FISHERMEAD
The name comes from a field “Fishers-Mead” was added to a local church. The roads are named after cricketers.

OLDBROOK
The name comes from a local field name (alternatively Holbrook or Oldbrook). The roads are named after cricketers.

FISHERMEAD

1. Fishermead 1 and 2 (MKDC, 1972)
   Three storey houses backing onto landscaped greens. Facades of glazed and fibre cement panels spanning between the party walls. Projecting balconies form carports beneath. Corner blocks of flats and maisonettes with the ground floors either fitted out for commercial use or left vacant for such uses in the future.

2. Fishermead C/O (Denton Tunley Scott, 1989)
   Modern and small-scale private housing arranged around a wedge of open space leading out of the gridsquare. Distinguishing concrete lintels over the windows.

3. Fishermead 3 (MKDC, 1975)
   Three storey brick facades punctuated by windows. Balconies are either at the front or rear depending upon orientation – an early MK example of planning for solar gain. The corner blocks, with distinctive glazed staircase lobbies, still have their flat roofs.

   Project Artwork

5. Fishermead 5 (MKDC, 1982)
   Three storey crescent that was originally planned for a mirror site in Coniburyrow but moved to Fishermead as a result of poor ground conditions. A suitably grand scheme to mark the termination of MKDC’s rental housing programme.

6. Fishermead 6 (MKDC, 1979)
   Combined development of a local supermarket and a multi-use community centre (the Trinity Centre) that also functions as the local church. The supermarket has an abnormally wide sheltering canopy.

7. Fishermead 7 (MKDC, 1982)
   A shift in design with two storey houses with pitched roofs around mixer courts with no distinction between footpath and road. Nearby, in Helston Place, a scheme of MKDC Starter Homes, built for sale rather than rent: architecturally modest.

8. Oldbrook
   The roads are named after cricketers. The gridsquare name comes from a local field name (alternatively Holbrook or Oldbrook). The name comes from a field “Fishermead” which the roads are named after places in Cornwall.

9. Oldbrook First School (Bucks County Council, 1994)
   One of a new wave of school designs that moved away from the more traditional image adopted by BCC. Linear design with classrooms off a spine. Big glazed window overlooking Oldbrook Green. Subsequent extension by Stenton Obhi Architects.

10. SIA House (Sansome Hall, 2005)

11. Oldbrook 2 (Colquhoun and Miller, 1980-83)
    Three storey concrete blocks of flats.

12. Oldbrook 3 (Phippen Randall and Miller, 1980-83)
    Three storey blocks. Projecting brick fins.

13. Oldbrook 4 (Design Research Unit, 1989)
    Individual plots for self-build housing were an important part of MKDC’s housing provision. Each site had its own brief detailing building zones, choice of materials etc. Most of the buildings, as here, are relatively conventional in appearance.

    Individual housing and bungalows built by Halbing, a housing association established to provide housing for people with disabilities. Cranked blocks address the roundabouts.

15. Fishermead Green (MKDC, 1984)
    Three cheerful service buildings on the cricket green at the heart of the gridsquare – a pavilion, landscape depot and a utility building.

16. The Cricketers Public House and Heating Place (David Byrne Associates 1982-3)
    beer-topped roofs, with a pop-up manager’s flat. The original brightly coloured timberwork has suffered in a subsequent redecoration. Enjoyable interior stained glass on a cricketing theme by Brian Nihse.

17. Fishermead 8 (Various, 1981 onwards)
    Combined development of a local supermarket and a multi-use community centre (the Trinity Centre) that also functions as the local church. The supermarket has an abnormally wide sheltering canopy.

18. Oldbrook 6 (MKDC, 1982)
    Shared ownership scheme with standalone blocks comprising two ground floor flats and sweeping staircases to the two maisonettes on the first and second floors. A development of the blocks in Oldbrook 1 and 2 with their own distinctive glazed canopy.

    Three cheerful service buildings on the cricket green at the heart of the gridsquare – a pavilion, landscape depot and a utility building.

20. Oldbrook First School (Bucks County Council, 1994)
    One of a new wave of school designs that moved away from the more traditional image adopted by BCC. Linear design with classrooms off a spine. Big glazed window overlooking Oldbrook Green. Subsequent extension by Stenton Obhi Architects.

21. Fishermead 1 and 2 (MKDC, 1972)
    Three storey houses backing onto landscaped greens. Facades of glazed and fibre cement panels spanning between the party walls. Projecting balconies form carports beneath. Corner blocks of flats and maisonettes with the ground floors either fitted out for commercial use or left vacant for such uses in the future.

22. Fishermead C/O (Denton Tunley Scott, 1989)
    Modern and small-scale private housing arranged around a wedge of open space leading out of the gridsquare. Distinguishing concrete lintels over the windows.

23. Fishermead 3 (MKDC, 1975)
    Three storey brick facades punctuated by windows. Balconies are either at the front or rear depending upon orientation – an early MK example of planning for solar gain. The corner blocks, with distinctive glazed staircase lobbies, still have their flat roofs.

    Project Artwork

25. Fishermead 5 (MKDC, 1982)
    Three storey crescent that was originally planned for a mirror site in Coniburyrow but moved to Fishermead as a result of poor ground conditions. A suitably grand scheme to mark the termination of MKDC’s rental housing programme.

26. Fishermead 6 (MKDC, 1979)
    Combined development of a local supermarket and a multi-use community centre (the Trinity Centre) that also functions as the local church. The supermarket has an abnormally wide sheltering canopy.

27. Fishermead 7 (MKDC, 1982)
    A shift in design with two storey houses with pitched roofs around mixer courts with no distinction between footpath and road. Nearby, in Helston Place, a scheme of MKDC Starter Homes, built for sale rather than rent: architecturally modest.

28. Oldbrook
    The roads are named after cricketers. The gridsquare name comes from a local field name (alternatively Holbrook or Oldbrook). The name comes from a field “Fishermead” which the roads are named after places in Cornwall.

29. Oldbrook First School (Bucks County Council, 1994)
    One of a new wave of school designs that moved away from the more traditional image adopted by BCC. Linear design with classrooms off a spine. Big glazed window overlooking Oldbrook Green. Subsequent extension by Stenton Obhi Architects.

30. SIA House (Sansome Hall, 2005)

31. Oldbrook 2 (Colquhoun and Miller, 1980-83)
    Three storey concrete blocks of flats.

32. Oldbrook 3 (Phippen Randall and Miller, 1980-83)
    Three storey blocks. Projecting brick fins.

33. Oldbrook 4 (Design Research Unit, 1989)
    Individual plots for self-build housing were an important part of MKDC’s housing provision. Each site had its own brief detailing building zones, choice of materials etc. Most of the buildings, as here, are relatively conventional in appearance.

34. Oldbrook 5 (Various, 1981 onwards)
    Individual housing and bungalows built by Halbing, a housing association established to provide housing for people with disabilities. Cranked blocks address the roundabouts.

35. Fishermead Green (MKDC, 1984)
    Three cheerful service buildings on the cricket green at the heart of the gridsquare – a pavilion, landscape depot and a utility building.

36. The Cricketers Public House and Heating Place (David Byrne Associates 1982-3)
    beer-topped roofs, with a pop-up manager’s flat. The original brightly coloured timberwork has suffered in a subsequent redecoration. Enjoyable interior stained glass on a cricketing theme by Brian Nihse.
Background

At the peak of activity in the late 1970s and early 1980s, over 2,000 new houses a year were being built in Milton Keynes - initially the majority were rental houses built by Milton Keynes Development Corporation (the Government body charged with building the new city) but, as political circumstances changed, there was an increased reliance upon the private sector.

The different aspects of this concentrated period of activity are all reflected in these four gridsquares which, with together with Bradwell Common and Springfield, were designed around a common orthogonal theme and are collectively known as Central Area Housing (CAH).

Development began in Fishermead in 1973 and the final houses were completed in 1980, whilst also briefly flirting with low cost "starter" homes. The decline of the MKDC programme was in 1979 brought an end to the rental housing programme and, in its place, MKDC developed its similar to many others throughout the city.

The election of the Conservative Government in 1979 brought an end to the rental housing programme, small offices and other facilities – meeting places, sheltered housing for the elderly and integrated housing for people with disabilities – as well as a mix of schools, shops, flats and shops, stores and offices – as well as mixed-use development along the central boulevards.

Maintenance problems meant that the majority of the flat roofs were replaced in the early 1990s (those that remained were of a different construction) and many of the original brown windows in the rental houses have been replaced; however the strong building forms still dominate the streetscapes. As with much of Milton Keynes though in certain places, particularly along the boulevards, the landscaping has become the dominant feature rather than the architecture.

The Heritage Trails were developed by On The Verge in conjunction with Milton Keynes Forum (the city’s civic society) as part of its arts and heritage project “Underpasses - Connecting People, Connecting Places”. They provide an insight into some of the key buildings in these gridsquares but we could not include them all so please keep your eyes open as you explore. As you walk and cycle around please look also at how the gridsquares connect with each other. Such connections were an integral part of the planning of Milton Keynes from the outset – see especially the road between Fishermead and Oldbrook under the V7 as well as the links into CMK. Two of the underpasses will be the subject of artworks during 2016/2017.

On The Verge is a community interest company that works closely with local residents, heritage organisations and artists to help improve some of the older estates bordering Central Milton Keynes concentrating upon the underpasses that link the estates with each other.

The Underpasses project is supported by: The Heritage Lottery Fund; Milton Keynes Community Foundation; and Milton Keynes Council and delivered in partnership with The Parks Trust MK; MK City Discovery Centre, and MK Council.