

GREAT MISSENDEN – A NEAR PLACE

Connections: Past, Present and Future: A large village in Buckinghamshire, SE England. Population = 10138 (2011 census). Located in the Misbourne Valley, in the Chiltern Hills, chalk escarpment. Mobwell Pond – at north end of the village = source of the River Misbourne. The river flows occasionally in winter & dries up in summer – this is called a winterbourne. Rare species live in the river – brown trout + water vole – adapted to living in winterbournes – also adapted to human use – milling, watercress beds and public water supply abstraction.



AREA OF OUTSANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) – designated an AONB in 1965 for a range of endogenous factors – natural landscape beauty, cultural heritage, steep chalk escarpment, flower meadows, woodlands, commons, tranquil valleys, villages, chalk streams, hillforts. Making it an area of national importance One of 46 AONB in the UK. **The Chilterns AONB** – 80 000 population. 2770 jobs supported by tourists to the area. Covers 833km². Economic value from tourists = £80 mill. 55 mill visits/yr. Popular for walking, cycling, horse riding.

FLORA AND FAUNA – woodlands – 2/3 are ancient woodlands (over 400 yrs old). Chilterns have the highest proportion of any similar area in the UK. The disruption to this habitat by HS2 construction would divide the woodlands and this would affect the spatial pattern of the woodlands. Hedgerows act as corridors for wildlife, allowing species to migrate + birds nesting + feeding habitats. 4000km of hedgerows in the AONB.

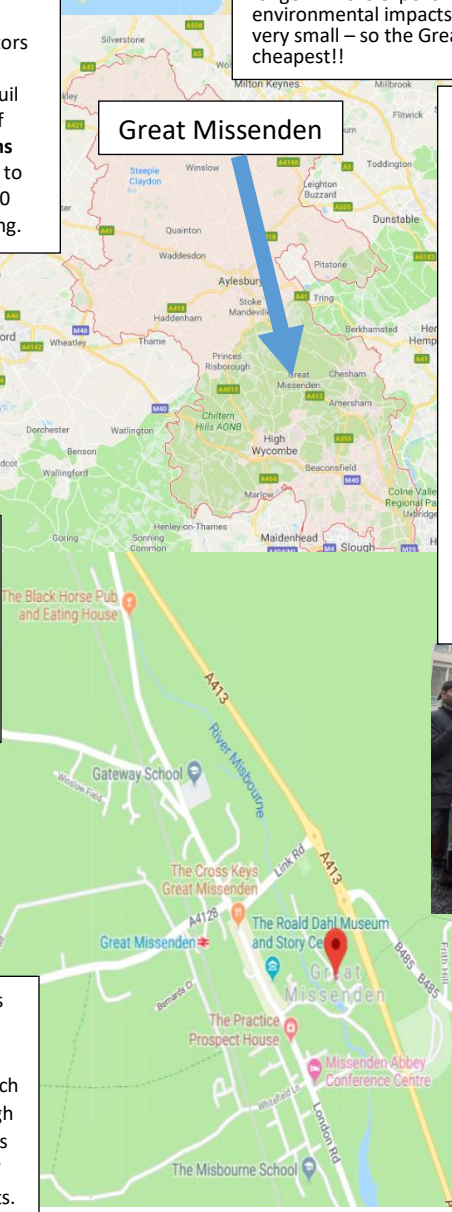
CONNECTED BY ROAD AND RAIL – connected to Central London by rail – 1000s of commuters work in London. Railway arrived in 1892 – previously the area was a farming community – self-sufficient, closed community. Also a coaching stop on the way to London from the Midlands – has 12 pubs/inns on the High Street. 1811 main employment = farming. 2011 main employment = professional.

CENSUS AND DIVERSITY – Not ethnically diverse – 96.3% white. Compared to England = 79.8% white. 65 yrs + (elderly dependents) outnumber under 15s (young dependents) by 2.5%. This is the opposite to England. Great Missenden ward = in the 10% of least deprived wards in England. Housing varies widely as does wealth – but young people cannot afford to live there.

CONNECTED BY TOURISM AND RECREATION – The village is at the heart of the Chilterns AONB – a honeypot site for tourists. Walkers, cyclists, day trippers like the natural environment – chalk hills and valleys + open farmland + beech woods. Roald Dahl Museum + Story Centre found on the High Street - is close to where the author lived for 36 years. Shops + services on the High Street – 7 pubs, restaurants + cafes. 7 hairdressers + beauty salons. 5 gift shops and 3 estate agents. All these services combine to offer a relaxing, leisurely atmosphere for the many tourists visiting the area on a yearly basis.

Occupation - 2011	Great Missenden %	England %
Managers, directors & senior officials	21.7	10.9
Professional occupations	24.0	17.5
Associate professional & technical occupations	17.2	12.8
Administrative & secretarial occupations	12.0	11.5
Skilled trade occupations	7.7	11.4
Caring, leisure & other service occupations	6.7	9.3

Great Missenden



Occupation – 1811 CENSUS	Number of families
Agriculture	164
Trade, manufacture, handcraft	113
Occupations other than the above	18
Number of families	295

Year	Population
1811	1576
1851	2097
1911	2555
1951	4464
2011	10138

FASTER CONNECTIONS AND THE HS2 – National and international external forces will have an economic impact on Great Missenden. High speed rail is big business in the EU (European Union) – since the 1980s. In 2007 the first high speed rail hit China. But in the UK only the Channel Tunnel linked to London is high speed. HS2 proposed in 2009 by the British Government. This would help with traffic on the West Coast Mainline + reduce travel times between London + Birmingham + Manchester + Leeds + Edinburgh - this will help reduce the UK North-South economic divide as business people can reach cities in the north much faster. 2010 government sated the route would include a section of the Chilterns AONB + the parish of Great Missenden – less than a mile from the village. Great Missenden parish Council, The Chilterns Conservation Board + Chilterns District Council declared opposition to the plans because it would have a detrimental impact on the natural environment of the Chilterns and divide the AONB in 2. In 2013 HS2 stated why it had chosen this route (out of 4 possible routes between London and Birmingham. The route via Heathrow was much longer + more expensive. All of the other 3 would have bad environmental impacts – but the difference between these impacts is very small – so the Great Missenden route is the shortest route – the cheapest!!

HS2 continued ... so the government went for the shortest, straightest, cheapest route – perfect for speeds of 400kph (284mph). The start date has been delayed – it was due to be 2017. But since the government's announcement businesses and home owners property values have decreased and a decline in business has been common



Annie Bailey's restaurant & bar closed 2013



GREAT MISSENDEN – NOT SOME CONSTABLE COUNTRY – THE CONTESTED CHARACTER – Great Missenden is presented in media in many different ways and has been represented by government, ministers, local artists, writers & musicians: **Roald Dahl – The Fantastic Mr Fox** - many of his descriptions are of the Chiltern Hills environment - "On a hill above a valley there was a wood. In the wood there was a huge tree. Under the tree there was a hole. In the hole live Mr Fox and Mrs Fox and their four Small Foxes" - *Fantastic Mr Fox*, Roald Dahl

PAINTING OF GREAT MISSENDEN – BY ARTIST GEORGE BOYTER



DAILY TELEGRAPH – PHILIP HAMMOND (THEN SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT) – DEC 2010 – High Speed Rail will be a pleasant surprise for many: “But some oppose the line on purely aesthetic grounds, arguing that the new line will be a scar on the landscape of rural Buckinghamshire, despoiling an area of outstanding natural beauty. Have you looked at the route? Between Great Missenden and the HS2 route are the A413, the Chiltern Railway and a line of pylons. SPO this is not some Constable country.” John Constable was a British artist who painted beautiful pictures of the English countryside

HS2 AND THE ENVIRONMENT – BLOG BY PETER DELOW, APRIL 2011 – “I have to concur 100% .. on the grounds of geography. Constable Country is in the Dedham Vale AONB on the Suffolk-Essex border, whereas the Chilterns AONB lies just north west of London. I think what he really meant was that the Chilterns was somehow an ‘inferior’ AONB to Dedham Vale and could be trashed with impunity. I personally believe that the rolling, wooded countryside of the Chilterns is very beautiful, but Mr Hammond obviously prefers something wetter.”

Oak tree lament (Stop HS2) by Dirty Mavis – 2011 – A SONG WRITTEN IN PROTEST –
2 hundred years I stand ... on the edge of the Misbourne plain
Survived the harshest winters and summers without rain
My roots are deep.... and you should weep
For this morning strangers came
With axe and saw, and cut me to the floor
So hang your head in shame
Men say that time is money, half an hour could be saved
And for this bold lie I am to die & thrown down in my grave
My roots are deep and you should weep
And the cause of so much pain
SO scrap this plan leave me stand on the edge of the Misbourne Plain.
On the English hills runs a line that kills
Leaves my country scarred and raw
So if you love my leaves and shade then please ... prepare yourself for war
For when there's no more oil And you're in the soil
And the breeze whispers to you
Did you fight to save this England did you stop the HS2?

ATKINS WOOD – is described as follows in the Roald Dahls Countryside Trail leaflet - This is a classic Chiltern beech wood. Beech trees are common in South Bucks because they were planted in the nineteenth century for the chairmaking industry in High Wycombe. The towering trees and dark forest floors typical of local woods provide the setting for the pheasant poaching scenes in *Danny the Champion of the World*.

TRIP ADVISOR REVIEWS -ROALD DAHL MUSEUM- 4 **** Reviewed 2 weeks ago via mobile
Story Time Bombshell!
Today was our second visit to RD Museum, as we came here for our eldest about 4 years ago. We were absolutely taken by a museum employee Sam, who was leading The Story Time this afternoon. His performance was utterly entertaining, well balanced with drama and physical expression, as well as beautifully clear and engaging! Bravo!! The museum and the visitors are very lucky to have him.
5*******A review from a 7 year old!**
It was a great ☺ place I loved it the best bit was the plane ✈ because I got to go into it! Really good place to visit, quite small but really really insightful for children and adults alike!
4******Plenty of woodland walking and some cracking views**

The area around Great Missenden offers plenty of walking options although many of them do involve some hill climbing. Quite a few walks pass through woodland and you are not so far from Chequers. For great views seen after a shortish hilly climb I'd recommend parking in Wendover and climbing up Winchcombe hill. You can get there from Great Missenden but it would take you about 2 hours walking. I don't think I can recommend the area for young children unless you do the walk described above.

USING INTERVIEW DATA: To use the data the information can be divided into 2 sections about change in Watford – Demographic and cultural change and Economic and social inequalities. Quotes are very useful – you cannot use all the information.

ECONOMIC CHANGE IN GREAT MISSENDEN – INTERVIEW WITH GREAT MISSENDEN RESIDENT: How do you think the construction of the bypass affected Great Missenden? She said it made a big difference to the kids as they couldn't go sledging as it cut through the hills
Do you think it adversely affected the businesses, particularly shops on the High Street? She said that it would be a very different place if it had not ben built as everything used to come through the High Street – the logs were pulled through by horses on the way to Amersham. But trade in the High Street shops went down.
Where do you think people work that live in the village today? She said that she did not know as there is nowhere to work anymore. Wright's and Gerhardt's were bug employers. Maybe some people work in restaurants.
With the arrival of all these commuters has the community changed?
We are a dying breed – all the locals are leaving. Older people are dying and younger ones are having to move out. Housing is too expensive and there are no local jobs anymore.

CHANGING EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS IN GREAT MISSENDEN – Up until the 1920s/30s Great Missenden was an agricultural centre and market town. It is now a tourist honeypot and a commuter settlement. For much of the 20th century Great Missenden was a service town with 12 pubs and a manufacturing centre – Gerhardt's – an electro plating company supplying the aircraft industry during the war. Wright's yard employed 250 people up until the 1980s. This local manufacturing has now been lost and young people have very few job opportunities. Both of these factory sites have now been redeveloped for housing.

Interactive map

