

# Jordans Village

# Visitor Information



Jordans Village





Old Jordans

## Jordans History

Jordans Village takes its name from Old Jordans (shown in this image), the farmstead where Quaker farmers lived in the 17th century. The whole area in our centre page plan includes almost 260 properties, more than 120 of which are contained within the boundaries of Jordans Village Estate. Of these, 40 houses and cottages and 21 flats are owned and maintained by Jordans Village Ltd. There is also a village hall and a village store.

The idea of creating a Village Estate at Jordans took definite shape in 1915-1916 when land became available and enabled Friends to fulfil a long-cherished wish to do something to preserve the surroundings of Jordans Meeting House, an area with a long Quaker history. The immediate impulse was prompted by the knowledge that the owner of Dean Farm, a property of 102 acres, was thinking of selling to a speculative builder the fields facing the Meeting House (New Jordans), which had been reopened in 1910 for regular meetings, and Old Jordans, bought a year later by Friends and opened as a Quaker hostel.

From the outset, the scheme went beyond the mere sterilisation of a few fields. The Jordans Committee, which conceived the project, considered it an opportunity to establish a village community. They raised capital to setup a limited company under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, then in force. The declared aim was to create a village based on Christian principles and in a manner serviceable to the national well-being by promoting suitable industries (Jordans Village Industries) and to establish and carry on religious, social, recreative and educational works and institutions.

The Village was intended to be a community where artisans could ply their trades and skills in conditions that would provide a fuller opportunity for the development of character and self-expression than existed at the time elsewhere. It was not necessary to be a Quaker to come to the Village.



The Village Green in winter



The Cottage was the first detached house built in the Village. Also known as the Architects House.

## Birth of the Village

Building began in 1919 and the Village dates its official founding as 15th February of that year, the day the commemorative bricks were laid on the foundations of the first house to be built. Jordans Village Ltd, which is a Friendly Society, was registered in the following year. Jordans Village Industries laid out the Village, made the roads and began the building of the houses and cottages using its own industries to produce the materials, from bricks to door hinges. But they had not bargained for post-war inflation, which made it impossible to carry out the more expensive, individually crafted building methods. In 1923, Jordans Village Industries was forced to go into voluntary liquidation.

The development of the Village was mainly carried out between 1919 and 1939, but has continued since then. The properties currently owned by Jordans Village Ltd consist of two blocks of flats, four blocks of terraced cottages (designed by Fred Rowntree as an architectural whole round the Village green), and a number of single and semi-detached houses scattered around the outlying parts of the estate, all of which are rented on monthly tenancies. The terraced cottages were completed and occupied by 1923. The flats at Puers Field were built just after the end of the Second World War with a later block being constructed at Cherry Tree Corner in the late 1960's.

The latest addition is four retirement cottages completed and occupied in 2009. Residents contribute towards the upkeep of the common areas of the village by paying amenity charges and towards the maintenance of the roads through the road fund. Over the years, a number of open spaces have been preserved to retain the original character of a garden village: Chalky Field in 1923, the Village Green in 1934, and Crutches Wood and Cherry Tree Corner, both in 1940.

In 1970, Jordans Village Ltd secured protection over the whole of Manor Farm Estate by purchasing the larger part of two fields immediately on the other side of Wilton Lane and obtaining covenants on the rest of the estate. With the passing of the Leasehold Reform Act of 1961, Jordans Village Ltd submitted and had approved by the High Court on Estate Management Scheme that aims to provide a permanent safeguard of the appearance and future development of the Village by retaining powers of management over any property. This is in line with the original intention of keeping Village land and development under Village control.

In April 1981, Chiltern District Council designated a Conservation Area at Jordans. Part of this area is around the Village Green and the remainder around the Meeting House and Old Jordans.

## **Jordans Village Limited (JVL)**

JVL is a Co-Operative Society and was incorporated on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1920 with the objective to “acquire, develop, maintain and govern an estate at Jordans ... by means of a village community”. It is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. It operates on a not-for-profit basis on behalf of its Members. The Society presently has over 600 Members. Membership is open to those who live in Jordans or have a close connection to the Village.

The Society is governed by a Management Committee consisting of twelve Members, eight of whom are elected directly by ballot. One Committee Member is a representative of the local Quaker Meeting, and three Members are nominated by the Tenant Members’ Committee (TMC). Each elected Member serves a term of three years, and every year a third of their number retire through rotation, being eligible for re-election without nomination; they cannot serve more than three consecutive three year terms. All Committee Members are volunteers. Any member of JVL can stand for election to the Management Committee, and a letter inviting nominations is sent to each member in December, with elections being held during February and the results announced at the Annual General Meeting in March of each year.

JVL owns the land with boundaries of Wilton Lane on the West, Jordans Lane & Chalky Field to the East, and Longbottom Lane to the South. It is responsible for the upkeep of the roads, Village Green (a designated Conservation Area), and Crutches Wood. JVL also owns two agricultural fields known as Manor Farm Fields to the west of Wilton Lane and licences them for grazing to a local farmer. You can find a map of the village and of the Conservation Area elsewhere in this booklet.

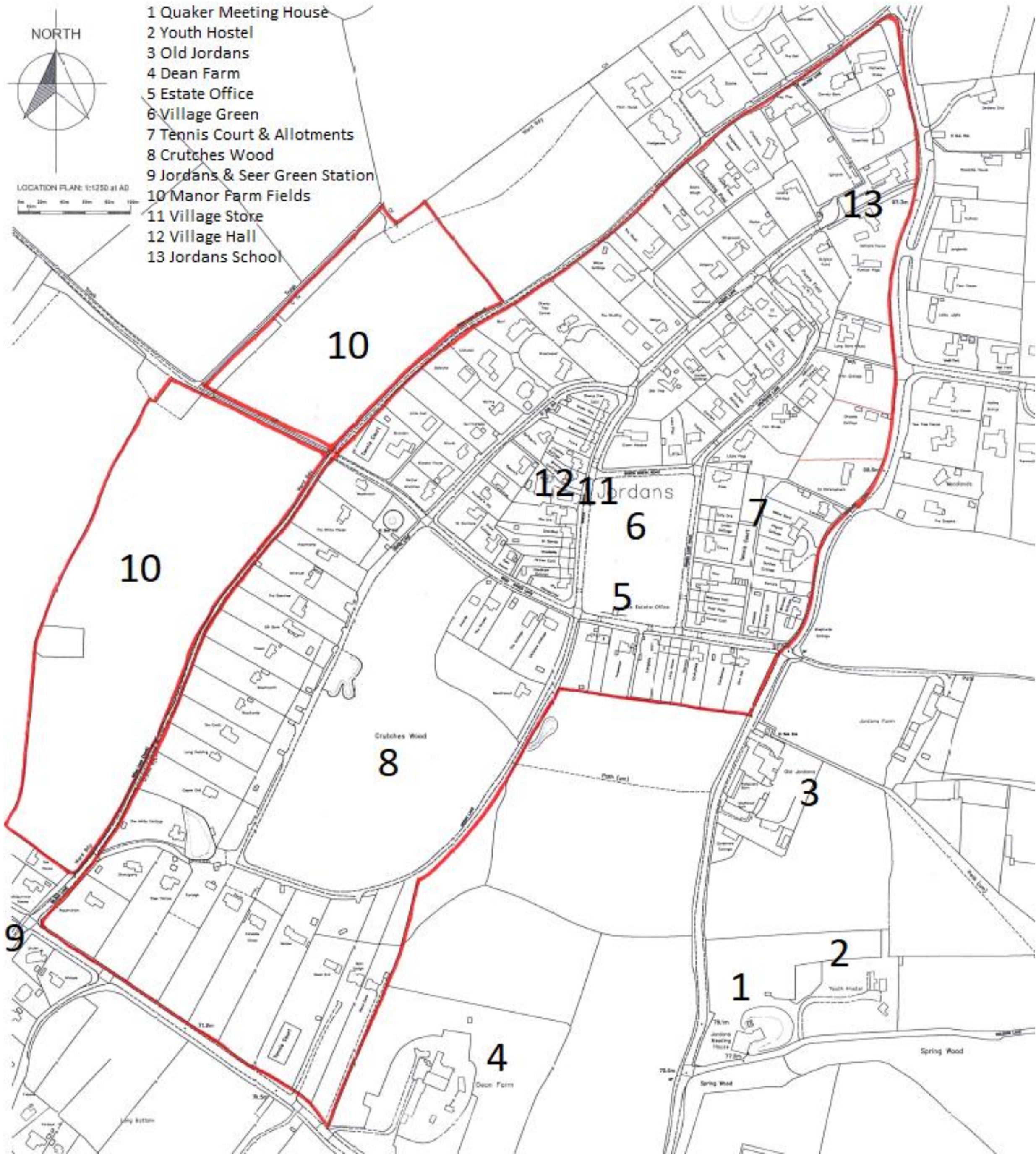
JVL also owns and maintains 61 residential properties on its land - 40 cottages and 21 flats. The properties within the Conservation Area are Grade II listed. Members of JVL may apply to join its Waiting List for housing, subject to certain eligibility criteria.

JVL employs a full time Estate Manager / Company Secretary who works from its Estate Office on the South side of the Village Green. He is responsible for running the company, keeping its accounts, arranging and taking minutes of meetings, arranging elections, maintaining JVL’s property and land rights, and keeping JVLs archives. He also edits and publishes the monthly Community Newsletter.

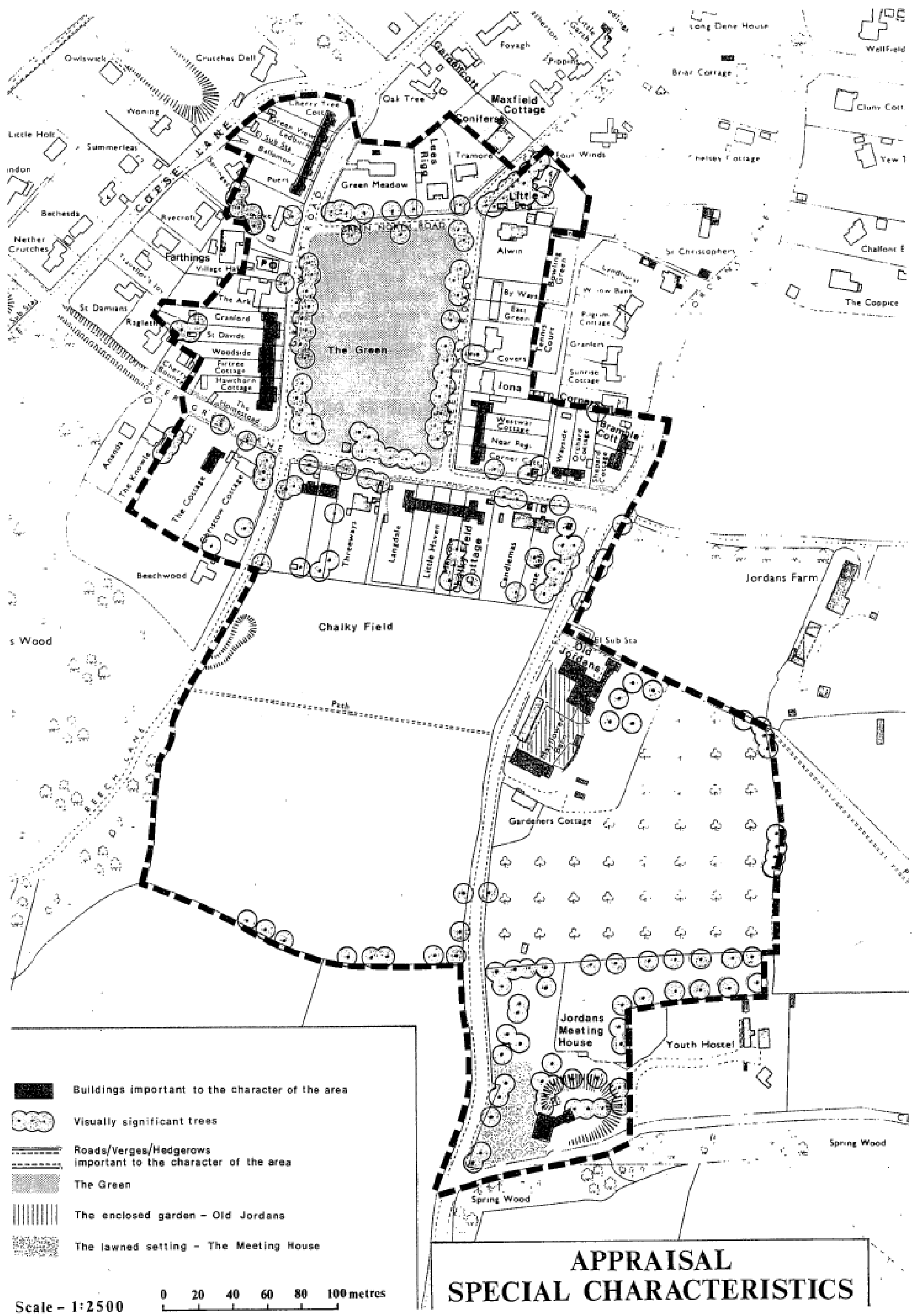
JVL’s land rights are set out in a document called the Jordans Village Management Scheme, implemented by the High Court in 1980. This scheme outlines certain rights JVL holds over its land, which include the right of prior consent to proposals for construction of and exterior modifications to buildings, changes to borders, and the felling of large trees. JVL also has the right to maintain properties that fall into disrepair under the Scheme. The Scheme also conveys a right to levy the Road & Amenity Charge.

Residents living on the estate, whether tenants of JVL properties or private owners, all contribute a proportion of the running costs of the village either through their rent or through the Road & Amenity charge levied on private households.

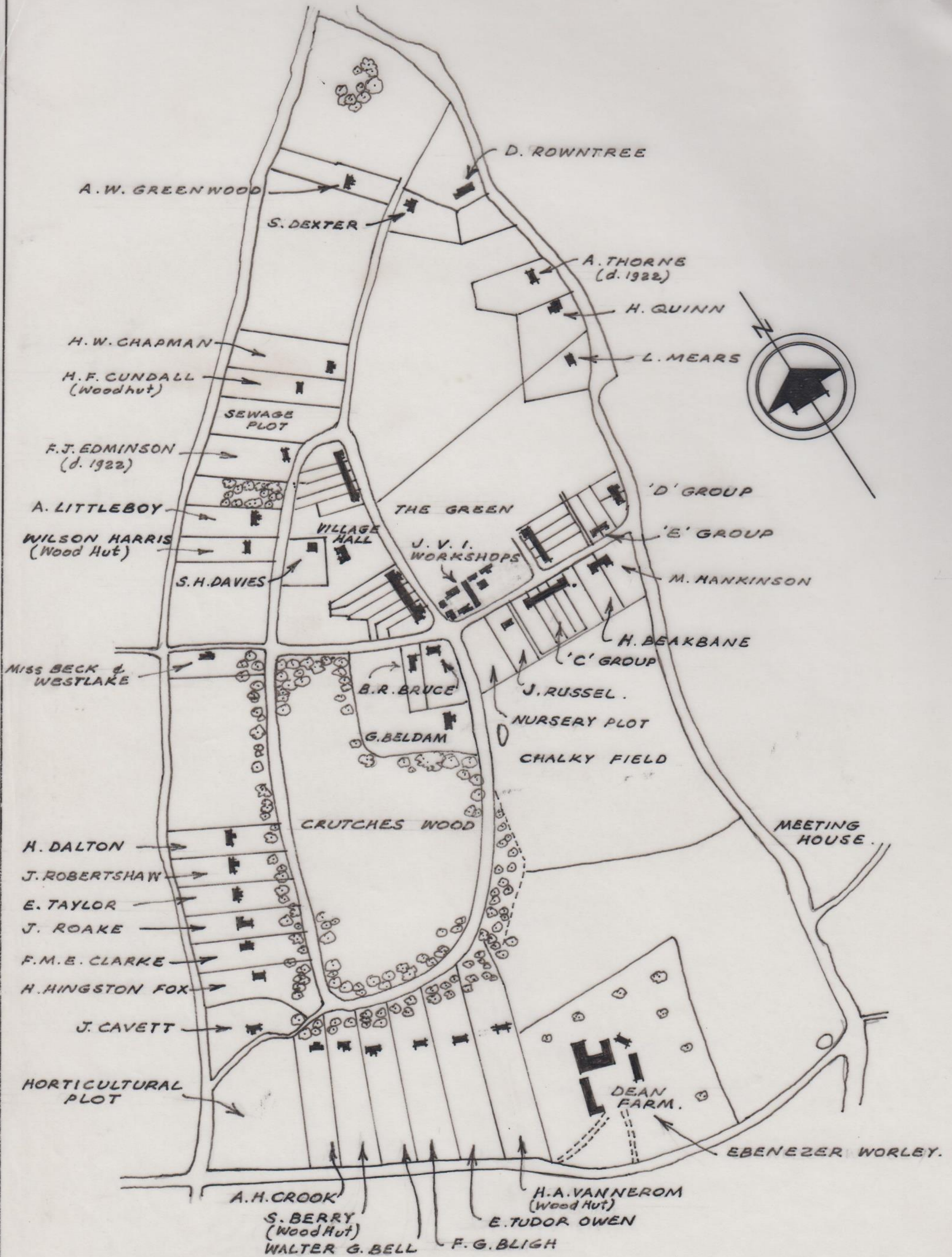
There are many clubs and social groups within the village, including a Tennis Club and Horticultural Society. Various regular activities take place in the Village Hall, including Concerts, The Jolly Quaker pub night on the first Friday of each month; the Jordans Picture House cinema club on the second Friday monthly from October through May; Quiz Nights, and regular Yoga, Ceramics, and Tai Chi classes on too. There are several larger annual events organised by the TMC, which you can read more about on the following pages.



# Jordans Village Ltd Land 2018



# Jordans Conservation Area



JORDANS VILLAGE, DECEMBER 1923

## **The Tenant Members' Committee (TMC)**

The Tenant Members' Committee came into existence in 1921 and soon afterwards sent representatives to sit on the Management Committee, which at that time did not meet in the Village. It consists of up to twelve members who serve for three years and are eligible for re-election without nomination. All are elected by Tenant Members, that is by shareholding owners or occupiers of property in the Jordans Village Estate proper.

The TMC, as it is usually called, organises a number of public events during the year. The most important event is The Village Supper, which is held in the Village Hall on the nearest Saturday to February 15th, to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the Village. The Supper is more than just a social occasion; it is an integral part of Village life. The TMC also holds a Summer Fair to raise funds to maintain or improve Village amenities and to carry out other activities such as Sports Day, a jazz picnic, and carols on Christmas Eve. It also runs a Mutual Aid Scheme.

Over the years, the TMC helped to start the first Village Store and induced the Railway Company to build extra accommodation at Seer Green and Jordans Station. Although the TMC organises a number of regular events, it is not just a social committee. As the medium whereby residents can play a part in the running of the Village, the TMC's most important function is to send three of its members annually to represent the Tenant Members and residents, whether shareholders or not, on the Management Committee.

On several occasions in the past, the TMC has provided an invaluable safeguard of residents' interests. This was especially true during the unsettled period of the 1920's when the TMC played a vital role in pressing the residents views on the Management Committee, which then contained a number of non-residents who were considered to be "out of touch" with Village life. It also played a decisive role when some members of the Management Committee, without the knowledge of the residents or shareholders, embarked on a commercial enterprise, Jordans Estates Ltd. This, residents felt, would almost completely reverse the ideals that inspired the founders of the Village and might have even resulted in the Village itself being taken over. The TMC is also frequently called upon to address a range of local issues. If you have a Village-related problem that you feel warrants attention, please contact a TMC Member via the Estate Office.

## **Jordans Village School**

Jordans Village First School is the successor of several small private schools that provided education for young children from 1922 onwards. The school was opened in 1943 and accommodated in the Village Hall with 12 children on the roll. A year later, it moved to buildings on the present site at the North end of Puers Lane, and these premises were extended in 1966. By this time, there were over 100 children at the school. The School was initially a combined First and Middle school and catered for 5 to 11 year olds and for many years the total hovered around this figure. In 1970, a party of parents cleared trees and bushes at the rear of the school hall for a large paved patio, which greatly increased the school's playing space. In the 1980s, the school became a First School only and now caters for around 60 pupils aged between 5 and 8 years old. Many local residents have been on the staff or in charge of the school, often for long periods.



## **Society of Friends**

Jordans Friends Meeting is one of the oldest established Quaker Meetings in Britain, and the Meeting House is one of the best known. Its fame arises not only from it being the resting place of William Penn and other eminent Quakers, but also from its setting and the simplicity of the building. It was built by local craftsmen over three months in 1688, on land sold to Friends by the owner of Old Jordans Farm. Over the next three hundred years, its main features have hardly changed. The interior was the same as when it was first built; the windows and doorways are in their original position, with much of the original window furniture and glass. It was closed during the 19th Century as a place for Meetings for Worship, until The Great Central Railway brought a number of Quaker families to the district. Since the early 20th Century, Meeting for Worship has been held every Sunday and all are welcome. In March 2005, a serious fire destroyed the whole of the roof and part of the rear of the building; luckily – and remarkably - the main Meeting Room was untouched. Over three years, a major restoration took place, including the rebuilding, to very generous plans, of the rear of the building. The adjoining burial ground (which pre-dates the building itself) is for Quakers from North and West London as well as those in the Chilterns area (in the early days of Quakerism, Friends were not allowed in the church yards).

## **Jordans Village Store**

The Village Store, run by a manager under a shop committee, started in a very small way in the front room of one of the workers' cottages by the Village Green. In 1921, the brick building, now used as the Estate Office, was erected and a proper store opened. The liquidation two years later of Jordans Village Industries Ltd, which threatened the Village's very existence, brought about the store's closure.

Almost immediately, some residents subscribed capital for opening a shop to take its place. This took the form of a shed on land in front of the Village Hall and business was soon back in full swing. In 1930, the Shop Committee felt justified in building a larger store on the site. The store, supported by a number of volunteer staff, is now a general grocers, with green groceries, an off-licence, and a part time sub-Post Office. Its coffee corner also serves as a natural meeting place for many of those living in and around the village, and a welcome place to stop for walkers.

In 2015, the store's shareholders voted to change its status from that of an Industrial Provident Society to a Registered Society for the Benefit of the Community. The store is actively supported by residents of Jordans through an amenity contribution and is also eligible for funding to help community shops survive and thrive in the highly competitive market conditions they face.

## **Chalky Field**

Chalky Field, opposite Old Jordans and one of the many open spaces in the Village, was at one time threatened by a scheme for sub-division into building plots. Wiser counsels prevailed and much of the land was sold for the purpose of full enfranchisement. In 1929-30, a number of residents and others purchased the remaining portion and presented it to Friends Trusts Ltd.

## **Crutches Wood**

Crutches Wood, another of the open spaces, has been extensively replanted with a mixture of broad leaved trees after the destruction of most of the beeches in the great storms of 1987 and 1990. Before the whole of Crutches Wood was dedicated as a permanent open space in 1940, parts of it had been redeemed for preservation by gifts from various donors. The large stone slab in the South West corner of the wood was placed there in 1934 in tribute to the generosity of the main donors.

## **Dean Farm**

Dean Farm House is the farmstead of a farm that dates back a thousand years. For at least five hundred years, from the late 12th Century until the 17th Century, it descended through the Dutton family. The house itself is basically a mediaeval hall house with a service wing, hall, and solar wing. The latter has two crown posts, which are indicative of the mediaeval structure. There is a fresco in one of the upper rooms. The great barn, longer but narrower than the Mayflower Barn, is roofed with ships timbers and still has a threshing floor of great beech planks and a knee-high threshold.

## **Social Guild**

The first group to concern itself with cultural and education aspects of Village life was the Social Guild, which was formed by villagers while the builders sheds were still being set up on what is now the Village Green. The Guild eventually withered away, mainly because the cultural activities which had grown up under its aegis had become independent, with organisations of their own.

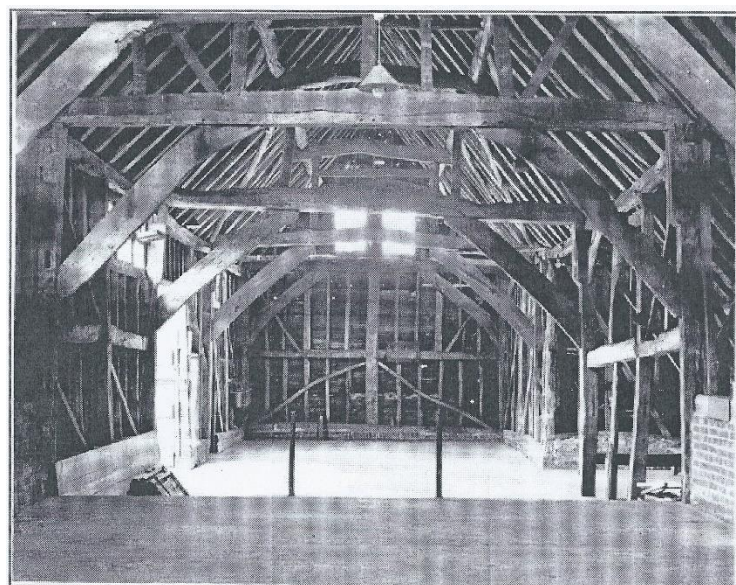
## **The Ark**

The Ark was built in the early 1930s by two residents of Jordans, Florence Feek and Laura Stead. It was originally a holiday home for girls living in a children's care and protection home in West Ham. The West Ham home was destroyed in an air raid during the Second World War and Florence Feek, who was there on a visit, perished with it. It was never rebuilt. From that time, The Ark in Jordans took over the West Ham home's function and became a temporary home for children in need of care and protection. Following a change in policy regarding children in care, The Ark ceased to operate as originally conceived and became a home for women, with or without children, who needed a temporary residence. It continues to function as a place for those women in need of peace and recuperation in a community setting. The Ark is now owned by BETEL, an independent Christian charity for men, women and families affected by drug and alcohol addiction and homelessness.

## **Village Hall**

Evidence of the Social Guild's vigour and enthusiasm is, however, still apparent in the form of the Village Hall. In their spare time, the workers of the Village built the Hall in the space of six weeks, during 1919, to house the Social Guild activities - it was then known as the Guild Hall - using materials given by the Management Committee. It has since been enlarged by Village residents and is frequently used by Village groups and societies, and is the current home of Jordans Nursery.

*Written by Ken Morgan, c1997. Updated By Robin Allen 2011. Updated and edited by Chris Jenkins 2015 & 2018*





S.F.S. SERIES

HOUSING ESTATE, JORDANS, NR. BEACONSFIELD, BUCKS.

7329



S.F.S. SERIES

OLD JORDANS HOSTEL & JORDANS HOUSING ESTATE

7327



The Village Store has humble beginning! It was actually based in the Estate Office before either of these buildings





Left:  
The Cottage



Right: Rear of  
Rowntree  
Cottages on  
Green West  
Road



Left & Right  
Rowntree  
Cottages on  
Green West  
Road



Left: The  
Quaker  
Meeting  
House on  
Welders Lane.



Right: The  
Mayflower  
Barn



Above Left: The Original Village Store, now the Estate Office.



Above Right: The Homestead, Green West Road



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