

## A walk around the green

With your back to Costa Coffee, notice the Hersham Robin 'Village Sign' on the green, established by the HRA some years ago. The robin is Hersham's adopted logo. In December the Christmas tree near the sign is decorated with robin decorations made by Burhill school children - we hope to have a larger tree for them in December 2015.

Now for the walk! Turn left past the Ceramics café and cross the road into the Memorial Gardens. The memorial here commemorates 115 Hersham men who died in WW1 and 34 who died in WW2. Each year on Armistice Day a service is held here and wreaths are laid.

In old photos you will see that there used to be a large pond in the Memorial Gardens. Now walk to the far end of the gardens and you will see a plinth where a First World War German gun used to be displayed - it's now used for Hersham in Bloom's excellent plants!

The old building you can see set back from the gardens is St Peter's Church Hall and was donated to the Village by Fredrick Vaux, a local benefactor who died in 1933 - but more of him later. The Hall he donated is built in the 'arts and craft' style which was common around the turn of the last century.

Walk out of the gardens and along the Burhill Road towards the Church. Along the way notice the nursery school on the other side of the road - this used to be Hersham's main school which was built in 1842.

Just past the vicarage you will soon see the churchyard on your left. Before you get to the weeping willow, stop for a moment to look over the wall for a small white stone tablet bearing the letters IHS near the base of the yew tree. This marks the position of the altar of a previous church on this site. Nothing remains of it apart from its stained glass altar window which was relocated to the Molesey Road Baptist church.

You might like to know there is a Profumo burial vault / memorial in St Peter's Churchyard. John Profumo was a Cabinet Minister who hit the headlines in the 1960s with a very high profile sex and Russian spying scandal - look it up on Google! After that Profumo dedicated his life to good works in the community and he has a road named after him in another part of Hersham. Before you move on, have a look at the current St Peter's Church; it's a fine Victorian building and its spire has dominated the village skyline since 1887.

Back to the walk. Cross the road and take a look at the wooden sign on the corner of Burhill road and Faulkners Road. It explains that the field where the sign is positioned was donated by

Fredrick Vaux in 1933 to St Peter's Church. The field (Vauxmead) is used by Lilliput Nursery School and for occasional community events.

Mr Vaux used to live in Burwood Road, now only the old stables to the house still exist (called Claremont Cottage in Burhill Road). As you will have gathered he was an important local benefactor and did a lot for Hersham. He was affectionately known as 'Old Daddy Vaux' later in his life and distinguished himself locally by riding around the village on a tricycle. Vaux Crescent, further up Burwood Road, was named after him.

Further down Faulkners Road you will see the Guide hut and St John Ambulance building. Keep going, and look out for the large house with a decorative side porch, Mr Faulkner, who gave his name to this road used to live here. Notice the inscribed stone tablet set into the driveway that sets out the boundary of his property in 1888. He ran a small iron foundry on the land behind.

At the end of Faulkners Road the old bakery is on your left. They have maintained a connection with the past by displaying some old bakery equipment in their garden. There were several other shops here as older residents will tell you. To your left you will see the Bricklayers Arms which has been a pub in Hersham for over 100 years. It's well worth a visit, as is the San Marco restaurant on the opposite side of the Road.

Turn right at the end of Faulkners Road and start walking alongside the green in the direction of the shopping centre. The road you are walking was renamed Queens Road after Queen Victoria who used it on her way to Claremont House. Before that it was known as Common Road, because the Green used to be part of Hersham's historic common land. There was a big dispute about who should maintain it which was only settled in 1904 when the council took over.

Whilst you are walking towards the shopping centre have a look at the green on your right, and try to imagine it absolutely packed with antique fairground rides and steam driven carousels, swingboats and other really traditional fairground rides. Carters Steam Fair is rightly famous and still comes to Hersham every May.

Carry on walking towards the Watermans Arms; and you'll see the day centre on the left facing the Green. The Village Hall is tucked away behind this. In the days before the existing village hall building was put up, there was a combined village hall and working men's club which was managed by the community and was the venue for many clubs and societies. There is still a lot going on at the current village hall, as you will see if you look at the noticeboard at the main entrance.

You will now be nearing the Waterman's Arms on the left hand side which is a great community pub with an excellent function room. You will notice there is a green oval plaque on the corner outside wall of the pub which celebrates the creation of 'Sham 69' in Hersham in 1975. This was a really well known punk type band which shot to stardom in the 1980s - look it up on Youtube - and search for 'Hersham Boys' for their most famous hit.

There used to be a village pump on the green opposite the Watermans in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Roughly where the pump used to be is the wooden, 'What's on in Hersham' notice board. This was established by the HRA to commemorate the Millennium and to provide a focus for community notices. As a modern addition to this there is now also an electronic community notice board diary on the HRA website blog - why not take a look at that too?

Now cross the road and you will be back at Costa Coffee - perhaps you'll need to sit down after all that and have another cappuccino?!

***Hersham Residents Association (the HRA) is a non-political organisation established to promote Hersham and its community. Why not join us and get more involved?***

***Find out more by visiting us at:***  
***[www.hershamresidents.info/index.html](http://www.hershamresidents.info/index.html)***



## **HRA Walking Tours**

### **Walk One: The Village Green**

**Hersham is a great village with some interesting and surprising history. This walking tour around the village green conservation area will help you explore.**

**If you have more time you can try our Hersham Industrial Heritage route - see the leaflet available on the HRA website.**

There is plenty of parking available in Waitrose car park at the back of Hersham Green Shopping Centre and the first two hours are free. You might be surprised to know that this shopping centre was once the site of a large and thriving abattoir; many long term residents of Hersham can still remember animals occasionally escaping and running down local roads! Hersham Residents Association was formed to help discussions about how to redevelop the site and the surrounding area - that was back in 1971.