

Human settlement here dates as far back as the Bronze Age and the Roman era, but the village as we know it today took shape in Medieval times, earning a mention in the Domesday Book of 1086.

The name Eydon is believed to derive from the Old English word "dun", meaning hill, reflecting its elevated position on a Jurassic ridge. The surrounding landscape of undulating hills and fertile farmland drove the growth of a rural economy in and around Eydon over the centuries. Traces have been found of a Saxon hamlet and a Roman roadway, but the current layout of two parallel streets linked by cross lanes probably dates from the 11th or 12th centuries.



With a Norman church and a manor house at the southern end, the village expanded from a cluster of cottages, crafted from honey-coloured local stone, to include a more diverse architecture of brick-built chapels and workshops. Most of the roof thatch was eventually replaced by slate or tile, brought first by canal and later by rail. But even as the economy evolved, Eydon remained off the beaten track, skirted a few miles away by the railways and reached only along relatively quiet byroads or a lane from the nearby Canons Ashby estate.



Its peaceful setting and historic buildings combine to create a sense that time, at least in part, has stood still in this quiet corner of England.

Visitor information



Eydon - postcode NN11 3PP - is around 2 miles west of the National Trust property of Canons Ashby and around 10 miles from its nearest towns, Banbury and Daventry.

The map inside this leaflet takes visitors on an easy route around the village that should take around 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the walking pace.

This information was provided by the Eydon Historical Research Group, which acts as a custodian of the village heritage. To find out more about the group's published booklets or to arrange a bespoke tour or talk, visit www.eydonhistoricalresearchgroup.org and use the "contact us" link.



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Village map design - Emily Banner

Eydon



Explore a historic hilltop village
in rural south Northamptonshire



Take a heritage walk around this picturesque village, where rows of ironstone cottages and other architectural landmarks tell a story of centuries of life in the English countryside.

Map inside



Eydon Village Guide Map

Eydon first appears in the Domesday Book survey of 1086. The later layout of the village with its two parallel streets is still very clear and a large number of houses are protected by "listing". We are fortunate in knowing much about the more recent history, which was first documented by a local author and later researched and recorded by the Eydon Historical Research Group.



Great Fires

Eydon has suffered two great fires, the first near the Royal Oak in August 1651. The second, in May 1905, started near the village green and spread along the east side of the High Street as far as the present Village Hall, destroying 11 cottages mostly owned by Eydon Hall Estate.



Eydon Reading Rooms

King George V visited Eydon during an extensive military training exercise in Sept 1913. He took refreshments in the Eydon Reading Rooms (now known as Wakelyn Manor).



The Forge

Winston Churchill also visited Eydon during the exercises and had his horse re-shod at the forge in Blacksmiths Lane.



The Royal Oak

The current Royal Oak was run by Annie Bricknell for over 50 years in the mid-20th C. She was a formidable business woman who owned a lot of land in and around Eydon, so there was a ready supply of fresh food even during wartime rationing.



The Village Hall

The Village Hall was built in 1926 on land made vacant in the 1905 fire. There was some opposition to the idea in the village so the land was bought discreetly by someone from Cropredy. The hall was built by local builders F C Kench using concrete blocks made with gravel from a pit off Moreton Road.



Lime Avenue Houses

The houses 11 to 29 Lime Avenue were built for Brackley Rural District Council in 1952/3 and won architectural awards at the time. Flats at 7-9 and 31-33 were built to match in 1964/5 by T Kench.



Places of Worship

During earlier times Eydon supported four places of worship, the church itself with 13th C origins, a 17th C Quaker meeting room (since demolished) in Lime Avenue and 19th C Methodist and Moravian chapels in the High Street (now converted to houses).



The Slaughter House

Like many villages, Eydon had its own slaughter house, situated in the High Street. It retains some of its original equipment and has recently been restored to operate as a wine shop.



Shops & Businesses

Many of the former Eydon shops or businesses are not so easily found, but the sites of several post offices, shops, laundries, bakers, tailors, a builder's yard, a coach company, an animal medicine maker and farms or farmyards are known.



Village School

The former Village School in School Lane was designed by Henry Dryden of Canons Ashby and paid for by the Annesley's of Eydon Hall. Opened in 1854 and closed in July 1968, it is identified by the Dryden crest over the door.



Eydon Stocks & Water Pump

On the Village Green can be found an old water pump and the Eydon stocks. The pump provided water both before and alongside the system of taps. Like most early pumps it is made of lead whose poisonous properties were not understood until much more recently. The stocks were installed in 1825 for £6. 15s. 6d and were last used for a veteran of Waterloo who enjoyed rather too much beer.



Rectories

Eydon has had three Rectories for St Nicholas Church. The first at Rectory Farm was certainly convenient for the church and old photos show a path behind Manor Farm and through the wall into the churchyard. The second at The Elms in Lime Avenue was a very grand affair in its day, and the third just out of the village on the Culworth Road is perhaps a typical Victorian rectory.



Eydon Hall

In the past many of the cottages and much of the farmland was owned by Eydon Hall. The Hall itself is Grade 1 listed and located beyond the church, its North Lodge gatehouse can be seen from the Green.

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