

= Uxbridge =

Uxbridge ( / ʊksbrɪdʒ / ) is a town in west London , England , and the administrative headquarters of the London Borough of Hillingdon . Fifteen miles ( 24 @. @ 1 km ) west @-@ northwest of Charing Cross , it is one of the major metropolitan centres identified in the London Plan . Uxbridge historically formed part of the parish of Hillingdon in the county of Middlesex , and was a significant local commercial centre from an early time . As part of the suburban growth of London in the 20th century it expanded and increased in population , becoming a municipal borough in 1955 , and has formed part of Greater London since 1965 . It is a significant retail and commercial centre , and is the location of Brunel University and the Uxbridge campus of Buckinghamshire New University . The town is close to the boundary with Buckinghamshire , which is locally the River Colne .

Several historical events have taken place in and around the town , including attempted negotiations between King Charles I and the Parliamentary Army during the English Civil War . The public house at the centre of those events , since renamed the Crown & Treaty , still stands . Uxbridge also houses the Battle of Britain Bunker , from where the air defence of the south @-@ east of England was coordinated during the Battle of Britain . Situated in RAF Uxbridge , the No. 11 Group Operations Room within the bunker played a crucial role during the battle and was later used during the D @-@ Day landings .

The wards of Uxbridge North and Uxbridge South are used for the election of councillors to Hillingdon Council and for statistical purposes . The 2011 Census recorded population figures of 12 @, @ 048 for Uxbridge North and 13 @, @ 979 for Uxbridge South .

= = History = =

= = = Toponymy = = =

The name of the town is derived from " Wixan 's Bridge " , which was sited near the bottom of Oxford Road where a modern road bridge now stands , beside the Swan and Bottle public house . The Wixan were a 7th @-@ century Saxon tribe from Lincolnshire who also began to settle in what became Middlesex . Anglo @-@ Saxons began to settle and farm in the area of Uxbridge in the 5th century , clearing the dense woodland and remaining there for around 500 years . Two other places in Middlesex bore the name of the Wixan : Uxendon ( " Wixan 's Hill " ) , a name now preserved only in the street names of Uxendon Hill and Crescent in Harrow , and Waxlow ( " Wixan 's Wood " ) near Southall .

Archaeologists found Bronze Age remains ( before 700 BC ) and medieval remains during the construction of The Chimes shopping centre ; two miles ( 3 @. @ 2 km ) away at Denham , Upper Paleolithic remains have been found . Uxbridge is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of the 11th century , but a hundred years later the existing church , St Margaret 's , was built . The town appears in records from 1107 as " Woxbrigge " , and became part of the Elthorne Hundred with other settlements in the area .

= = = Early developments = = =

The Parliamentary Army garrisoned the town upon the outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642 and established their headquarters there in June 1647 on a line from Staines to Watford , although the king passed through Uxbridge in April 1646 , resting at the Red Lion public house for several hours . Charles I met with representatives of Parliament at the Crown Inn in Uxbridge in 1645 , but negotiations for the end of hostilities were unsuccessful due in part to the king 's stubborn attitude . The town had been chosen as it was located between the Royal headquarters at Oxford and the Parliamentary stronghold of London .

The covered market was built in 1788 , replacing a building constructed in 1561 . In the early 19th century , Uxbridge had an unsavoury reputation ; the jurist William Arabin said of its residents " They

will steal the very teeth out of your mouth as you walk through the streets . I know it from experience . " For about 200 years most of London 's flour was produced in the Uxbridge area .

The Grand Junction Canal opened in 1794 , linking Uxbridge with Birmingham . By 1800 Uxbridge had become one of the most important market towns in Middlesex , helped by its status as the first stopping point for stagecoaches travelling from London to Oxford . The development of Uxbridge declined after the opening of the Great Western Railway in 1838 , which passed through West Drayton . A branch line to Uxbridge was not built until 1904 .

Harman 's Brewery was established in Uxbridge by George Harman in 1763 , and moved into its new headquarters in Uxbridge High Street in 1875 . The eventual owners of the brewery , Courage , closed the headquarters in 1964 . It was demolished and replaced by a Budgen 's supermarket , which in turn was demolished with the construction of The Chimes shopping centre . The brewery building in George Street remained in place until it was demolished in 1967 . The office building Harman House was built on the site in 1985 , named after the brewery .

= = = Urban development = = =

The enclosure of Hillingdon Parish in 1819 saw the reduction in size of Uxbridge Common , which at its largest had been 4 miles ( 6 @. @ 4 km ) in circumference . The common originally covered both sides of Park Road to the north of the town centre but now covers 15 acres ( 6 @. @ 1 ha ) .

In 1871 the town 's first purpose @-@ built police station was built in Windsor Street . The building included three cells and stables . The Metropolitan Police continued to use the building until 1988 , when operations moved to a new site in Harefield Road . The building subsequently became the Old Bill public house in 1996 , renamed the Fig Tree in 2006 .

In the early 1900s the Uxbridge and District Electricity Supply Company had been established in Waterloo Road , and much of the town was connected by 1902 , although some houses still had gas lighting in 1912 . A water tower on Uxbridge Common was built in 1906 , resembling a church tower , to improve the supply to the town .

Wood panelling from a room in the Crown & Treaty public house was sold in 1924 to an American businessman , who installed it in his office in the Empire State Building in New York . It was returned in 1953 as a gift to the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II and returned to the house , although the monarch retained ownership .

On 31 August 1935 Uxbridge Lido , an outdoor swimming pool built in the " Moderne " or Art Deco style , was officially opened . Before the opening , many residents swam in a section of the Frays River near Harefield Road , and the Colne . The pool , pavilion building , entrance building and both fountains were designated Grade II listed buildings in 1998 . Despite the listing , the pool was closed to the public and the buildings became subject to heavy vandalism . Uxbridge open @-@ air pool was fully refurbished during 2009 and re @-@ opened in May 2010 . Added to the site , now named Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex , is a 50 m indoor competition pool , a leisure pool , a 100 @-@ station gym , a wide range of exercise classes , an athletics stadium and track , 3G floodlit pitches , a sports hall , a café and a crèche . The Grade II listed buildings are still standing .

During the Second World War Uxbridge adopted the Royal Navy destroyer HMS Intrepid in 1942 , to help towards the ship 's costs ; Intrepid was lost to enemy action the following year . The town and surrounding areas suffered bombing by the Luftwaffe . V1 flying bombs fell on the town between June 1944 and March 1945 . The first recorded bombing using a V1 was on 22 June 1944 at 07 : 00 , when the bomb passed over the top of a bus and hit four houses nearby . Seven people were killed and 25 injured , leaving 46 houses in the area uninhabitable .

In 1958 the 199 @-@ acre ( 81 ha ) Lowe & Shawyer plant nursery to the west of RAF Uxbridge entered voluntary liquidation . The nursery had stood in Kingston Lane since 1868 , and was the largest producer of cut flowers in the country . Demolition work began in 1962 , and the construction of Brunel University commenced . Chrysanthemums are included the coat of arms of the Borough of Uxbridge in memory of the nursery . The Uxbridge ( Vine Street ) railway branch line , which partly ran alongside the site , was closed in 1964 and in 1966 the university opened , purchasing the land where the railway had run from the local council for £ 65 @, @ 000 .

Uxbridge Cricket Club moved from Cricketfield Road in 1971 to make way for the new Civic Centre . The club had been at Cricketfield Road since 1858 , but moved to a new site on part of Uxbridge Common on Park Road . The Market Square shopping precinct in the town centre was built in the late 1970s , but its lack of shelter made it unpopular and it did not attract the expected levels of custom . Many buildings along the High Street and Windsor Street had been demolished to make way for the new precinct , which was eventually sold to the Prudential Assurance Company and redeveloped with a roof in the early 1980s to become the Pavilions Shopping Centre . The Peacock public house in one of the two main squares was demolished and replaced with a café named The Chequers , which remains . Rayner 's pharmacy shop was also demolished during the Market Square development , although the shopfront was saved by the Museum of London and is held in storage .

The Chimes shopping centre was built beside Uxbridge station in 2001 , incorporating many of the existing buildings into the new structure . The centre was originally to be named St George 's Centre in plans dating back to the early 1990s , though this name was eventually taken by another shopping centre in Harrow on the Hill . Instead , The Chimes was said to refer to the sound of the bells from the nearby market house on the High Street . An Odeon cinema opened as a major part of the centre , with the smaller cinema at the opposite end of the High Street closing . Some houses on Chippendale Way and the St George 's car park were demolished to allow for the construction of the new shopping centre car park . The offices of the local building company Fassnidge were also included in the new development ; built in the 19th century , they now house a Pizza Express restaurant . Preserved timber from earlier demolished buildings in Uxbridge was used in the construction of a new building beside the former offices of Fassnidge , designed to resemble a much older structure .

In 2002 the dry ski slope near Park Road and the Uxbridge Lido was closed and the remaining buildings and structures removed . The Hillingdon Ski Centre had been subject to several arson attacks during 2001 and the company operating it became insolvent . The slope , which had been built in 1977 , was left to return to nature .

Work began in 2008 to extensively refurbish and extend Uxbridge Lido , and it reopened to the public in February 2010 as the Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex . On 8 September 2010 the 75th anniversary of the first opening of the Lido was celebrated at the pool .

= = Government = =

Uxbridge originally formed a chapelry within the parish of Hillingdon . It was split off as a separate civil parish in 1866 , and became part of the Uxbridge Urban District under the Local Government Act 1894 . In 1955 the urban district council successfully petitioned for a charter of incorporation and became a municipal borough . This remained until 1965 , when the borough was incorporated into the new London Borough of Hillingdon . Within the borough , Uxbridge is split into two wards : Uxbridge North and Uxbridge South . Each is served by three Conservative Party councillors .

Uxbridge had its own parliamentary constituency until boundary changes at the 2010 general election meant it became part of the Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency . Uxbridge and South Ruislip is represented by Boris Johnson MP , of the Conservative Party . He took over from John Randall in 2015 , who was first elected to represent Uxbridge in a 1997 by @-@ election after the sitting MP , Sir Michael Shersby , died shortly after the 1997 general election .

= = Geography = =

Uxbridge lies at a mean elevation of 130 feet ( 40 m ) above mean sea level . Like much of the rest of the UK its climate is generally temperate , with few extremes of temperature or weather .

The landscape upon which the settlement of Uxbridge was established is largely unchanged from the Mesolithic era . Much of it was covered by oak and elm trees , which were gradually cleared by early settlers . An archaeological excavation by the Museum of London in the 1990s found evidence of flint items shaped by Mesolithic hunters , as well as various animal bones and traces of charcoal

from the remains of campfires .

The River Pinn runs through Uxbridge , passing through the former site of RAF Uxbridge and the grounds of Brunel University . It joins the Frays River , which branches off from the River Colne and acts as the boundary between Uxbridge and the neighbouring county of Buckinghamshire .

## == Demography ==

The approximate population figure for Uxbridge North was recorded in 2009 by the Office for National Statistics as 11 @, @ 812 , and 11 @, @ 887 in Uxbridge South . The majority of residents in Uxbridge North were white , with 85 % categorised , against 79 % for the entire borough of Hillingdon . Uxbridge South also had a majority of white residents , matching the borough figure . In both wards , the remaining percentage was made up of mixed @-@ race , Asian or Asian British , Black or Black British , and Chinese or other ethnic groups . Of the two wards , Uxbridge South had a higher percentage of black and Chinese residents , when compared with the borough .

By the 2011 Census , the population of Uxbridge had reached 12 @, @ 048 in Uxbridge North and 13 @, @ 979 in Uxbridge South . The most common ethnic group remained white in Uxbridge North , measured as 69 @. @ 8 % , followed by Asian or Asian British ( 19 @. @ 5 % ) and Black or Black British ( 4 @. @ 1 % ) . The remaining percentage was made up of mixed @-@ race and other unspecified ethnic groups . White was also the most common ethnic group in Uxbridge South , measured as 62 @. @ 1 % , followed by Asian or Asian British ( 22 @. @ 6 % ) , Black or Black British ( 7 @. @ 3 % ) and mixed @-@ race ( 4 @. @ 3 % ) . The remaining percentage was made up of other unspecified ethnic groups .

In terms of employment , Uxbridge North had a larger number of residents employed in managerial roles , when measured during the 2001 census . The majority of residents in Uxbridge South were categorised as " not classifieds " .

The life expectancy for men is 77 in Uxbridge North , compared with 74 in Uxbridge South . The figures for women are 83 in Uxbridge North and 81 in Uxbridge South .

## == Religion ==

In the 2011 census , 72 @. @ 8 % of residents in the Uxbridge North ward answered that they had a religion , compared with 19 @. @ 3 % who did not and 7 @. @ 9 % who did not answer . Of those who answered , 53 % identified as Christian , followed by 6 @. @ 7 % who identified as Muslim and 6 @. @ 2 % as Sikh . The percentage identifying as Hindu was 5 @. @ 4 % . Figures for residents identifying as either Jewish , Buddhist or other unspecified religions were each below 1 % .

Within the Uxbridge South ward , 69 @. @ 2 % of residents answered that they had a religion , compared with 23 @. @ 8 % who did not and 7 % who did not answer . As with Uxbridge North , the majority ( 46 @. @ 4 % ) identified as Christian , followed by 13 @. @ 4 % who identified as Muslim and 5 % as Hindu . The percentage identifying as Sikh was 2 @. @ 3 % and those identifying as Buddhist were 1 @. @ 2 % . Figures for residents identifying as either Jewish or other unspecified religions were each below 1 % .

## === Churches ===

### ==== St Margaret 's Church ====

This is the original parish church of Uxbridge , and one of the oldest buildings in the town . Located in Windsor Street , it is known to have existed since at least 1245 , when a series of hearings took place there in which the Abbot of Bec in Normandy brought an action against the rector of Great Wrattling in Suffolk for non @-@ payment of tithes . On parchments kept at St. George 's Chapel , Windsor , in connection with this event , St. Margaret 's is mentioned by name , and there are several other references between 1245 and 1247 to the " chapel at Uxbridge " .

The oldest portion of the existing building is part of the north tower , which was built in the late 14th century . The north aisle , together with the nave and its arcades , dates from the early 15th century , while the south aisle , with its fine hammer @-@ beam roof , was added about 1450 . The carved stone font was placed in the church soon afterwards , dating from about 1480 .

For most of its history , St Margaret 's served as a chapel @-@ of @-@ ease to St John the Baptist 's Church in Hillingdon ; it was not until 1827 that it was given its own parish .

= = = St Andrew 's Church = = =

By the 1850s the population of both Hillingdon and Uxbridge was beginning to rise . With new housing being built between the two centres the then Vicar of Hillingdon , the Rev Richard Croft ( 1856 ? 69 ) gained permission to build a new church in the area , sometimes referred to as Hillingdon West . He asked the well @-@ known architect Sir George Gilbert Scott :

" to draw up plans to build a church without unnecessary ornament but in handsome proportions suitable to its position at the entrance to Uxbridge Town ... "

Scott produced his plans and local Uxbridge builder William Fassnidge was employed to construct the church . On St Peter ? s Day , 29 June 1864 , the foundation stone was laid at the south end of the chancel arch by the Lord Bishop of London , Archibald Campbell Tait . He returned less than a year later to consecrate and open the church on the feast of SS Philip and James , 1 May 1865 .

The spire was completed the following year . Together with the bells , vestry and organ and other embellishments , the cost of the building , located in Hillingdon Road , was some £ 12 @,@ 000 .

= = = Church of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael = = =

After St Margaret 's turned Protestant in the 16th century , there was no official Roman Catholic place of worship in Uxbridge until the late 19th century , following the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act . In 1892 Father Michael Aloysius Wren bought a presbytery at 37 Lawn Road , next to which a temporary church was built of corrugated iron , dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael . St Mary ? s School was also founded on Rockingham Road at this time . Fr Wren was helped by his nephew John , who acted as his assistant priest . They covered an extensive area , including the modern Catholic parishes of Ruislip and Hillingdon .

The mission grew from strength to strength and by 1907 the congregation numbered 150 , with school attendance at 60 . In time plans were made for a larger , more permanent church . This was the brainchild of Father Thomas Moloney , who bought the current presbytery and acquired the land that stood at the back so that a church could be built . The foundation stone was eventually laid on Low Sunday 1931 by Archbishop Alban Goodier , an English Jesuit who had been Archbishop of Bombay between 1919 and 1926 . The new church , in Oxford Road , was designed by the diocesan architect , T. H. B. Scott . It was built of brick in the Romanesque style , seating 350 . The church was built quickly and opened by Cardinal Bourne on 29th September 1931 . It was officially consecrated on 14 May 1936 , after its debts were cleared .

= = Economy = =

Uxbridge has two shopping centres , The Pavilions and Intu Uxbridge ( formerly The Chimes ) . Much of the town centre is pedestrianised . Just off the High Street is Windsor Street , a short road populated by older shops . A notable landmark on the road is Randalls , the Art Deco style former department store owned by the family of the former MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip , John Randall . The present store was constructed in 1939 on the site of another that had been built in 1900 . It was awarded Grade II listed status in October 2008 . The store closed in January 2015 following a decline in trade .

The town centre consists of retail outlets and a number of office buildings , including the main European offices of international companies such as Canon , PricewaterhouseCoopers , Apple , WMS Gaming , Unisys , Kuehne + Nagel , PAREXEL , Xerox , Arri , Bristol @-@ Myers Squibb ,

Monster Energy , APL , Herbalife Europe and Anixter International . Other employers include NetApp , IBB Solicitors , F. Hinds , The Coca @-@ Cola Company , Coca @-@ Cola Enterprises , General Mills and Nexen . Cadbury plc moved its head office to Uxbridge from Mayfair in January 2008 . The company announced the plan in 2007 as part of efforts to cut costs .

Within the borough of Hillingdon , 55 @. @ 1 % of residents travel to the Uxbridge North and Uxbridge South wards to work , and only 8 % of residents working there also live within the wards . The 2001 census measured a total of 6 @, @ 007 ( 35 @. @ 9 % ) of residents leaving the North ward to go to work . Uxbridge South had a figure of 5 @, @ 666 ( 26 @. @ 5 % ) of residents leaving the ward to work elsewhere .

= = Education = =

Primary schools in Uxbridge include Hermitage Primary School , St Andrew 's Church of England Primary School , St Mary 's Catholic Primary School , Whitehall Infant School , and Whitehall Junior School . Uxbridge High School is a comprehensive secondary school in the town .

Uxbridge is also home to Brunel University and the Buckinghamshire New University 's nursing campus . The main campus of Uxbridge College is also in the town .

= = Transport = =

Uxbridge tube station is the western terminus for branches of the Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines of the London Underground . The station , built in 1933 , is fronted by a pedestrian high street and is connected to a bus terminus with connections to Hillingdon , Hayes , Ealing , Ruislip , and Slough .

There were once two railway stations : Uxbridge Vine Street ( originally just Uxbridge Station ) and Uxbridge High Street . Both were planned to be linked , hence High Street ending on a half @-@ built bridge . High Street closed to passengers as a war economy and never reopened . Despite having the most intensive service , the Vine Street line was one of the first Western Region urban branches to close under the Beeching axe . Uxbridge Belmont Road was the first underground station , built slightly outside the town centre to allow for a possible extension to High Wycombe . This was subsequently replaced by the current station .

The B483 road connects the centre of Uxbridge with the Swakeleys Roundabout junction of the A40 . Uxbridge is also connected by major roads to Slough , Denham , Ickenham , Cowley , Iver Heath , Hillingdon Heath and Hayes .

The Grand Union Canal , formerly the Grand Junction Canal , connects London with Birmingham and passes immediately to the west of Uxbridge , forming part of the borough boundary . The first stretch was built in the late 18th century from Brentford to Uxbridge . Further upstream is Uxbridge Lock , and nearby is a derelict flour mill formerly owned by Allied Mills . The mill was bought in the 19th century by William King , who named it " Kingsmill " . Kingsmill continues to be used as a brand of bread by Associated British Foods .

London Buses routes 222 , 331 , 427 , 607 , A10 , U1 , U2 , U3 , U4 , U5 , U7 , U9 , U10 and N207 serve the area , alongside five non @-@ Transport for London ( TfL ) routes : First Berkshire & The Thames Valley route 58 , Green Line route 724 and Carousel Buses routes 730 , A40 and 740 .

The proposed West London Tram was postponed indefinitely by TfL in August 2007 after it was announced that the Crossrail project would be going ahead . TfL cited " an effective bus @-@ based solution " as an alternative , delivered in conjunction with local councils . Since 2013 the route has been served by the 427 , 207 , and 607 bus services .

= = Landmarks = =

= = = Civic Centre = = =

The London Borough of Hillingdon 's Civic Centre was built in Uxbridge High Street in 1973 , as part

of an effort to unite the services of the council , which had formed in 1965 with the merger of the Municipal Borough of Uxbridge , Ruislip @-@ Northwood Urban District , Hayes and Harlington Urban District and Yiewsley and West Drayton Urban District . Before the new building was completed , council services had been spread throughout Uxbridge and the rest of the borough and various buildings , as a result of the merging of the former district councils .

Part of the original Middlesex County Council office building that stood on site was incorporated into the new Civic Centre . The centre 's clock tower is the only visible section from the old building . The Uxbridge Cricket Club Ground and Uxbridge fire station were relocated as part of the new development , which became controversial owing to its size and cost . Areas of the building , particularly the council chambers , continue to suffer from poor acoustics .

= = = Uxbridge Magistrates ' Court = = =

The original Magistrates ' Court opened in 1907 in an Edwardian style . A new building with little exterior styling opened nearby in the 1990s and legal proceedings were transferred .

= = = RAF Uxbridge , Battle of Britain Bunker and Hillingdon House = = =

Uxbridge had a Royal Air Force station , known as RAF Uxbridge , until its closure on 31 March 2010 . The station was built within the grounds of Hillingdon House , a 19th @-@ century mansion bought by the British government in 1915 , and became most famous as the home of RAF Fighter Command 's No. 11 Group Operations Room during the Battle of Britain . Fighter squadrons at airfields in the south @-@ east of England were directed from the station , which was visited by Prime Minister Winston Churchill during the battle , and other foreign leaders throughout the rest of the war .

Following the station 's closure , the replica No. 33 Squadron Supermarine Spitfire gate guardian was removed from the main entrance for restoration work and moved to the entrance of the Operations Room ( now known as the Battle of Britain Bunker ) . The area around the bunker was retained as an enclave under the RAF Uxbridge name , under the care of RAF Northolt . An additional guardian , a Hawker Hurricane in the colours of No. 303 ( Polish ) Squadron , was added to the area in November 2010 .

= = Sport and leisure = =

Uxbridge has a Non @-@ League football team , Uxbridge F.C. , which plays at Honeycroft , West Drayton . Uxbridge Cricket Club is also based in Uxbridge and is a member of the Middlesex County Cricket League , a designated ECB Premier League . Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex has recently been refurbished and contains an indoor and outdoor swimming pool , an athletic track and large sports complex . The South Korean Olympic Team used the centre for training during the 2012 Olympic Games .

= = Notable people = =

A number of notable people have lived in Uxbridge .

Christine Keeler , the 1960s model who became involved in the 1963 Profumo Affair , was born here , as was the actor , writer and director Bernard Miles ( 1907 ? 1991 ) , who attended Bishopshalt Grammar School . Also born here was the poet , novelist and illustrator Peggy Eileen Whistler ( 1909 ? 1958 ) , who used the pseudonym Margiad Evans , and John Stears ( 1934 ? 1999 ) , the Academy Award @-@ winning creator of James Bond 's Aston Martin DB5 and Star Wars robots .