

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE ROAD NAMES FOR PEMBROKE PARK, EASTCOTE

by Susan Toms

When it was decided to develop the former MOD site at Lime Grove, Eastcote, which is now to be called Pembroke Park, many people were concerned that the history connected with the site would be lost and forgotten. Between 1943-1945 the site served as an outstation of Bletchley Park (see *Enigma and the Eastcote Connection*, RNELHS Journal 2005) and then it became the centre for GCHQ before its move to Cheltenham in 1954 (see *Codebreakers at Eastcote*, RNELHS Journal 2006). In fact there was still a link with the security services for several more years because a small department CESD - Communications Electronic Security Department - remained at Eastcote until the 1970s when it too finally moved to Cheltenham.

In order to record some of this history, the Society in co-operation with the Eastcote Residents Association approached the developer Taylor/Wimpey with a view to having the new roads on the site named to reflect its history. The developer was very sympathetic and in fact agreed to all the new roads and flats being named in this way, provided the names complied with Hillingdon Council's Street Naming guide lines.

The next stage was to compile a list of possible options for names together with the reasons for their inclusion. This was the initial list:

1. Russia, France, Belgium, Greece, Holland, Poland, Norway, and China.

While the site was an outstation of Bletchley Park each bay of bombe machines was named after one of these allied countries.

2. Danzig, Athens, Warsaw, Krakow, Stavanger, Zeebrugge, Canton, Hankow, Shanghai, Moscow and Avignon.

Each bay, which was named after one of the allied countries, housed approximately eight

to ten individual bombe machines, which in turn were named after cities within that allied country. So some of the names suggested were as above.

3. Wren/Wrens.

800 Wrens were stationed at Eastcote when it was an outstation of Bletchley Park.

4. Enigma.

This was the famous German code machine with which Bletchley Park and Eastcote was associated.

5. Pembroke.

The site was known as HMS Pembroke V during the war.

6. Flowers.

Thomas 'Tommy' Flowers was appointed to lead the team that designed Colossus, which was the forerunner of the modern computer. He was not employed at Eastcote but he was an employee at the nearby GPO Engineering Research Station at Dollis Hill, which had strong links with Eastcote. Former staff can recollect him working on-site at Eastcote and felt that his contribution should be recognised.

7. Colossus.

This was the first semi-programmable electronic computer which was used at Eastcote and Bletchley Park.

8. Coleridge.

This was the code name given to GCHQ's operation at Eastcote in 1946 to break ciphers which were used by the Soviet army, navy and air force on the main communication networks in the USSR.

9. Blagrove.

Edith Gordon Blagrove, later Lady Brind, was in charge at Bletchley Park of the Wrens at HMS Pembroke V and its outstations including Eastcote.

10. Cobra.

This was one of the systems used by Bletchley Park to break the German North Atlantic Naval Codes.

11. Ultra.

This was the name of the intelligence generated to save allied convoys in the Atlantic.

12. Ellis.

James Ellis was a noted crypto-mathematician who worked initially at Eastcote in the 1950s.

13. Aitken.

James Macrae Aitken was another noted mathematician associated with Bletchley Park and Eastcote during the Second World War and afterwards.

14. Welchman.

William Gordon Welchman helped to break the Enigma code with a device which revolutionised the effectiveness of the bombe machines (there were 110 bombes housed at Eastcote).

15. Yoxall.

Leslie Yoxall was an elite cryptographer who spent some time at Eastcote after the war before moving to the new headquarters of GCHQ at Cheltenham.

16. Cooper, Alexander, Denham.

Josh Cooper, Hugh Alexander, and Hugh Denham were famous code breakers who worked at Bletchley Park and transferred to Eastcote after the war to continue working for GCHQ.

17. Hooper.

Sir Leonard Hooper served at Bletchley Park and then at Eastcote as Director of GCHQ.

18. Foden.

Air Vice Marshall Arthur Foden was a senior in the CESD which remained at Eastcote until the 1970s. In fact he oversaw their move to Cheltenham when all the departments were finally brought together there. He was therefore the last Director at Eastcote.

19. Gardiner. Brigadier C.D. Gardiner was Deputy Director at Eastcote in the CESD which remained at Eastcote until the 1970s.

20. Adstock Manor, Wavendon House, Gayhurst Manor and Stanmore

These were other Bletchley Park outstations similar to Eastcote.

21. Knockholt, Cheadle, Flowerdown, Hawklaw, Cupar, Bower, Brora, Magask, Ford End, Wincombe, Beaumanor, Gilnahirk, Barnet, Poundon, Denmark Hill, Sandridge, Whitchurch, Forest Moor, Montrose, Sutton Valance and Highbridge.

These are the names of closed UK wartime wireless intercept stations, which would have been associated with Eastcote and Bletchley Park. Their inclusion was suggested by the Historian at GCHQ.

After further consultation this list was reduced to a preferred options list when we knew how many roads and flats were to be built on the site. The submitted list was approved by all involved and as a result these will be the road and flat names on the Pembroke Park estate which the developers are marketing under the name of Sandringham. As can be seen from the table below, a community hall called Enigma Hall is to be built and it is also planned to erect a memorial there to commemorate the site's historical importance. Hopefully the combination of the road names and the plaque will ensure that an important aspect of local history is not forgotten.

Pembroke Park Estate – Postal Addresses

POSTAL ADDRESSES.
1-11, Whitchurch House , 1, Wren Lane , RUISLIP, HA4 8FF.
3-7, odd & 4-12, even, Wren Lane , RUISLIP, HA4 8FJ.
1-6, Montrose Court , 2, Wren Lane , RUISLIP, HA4 8FL.
1-14, Highbridge House , 14, Wren Lane , RUISLIP, HA4 8FN.
1-10, Bower House , 1, Ellis Close , RUISLIP, HA4 8FP.
1-5, Wincombe Court , 2, Ellis Close , RUISLIP, HA4 8FR.
1-47, odd & 2-36, even Blagrove Crescent , RUISLIP, HA4 8FS.
1-11, Barnet House , 1, Aitken Close , RUISLIP, HA4 8FT.
2-5, & 7-12, Aitken Close , RUISLIP, HA4 8FW.
1-13, Pounden Court , 6, Aitken Close , RUISLIP, HA4 8FX.
1-10, Bletchley House , 1, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8FY.
1-3, Brora House , 3, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8FZ.
5-23, & 27-43, odd, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GA.
1-11, Denmark Hill House , 25, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GB.
1-10, Beaumanor House , 45, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GD.
1-6, Sandridge Court , 47, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GE.
1-26, Flowerdown Court , 2, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GF.
4-38, even, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GH.
1-4, Alexander Court , 40, Flowers Avenue , RUISLIP, HA4 8GJ.
1-5, 9-17, 23-29, 33-37 & 41, odd Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GL.
1-6, Stanmore House , 7, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GN.
1-8, Enigma Hall , 19, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GP.
1-14, Cooper House , 21, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GR.
1-12, Wavendon Court , 31, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GS.
1-16, Adstock Court , 39, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GT.
1-5, Hawklaw House , 2, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GU.
4-10, & 14-120, even, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GW.
1-6, Dollis Hill House , 12, Coleridge Drive , RUISLIP, HA4 8GX.