

East Dean and West Dean

In 1842 the main part of the extra-parochial¹ area of the Forest of Dean was divided for poor-law act purposes into two townships of East Dean and West Dean. A rough line was drawn in a diagonal direction from Lydbrook to Ayleford to form the boundaries. Being a diagonal line is the reason why a lot of people get confused as it is not a true east and west division.

The act attached East Dean to the Westbury-on-Severn union and West Dean to the Monmouth union.

In later years the boundaries were often changed and parts of these two townships were added to various adjoining parishes. East Dean was then divided in 1953 into the new civil parishes of Cinderford, Drybrook, and Ruspidge. In 1974 Cinderford, Drybrook, Ruspidge, Lydbrook, and West Dean parishes all became part of the new Forest of Dean district.

A more detailed account of the above can be found on the British History Online website. [A History of the County of Gloucester](#)

View a map showing the early Parish boundaries within the Forest of Dean [Parish Map of the Forest of Dean](#)

¹ An Extra-Parochial Place was an area which did not belong to any parish.