

Winterbourne, Gloucestershire

Winterbourne is a large village in South Gloucestershire, England, situated on the north fringe of Bristol.^[1] The village had a population of 8,965 according to the 2011 census. The Civil Parish of Winterbourne is centred on the village and includes the neighbouring communities of Winterbourne Down, Hambrook and Frenchay. To the north-east is the village of Frampton Cotterell and to the west lies the new town of Bradley Stoke.

Winterbourne was recorded in the Domesday Book as *Wintreborne*, meaning 'Winter Stream'.^[2] The village is believed to have derived its name from the nearby Bradley Brook as much of medieval Winterbourne was originally built up around St Michael's Church, which is situated near the river.

In the 1960s, the M4 motorway has bypassed the village to the southwest.



Looking towards the Huckford Viaduct and Frome Valley from Cloisters



St Michael's Church

The modern village is largely built on top of a hill, with woodlands and fields encompassing its urban features. The River Frome flows through a scenic valley between the village and nearby Frampton Cotterell, continuing on towards Frenchay, and eventually draining in Bristol's Floating Harbour. The Bradley Brook divides Winterbourne from Bradley Stoke and Stoke Gifford to the west, before flowing into the Frome at Hambrook. Since the



The village pond, home to ducks and swans. Shelter for the ducks is provided on the islands.

The Huckford Viaduct carries the Great Western Railway over the River Frome. Beneath the viaduct is the abandoned Huckford Quarry, a public nature reserve popular with dog walkers. Winterbourne is noted for its large duck pond, which overlooks the Frome Valley and is a prime spot for fishing and feeding the ducks and swans.

The Parish Church is St Michael's, a building dating from the 12th century, which celebrated its 800th anniversary in 1998. Set away from the bustle of modern Winterbourne, St Michael's sits amid fields, flanked by cottages, with its prominent spire visible for miles around. At the altar a stone depiction of the *Last Supper*, based on the painting by Leonardo da Vinci, greets the congregation. Winterbourne Court Farm Barn is immediately adjacent to the church. This is a grade II* listed 14th century tithe

barn and is an outstanding example of its type.

Winterbourne has a number of pubs including the George and Dragon, the Swan and the Mason's Arms. In recent years, a number of the village's pubs have become restaurants; two of which now serve Indian cuisine. The village has three social hubs: St Michael's Rooms, Fromside Community Centre and Greenfield, which regularly host clubs, functions and other public events.



The High Street

Winterbourne contains branches of the Co-op and Tesco Express, a chemist, optician, a handful of dental practices and a library. NatWest also has a branch in the village. Nevertheless, the attributes of a typical English village remain, with a bakery, butcher and Post Office serving the community. Horses and cattle are a common sight in the fields, notably the Cloisters area, which offers a stunning view of the Frome Valley and the Huckford Viaduct.

As well as being the centre of a large civil parish, Winterbourne contains the hamlet of Watley's End, nestled on the border between Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell. Nowadays, it is regarded as an area of Winterbourne, but a few decades ago it was considered to be a village in its own right. People with a sense of identity in Watley's End continue to refer to the busy, uphill part of the village as 'Winterbourne Hill'. Salem, the local Methodist church, is in Watley's End.

1 Governance

An electoral ward in the same name exists. This ward stretches from Winterbourne in the north west to Hambrook in the southeast. The total population of the ward taken at the 2011 census was 6,994.^[3]

2 Schools

Winterbourne contains several schools. The main primary schools are Elm Park and St Michael's, with most

students going on to attend the nearby secondary school: The Ridings Winterbourne International Academy. The Ridings was formally opened by Tony Benn in 1957. Silverhill School and Day Nursery () is an independent preparatory school for children aged 6 months to 11 years. St Michael's was founded in 1813 by the abolitionists and educational reformers, Hannah More and William Wilberforce. The original school was located upstairs in the George and Dragon pub. Larger rooms were then provided in Bourne House, where the school remained until a permanent building was erected on the High Street. St Michael's present location on Linden Close was opened in 1970.^[4] St Michael's alumna, J. K. Rowling,^[5] is reputed to have based much of her character, Albus Dumbledore, on Alfred Dunn, who was headmaster during her studies.^[6]

3 Notable residents

- Edward Colston, merchant, slave trader and Member of Parliament, is believed have spent much of his childhood in Winterbourne.^[7]
- Harry Grindell Matthews, inventor, was born in Winterbourne in 1880. His childhood home was located at what is now The Grove Residential Home for the Elderly on the High Street where there is a blue plaque commemorating this link.
- Joe Fry, racing driver, was born in Winterbourne in 1915.
- Joanne Rowling, author of the *Harry Potter* books, lived in Winterbourne until she was nine years old.^[8] Potter's surname originated from some of her friends in the village.^[9]

4 Sport and leisure

Winterbourne has a Non-League football club Winterbourne United F.C. who play at Parkside Avenue.

5 Location grid

6 References

- [1] OS Explorer Map, Bristol and Bath, Keynsham & Marshfield. Scale: 1:25 000.Publisher: Ordnance Survey B4 edition (2013). ISBN 978 0319239773
- [2] ISBN 0-19-852758-6 Oxford Dictionary of British Place Names

- [3] “ward population 2011.Retrieved 21 March 2015”.
- [4] Winterbourne Family History Online, St Michael’s School Admission Register 1966–1970 – Accessed 14 August 2006.
- [5] *Winterbourne Family History Online*, St Michael’s School Admission Register 1966–1970 – Rowling listed as admission No.305. Accessed 14 August 2006.
- [6] *Winterbourne, South Gloucestershire Community Information and Magazine*, Winterbourne, Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore!. Accessed 8 August 2009.
- [7] Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 11, Colston, Edward Author: William Hunt. Accessed 28 February 2017.
- [8] St Michael’s School Admission Register 1966–1970 – Rowling listed as admission No.305. Accessed 14 August 2006.
- [9] “Edinburgh “cub reporter” press conference, ITV, 16 July 2005”. *Quick Quotes Quill*. Archived from the original on 6 January 2007. Retrieved 29 June 2007.

7 External links

- [St Michael’s Church](#)
- [Introduction to Winterbourne](#)
- [Winterbourne family history](#)
- [The Frome Valley Walkway](#)
- [Winterbourne Down May Day Carnival information](#)
- [Public Houses in Winterbourne and Winterbourne Down](#)



• *Winterbourne House*

Winterbourne Mediaeval Barn Trust

- [1st Winterbourne Down and Bury-side Scout Group](#)
- [The Ridings High School](#)
- [Silverhill School and Day Nursery](#)

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