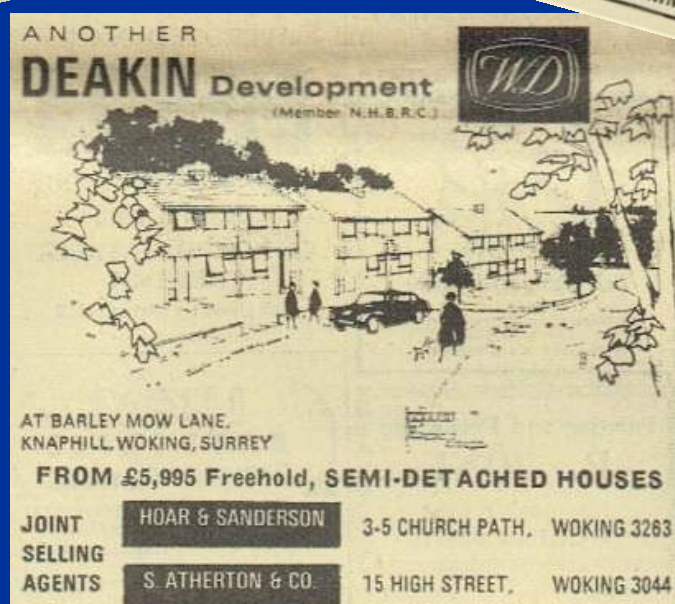
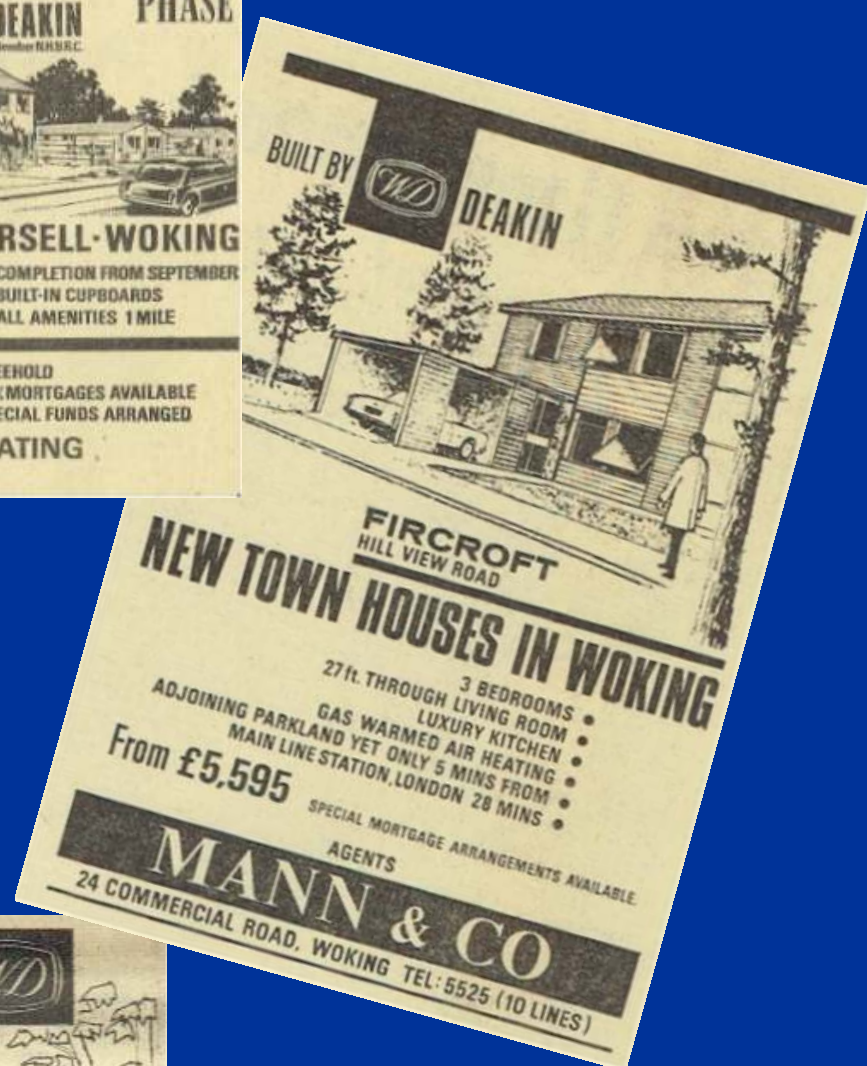
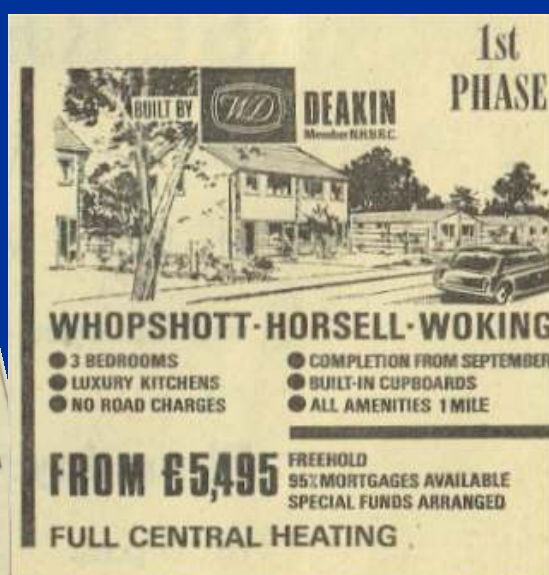


# W DEAKIN & CO LTD - BUILDERS OF WOKING

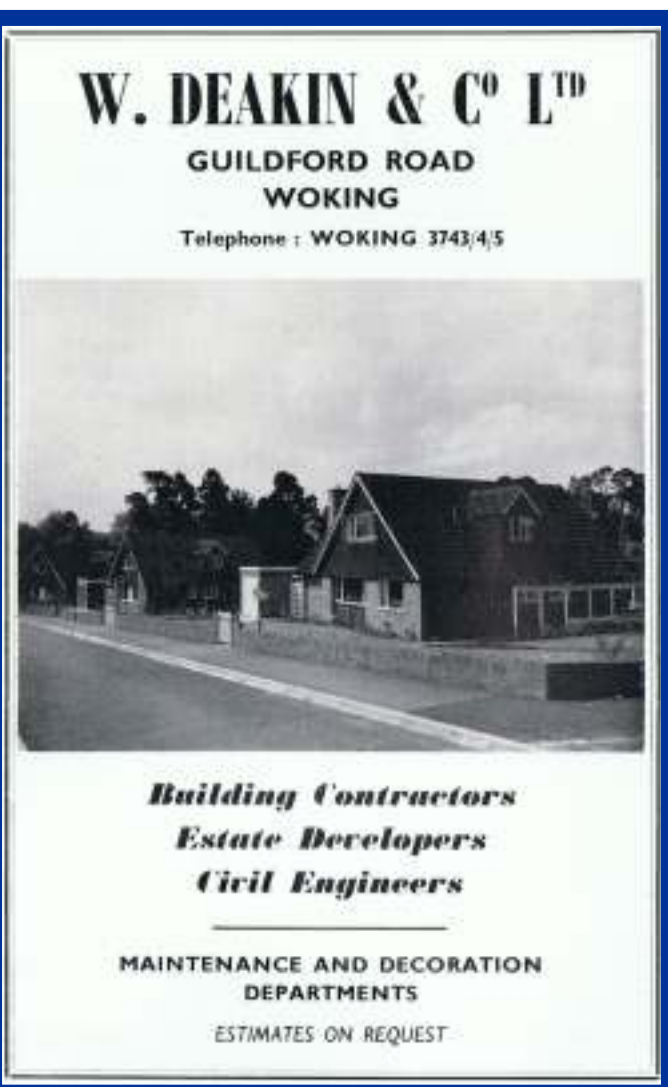
Iain Wakeford 2019



Advertisements for various Deakin developments in the late 1960's at Robin Hood Crescent, Whopshott Farm, Fircroft and Barley Mow Lane.

Looking back through the articles I have produced over the past eighteen months dealing with Woking in the late 1960's, it seems that hardly a month goes by without me mentioning the local building firm of W Deakin & Co Ltd. That is probably because looking back through the council minutes of the period, hardly a month went by without the Planning Committee having to discuss new plans (often revised to get around previous refusals), for houses, flats and maisonettes by the company!

Knaphill address had. There were serious concerns about the possibility of a land-slide on the site, which had once been a brick-works, excavated out of the hillside a hundred years earlier for the construction of the Woking Invalid Convict Prison (where the Inkerman Estate is today).



And a glance at my old newspapers from the period shows the company helping to build numerous new shops and business premises in the town, together with an array of advertisements for housing developments throughout the district.

By the end of 1966 the first stage of the firms Robin Hood Crescent development was complete (having all been sold apparently in less than a month), and orders were being taken for the second stage of three bedroom terraced town houses - due to be ready for occupation by April 1967. The prices began at £4,475 freehold, well over £1,000 less than similar sized properties then being developed by the company at Whopshott Farm in Horsell and at Fircroft, Hillview Road (overlooking Woking Park - 'special mortgage arrangements available').

The Robin Hood terraces were clearly not as 'exclusive' as the detached Horsell homes or as convenient to town as town houses of Hillview Road, but the reduced price might also reflect the perceived problems that the

Buy whilst work was progressing in Knaphill, Horsell and Hillview, not everything was going smoothly for the company, as plans for a development at Orchard Mains off Wych Hill had gone to appeal and in May 1968 the company claimed that if more land was not found locally for housing development 'ninety men employed by the firm were in danger of losing their jobs'.

Lack of land for building probably accounted for the gradual increase in house prices in Woking at that time. In June 1967 the three-bedroom detached properties on the Whopshott Farm Estate were advertised at £5,495, rising to £5,695 by December that year and £5,895 by the following April.

Meanwhile at Knaphill a new development overlooking the park at Barley Mow Lane was first advertised in May 1968 at £5,995 (for three-bedroom, semi-detached properties, featuring gas-fired central heating, wood-block flooring and coloured bathrooms), rising to £6,195 by September when the first few houses were complete!



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The new offices of Lynton House under construction in 1968-69

Eventually, off course, the firm received consent for their Orchard Mains development - presumably to the relief of the ninety men who no doubt relied on their work in order to pay their own homes - and there was good news for the office staff too, as consent on appeal was given for their long-planned new offices on the corner of Station Approach and Victoria Road.

As far back as 1966 they had applied to build new offices with a ground-floor showroom, underground car park and even room to

accommodate the veterinary practice that had previously occupied the site, but at that stage Woking Council were only allowing offices to be erected in the core of the town centre (to the north of the railway). On appeal the Minister found in Deakin's favour so that before long the company could move the offices from their cramped yard behind the shops on the opposite side of Guildford Road, to the new Lynton House - finally completed in 1969.

Deakin's offices (above) behind the shops of Guildford Road (below)

