Green	

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
... Beard		1	1.2.4	Norcott Meadow	
		2	0.0.32	Kentwood Common	
John Biggs			0.1.11	Kentwood Common near Harmoor	
Heirs or devisees of John Butler deceased			0.0.19	Theale Green	
Richard Beckley			0.0.18	Kentwood Common	
John Beckingham			0.0.37	Workhouse Common	
Seymour Beckingham			0.0.15	Workhouse Common	
William Brunson		1	0.0.14	by Workhouse Common	
		2	0.1.0	Workhouse Common	
Charles Burton			0.0.35	Langley Lane	
Richard Crockford			0.1.18	Kentwood Common adjoining Kentwood Rd	
George Henry Crutchley Esq.		1	15.2.11	Westwood Row Field	
		2	1.1.24	Spire Meadow	
		3	0.1.24	by Souch's	
		4	0.0.8	Church End Lane	
		5	0.1.6	Kentwood Common near Oxford Lane	
		6	0.1.20	Kentwood Common near Kentwood House	
		7	2.3.6	Kentwood Common opposite Kentwood House	
		8	1.0.30	Kentwood Common near the Red Barn	
		9	1.0.17	Norcott	
The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Reading		1	18.2.10	Theale Mead	
		2	5.1.30	Little Heath	
John Creswell			0.1.5	Workhouse Common	
James Draper			1.1.32	Theale Mead	
James Farrow			3.0.2	Kentwood Common	
Thomas Fulbrook			0.0.20	Theale Green	
Edward Fromont		1	1.1.28	Theale Meadow	
		2	0.0.28	Lotmore Green	
Ambrose Gardiner Esq.			0.0.2	Kentwood Common	

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
Ann Griffin			0.1.5	Kentwood Common near the Red Barn	
William Ham		1	2.2.4	Theale Mead	
		2	0.2.24	Theale Green	
William Simonds Higgs			1.0.6	Kentwood Common	
... Hasket			0.1.8	Workhouse Common	
Richard Hemmings			0.2.10	by Kentwood Common	
Charles Hamblin			0.3.2	Kentwood Common near Purley Lane	
John Henwood			0.0.28	Kentwood Common at Westwood Row	
Heir and devisee of John Horn deceased		1	5.0.18	Theale Mead	
		2	3.2.16	Tilehurst Common	
David Higham			0.3.10	Play Plott	
James Ilsley		1	0.2.36	Westwood Row Field	
		2	6.1.30	Norcot Meadow	
		3	5.0.2	Kentwood Common, East of the Gutter	
George Ilsley			0.1.4	Kentwood Common near the Red Barn	
Francis and Thomas Ilsley			0.1.6	Kentwood Common	
William Justice		1	1.2.2	Kentwood Common	
		2	1.3.18	Norcott Mead	
Elizabeth Justice		1	0.2.12	Westwood Row Field	
		2	0.1.35	Kentwood Common	
		3	0.1.20	Westwood Row Field	
William Keep			9.3.4	Theale Mead	
Elizabeth Keep		1	5.0.2	Theale Mead and the Ham	
		2	6.0.4	North Street	
John Englebert Liebenrood Esq.		1	16.3.32	Lewdham Field	
		2	13.2.10	Langley Mead	
		3	4.0.10	Cockney Hill Common	
		4	3.0.10	Cockney Hill Common	
		5	0.1.6	Pegs Green	

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
		6	21.3.2	Kentwood Common near Harmoor	
		7	0.1.30	Sulham Lane	
		8	0.0.20	Sulham Lane	
		9	0.1.4	Honey End Lane	
John Loader		1	4.0.19	Westwood Row Field	
		2	1.2.3	Kentwood Common	
James Lainchbury			0.1.4	Little Heath	
Mary Lovegrove		1	1.0.37	Workhouse Common	
		2	0.1.8	Westwood Row	
William Lyford			0.1.5	Tilehurst Common	
Peter Lovegrove		1	1.0.25	Theale Mead	
		2	0.0.4	Theale Green	
The Honorable Jane Maitland and her Trustees		1	3.0.3	Calcot Moor	
		2	4.0.6	Kentwood Common near Harmoor	
William May and Elizabeth his wife and Mary Lyne		1	6.0.10	Calcot Mill	
		2	0.3.26	Calcot Green	
The Trustees of the estate of Mr. James May deceased		1	4.3.0	Theale and Langley Meads	
		2	3.1.0	Little Heath	
Francis Marshall			0.3.30	Workhouse Common	
Moses Marshall			0.1.12	Little Heath	
Richard Palmer		1	1.0.35	Theale or Lotmore Green	
		2	1.1.28	Theale Mead	
Jane Parr			0.1.4	Kentwood Common near Harmoor	
Richard Povey			0.1.6	Workhouse Common	
Thomas Price			0.1.36	Lotmore Green	
Philip Lybbe Powys Esq and Francis Loader his lessee for lives		1	4.2.16	Cockney Hale Field	
		2	2.3.18	Langley Meadow	
The Reverend Martin Joseph Routh Doctor of Divinity		1	0.0.20	near Tilehurst Church	
		2	2.3.18	Kentwood Common	

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
William Stone		1	12.3.4	Theale Mead	
		2	1.1.18	Theale Green	
		3	1.0.14	Bath Road near Green Lane	
		4	0.0.15	adjoining Rixons Cottage	
Ambrose Serle Esq.			1.0.12	Kentwood Common	
The Reverend Henry Stevens			7.3.0	Theale Mead	
Thomas Stacey			0.1.6	Workhouse Common	
Francis Simmonds			0.1.19	Kentwood Common	
William Steadman			0.1.4	Kentwood Common	
Caleb Stacey			0.1.8	Kentwood Common	
Solomon Smith			0.1.8	Kentwood Common	
Anthony Gilbert Storer Esq.			1.1.12	Kentwood Common	
Jesse Stevens			1.3.14	Theale Mead	
The Right Honorable Charles Earl of Shrewsbury		1	6.1.37	Langley Mead	
		2	0.1.12	Kentwood Common	
Richard Taylor		1	0.0.20	Kentwood Common near Har Moor	
		2	0.1.14	Kentwood Common	
		3	0.3.10	Kentwood Common near Kentwood Farm	
Jonathan Tanner			3.3.28	Theale Mead	
William Thoyts Esq.			3.0.18	Theale Mead	
John Webb		1	8.0.10	Sandfield	
		2	0.3.5	Sandfield	
		3	1.3.16	Westwood Row Field	
		4	12.3.39	Norcot Meadow	
		5	6.3.10	Langley Mead	
		6	2.1.14	Langley Mead	
		7	0.0.18	Cockney Hill	
		8	0.0.32	Norcot Mead Lane by Pangbourne Road	
		9	0.1.17	by the road from Church End to Norcott	

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price	
		10	0.2.32	Hill Pond		
		11	0.0.24	Langley Lane		
		12	3.0.8	Workhouse Common		
		(includes 7a. 1r. 14p. as tenant in possession of the satisfaction of Lands Grounds and Rights and other Interests claimed by Arthur Blundell Sandys Trumbull Marquis of Downshire)				
Robert Webb		1	17.0.12	Curlham Field		
		2	1.1.0	Spire Mead		
		3	4.0.18	Bartholomew's Mead		
		4	7.1.30	Calcot Moor		
		5	0.0.10	Horn Castle		
		6	0.0.25	Worlds End		
		7	4.0.24	Kentwood Common		
Mrs. Ann Webb		1	5.0.18	Sandfield		
		2	4.1.2	Theale Mead		
The Warden and Fellows of Winchester College		1	6.2.6	Cockney Hale Field		
		2	0.2.30	Calcot Moor		
		3	3.3.5	Kentwood Common		
		4	2.3.32	Kentwood Common		
William Watlington		1	2.3.38	Cockney Hale Field		
		2	1.2.16	Westwood Row Field		
		3	15.2.4	Westwood Row Field		
		4	13.0.30	Westwood Row Field (the Dean)		
<b>Exchanges</b>						
Anthony Gilbert Storer	John Blagrave		2.1.19	Long Pightle		
John Blagrave	Anthony Gilbert Storer		2.0.8	Westwood Row Field		
William May, his wife Elizabeth and Mary Lyne	John Blagrave		0.3.7	adjoining May's Homestall		
John Blagrave	William May and others		0.3.7	Calcot Green		

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Name (1)	Name (2) for exchanges	No.	Area (a.r.p.)	Location	Price
Richard Webb	John Blagrave		0.0.26	Holy Brook by Calcot	
John Blagrave	Richard Webb		0.1.3	Calcot Green	
Thomas Humphries	John Blagrave		0.0.22	adjoining Humphries' Homestall	
John Blagrave	Thomas Humphries		0.1.6	Workhouse Common	
Ann Webb	John Blagrave	6 parcels	20.0.31	Hole Piddle, Lamb Ground, Cross Lane Ground	
John Blagrave	Ann Webb	4 parcels	21.3.17	Oxlade Ground, Curtins Piddle, Upper Olivers	
Richard Powlett Wrighte Benyon	William Thoyts			all William Thoyt's allotment	
William Thoyt	Richard Benyon		2.1.0	land at Sulhamstead	
Atkins Martin Edward Atkins	Richard Benyon		14.1.2	Theale Mead and Englefield Mead	
Richard Benyon	Atkins Atkins		15.3.18	Long Close, Widmore Close	
Ann Webb	John Englebert Liebenrood		5.3.38	Langley Meadow	
John Liebenrood	Ann Webb		10.0.30	Kentwood Common	
Elizabeth Keep	Richard Benyon		0.1.20	Little Heath	
Richard Benyon	Elizabeth Keep			land at Englefield	
John Harden	John Blagrave			Cottages and tenements with gardens in the occupation of William Ilsley and Ann Thatcher.	
John Blagrave	John Harden			Cottage tenement and garden now in the occupation of John Harden at Calcot Green.	

## Appendix H. Notes on Locations named in the 1817 Award

Most of the Meads and Meadows were in the Holy Brook and Kennet Valley but some, like Norcott Mead, were by the Thames.

<u>Location in 1817 Award</u>	<u>Current name/location</u>
Bartholemew's Mead.....	South of the Holy Brook, adjoining Spire Mead.
Calcot Moor .....	South of Bartholemew's Mead.
Cockney Hale Field.....	Adjacent to Westwood Row Field.
Curlham Field .....	South of Calcot Row.
Harmoor .....	A hamlet to the West of Lower Armour Road.
Kentwood Common.....	Much of the area to the North of Westwood Road, almost to the Oxford Road in the North, and from East of Kentwood Hill to the boundary of Purley in the West.
Kentwood House / Farm .....	On Kentwood Hill, opposite the bottom of Armour Hill.
Langley Mead .....	By the Kennet, at Arrowhead in Theale.
Lewdham Field .....	Off Long Lane, Ridgemount Close and Conifer Drive.
Little Heath .....	East of Little Heath Road, at the Halls Farm end.
Lotmore Green.....	South of the Bath Road, to the West of Theale.
Norcott Mead(ow).....	On the Thames, near Scours Lane.
Oxford Lane .....	The part of Kentwood Hill below Oak Tree Road.
Oxlades .....	Behind the West Lodge of Calcot Park.
The Red Barn .....	Near the Triangle.
The Roe Buck .....	A public house on the Oxford Road, near Tilehurst Station.
Sandfield (Sandy Field) .....	North of the Bath Road between Calcot Row and Beansheaf.
Spire Mead.....	Between Curlham Field and the Holy Brook.
Theale Mead.....	South of Theale Village.
Tilehurst Common .....	Old maps show this on either side of Halls Road and Firs Road, probably also known as Workhouse Common, but the allotments given as being on Tilehurst Common are on Kentwood Hill.
Westwood Row .....	Along the line of Overdown Road.
Westwood Row Field.....	Near Westwood Row, extending toward Purley.
Workhouse Common .....	Between Halls Road and Mayfair, and also on the other side of Langley Hill, and on the other side of Halls Road. This is probably the same common named as Tilehurst Common on some maps.



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