



Migration Case study: The Irish &
Pakistanis of Cricklewood



Roman soldiers would have marched along the route of the modern day Cricklewood Broadway.

The Roman army landed at Richborough, Kent, in 43 AD. They had traded with British tribes for many years and now wanted to gain control of their rich resources. They built camps and roads across Britain as part of their plan to conquer the native tribes. Later, Roman soldiers – who came from Italy, France, Spain, the Middle East, and North Africa – settled in towns close to their camps. Around 120 AD, London (*Londinium*) became the capital of the new colony.

Cricklewood Broadway, also known as the A5, is part of a longer road that runs all the way from Dover to Wroxtter, near Wales. It follows the route of an ancient track and was paved by the Romans nearly 2,000 years ago. When the Saxons settled in England 1,500 years ago, they called the road *Watling Street*.

Enquiry Question: Can you find out what were the resources that attracted the Romans to Britain?

From about 500 AD, Saxon settlers from Germany and native British people merged to become the English. A peaceful nation, famed for the wealth of its monasteries, England attracted the attention of first the Vikings and then the Normans.



The Norman army arrived from France in 1066 AD. Over the next few years, they defeated English resistance. To establish control, they built castles, like the Tower of London. William the Conqueror also ordered a survey of his new kingdom in 1086. This *Domesday* book records settlements at Wellesdone (Willesden) and Chileburne (Kilburn). 'Cricklewood' comes from the Saxon meaning 'a wood with a crooked outline'. The first written appearance is in legal documents from the 13th century, when it was recorded as 'Le Crickeldwode'.

Enquiry Question: Why do you think King William had the Domesday book written?

The first written recording of Cricklewood was as the Norman-French 'Le Crickeldwode'.

The area remained woodland through the Middle Ages, until clearances in the early 17th century. By the 18th century Cricklewood was a small hamlet of cottages and farms surrounded by countryside. By 1751 a public house called the Crown had opened, to offer refreshments to travellers.



In 1870, a railway station opened on Cricklewood Lane. Now people could easily commute into London and suburbs developed around the city as people came to London from across the UK. Hundreds of new houses were built in Cricklewood between 1880 and 1930. The 'tree roads' - Pine, Larch, Ivy, Olive and Ashford Road - were part of the Cricklewood Park development constructed between 1893-1900.

The Crown was rebuilt in 1889, and new shops were built on the Broadway between 1910 and 1914.

Enquiry Question: What reasons can you think of for people moving to London from other parts of the UK?

This photo from the early 20th century is notable for the lack of tall buildings – and cars!

Amenities were developed for the new communities. There were schools and several churches were built for the growing population, including St Agnes Roman Catholic Church. Built in 1883, many of the people who attended this church were Irish migrants. Three synagogues were also built for new Jewish communities.



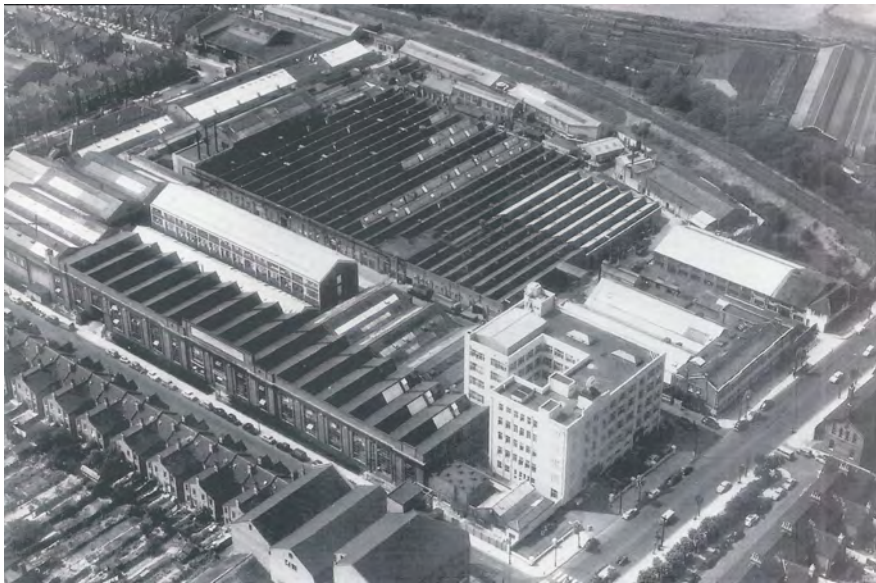
Children at the Gladstone Park pool. The photo was published in the Official Guide to Willesden in 1954.

As well as shops on the Broadway, there was a new cinema and skating rink for entertainment on Cricklewood Lane. Gladstone Park was completed in 1901 and the swimming pool was added in 1903. It was an open-air pool and people could swim there from May to September. There were also cricket pitches available to hire.

Enquiry Question: What leisure amenities can you think of in your local area today? Are they similar or different to the amenities of 100 years ago?

Rail links to London and road links to other parts of the UK meant Cricklewood was an ideal place for businesses to open.

There was a large goods yard by the station and in the early 20th century many light industrial units and factories opened in that area. One of the largest factories was Smiths Industries. It opened in 1915, making clocks and speedometers for cars. At its peak, Smiths employed more than 8,000 people.



Local industry began to decline from the late 1960s as rising rates – a tax paid by businesses – forced businesses to move. Several factories were destroyed in a fire on Claremont Road in the late 1970s and Smiths closed in 1978.

Enquiry Question: What problems does it cause when businesses leave an area?

The Smiths industries factory, Temple Road, Cricklewood, in its 1960s heyday. [©The Smiths Group]

In the early 20th century many Jewish refugees had come to London, fleeing persecution in Europe. Northwest London attracted many settlers, with large communities being established in Willesden, Hampstead, and Golders Green.



The former synagogue on Walm Lane, Cricklewood.

A synagogue was built on Walm Lane, Cricklewood, in 1931. The congregation grew and the synagogue was moved into a larger building next door. In 1989 the original building was sold and converted into flats. From the 1980s, the number of regular attendees fell and in 2005 the synagogue closed completely.

A second synagogue beside Gladstone Park had closed in 1993 and was re-opened as a primary school for Jewish children.

Enquiry Question: Can you find any other examples from your local area of religious buildings changing use? What might this tell us about changing communities?

British Nationality Act, 1948.

II & 12 GEO. 6. CH. 56.

Title page from the official government publication of the Act.

During the British Empire, nationals living in the UK, the Dominions (self governing territories) and the colonies (territories directly ruled by Britain) were all British Subjects. As the empire became the Commonwealth, this changed. The British Nationality Act of 1948 created the status of 'Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies', with automatic right of entry to Britain.

The UK was experiencing a labour shortage following the Second World War and needed more workers. The Act made it easier for people to come and work in Britain.

Between 1962 and 1971, controls on immigration were tightened. This was a result of popular opposition to immigration from Asia and Africa.

Enquiry Questions: 1948 also became known as the year of The Windrush. What can you find out about this and why was it significant to UK migration?

Irish citizens had the same rights to live, work, and vote as British citizens, even after Ireland left the Commonwealth in 1949. By the early 1960s, the Irish represented the largest migrant group in the UK. More than one million had immigrated by 1971.



Many Irish migrants came from farms and villages and were used to physical hard work. As well as rebuilding homes destroyed during the Blitz, projects like motorway construction in the 1960s provided opportunities for unskilled workers. It was estimated that more than 50% of the workers building the M1 motorway were Irish men. In the 1950s, Irish women were heavily recruited for the nursing profession and by London Transport.

Later, more skilled professionals came to work in the UK as teachers, doctors, and engineers.

Enquiry Question: Why did so many Irish people leave Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s?

Irish labourers, London, 1950s. [Image courtesy of Daniel Foley]



Pakistani workers at the Ascot Gas Water Heater factory, c. 1960. [Image courtesy of Tariq Dar]

Many Pakistanis emigrated from Northern Punjab, Mirpur, and Kashmir, as large areas were submerged by construction of the Mangla Dam in the 1960s.

They came to the UK to escape the social and economic problems that followed independence. Most thought they would stay just a few years before returning. The first Pakistani migrants were drawn to factory work, which was more accessible for those who were not fluent in English.

The voucher system in the 1960s allowed migrants already here to arrange jobs for their relatives and friends. Other vouchers were issued for those who had served in the British forces and skilled professionals, such as doctors and engineers. Between 1961 and 1966 the Pakistani population in Britain grew from about 25,000 to 120,000.

Enquiry Question: What attracted people from Pakistan to settle in Cricklewood? How many reasons can you think of?

Migration figures from the 1950s and 1960s are often inaccurate, since monitoring at ports and airports was not very strict. Children did not even need passports, which was to cause future problems.

There are no figures before 1947 for Pakistan, but in 1951 the UK Muslim population was about 23,000.

Immigration from Pakistan in the 1950s was small-scale: 12,800 males and 1,700 females. Migration increased significantly in 1961 before the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962. This restricted automatic entry for Commonwealth citizens.

Enquiry Question: Look at the figures in the passport application chart. What reasons can you think of for why passport applications were so low in the 1950s?

Applications for passports referred by the Indian and Pakistani Governments.

| | 1 May 1951 - 31 Dec. 1951 | | 1952 | | 1953 | | 1954 | | 1955 | | 1956 | | 1957 | | 1958 | |
|---|---------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|---|------|---|
| | I | P | I | P | I | P | I | P | I | P | I | P | I | P | I | |
| Total number of applications | 127 | 245 | 127 | 418 | 108 | 224 | 196 | 265 | 70 | 404 | 75 | 297 | 91 | 4 | 34 | - |
| Total number approved | 44 | 91 | 39 | 183 | 35 | 102 | 39 | 91 | 14 | 158 | 33 | 83 | 33 | 3 | 13 | - |
| Total number in which issue of passport not recommended | 83 | 154 | 88 | 235 | 73 | 122 | 157 | 174 | 56 | 246 | 42 | 214 | 58 | 1 | 21 | - |

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| | Indians | | | Pakistanis | | |
|----------------|--------------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|
| | Applications | Approved | Refused | Applications | Approved | Refused |
| 1951 (8 mths.) | 127 | 44 | 83 | 245 | 91 | 154 |
| 1952 | 127 | 39 | 88 | 418 | 183 | 235 |
| 1953 | 108 | 35 | 73 | 224 | 102 | 122 |
| 1954 | 196 | 39 | 157 | 265 | 91 | 174 |
| 1955 | 70 | 14 | 56 | 404 | 158 | 246 |
| 1956 | 75 | 33 | 42 | 297 | 83 | 214 |
| 1957 | 91 | 3 | 88 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 1958 | 34 | 13 | 21 | - | - | - |
| | 828 | 250 | 578 | 1857 | 711 | 1146 |

Pakistani passport applications chart, 1951-1958. [© The National Archives: HO 344/149]



Irish language classes, Cricklewood Technical School, 1956.

Migrants arriving in the UK wanted to make the most of the opportunities available. They worked hard and many took classes to improve their career prospects. Many Irish and Pakistanis soon progressed from unskilled work and became business owners and home owners. They encouraged their children to go to university and follow professional careers.

It was as important to retain a sense of identity as it was to move forward. Both Irish and Pakistani migrants formed societies to socialise with people from home. For the Irish, there were dancing and music classes for youngsters, to pass on the cultural traditions. For Pakistanis, Urdu classes and lessons in the Koran ensured they understood their heritage.

Enquiry Question: Why do you think it is important for migrants to keep their cultural traditions in their new homelands?



Sign in a boarding house window, 1950s, reading 'No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs'. [© London Metropolitan University Library Services and Special Collections]

Commonwealth citizens had been invited to the UK to do essential work. While many people welcomed them, there were fears for a loss of British identity and culture.

In 1958 Parliament discussed controlling the number of Pakistani migrants. And in 1968 the MP Enoch Powell spoke against migration by people of different racial and religious backgrounds. The speech came at the same time as the 1968 Race Relations Act.

The Act made it illegal to refuse housing, employment, or public services to a person because of colour, race, ethnic or national origins.

From the late 1960s, tensions over British rule in Northern Ireland resulted in an increase in racism towards Irish people in the UK.

Enquiry Question: How do you think the Race Relations Act changed the relationship between British people and migrant communities?



Parveen Quereshi worked as a teacher in Pakistan before moving to London.

Parveen was born in Rawalpindi in 1943. She earned her teaching degree and moved to Jhelum to work in a school run by Irish nuns. Parveen worked there for seven years before moving to the UK in 1973, settling in Riffel Road, NW2.

The change from busy teacher to stay-at-home mother wasn't always easy. Her family shared a house with her two sisters and their husbands but she missed her old life.

Parveen went back to Pakistan with her husband and children. Sadly her husband died and she returned to London. She used her teaching experience to teach Urdu and the Koran, and became a foster carer to children from many different backgrounds.

Watch the film 'Neuza & Parveen' here:

<https://youtu.be/gMb2MTmiVsg>



Margaret Lornegan was born in Galway, Ireland, in 1936. She has many happy memories of the freedom and adventures of her childhood in the countryside.

She was 22 when she came to London. Margaret's first job was in Littlewoods on Kilburn High Road. She then worked for several years at Smiths, in the typing pool. She met her husband in the Galtymore Irish dance hall and they married in 1965. Their first house was close to Cricklewood station.

Her husband Daniel worked as a caretaker for a synagogue and they have happy memories of the warmth of the Jewish community.

Margaret recalled how violence in Northern Ireland affected the Irish community in London in the 1970s and empathised with the sadness of the Pakistani community in response to contemporary violence.

Watch the film 'Amelia & Margaret' here:

<https://youtu.be/OpmgoDvZM14>



Michael Troy is a musician also known by the stage name 'McGinty'.

Born in 1945 in Co Offaly, he left school at 14 to work on a farm to earn money for his family. He wanted to leave home but his older brother had already gone, and their mother didn't want Michael to go.

In 1966 Michael left to join his aunt who lived in Weybridge, Surrey. He worked on building sites before setting up as a contractor and running his own building firm.

Michael is a lifelong Pioneer, who pledged never to drink alcohol, and a successful musician. He played in many of the Irish clubs in and around London. He performed many times at the Galtymore in Cricklewood and recalled long queues of people waiting to get in to listen to the Irish music stars.

Watch the film 'Benedict & Michael' here:

<https://youtu.be/DeKisXL8XYg>



Jamila Anwar was born in Jhelum, Pakistan in 1960. Her father came to London in 1964, to find a job and place to live. The family came to join him in March 1970: Jamila, her mum, brother and sister.

It was difficult for Jamila to imagine what London was like before she came, since there was no television in those days. The family moved to Cricklewood, with their first house near Staples Corner, sharing with another family.

Jamila went to Braintcroft Junior School. As a girl, she wanted to be a teacher but got married first, starting a family of her own. She worked with her husband running a restaurant for many years. She later went back to fulfill her dreams, training as a teacher and working in a further education college teaching English, numeracy and IT and working with Special Needs learners.

Watch the film 'Dani & Jamila' here:

<https://youtu.be/6przbB9mVjI>

Vocabulary

Act – a written law passed by the government

Amenities – positive features of an area , like schools, parks, and shops

British Empire – lands outside the UK once ruled over by the British monarch

City – a place where many people live together, of greater size or importance than a town or village, and including houses, places of work, and other amenities

Colonisation – the process of people settling an area with the plan of ruling it

Commonwealth – a union of nations that used to be part of the British Empire

Community – a group living together with shared interests, background, culture

Commute – to travel back and forth regularly from one place to another

Conquer – to take over by force

Culture – shared beliefs, traditions, behaviours, values, and attitudes

Ethnicity – racial, national, or linguistic identity

Hamlet – a very small village, often just a few houses

Identity — the character or personality of an individual; how you think about yourself and how others see you

MP — Member of Parliament; a person voted to represent the community

Migration — the act of moving from one country or place to another

Nationality — membership of a particular nation or country

Parliament — the body responsible for making decisions on national laws

Partition — the formal separation of a single nation into more than one

Population — the whole number of people in a country or area

Race — people sharing particular physical traits or characteristics

Rebellion — armed resistance to a government

Republic — a nation and government whose head is not a king or queen

Suburb — residential area on the edge of a city or town

Village — small settlement with houses and basic amenities