



Memories of New Basford

This map shows the memories of five older residents of the area. The memories were recorded in a series of interviews.

Key

Each resident is represented by three tones of a colour. The darkest tone maps memories that are very close to home, the medium shows friends and places regularly visited and the lightest shows statements about the area that are not linked to a specific place. Places that were referred to by more than one respondent are represented by a separate colour to highlight their obvious importance. Buildings shown in outline have since been demolished.



Derek and Doreen Page

The street we live on looks filthy. I used to go out in the street about six o'clock in the morning before I went to work and sweep up both sides. You never used to see a bit of rubbish.

We used to live at 83 Zulu Road with some friends. We bought number 75 in 1955 for £300.

There used to be a school there, before that the pub that was there was called 'The Haven. Didn't used to be many go in, there always used to be trouble in there.

There were shops near us, there was a bakery two or three doors down from us. Everybody used to come from the area to go for their bread and cakes. I used to be lovely bread, fresh baked.

Doctors and surgeons used to live on our road, from the City and the General.

They knocked em all down on our side and across the road, but ours were left. They built the houses now across from us and they are absolutely terrible, they are only two rooms up and two down.

If any houses come for sale now the housing associations buy them, put all the ritr raff in them.

There was a murder in number 83 just after we left. It was a young girl on Boxing Day, she got life sentence. Mind, I expect she'll be out now.

Next door to us, when anybody died, they used to come to her house straight away and she used to lay em out and put em on the sidewalk till the day of the funeral.

There's a hostel at 26 and 28. Doctors used to live in it, then they sold it and Polish people bought it and when they died it was sold and the MIND hostel bought it and when that closed down Turning Point bought it. I used to be on the advisory committee there right up to the day I had my stroke.

Mrs Smith got a road party organised on VE day and VJ day. She used to do cobbling, she had a hut down the bottom of the garden.

There were lots of shops, a wool shop, a fish and chip shop, fruit and veg, a pop shop and a beer-od, a Shipstone's.

At the bottom where the Community Centre is there used to be a cobbler's shop, there then there was a shop facing it, then you come up a bit and then near to us there were about five or six shops all right near us.

There was a paper shop on Chelmsford, Eric Jacks. He used to open every morning at half past four for people to get their papers and he didn't used to close till about eleven o'clock at night. Say if you run out of tea he used to fall everybody round there just come and knock on me door.

There's a lady who lives on the next street to Pearson Street in them warden aided flats, her name's Doris, and she used to drive the trolley buses and she's still living.

There used to be a friend of ours who lived on Chelmsford Street next to the paper shop and he got all gas and he wouldn't have electric and it was gas lighting right up till about ten year ago until he died. Jimmy Taylor.

Now you start of can't mix with anybody much. You know you just keep to yourself now and that's it.

Every year after Gosse Fair, week after used to be Basford Walks it used to build up in the streets putting machines, stalls and everything. Doggers, roundabouts.

Best fish and chip shop was on Northgate. There used to be a dairy on Northgate too.

The corner of Northgate used to be the garage my friend used to own. We used to go to football matches together. Floper, Pete Roper his name was. The Star Garage. He died last year.

Every winter we used to have the cellar packed full of coal, about five ton of it. The Milkman used to have a pony and trap, but then he changed it.

Shippo's horses used to come up every day and if the delivery men were too long at one pub they used to walk back to Shippo's on their own. We used to go out and give them some carrots.

We hadn't got a bath and I got the idea somehow, got a dolly tub had a bath in that and I got stuck. Next door neighbour had to come and pull me out.

Them days have never come back, I wish they would.

We used to go for a bath at Noel Street baths for a proper bath. Everybody used to keep pigs in pigstys at the bottom of the garden.

Them younguns that's moving in, forgive me for saying it, every one of them's prostitutes. Housing Association putting the ritr raff in, and that's why a lot of people sold up and left.

If you needed any creosote or coal you just had to pop over to the Gasworks and you could get two buckets of creosote for a expense and a big bag of coal for a expense.

Betty Chiltern

The very earliest days that I can remember, me Grandma lived just round the corner, on Pearson St. 5 Pearson St, and I do remember from a very early age, that she used to get everybody's rent and put them on the table with all the right money on each one and it was the morning she always used to take her cocoa matting up to make sure it was clean for the rent man to come, and the rent man used to collect all the rents from me Grandmas. Everything had to be just so the rent morning.

I was born in 10 Irene Terrace. I moved to number 2 because me Grandma, with paying everybody's rent, got me the house at number 2 when I got married. I was married at 18 and I was so excited cos I'd got this house at 2 Irene Terrace.

I remember all the neighbours, I remember their names. I remember the community that we had together, how we all used to stand at the bottom of the yard and talk till heaven knows how long in the summer nights.

I remember when I had me daughter, Wendy. They was all waiting in the yard for her to be born, all waiting. The neighbours was fantastic, absolutely fantastic.

There was Mrs Spencer, the lady at the top, and they always used to say that Mrs Spencer had got bugs, and she was a lovely woman so I didn't care what she'd got, to me she was a lovely woman. There was Mrs Warren, Mr Elliot that was next to me, I can remember all those in the other yard as well.

At that time it was a cobbled street, it was all cobbles and when I had my son, Paul, he was a little... he used to cry a lot, and the neighbours used to take him up and down the cobbles because the jolting sent him to sleep.

I do remember on a Sunday we used to go to Eland Street and there used to be a Mrs Revels that used to sell chocolates, there used to be a post office, Mr Levers, and then the chemist was Mr Collins. They were all more or less next to one another. Mrs Revels she used to sell chocolates and I remember we used to go, Sundays we had a treat of a bar of chocolate each and we used to go to Mrs Revels. Then there was a chip shop higher up.

My husband worked, it's still there now that wood place, he used to work three years and years ago. My husband worked on the trolley buses as well.

Me Grandma's house used to have a porch with a gate on, but now its gone, its lovely that house is now, I don't know whether you've been. Oh its lovely now, its all been blocked in and its all been tagged, you know, with that stone and it looks lovely now.

When Wendy was young you was all short of money. You never had money, you always had things on tick and paid for them on a Friday when payday came, and then started again. You never ever paid for anything, you hadn't got the money. I remember I worked at, there used to be a little corner shop, there used to be a cobbler at one side, you know at the end of Pearson Street, and there used to be a shop there, that's all gone now. I hadn't got no money and I used to take Wendy with me and I used to run the shop for her, clean the house for her, clean the bedrooms, did everything for her, including cooking the breakfast and I used to earn seven and six. It was two and six an hour, and I remember I spent it coming out the shop.

They was hard, but they was good days, I'd have em back anytime. They don't know they're born today.

Betty Beel

I came here when I was two, lived on Eland Street, it's down now, number 22, they've made the school since.

I lived next door to Charlesworths the coal merchants. I used to run errands for her, she had the fruit shop at the end and the coal business at the back and then across the road was Warnieys the bakers and I used to run errands for her and get a little bar of chocolate which was all the world to us because all we had as children was a ha'penny pocket money. Dad used to give us Saturday's ha'penny we used to call it and you could get quite a few things for a ha'penny. We used to go on a card and have a dip and you'd perhaps get an extra bar of something in the sweets.

I used to go to Sunday school up the road at Noel Street. At Christmas they used to come and bring us a carrier bag with oranges, apples, chocolate money wrapped in silver paper which we used to love as kids cos we hadn't got any money and we used to think that was marvellous to have that. Mam and Dad used to do the best they could, but the Church did a lot for us when we were kids cos we went to Sunday school.

When it was Gosse Fair time we used to love to run out and watch the steam rollers, the steam rollers are coming up the street, and the big rollers would roll up right the way down Eland Street, right the way down Noel Street to the Forest.

I can remember the milkman with his little bike and his basket in front with his milk churns and you used to go out with your jug and he'd fill your jug up with the milk. The man, Coffey, he lived on Egypt Road, I think his house is still standing.

As a kid Egypt Road seemed a long road and I used to go to the Co-op for Mam when we used to have cheese and butter and you didn't have it in packets, it used to be a big lump and you'd ask for it and they'd weigh it on the scales then pat it and wrap it up nicely.

Nancy Martin

I grew up on Rawson Street, number 14, a Shipstones house, I was there from 1948. Me Dad was the ostler at Shipstones, he used to look after the horses.

Me Dad used to get drunk when he was delivering, cos the horses used to bring him home, and once he was in this pub, and he came down and the horses was the wrong way round in the shafts. Sometimes the horses would go home on their own if they were fed up of waiting, or if they were hungry and the time had come.

Fascinating stories about Shipstones. They had all these kittens in the stable, and you know how big shirehorses are, they used to treat like they were on egg shells, never stood on a kitten, or a cat, it was amazing.

Our back yard had got the stables, you couldn't get into them, but you could hear the horses, they were our early morning call. Cobblestones there was down there, and every morning at seven o'clock precisely you'd hear em clapping down the road. I can't remember what time they came back, I think it was about five or six o'clock in the evening, and as they got nearer you could hear em quicker up.

It was a cold horrible damp house. A cold unloving house, really stark. Me stepmother, she was 92 when she died and she lived in there till she died. I lived there till I was eighteen.

Sunday school was a Presbyterian Church and the preacher's name was Mr Convey. I can remember him and he was so strict. We used to have to go to these anniversaries and stand there and say things and I was absolutely terrified.

When we were kids we hadn't got no clothes, we hadn't got a mother till I was twelve, and we used to have to go to Salvation Army, and all these clothes we used to bring back, they'd got fleas all over them.

I used to go to the Sunday school Chapel place on Mount Street, used to play the tambourine, can you imagine me stood there with that ribbon in me hair and a tambourine.

When I came back twelve years ago that was still a Co-op and that was the only shop I know that stayed all those years.

Northgate was a lovely little road full of all little shops, beautiful little shops, I used to run errands up there. Now it's like a major road, it's terrible to cross.

I remember playing on Suez Street at the blocked end that used to be the back end of Sydney Smith's brass foundry.

There was a lady on Islandula Road who was a corseteer, and she used to have people come in her front room, cos they was two up and two downs, and be measured for corsets like they used to years ago. I used to look after her baby while she was dealing with her clients.

Where we lived on Eland Street, there used to be a lamp outside the door and we used to wait until he'd lit the lamps and we'd get the light shining in our room, cos we'd got no electricity.

In them days you shared a room with your brothers cos you weren't so advanced as how they are on sex and things these days.

Monday morning, we all used to wash Monday morning, all of these terraced houses and you always used to see the washing, all white washing, clean washing hanging on the lines.

We've lived in two worlds, but I know which world I'd like to be in, the old one because there was a bit of respect, a bit of love for people. We cared about each other, if you'd only got a penny, you'd give somebody a ha'penny. It was a lovely atmosphere.

You can't walk out here, a person was mugged on Liddington Street, another one on Egypt Road. Well I don't go out at nights.

We used to take papers all round this area for three whole years, we used to get five bob a week and me Mam used to take it off me. It was for a Mr Wild, he used to have a paper shop down here, then next door to him was a big sweet shop, on Eland Street. He used to be strict, he was only a little man and he used to be ever so bossy if I was late. I only had one day off all the time I was there, from eleven till I left school, seven days a week, morning and night, she used to make me and then take it off me. Ooh she was a bitch, me stepmother. Wicked stepmother. I didn't love her, but she looked after us, she kept us clean, she fed us. No love though.

I started work and I was earning two pounds twelve shillings and she took that off me. Two weeks later I was earning fifteen to eighteen pounds and she took that off me. She gave me half a crown a week back. Very bitter about that, very bitter. I could have been a wealthy woman now if she'd allowed me to be. Then I saw sense and moved home.

Three has changed round here, you used to dare walk round these streets, you don't anymore. It's so many maggards, so many burglaries, you know it's awful.

We used to go to a hall for a dinner and it was expensive. I lost mine once in the snow. Me mother went crazy cos she had to repay it, I found it next day and I'd got a whole sixpence to spend.

Me Dad had a car, I can still remember the number AFU 564 and it was an Austin 700, with a big tall roof, and she used to make us wear bowler hats and a kit, and me hat used to nearly touch the top of the car.

Me Mam wouldn't let me go to the baths. I used to sneak there and she come past one morning in the car and saw me stood there with some woman's eels' cossette and towel.

There were loads of shops on Eland Street, Mr Wild the paper shop, a haberdashery shop, a coal merchant, a barbers' post office, a sweet shop, but we just used to go and look in there.

We used to go to the Basford Social Club, we used to go there quite a lot actually, and they didn't used to run Bingo as they run it as there is now, you used to wash them out and be proud of them white nappies. There used to be a card that you used to give back at the end of the game, so they was dish out again.

Mrs Spencer used to do hair nets, I remember her sitting at the table doing her hair nets, putting them on cards. And they always used to call her ever so scruffy, but I don't care, and I used to go on a Sunday morning and sit on her stairs and have a cup of tea with her. She had to go in the hospital at one time, and I remember I cried when she died. She was a lovely person, scruffy or not, I didn't care.

They were the happiest days of your life, the sixties, you used to go out on half a crown.

You could leave your doors open at that time.

Of course there was no washing machines then, I never knew what a washing machine was then, and nappies, no such thing as there is now, you used to wash them out and be proud of them white nappies. There used to be a copper in the corner of the kitchen where you used to have to boil your clothes, and a punch tub. You used to work hard, but it was good, it was good.

Mr Elliot, next door, when he went to the toilet, you had to wait before he had finished before you dared start. You'd got no inside toilets at all they was in the back yard, so one was adjoining the other and you used to wait till he had finished before you dared start. You used to hear him coughing and spluttering and you can imagine the rest!

The little club down the road there on Eland Street, that was there when I was a kid.

There was a funeral directors on Eland Street, Taylors I think it was called, and they used to have horse and carts then.

The Gasworks used to smell terrible. We used to go down there for the coal for the fire.

Sydney Smith used to have a posh car, cos it was only business people who had cars, and my trotter used to sit on the steps waiting for Mr Sydney coming out, and they never locked the cars in them days, and he'd hold the door for him and he'd tip him, sometimes expensive, that was a lot of money. So of course I followed suit and used to undo the door for whom I called Grandd, which was his father, but I might only get a penny off him.

I remember the brewery at the bottom of Northgate, it was at an angle, and I used to go and watch them bottling up. The women in the clogs with sucking round their waist while they were bottling up all the beers.

I used to remember newspaper lads running up the street shouting 'specials, specials', and that's how you knew news. You'd got to buy a special then you'd learn what was happening in the world, they used to bring it. As soon as you heard a newsy shouting special then you knew something had happened.

I remember the lamplighter coming up Eland Street and lighting the lamps. The lamps had a bar across them and we used to throw ropes on them and swing on them.

There was a little sweet shop against Malt Cottages.

The Coalman, Charlesworth used to bring the coal, you used to have a coalhouse at the side of your kitchen. Used to have a tin bath that used to stand in the toilet. You only had a bath once a week obviously, we all used to go in it, then we used to swirl it in the yard.

Things have changed, but I don't think always for the better. I know life's easier now, but sometimes I think its too easy. I mean you know when you think about all this throwaway stuff, throwaway nappies, and throwaway this, everything's throwaway isn't it. But you don't throw anything away then.

When we went in that house furniture was on dockets, you couldn't buy furniture then cos it was still rationed, and my husband made two reclining chairs, that was the furniture we had, cos we hadn't got enough dockets to buy them. And to have a fitted carpet, well it was a luxury then, absolute luxury.

I do remember when the queen got married, and we had a television, and we was the only one in the road that had got one, so all the neighbours came in to look at this wedding.

Where money was concerned, you had your wages, but now wages go straight into the bank. Then you'd get cash and you know exactly what you was doing, so much for the insurance, so much for the rent, and it all used to be put in these boxes. But now they just spend money, it's on cards and it just goes, but we just had to manage on what you'd got, but it were lovely counting that money.

There used to be a Police Station, and our Paul used to go missing and I was there nearly every day. They used to say to me 'not you again' and I used to say, well I don't know where he is.

There was shops all going down from Liddington Street towards Springfield Street, a pork shop, Pelmans, a post office, a greengrocers.

We never really saw anyone in that place on the corner, it always seemed empty to us, but it was always 'there's ghosts in there, you don't go in there.'

There was a little greengrocers, I remember going in there for me Mam and there's no bell or anything to let you know you're in the shop, you used to just walk in, and cos we never had anything I took an apple and I put it up my knickers leg and asked for what I wanted, cos we used to have it on tick you see and I came out there and that was the only thing I ever pinched.

There was a hairdressers, Beatrice Lillian they called her, Mrs Falconbury, and I used to run errands for her. Then there was a sweetshop next door to her. Then you'd go up to the beer-off at the top.

They used to change the pool for roller skating in the winter, cos they couldn't get nobody in the swimming. We used to go roller skating up there. They boarded the pool and just put flooring on top of the pool. When the war came to army took the building over.

I remember the Red Lion down at the bottom there, they've still got the little wooden veranda outside. I used to play on there and we used to swing ourselves under and roll out again on these bars.

We used to play all round Shipstones. We used to climb all over playing hide and seek.

Sometimes we used to have the oven shaff in bed with us to keep us warm, under the big army coat. Sometimes me Dad used to warm bricks and wrap them up and put them in with us. I suppose he cared in his way, he did the best he could.

Me Dad used to make us go to the Gasworks to get the coke for the fire, sixpence a pramful. Three times we had to go down, one pushed two rode down, three pushed back. It was loose and we had to shove this coke in, fancy sitting in that, ooh it were mucky.

I can remember me Christmas do at the Basford Social Club down there, but that wasn't all after me mother came. I can't remember any more parties.

If I was allowed to play out I used to go on Palm Street, I'd got a best friend on Palm Street. That was at the side of the Salvation Army hall at 58 Palm Street, and me other friend used to live across the road, Kathleen, she went to Australia when I was about nine. Oh I did miss her.

Then there was a house full of boys, Taylors, oh they was peats, absolute peats. They used to live in a great big house. Mucky, rough, everybody were rough in them days.

My mate used to live where the post office is now, down there, there was a row of tiny little cottages and she used to live there, John Street I think, she used to live in the first house. I wasn't allowed to go up there cos it was rough, but I went cos she was me friend to go to.

This one particular Sunday afternoon, I'd just come back from Sunday school and Mam were getting tomatoes on toast ready and she gave me some. Ooh I thought it was absolutely magic to have these tomatoes on toast. I think it was tinned tomatoes must have just come out.

There used to be an entry where you could cut through, used to call it a ginnet in them days, go up there and you had to go round and it sort of gave you a short cut onto Palm Street from Rawson Street. I used to sneak up there sometimes, when I knew she wasn't anywhere about, or I knew she wasn't coming back. She wouldn't allow us to have a bike and they'd get bikes up there, and I used to ride on this bike, I used to love it, cos I were never allowed a bike, I were never allowed nothing.