



Brentwood School

House History

When the house system was created in around 1904 there were only three houses: North Town, South Town and School House (for the boarders). It was established by Headmaster Edwin Bean, most likely based on the system at Clifton College in Bristol, where he had gone to school (today, the day-houses for boys and girls at Clifton College are called North Town and South Town). Each house was distinguished by the crest on the school cap: pink for School, yellow for South and light blue for North.

The school grew rapidly over the next decade so, in 1910 *"for the purposes of House matches"*, the boys were re-classified into five houses: School, North Town, South Town, East Town and West Town. As the names suggest, the day-boy houses were territorial: a house was assigned to each day boy depending on where they lived in relation to the school. This system promoted the house community spirit, as boys who lived in the same neighbourhood would be in the same house.

In January 1917 Mill Hill was leased by the school and opened as a boarding house. The name comes from the windmill which stood on the site before the house was built in the late 1800s. The boarders at Mill Hill were counted as School House at first, but in 1919 they broke away to form their own house.

In the December 1919 edition of the Brentwoodian it was noted that there had been an increase in the number of boys from Romford starting at the school, which boosted the size of South Town, while the number of boys in North Town had been diminishing.

The boarding houses Newnum and Otway opened in 1923 and 1927 respectively, and they each formed their own house.

In 1945 it was noted in the Brentwoodian that East Town (based mainly on Shenfield and Billericay) was by far the largest house, presumably as a result of new housing. Although size was an advantage in inter-house sports competitions, too many boys in one house prevented the house-master from getting to know the boys in his house well. So the system was reformed: there was now to be five day houses (North, South, East, West, and the new house, Weald) with no relation to where boys lived. Each house was also divided into Junior (First to Third Years) and

Senior (Fourth Year upwards). Ties with house colours also replaced the standard black ties.

The name 'Weald' for the new day boy house is an acknowledgement of the school's historic connection with the parish of South Weald. Also, in the same year that the new house was created, Weald Hall, once the home of Sir Antony Browne, was put up for auction. As a result of the sale, various items from the Hall found a new home at Brentwood School, for example the Tudor fireplace in Old Big School.

A new boarding house, Hough, was opened in 1965 and formed a new house. It was designed to take over Otway as a senior boarding house (from then on Otway only accommodated juniors). Subsequently numbers began to fall in Newnum and in 1981 it was closed.

School House closed in 1992, and in the following year Mill Hill became the girls' boarding house. The name 'School House' was not lost, but was instead adopted by Hough (boys) and Mill Hill (girls) competing together in inter-house competitions. This system of one house for boarders and five for day pupils has continued until today.