

[This is a draft of the first part of the 'Landscape, Settlement, and Buildings' section of the VCH account of Chippenham parish, covering boundaries, landscape, communications and population. It aims to conform to the revised VCH parish history template, issued in November 2017, and is prefaced by the introductory paragraph. It has been researched and written by John Chandler, Consultant Editor, VCH Wiltshire, and was completed in December 2017.]

CHIPPENHAM

CHIPPENHAM, in 2011 the third most populous town in Wiltshire,¹ stands 8 km. west of Calne and 18 km. north-east of Bath (Som.) The early settlement, described in 853 as a royal residence (*villa regia*),² lay in a meander of the (Bristol) Avon, encircled by the river on all but its southern side. The medieval town occupied this area, with a church, adjacent market place, and a principal street leading north-west to the river,³ which had been bridged before 1227,⁴ and beyond which a suburb had developed.⁵ Outside the town its large ancient parish (5,098 a. in 1847) extended some 12 km north-west and south-east, and included part of the former Chippenham or Pewsham forest. The town prospered by virtue of its position on a major thoroughfare between London and Bristol, as an administrative and marketing centre, and later from cloth manufacture and railway engineering. Chippenham grew modestly during the 19th century, encouraged by its early railway connection with London, Bath and Bristol, achieved in 1841; but much more rapidly after the M4 motorway was opened nearby in 1971.

LANDSCAPE, SETTLEMENT AND BUILDINGS

Boundaries and Parish Origins

The parish of Chippenham, as it existed until boundaries were redrawn in 1884 and later, bordered 11 other ancient parishes.⁶ For two of these, Kington St Michael and Hardenhuish, charters of purportedly Anglo-Saxon date survive describing their boundaries, which appear to correspond (so far as they march with Chippenham) to those still prevailing into the 19th century.⁷ A portion of the eastern parish boundary, between Derry Hill and Horselepride Gate (by Sandy Lane), was defined c. 1618 when the park and liberty of Bowood (in Calne) was established.⁸ From Horselepride Gate to Nash Hill Farm the southern parish boundary follows

¹ After Swindon and Salisbury: Census 2011. In 2017 it could claim to be the largest settlement (by population) in the Wiltshire unitary authority area: below, this section: population. This account was written in 2017.

² D. Whitelock (ed.), *Eng. Hist. Doc.* I, 2nd ed., 189.

³ Useful, though hypothetical, plans of the early settlement are in J. Haslam, *Anglo-Saxon Towns of Southern England* (1984), 134-5.

⁴ below, this section: communications.

⁵ K.H. Rogers (ed.), *Lacock Abbey Charters* (WRS, 34), 89, which imply that buildings existed in the area as far as Foghamshire (*Fokena*).

⁶ These were (clockwise from north) Kington St Michael, Hardenhuish, Langley Burrell, Bremhill, Calne, Bromham (its tithing of Chittoe), Lacock, Corsham, Biddestone St Nicholas, Biddestone St Peter, and Yatton Keynell: derived from Youngs, *Admin Units*, I, and MS 'Index maps for enclosure and tithe maps', in WSHC.

⁷ A.R. Wilson and J.H. Tucker, 'The Langley charter and its boundaries', *WAM* 77 (1983), 67-70; G.B. Grundy, 'Saxon land charters of Wiltshire, I', *Archaeol. Jnl.* 76 (1919), 170-1. A charter of Bremhill appears not to describe the boundary with Chippenham: Grundy, 'Saxon land charters, I', 238-40.

⁸ *VCH Wilts*, 17, 116, 117.

the division between Chippenham and Melksham forests as perambulated in 1300.⁹ North-east of Chippenham town a stretch of the river Avon defines the parish boundary with Langley Burrell, and further south the same river divides Chippenham and Lacock. A length of the boundary with Corsham follows a minor tributary of the Avon, the Pudding brook, which flows into the river south of Rowden. Elsewhere the parish is defined by field boundaries, and in places is very irregular. The definition of Chippenham and its neighbouring parishes is complicated by two further factors: much of the area which became urbanized during the 19th century remained in Hardenhuish or Langley Burrell until boundaries were periodically redrawn from the 1880s onwards; and Langley Burrell and Kington St Michael possessed numerous small detached portions of land surrounded by Chippenham.¹⁰

CHIPPENHAM AND HARDENHUISH PARISHES BEFORE 1884



As mapped for tithe commutation in the 19th century the ancient parish (excluding the borough) was subdivided into five tithings.¹¹ Chippenham itself was by far the largest tithing, and included numerous outlying farmsteads and hamlets, of which Monkton, Rowden, Sheldon and Lowden were the foci of manors. To the west Allington tithing included Lanhill and Fowlswick, which was a distinct manor; and the tithings of Tytherton Lucas, Stanley and Nethermore comprised much of the parish east of the river Avon. The boundaries of these eastern tithings were related to those of the medieval forest of Chippenham or Pewsham. As declared in 1228 the forest was defined on the north by the river Marden, which was also the boundary between the tithings of Tytherton Lucas (outside the forest) and Stanley (within the

⁹ *WAM* 4 (1858), 206; *VCH Wilts*, 4, 408, 446.

¹⁰ MS 'Index maps for enclosure and tithe maps'.

¹¹ WSA, tithe awards.

forest).¹² Nethermore and Pewsham, whose eastern, southern and south-western boundaries corresponded to those of Chippenham forest in 1300, also lay within the forest.¹³ Nethermore, which answered at eyres as a vill within the forest before 1270, incorporated a purpresture of Stanley abbey (in Bremhill), and was regarded as a tithing;¹⁴ whereas Pewsham, presumably because it was largely uninhabited woodland or wood-pasture, was extra-parochial.¹⁵ Pewsham lay between Nethermore and Chippenham, thus detaching Nethermore from the rest of the parish. Except where otherwise described, in this volume the parish of Chippenham is to be understood to refer to the ancient parish comprising these five tithings; Pewsham is given separate treatment.

Close to the centre of its parish, the municipal and Parliamentary borough of Chippenham, as mapped in 1784, 1820 and 1831, comprised no more than the historic urban core, constrained by the Avon on north and west, and extending to Wood Lane on the south and the beginning of the Causeway on the east.¹⁶ The Parliamentary borough was extended in 1832 to include the whole of the ancient parishes of Chippenham, Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell, and the extra-parochial Pewsham.¹⁷ The jurisdiction of the improvement commissioners set up under an act of 1834 was rather larger than that of the old municipal borough, since it incorporated the Causeway to the east, Foghamshire and New Road as far as the railway viaduct to the west, and part of Westmead.¹⁸ That of the local board established in 1867 encompassed a much larger area, including most of Chippenham tithing east of the town, the New Road area beyond the bridge and the St Paul's district of Langley Burrell.¹⁹

Although Allington may have had a chapel of ease until the 17th century,²⁰ and Tytherton Lucas retains a medieval chapel,²¹ the parish was an ungainly territory for religious provision, especially once informal settlements such as Derry Hill, Studley and Sandy Lane became established at its margins in the 17th century, and suburban housing encroached on Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell in the 19th. The religious boundaries were the first, therefore, to be realigned. An ecclesiastical district (from 1861 parish) of Derry Hill was created in 1841, taking in Pewsham and part of Chippenham.²² Then in 1855 St Paul's district church was established to serve the burgeoning railway and industrial suburb, which took into its parish portions of Chippenham, Hardenhuish, Langley Burrell and Kington St Michael.²³ In 1965 an ecclesiastical parish of Chippenham St Paul with Langley Burrell was created, and in 1969 another new parish, Chippenham St Peter, took in parts of Hardenhuish and the two Chippenham parishes.²⁴

The civil boundaries of the parishes into which Victorian Chippenham had spread were overhauled in 1884 and 1889. At the former date Nethermore tithing was subsumed within Pewsham,²⁵ which, in common with other extra-parochial places, had become a civil parish in 1858.²⁶ Also in 1884, under legislation of 1882,²⁷ detached parcels of Langley Burrell and

¹² *VCH Wilts*, 4, 407, 446.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *VCH Wilts*, 3, 270, 271; *VCH Wilts*, 4, 408; *Collectanea* (WRS 12), 93; below, manors and estates . . .

¹⁵ Youngs, *Admin Units*, I, 546.

¹⁶ WSA, X6/14; G19/1/49PC; G19/133/1.

¹⁷ WSA, G19/133/1; Youngs, *Admin Units*, I, 770.

¹⁸ WSA, 1769/66; 137/126/3.

¹⁹ WSA, 137/126/3; G19/700/1.

²⁰ Aubrey, *Topog. Colln.* ed. Jackson, 72-3.

²¹ Pevsner, *Wilts.* (2nd edn), 541; below, religious hist.

²² *VCH Wilts*, 17, 107.

²³ Youngs, *Admin Units*, I, 534.

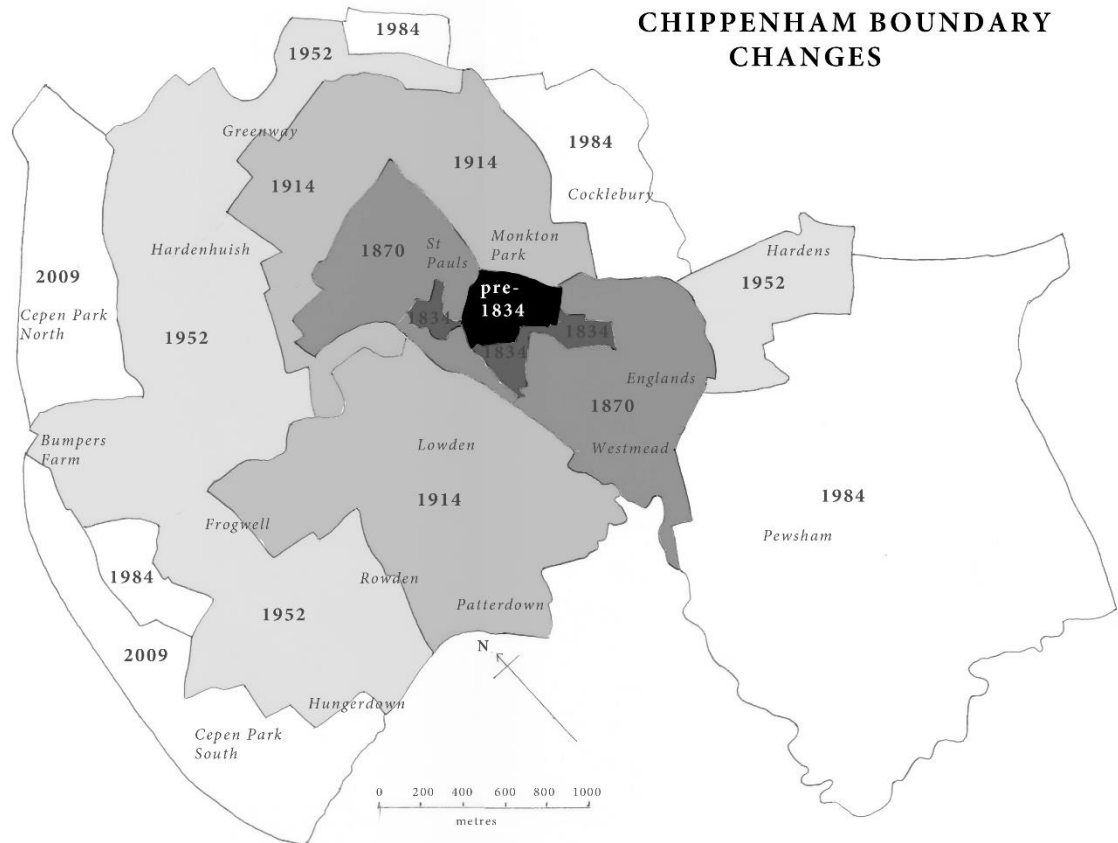
²⁴ *Ibid.*; below, religious hist.

²⁵ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 344.

²⁶ Extra-Parochial Places Act, 20 Vict, c. 19.

²⁷ Divided Parishes Act, 45 & 46 Vict, c. 58.

Chippenham lying geographically in each other's parishes were exchanged; some of these were inhabited, and in total 50 houses were transferred from Chippenham to Langley Burrell and 31 from Langley Burrell to Chippenham.²⁸ A more radical change occurred in 1889 after local government was reorganized. The municipal borough was enlarged to become coterminous with the urban sanitary district, which it replaced; and two new civil parishes were created: Langley Burrell Within and Chippenham (representing those parts of the old parishes now falling within the municipal borough).²⁹ In 1894 equivalent Langley Burrell Without and Chippenham Without civil parishes were formed from the rural portions of the parishes outside the borough.³⁰



Because Chippenham continued to expand its suburbs it became expedient to enlarge the area of the municipal borough, so that in 1914 the populous parts of Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell Without to the north and north-east were taken into the borough and transferred to Langley Burrell Within parish.³¹ At the same time the Frogwell, Lowden and Rowden areas of Chippenham Without west of the town were taken into the borough and into Chippenham Within parish. Three more changes occurred in 1934. Pewsham was enlarged to take in an adjacent area of Chippenham Without, the two 'Within' parishes were combined to create Chippenham civil parish, its boundaries coterminous with the borough, and what remained of Hardenhuish parish was absorbed into Langley Burrell Without. A further expansion took place

²⁸ *Census Report 1891*, II (C. 6948), 497.

²⁹ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 344, 351.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.* (this para.)

in 1952 to bring within the borough most of the former Hardenhuish parish, the ongoing housing development along Hungerdown Lane to the west, and ribbon development along London Road to the east.³² Then in 1984 Pewsham parish was abolished, its newly-suburbanised area to the south and south-east of Chippenham transferring to Chippenham parish, and the rural remainder entering Calne Without. The Chippenham boundary was also extended to the north and west in order to acknowledge further housing and major road development.³³ Housing development at Cepen Park as far as the Chippenham western by-pass during the 1990s and later resulted in a controversial decision to transfer the newly-populated area from Chippenham Without to Chippenham.³⁴ In 2009 the by-pass road became the boundary between the two parishes, so that Chippenham Without parish was restricted to the Allington and Sheldon areas of the ancient parish.³⁵

Landscape

The river Avon (Bristol Avon), which flows in a meandering course from north to south, bisects the ancient parish at its narrowest part into two roughly equal halves.³⁶ West of the river valley Cornbrash outcrops, a rubbly limestone mixed with clay, but in places around Allington, Lanhill and towards Hardenhuish, it is overlain by outliers of Kellaways Clay. From the built-up area of Chippenham, at around 60-70 m, the land rises undramatically westward to around 115-30 m in places, such as Lanhill, along the western parish boundary. Along the river valley a sandstone outcrops, the Kellaways Sand Member, but is overlain in places by superficial alluvial and gravel deposits. East of the river the predominant Oxford Clay gives the parish a flat terrain, effectively the Avon's wide floodplain, which lies rarely above 60 m and falls to 40 m where the Avon leaves the parish below Naish Hill. Along the eastern fringe, however, the Coral Rag and associated calcareous limestones have formed a notable and somewhat irregular high ridge, rising to 175 m in Nethermore Wood above Naish hill.

The western portion of the parish is drained by three streams flowing eastward to the Avon.³⁷ From north to south these are the Hardenhuish brook, which rises near Lanhill; the Ladyfield brook, which rises west of Vincients Wood and flows past Rowden; and the Pudding brook, which flows from Biddestone and defines the southern parish boundary. An earlier name for the Hardenhuish brook was *Fokene*, which is enshrined in the surviving street-name Foghamshire, close to where it enters the river.³⁸ Three Avon tributaries drain the eastern portion of Chippenham also. The Cat brook (or Cade Burna) flows from Bremhill Wick to the Avon near Tytherton Lucas; the river Marden enters the parish from Calne at Stanley and falls into the Avon east of Cocklebury Farm; the Cocklemore brook drains much of Pewsham and Nethermore tithings.

The Cornbrash gives rise to a lime-rich soil suitable for arable cultivation, whereas the heavier and more poorly drained clayland soils of the eastern parts of the parish have been better for pasture and wood pasture, with mixed woodland clothing the slopes of the Corallian ridge.³⁹ The clayland was heavily wooded in the late Saxon and early medieval periods.⁴⁰

³² Youngs, *Admin Units*, I, 534.

³³ Statutory Instruments, 1984, no. 387, N. Wilts. (Parishes) Order.

³⁴ *Wilts. Times*, 22 Sept. 2006.

³⁵ Statutory Instruments, 2009, no. 531, County of Wilts. (Electoral Changes) Order.

³⁶ This para: Geol. Surv. Map 1", solid and drift, sheets 265 (1965); 266 (1964);

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 10 Dec. 2017).

³⁷ Maps used in this para: OS 6", sheet Wilts. XX, 1886 edn.; OS 1:25,000, Explorer sheet 156, 1999 edn.

³⁸ *PN Wilts.*(EPNS), 90.

³⁹ <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/> (accessed 10 Dec. 2017); OS 1:25,000, Explorer sheet 156, 1999 edn.

⁴⁰ *VCH Wilts.* 4, 407.

Communications

Bridges: The topography of the Saxon and medieval town implies an ancient river crossing in the vicinity of the later bridge. A bridge over the Avon at Chippenham existed in 1227,⁴¹ and was broken and ruinous in 1375-6, when a pontage grant permitted customs money to be diverted to pay for its repair.⁴² This or a subsequent rebuilding formed the structure of ribbed arches, typical of the 15th century, which carried a roadway c.12 ft wide,⁴³ and which was described in 1578 as a great stone bridge of 15 arches.⁴⁴ Already by 1554 the town maintained its bridge at great cost,⁴⁵ and from that year to 1578 repairs to half of it were funded by revenue from the town lands.⁴⁶ It was then so weak that it was not safe for packhorses, and vehicles forded the river near Cocklebury.⁴⁷ Major repairs costing £79 were carried out in 1615 following the collapse of two arches and piers; and again in 1684, when over £60 was spent, probably after damage by ice.⁴⁸ The corporation agreed in 1758 to widen the further part of the bridge, and in 1788 to reverse an earlier alteration; but following a meeting in 1796 the whole bridge was widened and a balustrade added.⁴⁹ The Chippenham turnpike trust was permitted to erect tollgates on the bridge in 1805, and after 1834 the bridge was lit by gas.⁵⁰ Further widening took place in 1879-80,⁵¹ so that when inspected c. 1930 the carriageway was 41 ft. wide and of 22 arches.⁵² A pedestrian bridge was built alongside in 1959.⁵³ This and the road bridge were both demolished to make way for a new concrete bridge of three spans, as part of an improvement scheme which included flood prevention measures; it was opened in May 1966 and served as the only road bridge across the Avon in Chippenham until 1988.⁵⁴ A portion of the balustrade was retained.

A second bridge, decayed and repaired in 1653, may have been the wooden bridge referred to in highway surveyors' accounts in 1669.⁵⁵ It is perhaps to be identified with Back Avon bridge, which crossed the river from the end of River street.⁵⁶ The cause of many drownings, the vestry in 1788 determined to widen and strengthen it.⁵⁷ After floods swept away part of the bridge in 1881 and its iron replacement in 1882 it was rebuilt again in 1889, washed away in 1927 and, despite prolonged discussion and campaigning, was not replaced.⁵⁸

⁴¹ *Cal. Chart.* I, 39; Roger de Ponte occupied land in Chippenham in the early 13th century: *Hungerford Cartulary* (WRS 49), 84 (no. 325).

⁴² *Cal. Close, 1374-1377*, 184-5.

⁴³ E. Jervoise, *Ancient Bridges of the South of England* (1930), 116.

⁴⁴ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 296.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 264, 269.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 296-7.

⁴⁷ G.A.H. White, *Chippenham in Bygone Days* (1924), 25.

⁴⁸ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 40-4, 70.

⁴⁹ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 86, 102, 105-8.

⁵⁰ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 120, 159-60, 179.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 255.

⁵² Jervoise, *Ancient Bridges*, 116.

⁵³ Chamberlain, *Chippenham*, 45.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 45-6; WSA F1/25/6/1, report 1967, 4-5. For 1988 bridge, below, this section.

⁵⁵ I. Slocombe (ed.), *Wilts. Quarter Sessions Order Book 1642-54* (WRS 67), 306 (no. 917); J. Freeman (ed.), *Bayntun Commonplace Book* (WRS 43), 26

⁵⁶ OS 25", *Wilts.* XX (14), 1886 edn.

⁵⁷ R.F. Hunnisett (ed.), *Wilts. Coroners' Bills* (WRS 36), 99 (no. 1569).

⁵⁸ *Bath Chronicle*, 17 Feb. 1881, p. 5; *Wilts. Times*, 16 Mar. 1889, p. 5; *Devizes & Wilts. Gazette*, 5 Sep. 1889, p. 8; *Wilts. Times*, 24 Sept 1927, p. 7; *Ibid*, 18 Mar. 1939, p. 2.

Roads: The 1554 borough charter refers to the corporation's responsibility to maintain not only a bridge, but also a causeway.⁵⁹ Repairs to this, the south-eastern approach to the town, were also funded from the proceeds of the town lands, and stone was brought to pitch it in 1598, 1603 and later.⁶⁰ Its earlier maintenance may have been assisted by travellers' doles to a hermitage which stood opposite the Packhorse inn until the 17th century.⁶¹ Between 1639 and 1645 the causeway was repaired, safeguarded (from vehicular use) with great stones, and extended by 438 yds.;⁶² and in 1685, when it was again out of repair, it was said to be 10 ft. broad and extended for two miles towards Calne.⁶³ The corporation levied a rate to repair it in 1698, and from 1744 paid a contractor 15 gns annually to maintain it from Chippenham to the top of Derry Hill.⁶⁴ It was still the corporation's responsibility in 1835 to maintain it as a pitched footpath of about 2½ miles,⁶⁵ and it did not pass until 1895 to the county council.⁶⁶

By c. 1370, and probably long before, the principal overland route between Bristol and London passed through Chippenham.⁶⁷ To protect travellers from ambush, presumably on this road, a trench had been ordered to be made in a part of Chippenham forest in 1231.⁶⁸ In 1392 William Bekeswell, a Bristol burgess, left money for repairing *Chippenameslane* and a way near Calne, and in 1476 a Bristol goldsmith, Robert Hynde, gave 6s. 8d. for repairing the king's highway between Chippenham and Calne, towards London.⁶⁹ East of the town the road followed the causeway to the top of Derry Hill where, in 1653, it skirted Bowood park towards Studley.⁷⁰ New Road, the present A4 road which takes an easier course through Derry Woods, was made between 1801 and 1808.⁷¹ West of Chippenham bridge the road's ancient course is marked by Foghamshire, described as a street before 1283,⁷² and then by Marshfield road, described in 1651 as a hollow way called Bristol way, to Landsend and beyond.⁷³ This route, via Marshfield, was the highway to Bristol in a list of 1588,⁷⁴ rather than the alternative via Bath preferred by later wheeled traffic.

Other ways leading from Chippenham to nearby towns and villages are referred to in medieval sources: to Sutton Benger in 1257;⁷⁵ to Lacock in 1293;⁷⁶ to Cocklebury c. 1320 and in 1347;⁷⁷ and to Devizes through Pewsham forest in 1381.⁷⁸ A *Batheweeye* near Fowlswick existed in the 13th century, but may not have served Chippenham town.⁷⁹ Roads referred to as leading

⁵⁹ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 269-70.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 296-7, 192; Jackson, 'Chippenham', in *WAM*, 12 (1870), 285.

⁶¹ Jackson, 'Chippenham', 285; Chamberlain, *Chippenham*, 49.

⁶² *Recs. of Chippenham*, 208-9, 213.

⁶³ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 318-19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 79, 82.

⁶⁵ *Royal Comm. of Inquiry into Municipal Corporations*, 1st rept., pt. II (H.C. Papers 1835, 116), p. 1248.

⁶⁶ Chamberlain, *Chippenham*, 50.

⁶⁷ www.goughmap.org (accessed 15 Oct. 2017).

⁶⁸ *Cal. Close, 1227-31*, 537; on the function of trenches, O. Rackham, *Hist. of the Countryside* (1986), 268-70.

⁶⁹ T.P. Wadley, *Notes or Abstracts of the Wills . . . [in] the Great Orphan Book . . . Bristol* (1886), 34, 158.

⁷⁰ *WAM*, 41 (1921), 419.

⁷¹ *Printed Maps of Wilts.* (WRS 52), 23, 33; OS Drawings 61 (surv. 1808).

⁷² J L Kirby (ed.), *Hungerford Cartulary* (WRS 49), 89 (no. 351), date inferred from K H Rogers (ed.) *Lacock Abbey Charters* (WRS 34), 89 (nos. 359, 360).

⁷³ WSA 118/53; I. Slocombe (ed.) *Wilts Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1642-54* (WRS 67), 286; *Recs. of Chippenham*, 64; J. Ogilby, *Britannia*, vol. 1, pl. 11.

⁷⁴ W Smith, *Particular Description of England, 1588* (1879 edn.), 70.

⁷⁵ *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Series), II, 202.

⁷⁶ *Hungerford Cartulary* (WRS 49), 84 (no. 327).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 82 (no. 318); *Tropenell Cartulary*, I, 304.

⁷⁸ *Cal. Pat., 1381-5*, 47.

⁷⁹ *Reg. Malm.* (Rolls Series), II, 288.

out of the parish towards Pickwick (in Corsham) in 1623 and Corsham in 1605, 1624 and 1639, presumably served travellers heading for Bath; in 1624 the highway from Chippenham to Bath ran by Salters Cross (Hungerdown) and Corsham.⁸⁰ In 1675 an unenclosed road from Chippenham to Bath via Pickwick was mapped as part of a main route between London and Wells (Som.).⁸¹

Two features of Chippenham's pre-turnpike road pattern, although falling largely outside the parish, demand notice. Maud Heath's causeway, established in 1474 by a private benefactor and administered by a trust, maintained an all-weather route across the Avon flood-plain from Bremhill to Chippenham Clift, with a river crossing and long raised causeway at Kellaways.⁸² As such it offered travellers one of three alternatives to the main road between Chippenham bridge and Calne. A second was a route via Stanley and Studley, described in 1675 as the 'plow road' to Chippenham.⁸³ A third, employed apparently when the bridge was out of repair, involved diverting through Monkton and Cocklebury to a ford near Harden's farm, and rejoining the main road near Gate farm.⁸⁴ The second feature was an agreement made in 1651 between Chippenham, Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell parishes to partition responsibility for repairing and maintaining stretches of the principal roads leading north and west out of the town, towards Bristol, Malmesbury and Wootton Bassett.⁸⁵ The impetus for this unusual arrangement is unclear, but may have been intended to resolve disputes arising from small detached parcels of land falling within each other's parishes.

Chippenham in the 18th century was an important junction, the hub of seven roads radiating from the town which came under the control of turnpike trusts.⁸⁶ The earliest, the Chippenham trust of 1727, provoked hostility when it began charging travellers along the roads which it administered,⁸⁷ the London road as far as Studley bridge via Derry Hill, and the Bristol road to Tog Hill (in Doynton, Glos.). The trust abandoned the Bristol road at its turnpike act renewal in 1743, and turnpiked the Bath road as far as Pickwick instead. Responsibility for the Bristol road was assumed by the Sodbury trust in 1751/2, which also turnpiked the road branching from it at the Long Stone near Lanhill towards Castle Combe and Chipping Sodbury (Glos.). The importance and use of this road increased after 1825 because it afforded a direct route to south Wales by steamboat from Aust (Glos.) to Beachley in Tidenham (Glos.).⁸⁸ Although east-west traffic between London, Bath and Bristol was undoubtedly the most important, especially after c. 1750,⁸⁹ three north-south roads were also turnpiked between 1755 and 1768. The Malmesbury trust turnpiked the route through Stanton St Quinton to Chippenham in 1756, the Holt trust the road to Lacock, Melksham and Bradford on Avon in 1762, and the Chippenham trust the road to a junction of roads at Draycot Cerne in 1768. In 1773 there were tollgates at the St Mary Street–Causeway junction and at Chippenham Clift; a gate at Allington Bar was then no longer in use.⁹⁰ In 1805 the Chippenham trust was permitted to erect gates and a tollhouse at the northern and western approaches to Chippenham bridge,⁹¹ and these were in use until c. 1834, when new gates and tollhouses were built at the junction of

⁸⁰ WSA A1/110, 1623E, 1624E, 1639E; *Recs. of Chippenham*, 2.

⁸¹ J. Ogilby, *Britannia*, vol. 1, pl. 35.

⁸² K.S. Taylor, *Dry Shod to Chippenham* (2012); see above, Bremhill, introduction; and below, Langley Burrell, introduction. Chippenham Clift refers to the high ground by the Little George road junction.

⁸³ J. Ogilby, *Britannia*, vol. 1, pl. 11.

⁸⁴ Chamberlain, *Chippenham*, 36.

⁸⁵ WSA 118/53; I. Slocombe (ed.) *Wilts Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1642-54* (WRS 67), 285-7; *Recs. of Chippenham*, 63-5.

⁸⁶ This para: *VCH Wilts*, 4, 256-71; WSA 1316/1-2.

⁸⁷ D. Gerhold, *Bristol's Stage Coaches* (2012), 42-3.

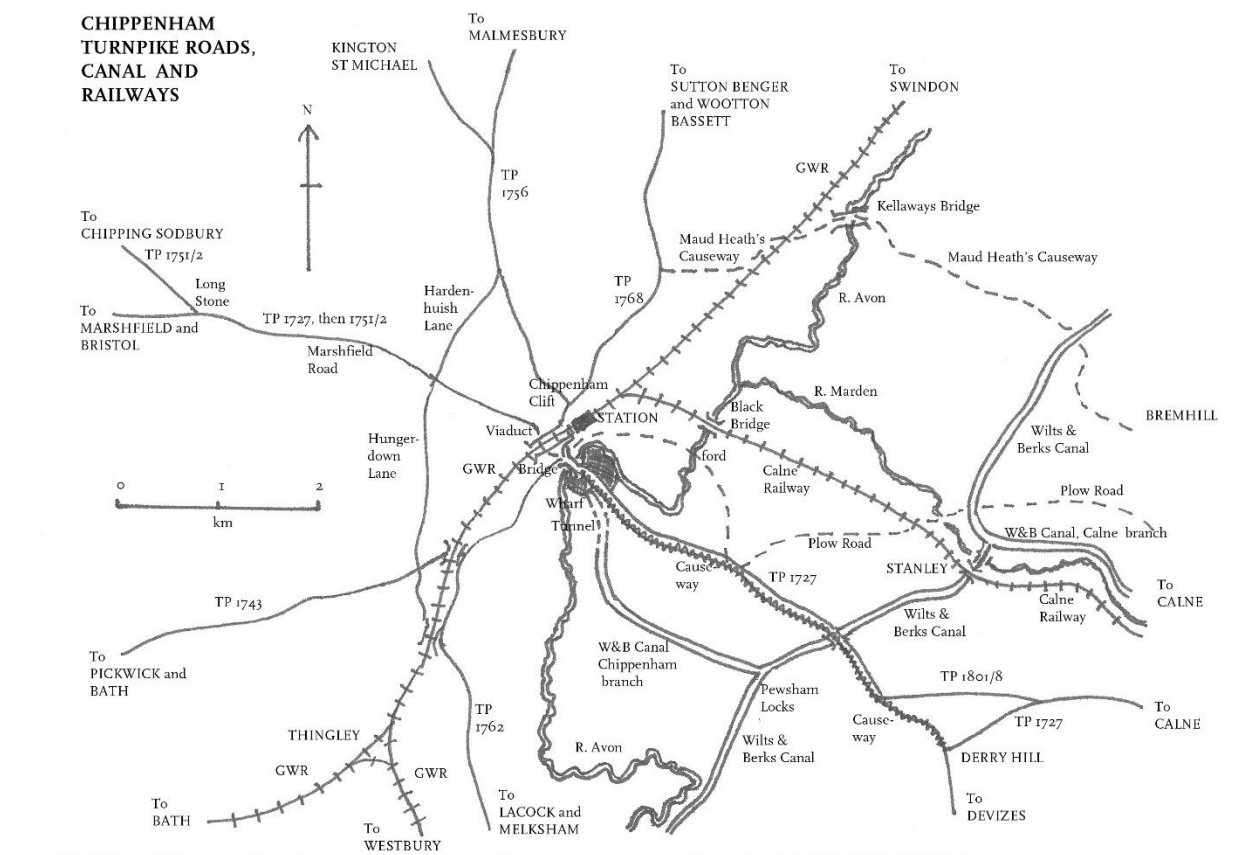
⁸⁸ *VCH Glos*, 10, 55.

⁸⁹ Gerhold, *Bristol's Stage Coaches*, 43-6.

⁹⁰ Andrews and Dury's *Map of Wilts.* (1773), pl. 13.

⁹¹ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 120; WSA 1780/34, 325-41; WSA 1316/2, meetings 18 June and 6 Aug. 1805.

the Bath and Lacock roads, at Lowden, Hungerdown Lane and on the London road at the Stanley turning.⁹² The Chippenham trust's roads were disturnpiked in 1870 and all the others serving the parish had been disturnpiked by 1877.



Chippenham's major road network changed little before c. 1960, although the growing importance of the London to Bristol road through Chippenham and Bath (designated A4) was recognized when it was trunked in 1936.⁹³ Increasing traffic during the 1960s led to the adoption of an inner relief road scheme in the Ivy Lane and viaduct area in 1965-6, and this was opened in April 1967.⁹⁴ Traffic through the town reduced with the completion of the Wiltshire section of the M4 motorway in 1971, but north-south traffic approaching and leaving the motorway increased along Hungerdown Lane and Hardenhuish Lane which had been widened in phases, 1962-6, and upgraded to A-road status.⁹⁵ A town centre relief scheme (Avenue la Flèche), opened in September 1988, included the longest single-span bridge (35m) in Wiltshire.⁹⁶ One effect of this was to enable the partial pedestrianization of the High Street area from c. 1995.⁹⁷ A western by-pass, West Cepen Way, was constructed 1997-9,⁹⁸ replacing Hungerdown Lane as the A350, and enlarged to a dual carriageway road 2014-18.⁹⁹

⁹² R. Haynes and I. Slocombe, *Wilts. Toll Houses* (2004), 21-7.

⁹³ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 265.

⁹⁴ WSA F1/250/6/1, reports 1966, p. 5; 1968, p. 4.

⁹⁵ WSA F1/250/6/1, reports 1962-6, 1973, p. 4; OS, 1:50,000 map, sheet 173, 1981 edn.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* reports 1988, p. 5; 1989, p. 5.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* report 1995.

⁹⁸ *WAM*, 92 (1999), 136; *Western Daily Press*, 4 Aug. 1999 [better refs needed].

⁹⁹ personal observation.

Canal: Proposals in 1734-5 and 1765 to make the Avon navigable between Bath and Chippenham were not implemented.¹⁰⁰ Prominent Chippenham residents were among the promoters in 1793 of a narrow canal to link Bristol and Abingdon (Berks.), and this became the Wilts. & Berks. canal constructed between 1795 and 1810.¹⁰¹ The canal ran from the Kennet & Avon at Semington to the Thames at Abingdon, and included a branch to Chippenham which was completed as far as Englands in 1798 and became operational in 1800. The main canal crossed the parish south-east of the town, through Pewsham and Stanley, with three locks at Pewsham, and a road bridge carrying the London road over the canal at Forest Gate. A brickworks was opened nearby. The Chippenham branch left the canal near Pewsham locks and, after a dispute with the borough council,¹⁰² it was extended, 1800-3, from Englands by a tunnel to a wharf built close to the market place. Trade principally in Somerset coal, but also in stone, timber and agricultural produce, was brisk at Chippenham and Pewsham wharves until the 1850s, but by 1875 had declined to such an extent that there were calls to abandon it. Despite leakages and damage resulting from neglect, some traffic on the Chippenham branch continued until 1904; but by 1916, following complaints of nuisances, it had been filled in and part was used as a tip. In 1970-1 the tunnel was closed up and the cutting leading to it filled in, and during the development of the Pewsham housing estate, c.1985-95, its former course defined the edge of the estate along which its perimeter road, Pewsham Way, was constructed. In 2017 restoration work was under way at Pewsham locks and elsewhere as part of a campaign to reopen the main canal.¹⁰³

Railways: The precursor of the Great Western Railway determined in 1833 that its railway between London and Bristol would pass through Chippenham, and this was authorized in 1835.¹⁰⁴ The broad gauge line (converted to mixed gauge in 1874 and standard gauge in 1892) was built in 1841 across the narrowest portion of Chippenham parish, entering from Langley Burrell and passing north of the town and by Lowden, to leave near Patterdown. A station and associated buildings were constructed in stone to an Italianate-style design by I.K. Brunel c.300m north of Chippenham bridge, and the line was carried south-westward, first by a high stone and brick viaduct of nine arches,¹⁰⁵ c.90m long, spanning the valley of the Hardenhuish brook and the Foghamshire area, and then on an embankment for some 3km to Thingley (in Corsham). After 1856-7, when a second line was constructed, from a junction at Thingley towards Westbury, Salisbury and Weymouth (Dorset), Chippenham station was enlarged with additional platforms and a train shed. Further sheds, depots, offices and ancillary buildings were added, and industries were attracted to the vicinity, so that a plan of 1929 shows the station as the centrepiece of a linear industrial complex extending almost 1km along both sides of the railway. Many sidings were removed and buildings demolished during the 1960s, to be replaced by car parks, and the track was realigned for high-speed train working in 1976. The principal Brunel station buildings were retained. In 1990, when Chippenham was Wiltshire's third-busiest station, c.1,000 passengers commuted to London daily. A frequent rail service between London and Bristol via Bath, and a less frequent service between Swindon and Westbury via Melksham, called at Chippenham station in 2017, when the forecourt was also the terminus for buses to various north Wiltshire destinations.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ *VCH Wilts*, 4, 272; WSA 109/892.

¹⁰¹ This para: *VCH Wilts*, 4, 272-9; L.J. Dalby, *Wilts & Berks Canal* (3rd edn., 2000); R. Alder, *Chippenham and the Wilts & Berks Canal* (2011).

¹⁰² *Recs. of Chippenham*, 111-12.

¹⁰³ www.wbct.org.uk/the-trust/our-news (accessed 19 Dec 2017).

¹⁰⁴ This para: *VCH Wilts*, 4, 280-4; C.G. Maggs, *The GWR Swindon to Bath Line* (2003), 53-62; R.H. Clark, *Hist. Survey of Selected Great Western Stations*, 3 (1981), 55-8.

¹⁰⁵ HER 1267956.

¹⁰⁶ personal observation.

The Calne Railway company opened a broad gauge branch line between Chippenham and Calne in 1863. The line was operated by the Great Western Railway, which converted it to standard gauge in 1874 and purchased the branch in 1892.¹⁰⁷ It diverged from the main line at a junction c.500m east of Chippenham station and crossed the Avon by Black Bridge, a timber structure replaced by steel girders in 1920. From the bridge it ran on a straight alignment ESE across Stanley tithing to Stanley Bridge, where a halt was opened in 1905. Its course then took it over the canal west of Stanley abbey and along the Marden valley to Calne. Passenger (including service personnel) and goods traffic (including cattle, pigs and milk) was considerable until the early 1950s, when 300,000 passengers were carried annually, but declined after 1955 and the line closed in 1965. Track was lifted in 1967 and Black Bridge removed in 1971.

Post, Carriers, Buses and Telecommunications: From 1784 mail coaches between London and Bristol called at Chippenham, and by 1833 the mail was one of five stage coaches that traversed this route daily.¹⁰⁸ In 1792 there was a post office in the White Hart inn,¹⁰⁹ but by 1830, and perhaps 1822, it occupied premises in High Street.¹¹⁰ Ann Elliott, postmistress in 1822, was replaced by Mary Elliott between 1855 and 1859.¹¹¹ Money orders were handled by 1867 and telegraphs by 1875, and by 1880 pillar boxes had been erected at Causeway and Rowden Hill.¹¹² The post office, previously at 12 High Street, had relocated before 1886 to 50 Market Place, where it remained until 1959, when a new head post office was built on the corner of St Mary Street.¹¹³ A sub post office in New Road opened in 1881,¹¹⁴ and by 1889 there were seven pillar boxes at locations in the town, including the railway station, and four postal deliveries daily.¹¹⁵ There was a telephone call office at the main post office in 1903, and a second sub office, in Sheldon Road;¹¹⁶ a further sub office was open in London Road in 1939.¹¹⁷ The head post office of 1959 closed in 2012 and business was transferred to a convenience store at 28/29 Market Place, where it remained in 2017.¹¹⁸

Mr Wiltshire's waggon travelled weekly between Chippenham and London in 1690, and a carrier took three days to make the journey in 1748.¹¹⁹ Three waggons plied between London and Bristol in 1792, stopping at Chippenham inns.¹²⁰ Carriers, sometimes styled caravans, were operating between Chippenham and local towns by 1822, including Bath, Calne and Devizes.¹²¹ By 1842 there were in addition daily carriers to south Wales and to Southampton, and a weekly carrier to Malmesbury.¹²² The number of local carriers increased after 1850 so that in 1895 and 1903 there were 13 carriers journeying weekly or more often (generally including Friday) to Chippenham from nearby towns and villages, mostly from places north and west of the town not

¹⁰⁷ This para: C.G. Maggs, *The Calne Branch* (1990), 11-16, 45-9, 105-12.

¹⁰⁸ D. Gerhold, *Bristol's Stage Coaches* (2012), 86-93, 123-5.

¹⁰⁹ *Univ. British Dir.* 2, 592.

¹¹⁰ *Pigot's Dir. Wilts.* (1822, 1830 edns.).

¹¹¹ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1855, 1859 edns.)

¹¹² *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1867, 1875, 1880 edns.)

¹¹³ *Chippenham Walkabout* (1977), 8-10, 27; OS 1:500 (1886 edn.).

¹¹⁴ *Bath Chronicle* 30 June 1881, 6.

¹¹⁵ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1889 edn.).

¹¹⁶ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1903 edn.).

¹¹⁷ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1939 edn.).

¹¹⁸ *Wilts. Gazette & Herald*, 22 Nov. 2012; personal observation.

¹¹⁹ D. Gerhold, *London Carriers and Coaches 1637-1690* (2016), 43; D. Gerhold, *Carriers and Coachmasters* (2005), 192.

¹²⁰ *Univ. British Dir.* 2, 592.

¹²¹ *Pigot's Dir. Wilts.* (1822 edn.).

¹²² *Pigot's Dir. Wilts.* (1830, 1842 edns.).

accessible by rail.¹²³ Several used the Great Western Hotel as their inn. By 1911 their numbers had reduced, so that by 1920 there were five, and by 1927, only one.¹²⁴

A motor bus service in summer between Bath and Chippenham had been inaugurated before 1911,¹²⁵ but it was not until the late 1920s that bus operation proliferated. In 1929 the railway-owned National company ran buses to Trowbridge via Melksham, to Calne, and to Stroud (Glos.) via Malmesbury, while Bristol and Bath tramways companies ran buses to Swindon, Chipping Sodbury (Glos.), Bristol and Bath.¹²⁶ Chippenham remained an outpost of the Western National bus company, formed from National in 1929, and the company built a bus station and offices at Timber Street which opened in 1956.¹²⁷ Services were transferred to Bristol Omnibus company in 1970, Badgerline in 1985, and First Bus in 1995, although in 2017 most local services were operated by Faresaver, a company based at Bumpers Farm, Chippenham.¹²⁸ The bus station was improved in 1962 and 1968, and rearranged in 2006, when excavations uncovered the canal wharf beneath.¹²⁹

Population

Domesday Book records on the royal manor of Chippenham 31 slaves working the demesne, 52 households headed by a villein and 92 by the lesser categories of peasant, with a further 2 peasant (bordar) households on a minor estate.¹³⁰ A separate Domesday entry for Stanley adds 3 villein and 3 bordar households.¹³¹ The total of households recorded in 1086 exclusive of the demesne was therefore 152. In 1332 59 Chippenham burgesses contributed £16 18s. 10¹/₄d. to a tax, the second largest payment (after Salisbury) of any Wiltshire borough.¹³² Chippenham's tithings were separately assessed, 14 Allington inhabitants paying £2 2s. 8d., 14 Stanley inhabitants £2 8s. 3¹/₂d., and 19 Tytherton Lucas inhabitants £3 2s. 2¹/₂d.¹³³ Totals for a similar tax two years later were in each case slightly higher, and Rowden was explicitly included in the Chippenham total.¹³⁴ To the 1377 poll tax 257 Chippenham inhabitants contributed, as well as 48 from Allington, 66 from Stanley, 45 from Tytherton Lucas, and 112 from an unidentified location, 'Ende', which has been surmised to be a part of Chippenham.¹³⁵ Chippenham's total of 257 payers places the town 18th by population of Wiltshire's fiscal units, but if the outlying parts of the parish are included the total, 528, would place it fifth.¹³⁶

Lists of householders within the borough drawn up c.1604 and 1685 recorded 103 and 100 respectively.¹³⁷ A religious census taken in 1676 reported 858 adults in Chippenham parish,¹³⁸ but a century later a demographer claimed that in 1773 the total population was 2,407 in 483 houses.¹³⁹ The 1801 census total for the parish was 3,366 and this had risen to 3,506 in

¹²³ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1895, 1903 edns.).

¹²⁴ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911, 1920, 1939 edns.).

¹²⁵ *Kelly's Dir. Wilts.* (1911 edn.).

¹²⁶ *Roadways*, 3 (Sept. 1929); R.J. Crawley and F.D. Simpson, *The Years Between*, 3 (1990), 6-7.

¹²⁷ Crawley and Simpson, *Years Between*, 78.

¹²⁸ *Companion to Road Passenger Transport Hist.* (2013), 56, 98; www.faresaver.co.uk/ (accessed 19 Dec. 2017).

¹²⁹ Crawley and Simpson, *Years Between*, 253; Alder, *Chippenham and the Wilts & Berks Canal*, 61.

¹³⁰ *Domesday*, 162, 191.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹³² D. A. Crowley (ed.) *Wilts. Tax List of 1332* (WRS 45), 4-5.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 98-9, 101.

¹³⁴ *VCH Wilts* 4, 296, 298-9.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 307-8.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 312.

¹³⁷ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 26-8, 73 [check chantry certs at TNA].

¹³⁸ A. Whiteman (ed.), *Compton Census of 1676*, 129 [check]

¹³⁹ R. Price, *Essay on the Population of England* (2nd ed., 1780), 7.

600 dwellings in 1821, of whom 110 lived in Allington and 195 in the other tithings.¹⁴⁰ These figures were disputed by the borough council, who claimed that there had then been 755 houses, and extrapolated a total population of 4,411.¹⁴¹ This was close to the official figure in 1831, 4,333, which rose substantially to 5,438 in 1841, swollen by the presence of 315 itinerant railway labourers.¹⁴² Between 1851 and 1891 the population levelled at c.5,000-5,400, of whom 1,352 were living within the borough in 1881.¹⁴³ Boundary changes during the 1880s and subsequently make direct comparisons impossible, but the combined population in 1901 of Chippenham Within (3,655) and Without (1,948) stood at 5,603, and rose only modestly to 6,075 in 1931. After the urban portion of Langley Burrell was taken into the civil parish in 1934, a total for the whole parish of 11,851 was reported in 1951.¹⁴⁴ Pewsham, as an extra-parochial place and then a civil parish, was separately enumerated, its population rising from 139 in 1801 to 303 a decade later, and 480 in 1841; it declined thereafter, to 367 in 1881 and remained static until after 1931, but had risen to 561 in 1951.¹⁴⁵

Each decennial census since 1951 saw a rise in Chippenham's population, and this was especially marked during the 1950s (48 per cent increase 1951-61), 1980s (33 per cent increase 1981-91), and after 2001 (28 per cent increase 2001-11). These increases largely reflected boundary changes, as urban Chippenham expanded into Hardenhuish and Pewsham.¹⁴⁶ In 1961 the total was 17,543, rising modestly to 19,128 in 1981, but then to 25,376 in 1991, and from 28,065 in 2001 to 35,830 in 2011.¹⁴⁷ The Chippenham community area, larger than the parish, had a population of 45,337 in 2011, the largest in the Wiltshire unitary authority.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ *VCH Wilts* 4, 344.

¹⁴¹ *Recs. of Chippenham*, 154-5.

¹⁴² *VCH Wilts* 4, 319, 344.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, 344.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 355.

¹⁴⁶ above, boundaries.

¹⁴⁷ *Census, 1961-2011*.

¹⁴⁸ *Wiltshire Census 2011 Selected Statistics Profile Tool: Chippenham Community Area*