

# Winsley Parish - Hamlets



The parish of Winsley contains several hamlets as well as the village of Winsley, those hamlets being Turleigh, Conkwell, Murhill, Haugh and Ashley. Of these hamlets Turleigh, though small, is the largest. Murhill and Conkwell are next in size and very small, and Haugh and Ashley consist of only a few buildings.

## Turleigh

Turleigh lies halfway down a steep but widening valley immediately to the south of the plateau holding Winsley village, and has a beautiful outlook over the river Avon and the valley. Like Winsley it was originally part of the Manor of Bradford, granted to Shaftesbury Abbey by Ethelred II, and remained part of that Manor until the dissolution of the monasteries.

The road through the hamlet runs steeply downhill from Winsley to the centre of Turleigh and then divides - the main (left-hand) branch running along the contour of the hill and then down into Bradford On Avon, whilst the right hand branch runs uphill a short way before terminating. The houses are stone built and old, and range from smaller properties formerly occupied by quarrymen, stonemasons and tanners to large properties showing good evidence of the former wealth of the area: in total there are around 60 properties.

A feature of Turleigh is Turleigh Trows, a line of seven narrow interconnected stone basins through which water from a strong and reliable spring nearby runs before disappearing through a grating to continue downhill. These basins are situated to the side of the road, near to the bottom of the steep hill down from Winsley. They may possibly have originally been used some of the time for either watering animals, or for washing clothes - but they also supplied all water for those living nearby until mains water reached Turleigh (possibly circa 1920/30).



Turleigh used to have a Baptist Chapel, a Post Office, a shop and a public house (The Prince of Wales), but these are all now residential properties.

The Chapel was located over a coach house near the Manor, in the middle of the Hamlet, and the building

seems from its style to be of late 18th/early 19th Century date. Membership was always small, and the Chapel would have struggled to remain viable until its inevitable closure in 1885.

There is no bus service, the nearest being in Winsley Village, and the nearest rail connections are at Avoncliff Halt ( about half a mile), or the main station at nearby Bradford on Avon.

### **Larger Buildings in Turleigh**

Turleigh Manor - A Grade 11\* Listed, stone built property of 2 floors plus an attic floor, with a seven window frontage. Constructed late 17th/early 18th Century.

Turleigh Grange - Grade 11 listed, stone built, with 2 floors and a 3 Window frontage. Date of around 1820  
Turleigh House (previously called Brooklands, and also Turleigh Mill) Early 19th Century two storey house of a long plan form.

Uplands - dating from around 1700, 2 storeys and a five-window frontage.

### **Murhill and Conkwell**

These two small hamlets almost certainly originated in their current form with the quarrying of the local stone for the construction of the Kennet & Avon canal in the early 1800's, although there would in all probability have been isolated dwellings in the area for two to three hundred years prior to this date. Both hamlets lie in wooded surroundings and consist largely of former quarrymen's cottages, with some few later additions.

Murhill lies close to Winsley village, slightly southwest of it and lower down the escarpment, above and not far from the Kennet & Avon Canal. When the nearby stone quarries were in production an inclined tramway ran down to a wharf by the canal. Once construction of the canal was completed, stone was transported from there to other towns.

Murhill House, which dates from around 1840, was created around remodelled quarrymen's cottages and is a Grade II listed building. Conkwell lies across the plateau a short distance to the north of Winsley, in woodland in a natural notch in the edge of the plateau. It also has the remnants of an inclined tramway which took stone from its quarry down to the wharf at Dundas.

Conkwell Grange estate was created, and the house was built, in 1907. The estate functioned as a stud farm and racing stables for many years and is approximately 300 acres in size. It is still concerned with horses and the land.

### **Haugh and Ashley**

Now consist of a few scattered houses on the plateau fields to the north of Winsley, although they may once have been quite sizeable medieval settlements probably taking their names from the original owners of the land. The buildings were, and still in some cases are, mostly farmhouses and barns and cottages.

