BERKSHIRE FROM THE AIR

Jason Hawkes

Proudly calling itself the Royal County, Berkshire is home to the one of Britain's greatest historic sites, Windsor Castle, but it has a history dating back way beyond this, to prehistoric times. It is a county of great contrasts, bordering as it does Greater London in the east and also Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, Wiltshire and Hampshire.

With an area of over 470 square miles (c.1200sq km), and a population of under a million it is a relatively small county, but rich in historic sites and blessed with a quintessentially English landscape. Reading is by far the largest town (pop.235,000), followed by Slough (122,000), but there are many smaller, delightful villages throughout. The River Thames winds its way through the county, with many settlements having grown up along its route and around its major tributaries, principally the River Kennet. Because of its huge significance in Berkshire, often defining the county boundary, the course of the Thames is followed at many points throughout this book. It is to the north of the Kennet that the famous Berkshire Downs roll gently across the landscape, while to the south, where the county borders Hampshire, lies Walbury Hill, at 974ft (297m) being the highest point in South East England.

The fascinating aerial photographs in this book by internationally-renowned aerial photographer Jason Hawkes are selected to provide the reader with an overview of a variety of landscapes and settlements, with historic sites included. There can be no better way of appreciating the many glories of Berkshire than to view the county from above.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Hawkes is one of the country's best-known photographers specialising in aerial photography. From his base near London he travels worldwide to produce images for books, advertising and design. Since 1991 he has provided photographs for major international companies including Nike, HSBC, Ford, Rolex, Toyota and BP. The images in this book and the sister publications in the series were specially commissioned by Halsgrove.

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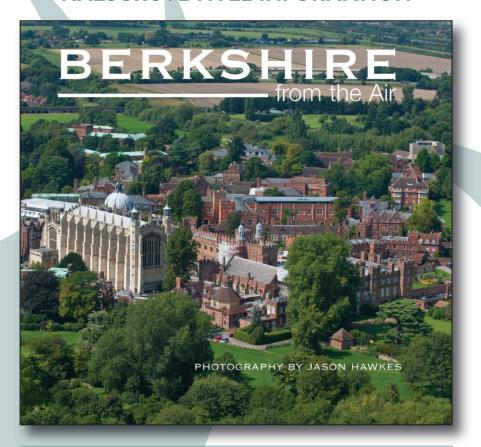
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Top left: Eton College, the best-known of British public schools.

Top right: River Thames near Caversham.

Left: Beale Wildlife Park and Gardens. The Lake.



Example of a double-page spread.



Windsor Castle.



Donnington Castle with Newbury in the background.