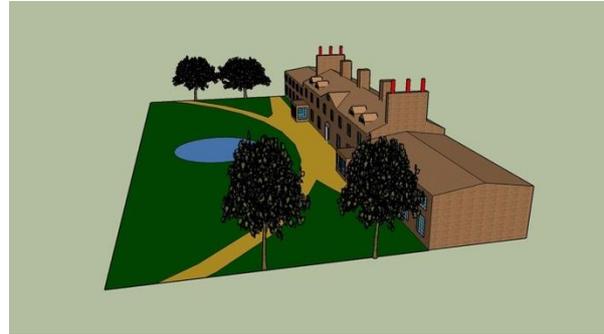


# 'Fifty Fabulous Features'

*Statements of Significance for Fifty Features of  
Historic Designed Landscapes within the  
Land of the Fanns*



# Table of Contents

## Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
Maps: .....	14
FEATURE NAME (ID: 18): OLD HALL POND .....	19
FEATURE NAME (ID: 24): GARDEN WALLS AND GATEWAY OF LITTLE BELHUS HOUSE.....	24
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BELHUS PARK TUDOR AND JACOBAN GARDENS WITH REFERENCE TO THE INDIVIDUAL FEATURES THAT FOLLOW .....	28
FEATURE NAME (ID: 31): BELHUS PARK – REMAINS OF TUDOR/JACOBAN GARDEN CANALS .....	31
FEATURE NAME (ID: 33): REMAINS OF A CIRCULAR TUDOR/STUART GARDEN FEATURE, BELHUS PARK.....	36
FEATURE NAME (ID: 30): BELHUS PARK - REMAINS OF MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WALL OF WALLED GARDEN .....	41
FEATURE NAME (ID: 27): BELHUS PARK - LONG POND.....	47
FEATURE NAME (ID: 29): BELHUS PARK – ICEHOUSE WELL.....	52
FEATURE NAME (ID: 23): BELHUS COUNTRY PARK: BRICKKILN WOODS BRICKMAKING STRUCTURE .....	57
FEATURE NAME (ID: 25): BELHUS PARK – STENCH PIPE .....	62
FEATURE NAME (ID: 32): BELHUS PARK - VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (I.D.9408) .....	65
FEATURE NAME (ID: 40): BELHUS PARK - ANCIENT SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (I.D.9405) .....	69
FEATURE NAME (ID: 36): BELHUS PARK - THREE VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (ATI I.D.24707/24708/24709) .....	73
FEATURE NAME (ID: 1): BELVEDERE TOWER AND MOUND.....	77
FEATURE NAME (ID: 14): THE PUMP HOUSE, BEDFORDS PARK .....	82
FEATURE NAME (ID: 12): BEDFORDS PARK, QUEEN ANNE’S WELL .....	88
FEATURE NAME (ID: 13): BEDFORDS PARK, WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN WELL.....	93
FEATURE NAME (ID: 16): BEDFORDS PARK BRIDLEWAY/ CARRIAGE DRIVE .....	97
FEATURE NAME (ID: 15): STONE TERRACE STEPS, BEDFORDS PARK .....	104
FEATURE NAME (ID: 11): THE MOATED SITE OF MAYLAND’S HOUSE AT DAGNAM PARK .....	108
FEATURE NAME (ID: 5): FISH POND AT DAGNAM PARK .....	112
FEATURE NAME (ID: 10): ROUNDEL MOUNT AT DAGNAM PARK.....	116
FEATURE NAME (ID: 9): HORSESHOE PLANTATION/ VIEWING PLATFORM AT DAGNAM PARK.....	119
FEATURE NAME (ID: 6): PLEASURE GROUND AT DAGNAM PARK.....	123

FEATURE NAME (ID: 4): STABLES AND WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN AT DAGNAM PARK.....	127
FEATURE NAME (ID: 2 and 3 ): PRIORY AND NORTH LODGE AT DAGNAM PARK .....	133
FEATURE NAME (ID: 7 and 8): COLUMN BASES AT DAGNAM PARK .....	138
FEATURE NAME (ID: 22): PARKLANDS BRIDGE, GAYNES PARK.....	140
FEATURE NAME (ID: 19): KISSING GATE, LANGTONS GARDENS.....	145
FEATURE NAME (ID: 21): CASH’S WELL.....	150
FEATURE NAME (ID: 20): CLOCKHOUSE GARDENS .....	157
FEATURE NAME (ID: 50): NINETEENTH CENTURY PARISH BOUNDARY POST .....	161
FEATURE NAME (ID: 17): THE ALPINE GORGE AND FILMY FERN CAVE .....	164
FEATURE NAME (ID: 48): GRAYS TOWN PARK SHELTER .....	168
FEATURE NAME (ID: 49): GRAYS TOWN PARK ROCKERY .....	172
FEATURE NAME (ID: 43): THE ELMS GARDEN RAILINGS.....	176
FEATURE NAME (ID: 42): THE ELMS GARDEN CASCADE.....	180
FEATURE NAME (ID: 42): THE ELMS GARDEN GROTTTO .....	183
FEATURE NAME (ID: 45): HERBERT E BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDENS NAME SIGN .....	185
FEATURE NAME (ID: 44): THE SHELTER, HERBERT E BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDENS.....	188
FEATURE NAME (ID: 46): HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL, HERBERT E. BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDEN .....	191
FEATURE NAME (ID: 47): REJECT BRICK WALLS, HERBERT E BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDENS .....	193
FEATURE NAME (ID: 41): MILLARD’S GARDEN .....	196
A HISTORY OF DILKES PARK, SOUTH OCKENDON .....	201
FEATURE NAME (ID: 37): DILKES PARK BRICK PILLARS AND ENTRANCE GATES .....	203
FEATURE NAME (ID: 35): DILKES PARK DIPPING POND .....	207
FEATURE NAME (ID: 38): DILKES PARK JUMPING BLOCKS POSITIONED ON FORMER CIRCULAR ROSE BEDS.....	210
FEATURE NAME (ID: 39): DILKES PARK, OLD PADDLING POOL.....	214
FEATURE NAME (ID: 34): GROUP OF MATURE TREES- HUMBER AVENUE AMENITY GREEN .....	218
FEATURE NAME (ID: 28): BONNYGATE WOOD .....	222
FEATURE NAME (ID: 26): BISHOP BONNER’S PALACE.....	227

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **We would like to thank the following for their valued support and guidance:**

Patricia Sinclair, Chair, Essex Gardens Trust

Linden Groves, Strategic Development Officer, The Gardens Trust

Debbie Brady, Heritage Engagement Officer, Land of the Fanns

Thames Chase

Valina Bowman-Burns, Thurrock Museum

Northamptonshire Archives and Heritage Services

Essex Record Office and their staff

Susan Yates, Chairman, Thurrock Local History Society

Members of the Thurrock Local History Society

Elsbeth Bingley and other members of the Bingley family for use of Randall Bingley's research into Cash's Well

Brian Taylor for his assistance in locating the brick-making structure in Belhus Park

Essex County Council

UCL Archaeology South East

Juan Rangel and Impulse Leisure

Tina Holland, Friends of Grays Town Park

Keith Harrington for photographs of Grays Town Park

Paul Woloschuck for his memories of Grays Town Park

Claude Hitching, *The Pulham Legacy*

Stan Harrison, former gardener of Dilkes Park

Kevin Jewel, formerly Land and Partnership Manager, Keepmoat Homes Ltd

John Kent, formerly Council Leader, Thurrock Council

Alan Leyin

Ian Rydings, formerly Property Asset Manager, Thurrock Council

John Webb

Don Tait at Friends of Dagnam Park

Stephen Nash, Alan Marks and Tracy Hermitage through Facebook Group 'The History of Belhus Mansion & Aveley'

J.Simpson

Lois Amos, Friends of Bedfords Park

Taylor Smyth-Richards, London Borough of Havering.

Deborah Kirk for her voluntary research

Robert Adams for his guidance, patience and support during our GIS Training

And finally .....

A huge thank you to Dr. Twigs Way, our inspirational leader and trainer for her teaching, guidance, patience and support throughout the project.

## Introduction to the Land of the Fanns

The Land of the Fanns project is a 5 year, £2.4 m landscape partnership scheme that aims to engage the local population in rediscovering, understanding and enjoying the hidden gems of their local landscape. There are 27 heritage and environment projects that are being delivered in partnership with several organizations, such as Essex Wildlife Trust, local councils, Thames Chase Trust and many more, spread over an area of 80 sq. miles, from Romford to Langdon Hills to Thurrock and Brentwood. Called Land of the Fanns due to the area once being made up of fens, farms and forests ('fanns' being an old Saxon word for low lying marshy area), the Fanns landscape has, like most, seen many changes and developments over the centuries dating back from the ice age. The project was set up to remind the local populations of the fascinating historic legacy that we have around us and to engage with it through training, events and projects for future generations. So we were particularly excited about working with The Essex Gardens Trust on the 50 Surveys project that included a number of volunteers engaged to research local landscape features in their area. This project fitted in perfectly with the aims and objectives of the Land of the Fanns ethos, that of local people learning new skills and discovering the historic knowledge of their landscape. The result of the volunteers hard work, especially difficult in these challenging months, not to mention the intrusion on their own lives, is the production of one of the most useful documents about our landscape and the significance of those features, that will also help local councils in future planning.

We at Land of the Fanns project team would like to thank the hard working volunteers who spent hours and days for the last year producing this valuable document, The Gardens Trust and also to Twigs Way, a Gardens Trust consultant, who has been an inspirational leader and trainer.

### Debbie Brady, Heritage Engagement Officer, Land of the Fanns



*Trainees looking out across the Land of the Fanns, Thorndon Park South*



*Trainees research at the Essex Records Office*

## **Introduction to Fifty Fabulous Features: Twigs Way (Project Co-Ordinator and Trainer)**

### ***Background***

The Fifty Fabulous Features report forms part of a wider project to identify and record the changes in the Land of the Fanns landscape over time to build an understanding and appreciation of its significance. The project included initial training workshops, followed by an active period of site survey, research and recording.

The Land of the Fanns commissioned the Gardens Trust to train, guide and support volunteers drawn from across the Land of the Fanns area to identify, research and record specific features relating to the heritage asset of historic designed landscapes and their constituent parts or features.

This enhanced understanding was then used to assess the significance of those features and produce a significance statement for each as well as assessment of current condition, current use, and possible issues and future threat etc.

The aim of these significance statements, based on enhanced research and desktop and site survey, was to create an awareness of the features to assist in their understanding, promotion and protection in a fast changing area with considerable pressures; in particular where un-designated heritage assets may be overlooked or undervalued during the planning process.

Establishing and training a volunteer team will also enable other heritage assets within the area to be recognized and protected in future, as has already happened through further community outreach by the volunteers.

Although participation fluctuated over time, in part due to Covid19 impact, approximately 15 members formed the core training and research group for the Fifty Fabulous Features, with outreach to a much wider range of individuals, community groups and professionals (as noted in Acknowledgements).

### ***Scope***

The initial project was to identify, 'survey', research and record 55 features across the Land of the Fanns. Due to Covid 19 the project was very slightly curtailed to concentrate on 'Fifty Fabulous features'.

The nature of the differing landscapes meant that in fact the features tended to 'cluster' where there had been landscaped parks in the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, or where amenity parkland had been created as part of the mid-twentieth century housing estate design.

There were feature clusters in Belhus Park, Dagnam Park and at the later Dilkes (Public) Park, Grays Town Park, and the Herbert E Brooks Memorial Garden. Individual features were also recorded from Warley Place, South Weald, Bedfords and Langtons.

However outliers from these were discovered, for example the veteran trees that once lay within Belhus Park and are now outside the registered boundaries.

In late spring-summer 2020 restrictions on movement meant that it was not possible to explore additional sites further afield. However research in other areas prior to the 'lockdown' indicated that the project as it stands is a true reflection of the geography of the area and concentrations of heritage historic landscape features.

### ***Timetable***

The Project, known during the initial period of training workshops as 'Know It, Love It', ran from September 2019 to October 2020 (with a small extension planned to late Spring 2021 for joint site visits). Stakeholders in the wider project include local authorities, the Forestry Commission, Land Trust, Woodland Trust, Thames Chase Trust, Essex Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Thames21, and the Thames Estuary Partnership. The project was supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The initial training phase was completed by December 2019 and the feature-based survey and research phased initiated following that with approximately 15 trainees/volunteers continuing on to this phase.

Further 'team meetings' accompanied by on-site visits were initiated until mid-March 2020 when Covid19 brought a halt to these and monthly Zoom meetings and email communication was initiated instead.

The original timetable for the feature-based survey and research element of the project was until October 2021 but rapidly changing circumstances from Spring 2020 onwards meant that most volunteers had more time available for research and the project was completed more rapidly, although joint site visits to 'present' the features to the whole group on completion were delayed indefinitely (late Spring 2021?).

### ***What are Heritage Statements of Significance and Why Are they Needed?***

National Planning Policy Framework defines significance as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest'. Such interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic' and it may derive 'not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

Significance is what conservation sustains, and where appropriate enhances, in managing change to heritage assets .

Every heritage feature and landscape has a significance. In determining planning applications local planning authorities use Statements of Significance to achieve an appropriate decision and outcome. These statements should be provided by the applicant of the planning application and draw on the Historic Environment Record, and other heritage records of designated and undesignated sites.

However in the case of un-designated or previously unrecognised or unrecorded features there is often insufficient or no material available on which to produce a statement of significance, and in many instances the need for one is not recognised as the feature may be unrecorded or relatively 'disregarded' in terms of national policy.

This is especially the case for smaller features, features no longer within their original setting, or features relating to the late nineteenth/ twentieth century: all of which factors are particularly common in the Land of the Fanns area.

*The aim of the current project in relation to Statements of Significance was to:*

- Identify 50 heritage features related to historic landscape design within the Land of the Fanns;
- To provide each of these features with a Statement of Significance, including a brief history, appraisal of significance, current status and condition etc;
- To make volunteers aware of the role of Statements of Significance and their use and value in conservation and planning;
- To train volunteers in the production of statements of significance so that they can support other features and other groups within the community.
- To make community, local government , national heritage bodies etc aware of the wealth of heritage features associated with historic landscape design within the Land of the Fanns area;
- To integrate the research and Statements of Significance into Parkland Management Plans and Conservation Management Plans for historic parks and gardens due to be initiated by the Land of the Fanns and carried out by consultancy (this aspect has been delayed due to Covid19).

At present Historic England defines and decides significance through assessing factors of Evidential, Historic, Aesthetic and Communal attributes and this has been followed as far as possible within the following Statements of Significance for each feature. Although this standardisation and categorisation can sometimes appear to be repetitive, and in actual planning applications would be subsumed within an overall statement of significance, the categories were purposely separated out in this project to encourage volunteers and the wider community to consider their heritage assets from 'all angles'. As will be seen some contributions bring a unique outlook on these categories incorporating individual and local aspects and appraisals. A final summary brings these aspects together.

### ***Why Feature Based?***

The project is focused on individual features, whether they are 'stand-alone' (e.g. Cash's Well) or whether set within or forming part of a wider historic landscape or heritage asset (e.g. Bedfords Park Steps, Warley Alpine Gorge).

This follows the pattern of the Historic Environment Record, and also reflects the often fragmented nature of the heritage asset in the more densely populated areas of Land of the Fanns.

It also highlighted the importance of often small scale features or individual aspects of small sites, which have value to communities at the local level – sometimes even at the micro-scale of forming a heritage link for people along specific streets etc. Memories can be embedded in local amenity spaces, or wilder play areas left over from pre-housing development (e.g. Millards Garden).

A feature such as walls of brick rejects within a memorial garden, relicts of a spa (Cash's Well) or even railings surrounding a once rare Quarry Garden hint at social and cultural histories vital to this area of Essex, often bypassed by casual walkers and under-valued until under threat.

These are the features that need identifying and researching before they are lost through lack of knowledge beyond the very local communities.

### ***Outcomes***

There were two main planned outcomes to the project:

1. The training of the volunteers in understanding, researching and recording heritage features relating to historic landscape design which was achieved incredibly successful as this report (entirely compiled by the volunteers) demonstrates. In fact the training went beyond that originally envisaged and included appreciation of and use of such aspects as 16<sup>th</sup> century documentation, archival materials, GIS, LIDAR, on-site appreciation of landscape features, etc. etc.
2. The production of written records of the (fifty) identified features detailing the history, statements of significance etc. which would then be passed to the relevant authorities and bodies including the Essex County Council, district planning bodies, Historic Environment Record, Land of the Fanns, bodies of 'Friends' of various parks, local Museums etc. This too was accomplished to a higher standard than had perhaps originally been envisaged and resulted in the attached report.

### ***Additional Unplanned Outcomes included:***

Identification of a broader range of feature types and dates than might be expected to 'normally' be included within an Inventory or other research project into historic designed landscape heritage assets within an area;

Highlighting of small scale twentieth century features and designed landscapes integral to the specific way in which this area of Essex was developed;

Spotlighting the need for targeted approaches at community level to access oral histories of some of these later (or relict earlier) features and fully understand the significance's these hold;

Discovery of previously unrealized archaeological and archive materials at Belhus Park (Grade II, At Risk) which it is hoped will form the basis of an onward project involving Historic England and the wider community as well as the owners and managers;

Identification of possible Pulhamite rock material at Grays Town Park;

Additional support for the Friends of Dilkes Park in their on-going recording and research and preservation of the park;

Provision of indirect support for the challenge of a planning application which would have damaged amenity landscape design within one of the housing estates within the area;

Working with representatives of several historic sites which resulted in enhanced communication and integration across these sites;

Working in partnership with the Essex Gardens Trust led to several of the trainees joining the county based Gardens Trust, increasing membership and extending the trust's reach into this area of Essex;

Successful bid by the Essex Gardens Trust to continue work with the trainees (and additional volunteers) on a Land of the Fanns/CAF funded project to create an Inventory of Historic Parks and Gardens for Thurrock.

The Fifty Fabulous Features report will also be used to assist consultants in future Parkland Management Plans for sites included within it .

### ***Finally ..***

The volunteers trainees have recorded their own thanks and acknowledgements to those who assisted them in the research and recording, but as Team 'Co-Ordinator' I would like to give my very sincere thanks to all of the volunteers who have formed such an amazing and dedicated, enthusiastic and hard-working team over the last year, and who have achieved such an incredible amount in terms of both the features they recorded and the learning and skills they have achieved. It was quite simply 'Fabulous' to work with you!

### **Twigs Way - October 2020**



*Examining reconstruction of the steps at Bedford's Park*



*Exploring the Thorndon estate*



*Recording a feature at Dagnams Park*



*Trainees enjoying a tour of Dagnam Park led by Friends of Dagnams Park Chair, Don Tait*



The Essex Gardens Trust was delighted to be involved in the Land of the Fanns project to record the heritage assets of '50 Fabulous Features'. This area has so much rich history that, for too long, has lain beneath the surface and its legacy not known to many of the local residents. '50 Fabulous Features' is a 'fabulous project' that has developed an impressive team of enthusiastic researchers and strengthened their knowledge of, and pride in, their locality. Thanks to this success, the Essex Gardens Trust has been awarded Land of the Fanns funding to enable this important work to continue. It will enable the Trust to build on the skills already acquired by the team and further enrich our understanding of the local heritage. One of the Essex Gardens Trust's objectives is to help to protect precious green spaces by spreading recognition of the value of local landscapes to the local community. The Trust is excited to be able to embark on a follow-on project which will now focus on the area of Thurrock.

**Patricia Sinclair – Chair, Essex Gardens Trust**



## **Introduction - The Gardens Trust**

The Gardens Trust is the only UK national charity dedicated to protecting and conserving our heritage of designed landscapes. We campaign on their behalf, undertake research and conservation work, and encourage public appreciation and involvement.

We are a statutory consultee in the English planning system, which means that local authorities have to consult us on any planning applications that affect gardens and landscapes registered on the National Heritage List. This is a huge role!

To deliver our ambitious remit, we work closely with local volunteer groups, including Essex Gardens Trust, which is one of a fleet of County Gardens Trusts across the country.

This fabulous project has given us the opportunity to share our love of historic parks and gardens with new people in the Land of the Fanns area; to help increase local skill sets for researching, recording, understanding and protecting precious heritage assets; and to meet and support a whole new group of dedicated volunteers.

Working alongside Twigs Way, the volunteers on this project have risen to the challenge of learning how to survey a range of historic landscape features in their area. This was always a tall order, and we never imagined that a global pandemic would be added to a list of obstacles that normally include brambles and bottomless archives.

This publication represents a mammoth achievement by this volunteer team – precious surveys of 50 historic designed landscape features, all of which will now contribute to the protection of those assets. The Gardens Trust would like to congratulate and thank the volunteer team, and wishes it many garden history adventures in future.

### **Linden Groves -Strategic Development Officer, The Gardens Trust**



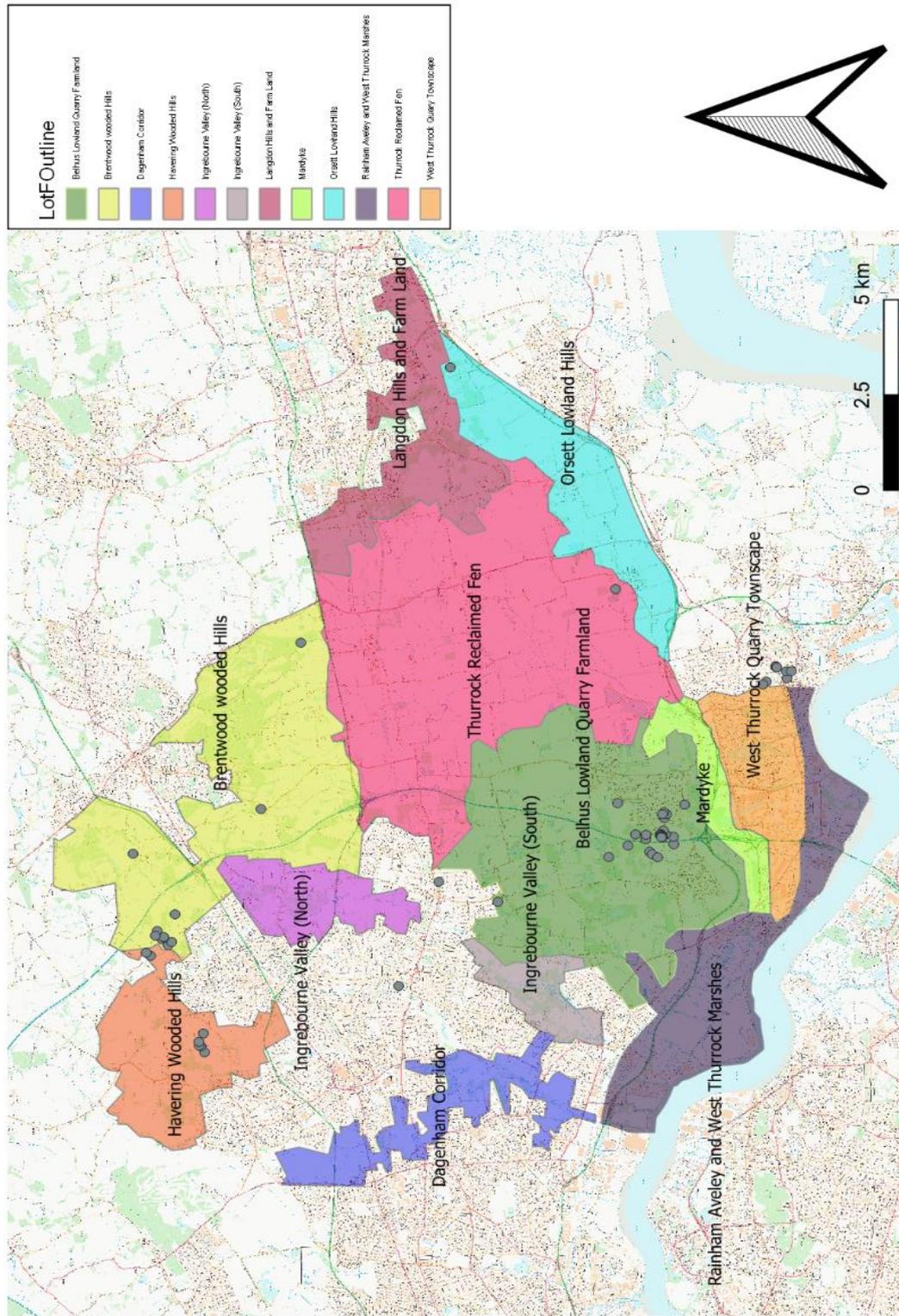
*Exploring Langtons*



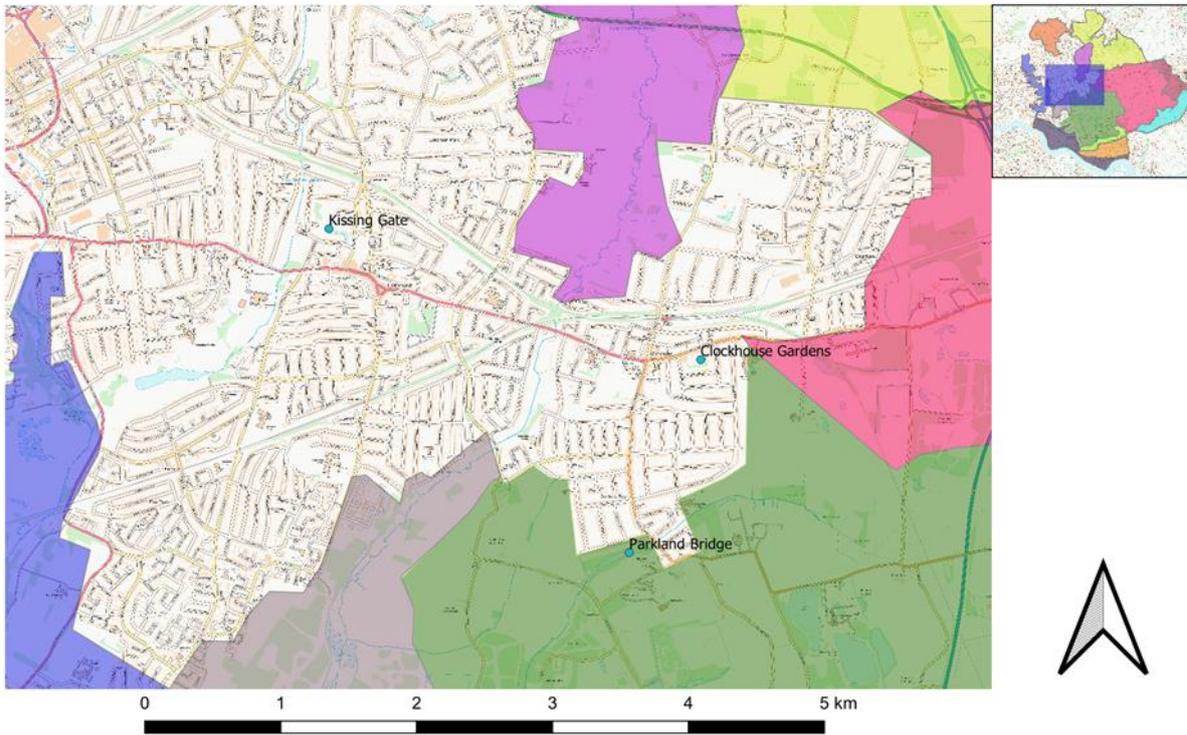
*Discussions in the gardens of Langtons*

# Maps:

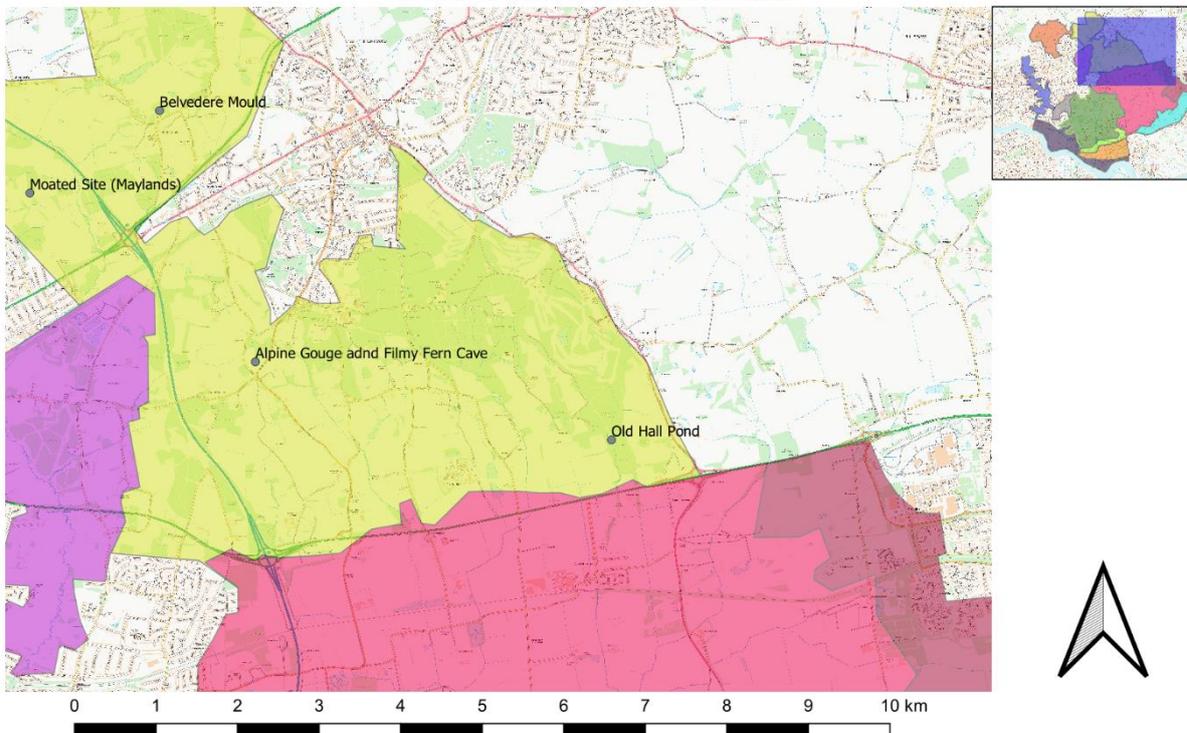
## Land of the Fanns: 50 Features Map Overview



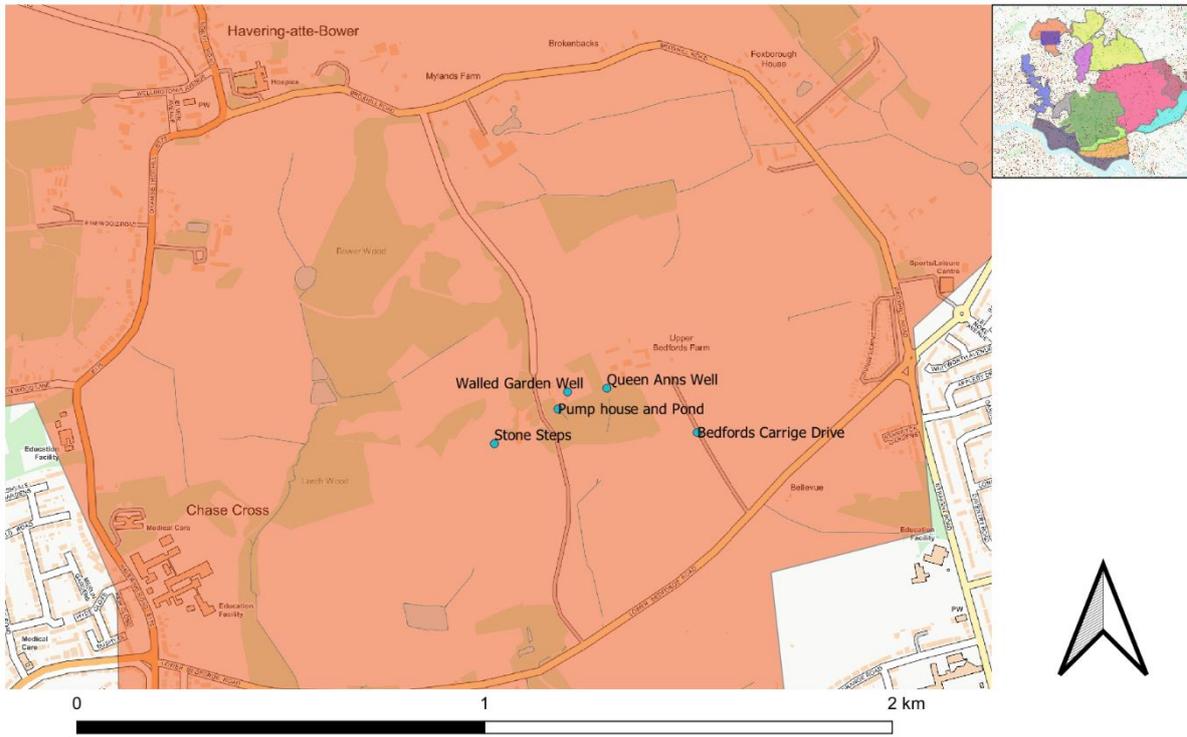
### Land of the Fanns: North West



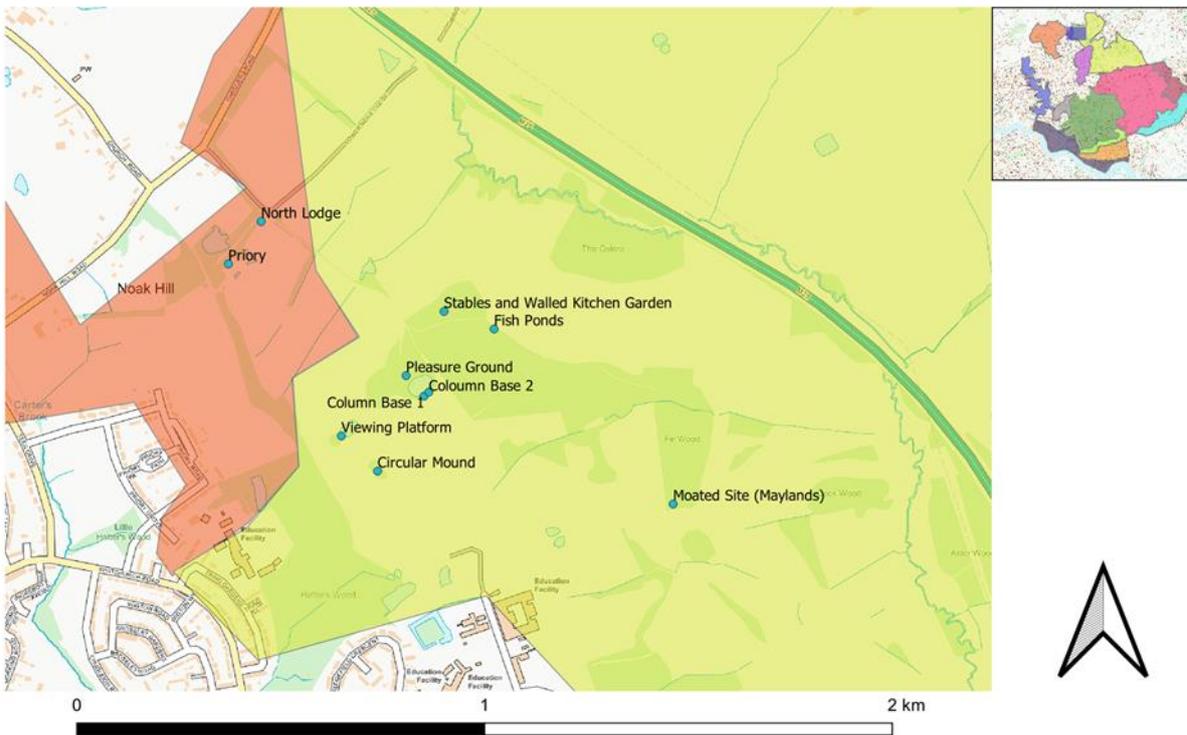
### Land of the Fanns: North East



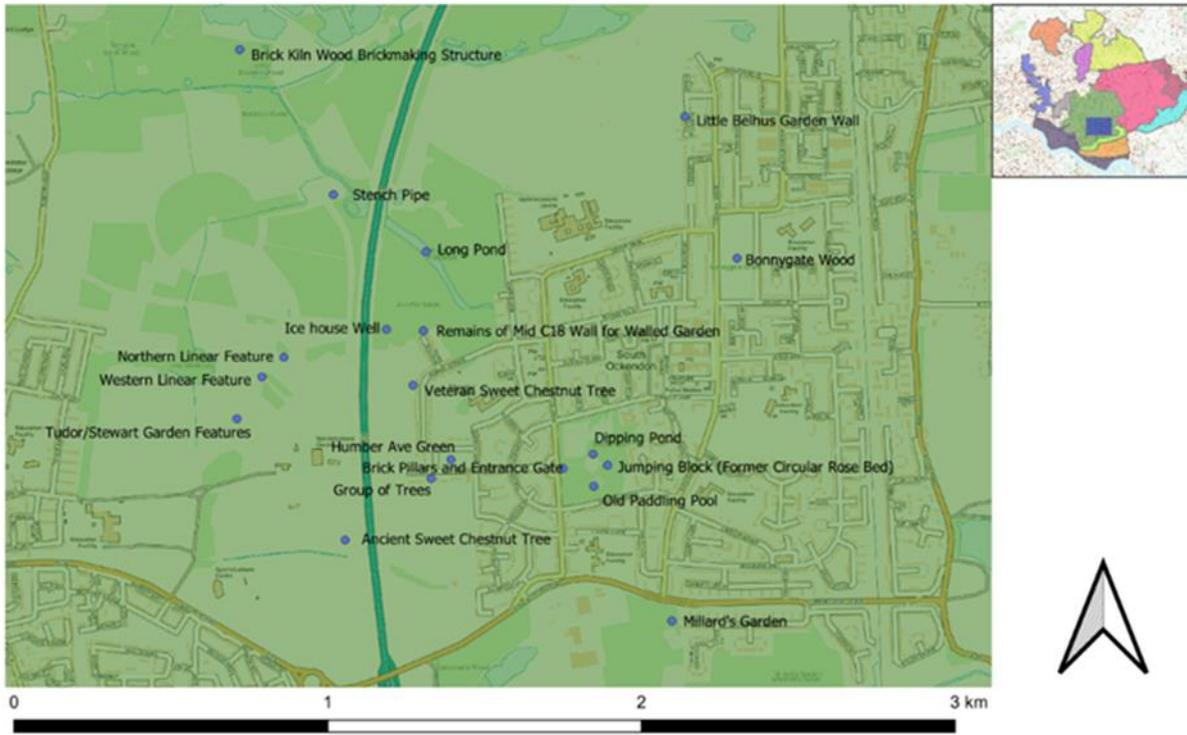
### Land of the Fanns: Bedfords Park



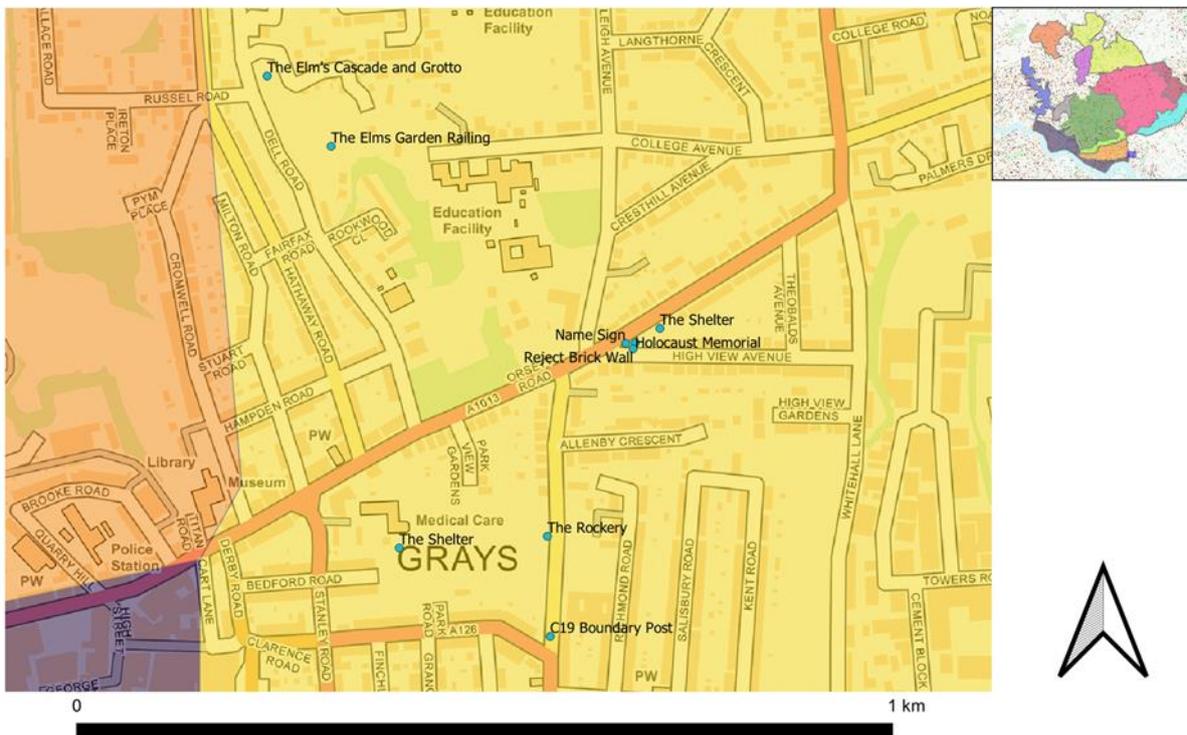
### Land of the Fanns: Dagnam Park



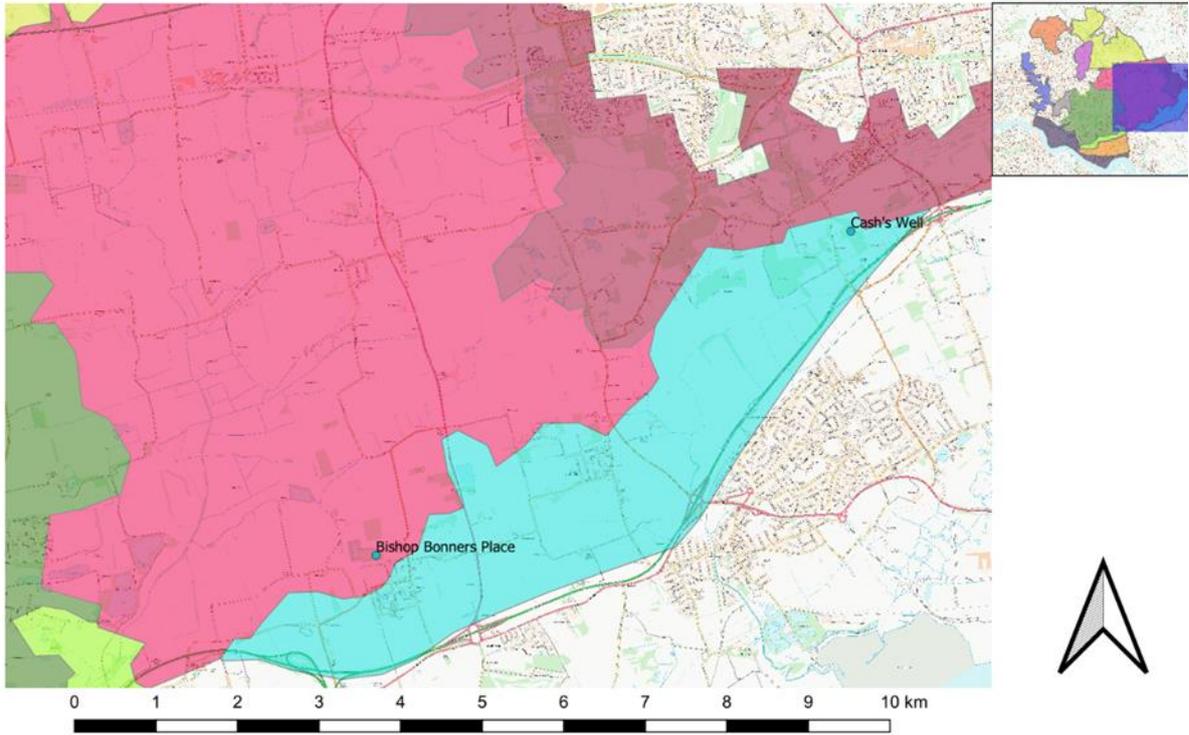
### Land of the Fanns: Belhus Park



### Land of the Fanns: Grays Town



Land of the Fanns: South East



## FEATURE NAME (ID: 18): OLD HALL POND

**Location:** Thorndon Park, Herongate and Ingrave, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3SA

**NGR:** TQ562693 189891

**Local Authority:** Brentwood Borough Council

**Description of Feature:** Old Hall Pond is a long wide oblong of water, dammed at the south end. The pond is home to many wildfowl and fish and towards the north end has 3 large pads of lilies and nearer the west bank a large patch of water irises. A pedestrian path encircles the pond, fairly narrow for the most part but wider to the south end. The pond is edged with trees, brambles, hawthorn, sedge, and grasses. On the western banks some trees have fallen into, or just above, the water. A few benches have been placed along the paths and at the south end is a notice board with fishing and safety information.

**Material:** At Thorndon South the stream enters the park from a neighbouring golf course travelling through Menagerie Wood to Old Hall Pond. A second stream arises from the Woodland Trust land and flows through the ash valley, part of Menagerie Wood, into the pond. On exiting through the sluice of the dam the stream meanders through Mill Wood and out of the park, eventually reaching the Mardyke. The underlying geology of the park is London Clay.

**Size:** approx. 12,356 square metres

**Orientation:** Old Hall pond lies in the south of Thorndon Park. The remains of the Old Hall and the pigeon mount are to the west of the pond: the Menagerie Plantation is to the north: the Octagon Plantation is to the east: and Mill Wood lies to the south of the pond. The head of the pond lies to the north.

**Current State:** The shape of the late-sixteenth century pond has been retained but the mid-eighteenth century enlargement is barely discernible. The additional two prongs are marshy areas full of vegetation and the ziggurat between is overgrown with new and fallen trees. The pond continues to be stocked with fish as was one of its original uses. The pond's perimeter paths are now a prominent feature to take the heavy footfall of the public.

**Current Use:** The lake is home to a variety of wildfowl and is well used by anglers fishing for bream, pike, carp, roach, rudd, and tench. A circular public footpath around the lake is a popular walk for all age groups. Runners and cyclists also use this route.

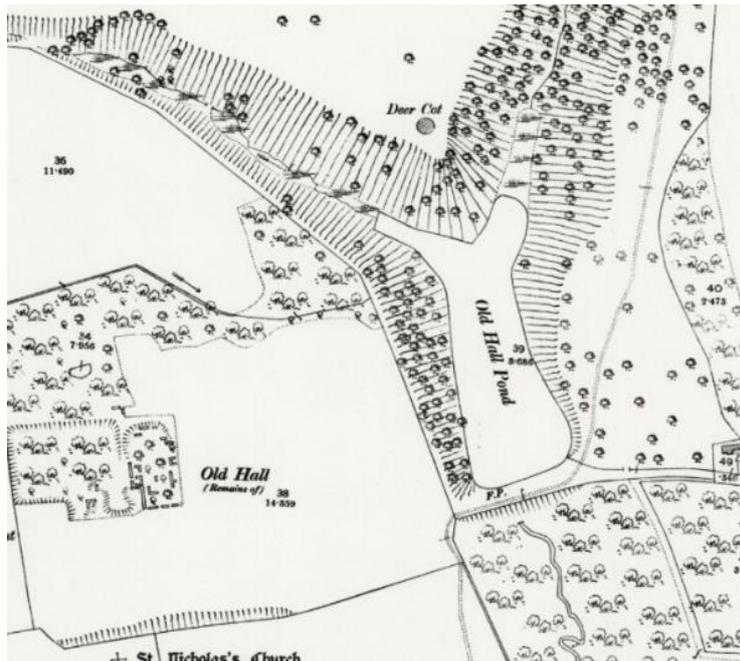
**Existing Designation:** The whole of Thorndon Park is Grade II\* No.1000314.

**Brief History:** Thorndon Park has been associated with the Petre family since John Petre's ownership in 1573: his father had already acquired a substantial amount of land in the area. John Petre was knighted and embarked on an ambitious programme to rebuild the house and remodel the grounds. Following the improvements John Walker Snr was commissioned to survey the estate surrounding the Old Hall (Walker 1598). Old Hall Pond was created during landscaping carried out by the first Lord Petre in 1581 as part of the water management system as well as use as a fish pond. The 1598 survey by J. Walker shows a pond situated east of the old hall and is an oblong shape.

When Robert James Petre, son of the seventh baron, inherited and married in 1732 he moved the family from nearby Ingatestone Hall to Thorndon. Robert Petre was a plantsman and garden designer and supported the importation of seeds from America. He commissioned Giacomo Leoni to remodel parts of the Hall as well as devising an elaborate formal scheme for the gardens. French surveyor Sieur Bourignon drew up a plan for these proposals to the landscape in 1733. Lord Petre created an amazing nursery at Thorndon to supply the proposed design and although work began in 1736 it was never fully completed due to the death of Lord Petre in 1742 at the early age of 29. However, Old Hall Pond was enlarged into a lake by the addition of two prongs at the southern end separated by a zigurat and its banks terraced. Its feeder stream from the west was culverted into a grotto.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Lord Petre abandoned the Old Hall to build the new Thorndon Hall 2km north of the Old Hall the Old Hall being demolished in 1764. Lancelot Brown (1716-83) was commissioned to make improvements to the estate and these improvements included the creation of New Hall Pond. The estate was heavily in debt by the time the tenth baron inherited the estate due to his father's spending. The estate was maintained by the Petre family during the nineteenth century but a fire almost destroyed the Hall in 1919. The family moved back to Ingatestone Hall and following the First World War the Hall and 240 acres was acquired for Thorndon Park Golf Club. Much of the remainder of the park was acquired by Essex County Council and 1971 it was opened as a country park. The Hall was converted into private apartments and in 1992 the Woodland Trust purchased some of the woodland in the park. The site remains in multiple ownership.





*25:1 inch OS Map 1892 showing extended arms*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The history of Thorndon Park and Old Hall Pond is well documented through maps, images, archaeological assessment, and estate papers mostly held by the Essex Record Office. There is evidence of Bourignon's 1733 plan to enlarge the lake as the additional two prongs are still discernible as is the ziggurat dividing them, although summer vegetation makes them difficult to define. There is evidence of this enlargement on the late-nineteenth century ordnance survey maps. From the Walker 1598 survey Mill Grove, to the south of the lake, and Pond Mead, to the east of the lake, remain as woodland today and the dam and sluice are evident to the south of the pond. The pond provides on-site evidence to enhance the cartographic information.

**Historic:** The site is strongly linked to the Petre family and their well-documented history. The earliest significant phase of history for the pond is its importance as part of the water management system following John Petre's acquisition of the estate in 1573. The second significant phase was the enlargement of the pond as part of the 1733 landscape proposals of Giacomo Leoni (1686-1746), the Italian architect born in Venice, and the French surveyor, Sieur Bourignon. Today the site is significant in its benefit to the local community while also retaining evidence of its sixteenth century layout.

**Aesthetic:** Old Hall Pond is a picturesque area bounded by historic trees which provide different leaf colour throughout the seasons. The serenity of the area makes the public footpaths around it a pleasurable and relaxing place for the many walkers and anglers who visit.

**Communal:** Thorndon South Country Park is managed by Brentwood Borough Council and is a Site of Special Interest. Old Hall Pond is an important area and green space for the local people who visit regularly: it is also an important habitat for wildfowl. Car park charges generated by visitors contribute to the park's upkeep.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of Old Hall Pond and its surrounding landscape lies mainly with its connection to the late-sixteenth century Lord Petre and his remodelling of the gardens which included the creation of Old Hall Pond, probably to stock fish. Whilst the most of the original design of the Old Hall's gardens has been lost the Pond and the few other remaining features are of great historic value. Today the Pond and its surroundings are significant for maintaining the diversity of habitats for wildlife and for being a scenic green space for visitors. The pond provides a relaxing atmosphere for anglers and promotes health benefits for visitors by means of exercise.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Vandalism, decay, access, specific threats. The paths around the pond are liable to erosion due to their muddy state in the winter and their constant use by visitors.

### **Key References:**

- 1598 J. Walker Survey of Thorndon Estate ERO D/DP P5
- 1733 Le Sieur Bourgignon Design for a landscape ERO D/DP P23/1
- 1852 25" to the mile Ordnance Survey map of Old Thorndon Hall Pond
- 1970 Clutton, George and Mackay, Colin *Old Thorndon Hall, Essex – A History and Reconstruction of its park and garden*, Garden History Society Occasional Paper
- 1987 Historic England listed park and garden List entry 100314
- 2020 Photographs Jill Plater

**Researcher:** Jill Plater 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 24): GARDEN WALLS AND GATEWAY OF LITTLE BELHUS HOUSE

**Location:** Little Belhus Close, South Ockendon, RM15 5BQ

**NGR:** TQ558483 182213

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of Feature:** Mid-sixteenth century red brick garden walls surrounding the north garden of a mid-sixteenth century, timber framed and weather-boarded house. The wall is built in English Bond, with brick, gabled capping. There is a side entrance with a wrought iron gate in the west wall and two steps leading to a large double, wooden door gateway in the northern wall. The entrance gateway is plastered and has an arch flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a cornice. Historic England recorded

*'Over the cornice is an ornamental original gable containing a cast-iron rectangular panel of the Stuart Royal Arms of between 1603 and 1689.'*

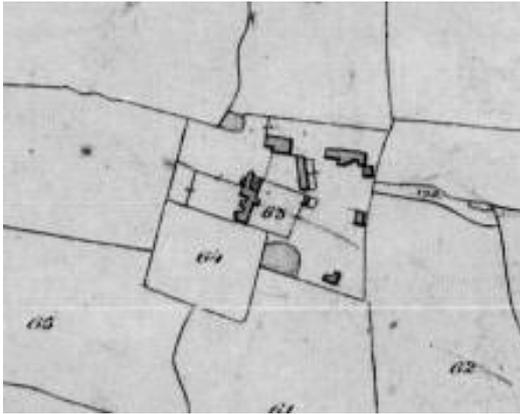
The top of the gateway is now overgrown with vegetation and therefore this cannot be seen. In *"Forgotten Thameside"* (1966), Glyn Morgan suggests that the inside of the garden walls contained niches for statuettes. There is also part of a similar wall in the southern garden. The house and garden wall are now surrounded by twentieth century council housing.

**Size:** Surrounds an area of approximately ½acre. Height approximately 3m

**Current State:** Fair. Some modern cement repairs. The outside of the East wall is hidden by vegetation on the edge of an Amenity Green which runs alongside.

**Existing Designations:** Listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.  
Historic England – Grade II No. 1111580

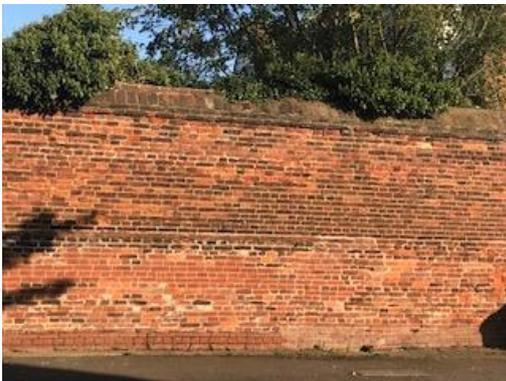
**Brief History:** The house was built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In a house sale advertisement in 2012 it was described as a 'Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century hunting lodge' (*Daily Mail Online 20.2.2012*). The Barrett-Lennards of Belhus Park were the landlords of Little Belhus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the 1950's, London County Council bought land in South Ockendon and Aveley to build two new council housing estates. This included the site of Little Belhus House which was spared from demolition despite the need to build new housing. In the 1960's the house was uninhabited, except for a caretaker, and in disrepair. In 1967, when the LCC was succeeded by the Greater London Council, new roads and new housing was built, closely surrounding the house and garden walls. Little Belhus later passed into private ownership. The House is now divided into three apartments.



*Little Belhus showing north and south garden  
Part 1840 South Ockendon Tithe Map*



*Side entrance to garden in west wall*



*Little Belhus garden wall 2020*



*Arched entrance gates in north wall*



*Wall showing English Bond and gabled capping*



*Gated entrance to north wall showing cornice*



*Outside of east wall bordering amenity green*



*Garden walls surrounding Little Belhus House*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** Little Belhus Garden Walls are significant as an excellent example of mid-sixteenth century building methods. The walls not only give evidence of the type of mortar and bricks used at this time but show how status in society could be displayed by such building and landscaping. For example, the grand north entrance and the niches in the walls for statuettes.

**Historic:** The garden walls surrounding Little Belhus Lodge were built mid-sixteenth century. They have survived many generations of occupants and suggestion of demolition. The 1839 South Ockendon Tithe Map shows Little Belhus as being in a rural location, surrounded by open countryside and it remained that way until, in the 1950's, council housing was built close by. Followed in 1967, when new roads and more council housing was built adjacent, completely surrounding the site on all sides thus becoming part of an urban location. The history of Little Belhus Garden Walls is sparsely documented through books, maps, newspaper, photographs and Historic England's register of listed buildings. Further research at the Essex Records Office was prevented due to the Coronavirus Lockdown but may add further insight into the history of the site.

**Aesthetic:** The Garden Walls are aesthetically pleasing and give insight into the building styles of the mid-sixteenth century.

**Communal:** Little Belhus House and garden walls are valued as a link to the past by the local community who are aware of its location. As it is tucked away in a cul-de-sac at the edge of the estate many are unaware of its existence.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

Little Belhus Garden Walls are significant as an excellent example of mid-sixteenth century building methods and as a grade II listed building this importance has been recognised. It is an example of how historic buildings can be restored to be conducive with modern living and provide a positive contribution to an urban landscape. The house and garden walls provide a pleasurable view amid the mid-twentieth century housing.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Damage to walls by overgrown vegetation.

**Key References:**

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1111580>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/property/article-2103819/A> OliverWadeson

1966,Forgotten Thameside, Glyn H. Morgan

1839 Aveley Tithe Map (excerpt)

2020, Photographs, Heather Hunter

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BELHUS PARK TUDOR AND JACOBAN GARDENS WITH REFERENCE TO THE INDIVIDUAL FEATURES THAT FOLLOW

In 1526, Belhus House, dating to the fourteenth century, was rebuilt by John Barrett and between 1483 and 1644, the family built up one of the largest estates in Essex.

In 1586, a manorial survey, of which only the large and detailed maps remain, shows the house, gardens and estate in significant detail and describes each garden and field, with acreage (*Northamptonshire Record Office: Map/1254*). A further survey in 1619 also survives, with maps and descriptive text. (*Essex Record Office: D/DL P1A, also D/DL P1*)

In 1618, Sir Edward Barrett obtained a licence to make a park. Adding several farms to his estate, by the mid-seventeenth century the park was stocked with 300 deer and the gardens included a 'wilderness', a 'rock garden', 'private garden' and a 'pallisadoe garden'. (*Essex Record Office: D/DL P1A, also D/DL P1*) The exact position of these three gardens is unclear.

### **The northern garden**

Described in the 1586 survey as 'The Greate Orchard' this garden, to the north of the house and enclosed by a fence was, at the time, laid out into six rectangular sections, divided by paths, N-S and E-W, with the walls of two smaller enclosed gardens intruding into the garden in the south-western corner. Small ponds were in the north western and south western corners of the garden and a small structure with a curved roof was set mid-way along the eastern edge of the garden. A large tree was at the centre of the northern boundary. On the 1586 map, the area of 'The Greate Orcharde', together with the smaller 'Garden' and 'cookes garden' is stated to be 'six acres and a quarter and four perches'.

The 1619 Survey of the Manor (*Essex Record Office: D/DL P1A, also D/DL P1*) also shows the formal garden. However, the four northernmost rectangular sections had been replaced by an elaborate parterre in the form of a diagonal cross, with a small circular structure at the centre of the cross. The parterre was surrounded and crossed by paths. The northern triangular section was further subdivided by a path leading to a large tree. The southern section appears to contain bushes, whilst the western and eastern triangular sections have what appear to be elaborate, multi-branched paths between plantings. The two southernmost rectangular sections of the 1586 garden had been joined with 'cookes garden' and were fenced off from the 'Greate Orcharde'. Running along the western side of the garden, between the parterre and the fence line appears to be a linear canal-like structure, surrounded by a path. The northern side of the garden, also appears to show a further linear structure, surrounded by paths and possibly crossed by a small bridge from the centre of the garden.

A late seventeenth or early-eighteenth century painting by an unknown artist, possibly from the school of Jan Siberechts (<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/belhus-house-and-park-c-1710-3043>;) shows a bird's eye view of the property. The layout of the garden in that painting reflects that of the 1619 survey and clearly shows both the western and northern canals, with the northern canal crossed by a bridge.

### **The small gardens immediately north of the house**

Immediately to the north of the House, the 1586 survey shows a small rectangular 'Garden', surrounded by a wall and divided into two rectangular sections. A small building is in the north-west corner of the garden and there is an entrance to the 'Greate Orcharde' on the north side. To the east of this garden is a small, irregularly shaped garden, surrounded by a fence and called 'cookes garden'. In 1619, 'the garden' had retained its shape and layout. However, what had been the 'cookes garden' had been extended eastwards to enclose the two southernmost rectangular sections of 'The Greate Orcharde'. Each of the two rectangular sections appear to be divided into three parts. A building, possibly a dovecot, stands between the two rectangular sections.

### **The western garden**

Described in 1586 as 'The little orchard', this garden, walled on three sides, was laid out in four rectangular sections, divided by paths N-S and E-W. The garden was said to measure 'one acre, half quarter and twelve perches'. A small building is in the north-west corner of the garden and another in the south-eastern rectangular section, possibly a dovecot.

In the 1619 survey, the rectangular planting had been replaced by a circular path, linked to another path around the perimeter of the garden in four places. A curved path led from the circular path to the centre of the garden from the east and appeared to cross a slightly darker ring, possibly a water-filled feature.

The seventeenth or early-eighteenth century painting of the House again reflected the detail in the 1619 survey and depicts the garden with a water-filled central ring, surrounded by and crossed to the east by a path, with a small structure in the centre of the ring.

### **The courtyard**

Immediately south of the House, between it and the gatehouse, was 'the courte'. There appeared to be no access between it and the gardens to the east and west in 1586, but by 1619, an opening to the east was visible.

### **The wood yard**

To the east of 'the courte' and abutting the eastern side of the House was a walled area described in the 1586 survey as the 'woodde yearde'. A number of brick-built structures were set against the walls of the yard and there appears to be a well to the north of the yard. A gate leads to the last of the gardens surrounding the House. By 1619, these last two gardens appear to have been merged.

### **The outer house**

Described in the 1586 survey as 'The outer heyse', this area is in the far south-east corner of the immediate surrounds of the house. It contained a large pond and had a gate to the road to the south. By 1619, this area appeared to be walled in and contained a pond and a building.

## **Defacement and spoiling of the gardens**

In 1644, Sir Edward Barrett died, without issue. He named a distant relative, Richard Lennard as his heir, but the estates were only converted to him when he came of age in 1647/8. He then took the name Richard Lennard-Barrett. Edward Barrett's widow Katherine still lived at Belhus and remarried in 1653 to a William Morgan.

It appears that, to fund his lifestyle, a huge amount of destruction was caused to the estate, primarily through the felling and selling of timber. However, the mansion gardens also suffered. In two writs dated 1656, the Sheriff of Essex was ordered to grant seizing of the estate to Richard Barrett. In the writs, four gardens associated with Belhus House were mentioned:

- The 'Wilderness' where broken down fences had allowed deer and conies to eat and spoil the fruit trees and cows and sheep 'had totally defaced and spoiled' 'the walks and banks'. This suggests a large garden and could refer to the northern garden;
- The 'Rock garden' where broken down fences had allowed deer and conies to spoil the fruit trees;
- The 'Private Garden' where 'the walls' had been broken and the garden laid open;
- The Pallisadoe Garden, where the hedges, pales and fences had been broken down and allowed deer and conies to spoil the fruit trees.

Ultimately, the house and park were conveyed to Richard, but until 1673, when he moved to Belhus from Ireland, he let the house to his mother, Lady Dacre and her husband. Other lawsuits connected to the earlier destruction continued until 1689.

## **Removal of the formal gardens**

Between 1744 and 1777, major remodelling of the house and gardens, ordered by Thomas Barrett-Lennard (later Lord Dacre), removed 'the Old Gardens' that surrounded the House which, handsome in their own fashion, with their high walls entirely shut out the Prospect" (*An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett: Thomas Barrett-Lennard 1908*) Between 1753 and 1771, under the direction of Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Lord Dacre, the gardens and park were transformed by Capability Brown and Richard Woods. Some features of that era still exist today. Of the Tudor and Jacobean gardens, nothing remains other than traces of the circular feature in the western garden that are just visible as slight mounds and hollows. LIDAR imagery clearly reveals that circular feature and also shows that the line of the linear canals still remains under the municipal golf course that now occupies the entire site.

### **Key References:**

Northamptonshire Record Office: Map/1254

Essex Record Office: D/DL P1A, also D/DL P1

Essex Record Office D/DL T1/779A

<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/belhus-house-and-park-c-1710-3043>;

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/historical-places-in-thurrock/belhus-mansion-painting>

1908, *An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett: Thomas Barrett-Lennard*

**Researcher:** Phil Loblely 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 31): BELHUS PARK – REMAINS OF TUDOR/JACOBEAN GARDEN CANALS

**CENTRE OF WESTERN LINEAR FEATURE**

**NGR: TQ557134 181375**

**CENTRE OF NORTHERN LINEAR FEATURE**

**NGR: TQ557204 181437**

**Local Authority: Thurrock Unitary Council**

**Description of Feature:** The 1586 survey map of the Manor of Belhouse (*sic*) (*Northamptonshire Record Office: Map/1254*) shows the extent of the large formal garden to the north of the House, then called 'The Greate Orcharde'. Enclosed by a fence the garden was, at that time, laid out into six rectangular sections, divided by paths, N-S and E-W, with the walls of two smaller enclosed gardens intruding into the garden in the south-western corner. Taking measurements from the survey, overlaid on a Google Earth, the garden was in the shape of an irregular trapezoid, with parallel sides to the north and south measuring approximately 110m by 174 metres respectively. The western boundary (including the small garden intrusion) measured approximately 180m and the eastern boundary approximately 192m. On the 1586 map, the area of 'The Greate Orcharde', together with the smaller 'Garden' and 'cookes garden' is stated to be 'six acres and a quarter and four perches'. Small ponds were in the north-western and south-western corners of the garden and a small structure with a curved roof was set mid-way along the eastern edge of the garden. A large tree was at the centre of the northern boundary.

The 1619 Survey of the Manor (*Essex Record Office: D/DL P1*) also shows the formal garden. However, the four northernmost rectangular sections had been replaced by an elaborate parterre in the form of a diagonal cross, with a small circular structure at the centre of the cross. The parterre was surrounded and crossed by paths. The northern triangular section was further subdivided by a path leading to a large tree. The southern section appears to contain bushes, whilst the western and eastern triangular sections have what appear to be elaborate planting patterns.

Running along the western side of the garden, between the parterre and the fence line appears to be a linear canal-like structure, surrounded by a path. The northern side of the garden, also appears to show a further linear structure, surrounded by paths and possibly crossed by a small bridge from the centre of the garden.

A late seventeenth or early-eighteenth century painting by an unknown artist, possibly from the school of Jan Siberecht, (<https://artuk.org>) ([www.thurrock.gov.uk](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk)) shows a bird's eye view of the property. The layout of the garden in that painting reflects that of the 1619 survey and clearly shows both the western and northern canals, with the northern canal crossed by a bridge.

The LIDAR DTM 50cm image (lidarfinder.com) shows what appears to be the line of the path running alongside the western canal. The line of the northern canal is much less distinct, but it was on the same alignment as a double avenue of trees that ran eastward from the north-east edge of the garden. The LIDAR image shows up the circular depressions left from that double line of trees. From that, the line of the northern canal can be ascertained.

**Size:** The following measurements are taken from the 1619 survey map.  
The western canal measures approximately 118m by 10m.  
The northern canal measures approximately 85m by 12.8m.

**Orientation:** The western canal runs approximately N-S. The northern canal runs approximately W-E.

**Current State:** The feature lies under a golf course. A 2020 site visit revealed a slight increase in elevation corresponding with the left edge of the western canal. There is no evidence of the garden visible on the surface.

**Current Use:** None, the feature lies underneath a golf course.

**Existing Designations:** The feature lies within Belhus Park (Heritage England reference 1000738), but has no separate designation. Belhus Park is on the Historic England 'At Risk Register'.

**Brief History:** In 1526, John Barrett described the house as 'newly builded' (*Essex Record Office: D/DL T1/607*). In 1586, the manorial survey shows extensive formal gardens surrounding the house. At the time of the survey, the 'Greate Orchard' to the north of the house was divided into rectangular segments. In 1618, Edward Barrett was granted a licence to make a park and in 1619, another manorial survey showed that the northern garden had been remodelled with an elaborate parterre and canal-like features along the western and northern sides of the garden.

Between 1744 and 1777, major remodelling of the house and gardens ordered by Thomas Barrett-Lennard (later Lord Dacre) removed 'the Old Gardens that surrounded the House which, handsome in their own fashion, with their high walls entirely shut out the Prospect' (*An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett: Thomas Barrett-Lennard 1908*).

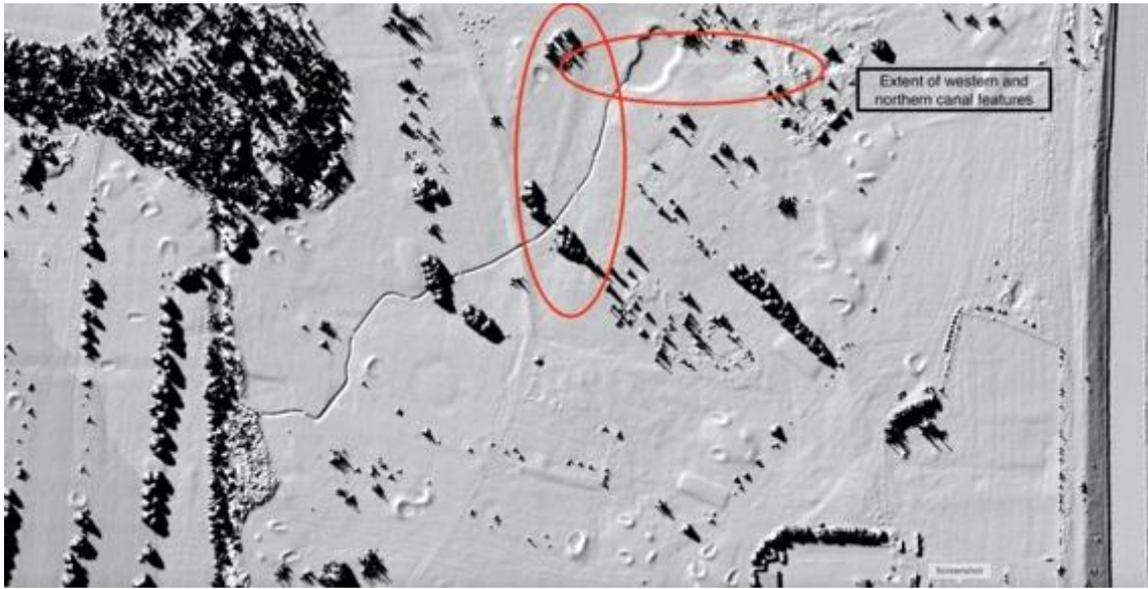
Lord Dacre employed Sanderson Miller on the transformation of the house into a 'Gothic edifice' and between 1753 and 1763, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Richard Woods created the modern park landscape. The Chapman and André map of Essex of 1777 shows that new landscape and the removal of the formal gardens. After much neglect during the two World Wars, the house was demolished in 1957 and subsequently bought by Essex County Council. The site remains in local authority ownership.



**1619 Survey (part) 'Document D/DL P1A: Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Records Office**



**1586 Survey (part) 'Belhouse Manor':Map 1254 Reproduced by courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office'**



*LIDAR 50cm DSM image reproduced by courtesy of lidarfinder.com*



*Belhus House and Park, artist unknown, c.1710: Reproduced by courtesy of Thurrock Museum*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** LIDAR imagery indicates that there is significant potential for the site to yield tangible evidence of the construction and layout of the northern garden and its water features. The evidential value of the feature also lies in the mid-sixteenth and seventeenth century maps that illustrate the gardens and in contemporary supporting documentation.

**Historic:** The canal-like features form one of a series of newly discovered remnants of the Tudor/Jacobean gardens.

**Aesthetic:** The features are hardly noticeable to the naked eye. However, a geophysical survey, combined with high definition LIDAR imagery could reveal a wealth of surviving detail and could demonstrate the changing fashions in garden design from the Tudor through to the Georgian age. This could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insight into the long heritage of the site for current users.

**Communal:** The remains of the house and garden are located within a public golf course. Public access by non-golfers is, therefore, severely restricted. However, the Belhus leisure complex, comprising golf clubhouse and bar, swimming pool and gym are very popular in the local community. There is some local knowledge of Belhus House, specifically of its destruction in 1957. However, further insight into the earlier, Tudor mansion and associated gardens, would enhance local knowledge and appreciation of both house and surrounding parkland. The discovery of these garden features may also prove of value to garden historians.

## Statement of Significance Summary

The significance of the canal-like garden features associated with the northern formal garden of Belhus House is primarily in their survival as a remnant of the Tudor and Jacobean gardens that were destroyed in the eighteenth century and replaced by the 'Capability' Brown and Richard Woods inspired parkland.

The site lies underneath a public golf course, a few hundred metres from the club house and leisure complex. Although the site is not readily accessible, visitor numbers to the leisure facilities in the immediate area are high.

Belhus Park is on the Historic England 'At Risk Register'. It is to be hoped that the discovery of this feature might make funds available to enhance national and local understanding of both the historic development and significance of the site and, with the help of Historic England, lead to the removal of the site from the Heritage at Risk Register.

## Key References:

1586, Northamptonshire Record Office: Map 1254

Essex Record Office: D/DL P1

Essex Record Office D/DL T1/607

1908, An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett: Thomas Barrett-Lennard

<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/belhus-house-and-park-c-1710-3043>

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/historical-places-in-thurrock/belhus-mansion-painting>

**Researcher:** Phil Lobley 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 33): REMAINS OF A CIRCULAR TUDOR/STUART GARDEN  
FEATURE, BELHUS PARK

**NGR:** TQ557055 181240

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** Satellite imagery (Google Earth 2019) shows the feature appears as a ring of light-coloured grass surrounding an inner circle of darker grass. Light coloured grass marks extend, faintly, north and east of the ring. The 3D option on the Apple Maps app shows the feature even more distinctly. The LIDAR DTM 50cm image (lidarfinder.com) shows the feature clearly.

The 1619 Survey of the Manor shows a formal garden to the west of the house, surrounded by walls to the north, west and south, with a circular path, linked to another path around the perimeter of the garden in four places. A curved path led from the circular path to the centre of the garden from the east and appeared to cross a slightly darker ring, possibly a water-filled feature.

The more detailed 1586 survey map of the Manor of Belhouse (*sic*) shows the garden clearly, although the garden was, at that time, laid out in four rectangular sections, divided by paths, N-S and E-W. The 1586 map calls this garden 'the little orchard' and states that it measures 'one acre, half quarter and twelve perches'. The garden measures approximately 63m N-S and 76m E-W. Image overlays of the two maps and a LIDAR image on Google Earth show the later ring feature to be in the centre of that garden.

A late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth century painting by an unknown artist, possibly from the school of Jan Siberechts shows a bird's eye view of the property. The layout of the gardens in that painting reflects that of the 1619 survey and depicts the western garden with a water-filled central ring, surrounded by and crossed to the east by a path, with a small structure in the centre of the ring.

**Size:** Outer edge of ring feature – approximately 32m in diameter  
Inner edge of ring feature – approximately 16m in diameter

**Orientation:** Circular feature, with faint grass marks extending to the north and east.

**Current State:** The feature lies mostly under a golf course fairway, with a segment to one side of the fairway. A 2020 site visit revealed a slight change in elevation corresponding with the line of the ring and the inner circle. There are no remains visible on the surface.

**Current Use:** None, the feature lies underneath a golf course.

**Existing Designations:** The feature lies within Belhus Park (Historic England reference 1000738), but has no separate designation. Belhus Park is on the Historic England 'At Risk Register'.

**Brief History:** In 1526, John Barrett described the house as 'newly builded'. In 1586, the manorial survey shows extensive formal gardens surrounding the house. At the time of the survey, the 'orchard' to the west of the house was divided into four simple rectangles with a structure, possibly a dovecote, in the south-eastern rectangle. In 1618, Edward Barrett was granted a licence to make a park and in 1619, another manorial survey showed that the garden had been remodelled with the circular feature now shown in the images.

A late-seventeenth century painting of the house and gardens shows the garden with a water-filled ring, surrounded by and crossed to the east by a path, with a small structure in the centre of the ring.

Between 1744 and 1777, major remodelling of the house and gardens ordered by Thomas Barrett-Lennard (later Lord Dacre) had removed 'the Old Gardens that surrounded the House which, handsome in their own fashion, with their high walls entirely shut out the Prospect'. Lord Dacre also writes in 1752 of 'laying the rising fields to the West open to the house & Park'. Lord Dacre employed Sanderson Miller on the transformation of the house into a 'Gothicke edifice' and between 1753 and 1763, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Richard Woods created the modern park landscape. The Chapman and André map of Essex of 1777 shows that new landscape and the removal of the formal gardens.

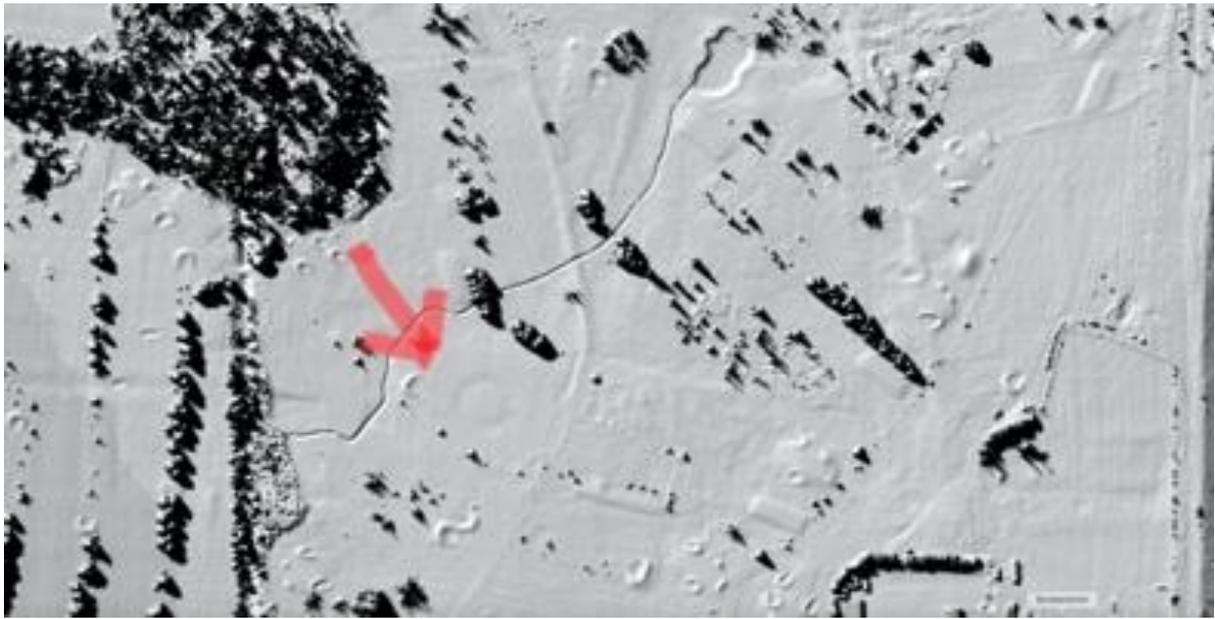
After much neglect during the two World Wars, the house was demolished in 1957. Subsequently bought by Essex County Council, the site remains in local authority ownership.



**Belhus Park, 1619 Survey (part) 'Document D/DL P1A:  
Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Records Office'**



**1586 Survey (part) 'Belhouse Manor: Map 1254  
Reproduced by courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office'**



*LIDAR 50cm image Reproduced courtesy of lidarfinder.com*



*Belhus House and Park, artist unknown, c.1710: Reproduced by courtesy of Thurrock Museum*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** LIDAR imagery indicates that there is significant potential for the site to yield tangible evidence of the construction and layout of the northern garden and its water features. The evidential value of the feature also lies in the mid-sixteenth and seventeenth century maps that illustrate the gardens and in contemporary supporting documentation.

**Historical:** The circular feature forms one of a series of newly discovered remnants of the Tudor/Jacobean gardens.

**Aesthetic:** The feature is hardly noticeable to the naked eye. However, a geophysical survey, combined with high definition LIDAR imagery could reveal a wealth of surviving detail and could demonstrate the changing fashions in garden design from the Tudor through to the Georgian age. This could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insight into the long heritage of the site for current users.

**Communal:** The remains of the House and garden are located within a public golf course. Public access by non-golfers is, therefore, severely restricted. However, the Belhus leisure complex, comprising golf clubhouse and bar, swimming pool and gym are very popular in the local community. There is some local knowledge of Belhus House, specifically of its destruction in 1957. However, further insight into the earlier, Tudor mansion and associated gardens, would enhance local knowledge and appreciation of both house and surrounding parkland. The discovery of this garden feature may also prove of value to garden historians.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of the circular garden feature associated with Belhus House is primarily in its survival as a remnant of the Tudor and Jacobean gardens that were destroyed in the eighteenth century and replaced by the 'Capability' Brown & Richard Woods inspired parkland.

The site lies underneath a public golf course, a few hundred metres from the club house and leisure complex. Although the site is not readily accessible, visitor numbers to the leisure facilities in the immediate area are high.

Belhus Park is on the Historic England 'At Risk Register'. It is to be hoped that the discovery of this feature might make funds available to enhance national and local understanding of both the historic development and significance of the site and, with the help of Historic England, lead to the removal of the site from the Heritage at Risk Register.

### **Key References:**

[Essex Record Office: D/DL P1A](#)

[Essex Record Office: D/DL T1/607](#)

[1586, Northamptonshire Record Office: Map/1254](#)

[1908, An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett: Thomas Barrett-Lennard](#)

[https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/belhus-house-and-park-c-1710-3043;](https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/belhus-house-and-park-c-1710-3043)

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/historical-places-in-thurrock/belhus-mansion-painting>

Researcher: Phil Loble 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 30): BELHUS PARK - REMAINS OF MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WALL OF WALLED GARDEN

**Location:** Surrounding Irvine Gardens, South Ockendon, RM15 Essex

**NGR:** TQ557649 181523

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** The walls of the former kitchen garden of the Belhus Park estate survive in the middle of the eastern boundary of the Belhus Park site, c500m to the north-east of the clubhouse. Flemish bond, red-coloured brick with recessed panels, bordered by bull-nosed plinth, raised pilasters and brick on edge parapet. The walls stand over 3m high. Two walls known to be complete. The remnants of the remaining two walls are not accessible to the public as they stand in the rear gardens of the local housing. The two complete adjoining walls back onto the Oak and Ash Plantation whereas the front of the wall forms boundaries to the rear gardens of houses and as a boundary at the end of the cul-de-sac known as Irvine Gardens. The walls would have enclosed a garden area of approximately 110m x 80m.

**Material:** Red brick W 23cm (9") x H 6cm (2 3/8") x D 10.5cm (4 1/4")

**Size:** The W-E wall (south facing) is approximately 110m in length. The N-S wall is approximately 80m in length. Height approx. 3m 11cm.

**Orientation:** One wall lies W-E from the Gardener's cottage with the adjacent wall lying N-S.

**Current State:** Bricks and pointing badly weathered in places. Some modern-day remedial brickwork carried out on north/south wall using modern bricks. Ivy growing over many parts of the wall originating from the Oak and Ash Plantation side of the wall. Garden rubbish and general refuse has been fly tipped on the wood side of the walls. Moss covers some of the bull-nosed plinth.

**Current Use:** Garden walls for twentieth century housing. A boundary between the wood and housing.

**Existing Designations:** Grade II Listed Building – Entry 1337122 (16 Apr 1988)

**Brief History:** The walled kitchen garden was an element of the historic parkland landscape around Belhus Park. By 1744 the old walled garden, south of the house of the Belhus historic estate, was removed. Mentioned by Lord Dacre, Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard, in a letter to his friend Sanderson Miller, it "entirely hindered the view of Park and County". The new, walled kitchen garden was built in the present position, adjacent to an orangery built in 1750, approximately a quarter mile north-east of the house as part of the improvements undertaken. Although Lancelot 'Capability' Brown was commissioned to landscape the grounds, it is unconfirmed that he was involved with the building of the walled garden as his

first visit to Belhus was not until October 1752. Lord Dacre's ideas could have been influenced by his good friend Sanderson Miller, amateur architect and landscape designer. The Chapman

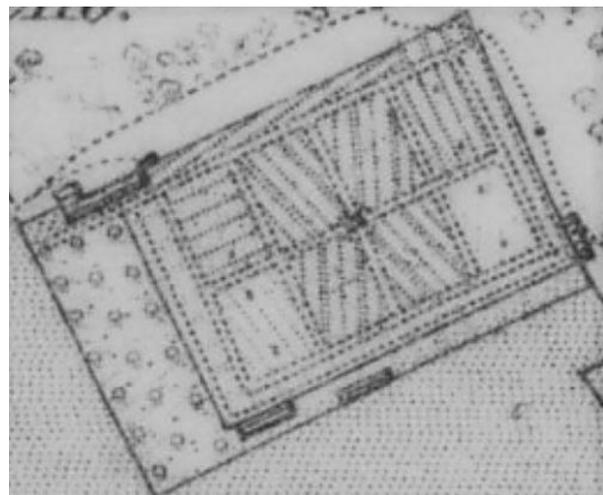
and André Map of 1777 shows clearly the walled kitchen garden divided into eight equal sized sections, alongside 'The Orangery', with an avenue of trees leading to it from the house.

The family of Barrett-Lennard remained living at Belhus until 1919. The walled garden was still in good repair during the early part of the C20 until, in 1937, a large part of the historic estate was bought by Essex County Council. The House was demolished in 1957, by which time the walls of the walled garden had been incorporated into much needed council housing developed by London County Council. Designated as the 'higher income group' houses, a cul-de-sac, Irvine Gardens, was created within the area previously the walled garden. The residents benefitted from the retention of the walls of the walled garden being the boundary between their garden and the Oak and Ash Plantation. Two of the walls originating from the building, locally known for many years as the 'Gardener's Cottage'\*, are accessible to the public, with some difficulty, on the woodland side. Before the storm of 1987, when the Oak and Ash Plantation suffered severe damage, a pathway ran alongside the wall. However, when the wood was cleared of fallen trees, new pathways were formed away from the wall thus limiting public access. The remaining sections of the other walls, which seem to exist along the side of some houses can be seen using Google Earth but have been lost to the historic landscape and public view. The building of the M25, completed in 1986, cut a swathe through the park isolating the former walled garden from the foundation ruins of the house.

\*Gardener's Cottage was originally an orangery built in 1750 with five 8' x 4', south facing windows at the front and two at either side. The building, now privately owned, has been sympathetically reconstructed and renamed 'The Orangery'.



*Chapman and André map 1777 showing walled garden and avenue of trees leading to it*



*Layout of garden with orangery in top left hand corner. OS Kent III 1862-1866*



*Lidar image showing walls surrounding houses by courtesy of lidarfinder.com*



*The Walled Garden early 1900's with espalier trees*



*Belhus Park walled garden early 1900's*



*Belhus Park walled garden early 1900's*



*The Orangery/ Gardener's Cottage next to the walled garden, early 1900's*



*Eighteenth century wall at far end of Irvine Gardens*



*Eighteenth century garden wall showing plinth and pilasters - Irvine Gardens*



*Pilaster showing weathering, Irvine Gardens 2020*



*Rear of wall overgrown with ivy and scattered fly tipping, 2020*



*Moss covered plinth of rear of garden wall*

## **Statement of Significance:**

**Evidential:** The walls provide evidential material showing the significance of the Belhus historic estate. They are an excellent example of C18 walled garden brickwork and are one of the few surviving features of the estate. The tall and thick walls are evidence that there once existed an impressive and productive garden. Gardens were expensive to build but were an area of pride. A letter from Lord Dacre's agent, John Todd, written in 1744, described considerable expense at this time. The Chapman and André Map of 1777 shows the walled garden in detail, divided into eight equal sections. Evidence of the former walled garden is contained in written documents, aerial photographs, Lidar, Google Earth and maps. Photographic evidence of the garden in the early 1900's provides evidence of the gardens former glory. (By kind permission of a descendent of a former domestic gardener, William Snare, of the Belhus estate) Current photographic evidence illustrates the vulnerability of the walls due to overgrowth from the wood and of fly tipping.

**Historic:** The walls of the garden are significant as they still provide an outline of the original walled garden. These gardens were very practical, typically situated away from the house so as not to spoil the view of the surrounding countryside but close enough to the kitchens. Aerial photographs of Belhus Park, taken in 1929, show the walled garden still neatly divided into sections and tidy. Those taken in 1938 show the garden in a decent state but by 1953 aerial photographs show the walled garden no longer existed. New council housing had been built within the walls and part of the south wall had been demolished to provide an access road to the cul-de-sac known as Irvine Gardens.

**Aesthetic:** The tall walls have strong aesthetic value. They provide insight into the workmanship of the past and a sense of history is enhanced by the 'romantic ruin' appearance of its ivy and moss covered walls as seen from the adjoining wood.

**Communal:** Some of the residents of Irvine Gardens can enjoy the pleasure of having an eighteenth century wall as their garden boundary.

## **Statement of Significance Summary**

The grade II listed walls of the Walled Garden play a significant part in the history of Belhus Park as it was included in the eighteenth century landscape plans commissioned by Lord Dacre, Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard, for his estate. It is also one of the last remaining features of the estate providing links with the past. The tall, thick walls are evidence that there once existed an impressive and productive garden. Gardens were expensive to build but were an area of pride.

Maps, aerial, historic and current photographs, written documents and oral testimony record the history of the site including its association between Lord Dacre and his friend Sanderson Miller who may have influenced this area of the landscape plan.

The walls of the garden are significant, not only as an example of C18 workmanship and their aesthetic value but they still provide an outline of the original walled garden and one can visualise the distance to the house where foundations still exist, despite the M25 cutting a swathe between the two sites.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Weathering of brickwork and pointing, Ivy and moss overgrowing to rear of walls. Fly tipping. Balls being played against the wall causing further damage.

**Key References:**

1908, T Barrett-Lennard, The Families of Lennard and Barrett

1910, L. Dickens & M. Stanton, An Eighteenth Century Correspondence ( Letters between Lord Dacre and Sanderson Miller

1975, D Stroud, Capability Brown

1777, Map of Essex, John Chapman & Peter André

1862-1866 Map OS Kent III

1988, Historic England List entry 1337122 [www.historicengland.org](http://www.historicengland.org)

[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

[www.britainfromabove.org.uk](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk) EPW026338 (1929) EPW026629 (1929) EPW026336 (1929)

EPW026631 (1929) EPW059396 (1938) EAW052929 (1953)

Photographs from early 1900's by kind permission of Stephen Nash- Facebook page - The History of Belhus Mansion and Aveley

Oral testimony of the owner of 'The Orangery' - Facebook page - The History of Belhus Mansion and Aveley

Current photographs – Heather Hunter

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 27): BELHUS PARK - LONG POND

**Location:** This feature is divided by the M25 Motorway and therefore one section lies to the west of M25 near to a footbridge, and the other section lies east of the M25, within the Oak and Ash Plantation, north of the site of the former Ice House and the walls of the former walled garden of the Belhus estate.

**NGR:** TQ557658 181777

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** A man-made water feature, fed by a spring at the eastern end. Heavily silted up, with fallen trees (from its banks) in the water and an overgrowth of plants. Divided by the M25 motorway, there are three quarters of the lake to the east, with the remaining quarter to the west, joined by a pipeline under the motorway. On the west side, the original island is overgrown with trees and shrubs, and the water itself is heavily overgrown with bull rush. A wooden footbridge crosses over the far eastern end of the lake, within the Oak and Ash Plantation. Informal pathways run along both sides of the water before reaching the edge of the wood and a metal foot bridge which crosses the motorway to access the second part of Long Pond in Belhus Country Park.

**Materials:** The footbridge at the eastern end is made of heavy-duty timbers (sleepers). The metal motorway bridge is the responsibility of the Highways Agency. The pipe line is made of preformed concrete, and the banks of the lake are of earth.

**Size:** Long Pond is the same length as when it was created - 0.25 miles created from an existing 'moory sided canal' (*Letter from Lord Dacre to Sanderson Miller, February 1761. 'Capability Brown'-D. Stroud*)

**Orientation:** The lake lies in a northwest to southeast direction.

**Current Use:** As the whole of Long Pond can be accessed via a footbridge over the motorway, it is very popular with dog walkers, visitors to Belhus Woods Country Park, and is part of the route used by the local Academy for their cross country runs. Ducks, moorhens and herons can regularly be seen on and around the water.

**Current State:** Very poor. Heavily silted, with fallen trees causing blockages in the pipeline, along with a low flow of water during summer making the water stagnate, with the possibility of contamination in the water. The land next to the Oak and Ash Plantation at one time was a quarry which became a local council landfill site. After its closure there were concerns of contamination in the water. This site is now being refurbished into a country park. When asked about contamination, the company doing the work, offered this quote:

*"Being a former quarry, then a landfill, the land was poorly restored by today's standards. This meant that pollutants such as barbitals had been leaking into the surrounding environment and were discovered in Capability Brown's Long Pond in the Oak and Ash Plantation, barbitals*

*are extremely toxic to aquatic life. Rural Arisings Ltd is carrying out the remediation and...restoration and has set up the Little Belhus Country Park Trust, which has the objective of managing the park for the benefit of the wildlife and the local community. By using clean inert soils from construction projects in the area, a "cap" is placed on top of the existing ground. This stops the rainwater from mixing with the landfill wastes and reduces the volume of liquid within the landfill (technical term: leachate), preventing it from being pushed out into the wider environment".*

Little Belhus Country Park is a separate area to Belhus Country Park and the Oak and Ash Plantation.

**Existing Designation:** Historic England, Park and Garden, Grade II. List entry 1000738

**Brief History:** Long Pond was a feature created in the eighteenth century, in the grounds of the Belhus Estate. Thomas Barrett-Lennard (Lord Dacre) hired Capability Brown to remodel the grounds, but Long Pond was not completed at the same time as the rest of the work. Lord Dacre wanted to make the Long Pond from the 'rushy' area of Bumpstead Mead, in the north east corner of the estate, and in 1761 the plan for the pond was confirmed. A letter from Lord Dacre to his friend, the architect Sanderson Miller, refers to his heavy expenses at the time and by then he had decided that a cheaper option would be to convert the existing canal into a river rather than a lake.

Some years later, in 1770, it is thought that Richard Woods completed the water feature, by remodelling an existing 'canal'. Further research is needed to confirm whether this canal had been part of an earlier landscape design shown on the Belhus Survey Map of 1619. The Ordnance Survey map of 1892 shows a bridge over to the island, with a boathouse next to the sluice gate. The estate was sold in the early 1900's, and a large amount was bought by Essex County Council. During the 1940's a large part of the land was bought by London County Council to build a housing estate. When completed it was placed in the care of Thurrock Urban District Council. Various parks and open spaces were kept as they were including Long Pond. During the 1970's the M25 motorway was built, dividing Long Pond, not only in two parts, but also between the care of two authorities.



**Chapman & André Map 1777 showing Long Pond**



**Long Pond circa early 1900's**



**Information Board covered with graffiti**



**West end of Long Pond looking towards M25 with the island on the right**



**Long Pond from the connecting pipeline looking east**



**Footbridge across eastern end of Long Pond**

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** In its current state, it is obvious from its overall shape that it is not a naturally formed body of water. Its importance is highlighted by the fact that when the M25 was built, both parts of the feature were kept connected, not just by the pipeline, but also by the bridge crossing the motorway. Through further research, it may contain evidence of its earlier form and any subsequent alterations.

**Historic:** Much has been written about the Belhus Estate, especially under the ownership of Thomas Barrett-Lennard, and the improvements made for him by Lancelot Capability Brown and Richard Woods. These changes can be clearly seen from the estate survey map of 1619, identifying the original body of water most likely to have been used to create Long Pond, in comparison to the Chapman and André map of 1777, which shows the completed Long Pond in addition to other changes to the estate. Long Pond is recorded in the Historic England listings, and also on the website detailing the work of Capability Brown. The sale and changes of ownership, the building of the M25 and subsequent changes are covered in the Thurrock History Journals, amongst just a few of the many books covering the Belhus estate.

**Aesthetic:** The Long Pond, although in poor condition, still holds a charm of its own. Regularly, herons can be seen on its banks, and when walking past, ducks and moorhens can be seen rushing from the undergrowth to the safety of the water. During the summer and autumn flocks of wild ring-necked parakeets can be seen and heard in the trees surrounding the water. As the seasons change so does the surrounding vista. It is a place of quiet contemplation and wonderful scenery. It gives evidence of earlier aesthetic styles and fashions and changes from the canal to a more 'natural' style.

**Communal:** This is an area that is well used by local residents and visitors alike. A place to meet up with your friends to go for a walk. Somewhere to exercise your dog, but not too far from home, with paths that are in a fair condition, somewhere to take exercise and enjoy nature.

## Statement of Significance Summary

The significant period for Long Pond is in the eighteenth century when it was part of the improvement plan for the estate of Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard, and his link to the renowned landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Despite the natural changes in the landscape over the past few centuries, Long Pond remains as evidence of a change in styles and ways of thinking of people, wealthy enough to change a whole landscape just for their pleasure, and of the eighteenth century landscape designers. It provides evidence for future generations to acknowledge the vision of these people and to recognise the importance, to people, and wildlife, of these landscapes. There is a need for the open water and the trees to help compensate for the traffic that cuts through them, and as a place of escape for the people who live around it, to get away from busy built up areas, into places of beauty and peace, an essential in today's busy way of living.

### **Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

The main problem is of decay in the surrounding trees, whose collapse cause blockages in the pipeline. Contamination of the water. Overgrowth of trees and shrubs. Fly tipping and vandalism (the life ring beside the deep water has been taken). The notice and information boards have either been taken or covered with graffiti.

### **Key References:**

1959, Thurrock History Journal No 4 Autumn

1975, Capability Brown, D. Stroud pp73,74

1777, J Chapman and P André - A map of the County of Essex from an actual survey

1892, OS 25 inch to 1 mile map National Library of Scotland

ERO. D/DL P1 1619 Estate Survey Map of Belhus

[www.historicengland.org](http://www.historicengland.org) ( Park and Garden – 1000738)

[www.capabilitybrown.org/Belhus-Garden](http://www.capabilitybrown.org/Belhus-Garden)

Rural Arisings Ltd

Postcard image early 1900's "Long Pond- Belhus Park" by kind permission of Stephen Nash through the Facebook page of ' Belhus Mansion and Aveley History Group'

2020 Current photographs Sonia Dewell

**Researchers:** Sonia Dewell & Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 29): BELHUS PARK – ICEHOUSE WELL

**Location:** Just beyond the north wall of the former kitchen garden, in the north-eastern corner of the park. To the east side of the M25 by junction 30.

**NGR:** TQ557531 181528  
**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** The eighteenth century well of an icehouse is located within the Oak and Ash Plantation, part of the former landscaped gardens of the historic Belhus Park Estate, just beyond the remaining north wall of the former kitchen garden and close by Long Pond. It is a brick-lined well-shaped hollow, covered by a padlocked metal grid, within a circular, clay mound, overgrown with vegetation, adjacent to a large horse chestnut tree growing on the mound, shaded by trees at the edge of the wood. The entrance faces to the north. There is no covering dome and vegetation obscures the shape of the mound and grows amongst the bricks of the well. Various items of modern refuse lie beneath the metal grid. It is situated at the edge of the wood, to the east of the footpath, bordering the M25, leading north from Belhus Park. The site can easily be missed due to lack of signage. Modern wooden steps lead up to the rim of the remaining brickwork.

**Material:** Red sandy bricks without frogs (size: 8¼inchesx4inchesx2½inches). Wooden steps. (Not part of original icehouse) Clay and earth mound.

**Size:** Mound approximately 13.1m in diameter. Approximately 190cm depth of brickwork is visible. Diameter at rim of well 270cm.

**Orientation:** Entrance lies N-S

**Current State:** At risk - Overgrown with brambles, ivy and nettles, some modern litter and wooden posts.

**Current Use:** Disused

**Existing Designations:** Belhus Park – Historic England Registered Park and Garden grade II List Entry Number: 1000738.

**Brief History:** Belhus, an estate of medieval origins, was the home of the Barrett and Lennard families from the fifteenth century until the twentieth century when the estate was sold. Between 1761 and 1771 Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Lord Dacre, undertook improvements to both the house and grounds employing Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Richard Wood as the landscape architects. Research has not found any reference to the actual design of the icehouse therefore it cannot be positively attributed to Brown or Woods but its building may have been influenced by architect and landscape designer, Sanderson Miller, a good friend of Thomas Barrett-Lennard. Icehouses became a common feature for larger houses in the eighteenth century, used to store ice throughout the year to preserve fish and game, prior to the invention of the refrigerator. Chapman and André's map of 1777 shows the completed Long Pond (a convenient source of ice) with a mound close by. Prior to the building of the M25 motorway, excavations were carried out in 1979 by Terry Carney for the Thurrock

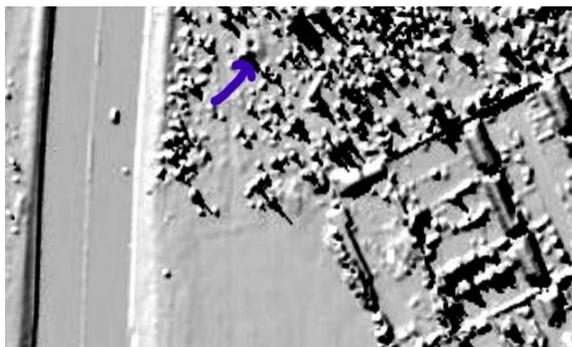
Museum. The mound, indicated on the map, was considered to be the location of the icehouse as it was in the correct position. The excavation revealed the foundations of the entrance passage and the buttresses to support the roof. It was found that repairs had been carried out using a dark grey mortar resembling cement which could indicate the building being in use until the late-nineteenth century. No evidence of steps or of decorative bricks or stone, which could have been used for ornamentation of the entrance, were found during the excavation. A photograph, with the title "The Arch", has recently been donated to a local history group by the four times great-grandson of a gardener, William Snare, who was employed on the Belhus estate in the early 1900's. It is thought that this could be an image of the entrance to the icehouse. In 1998 Thurrock Council and Thames Chase instigated improvements when the site was partially cleared and signage erected explaining the history of the site. Unfortunately, the information board was vandalised and removed. Signage does exist on the other side of the wood. Today the site of the icehouse stands neglected and overgrown.



*(Part) Chapman and André map 1777 showing possible location of icehouse mound*



*Early-1900's postcard of 'The Arch'. Could this be the entrance to the icehouse?*



*Lidar image showing position of icehouse in relation to M25 and former walled garden*



*Inside brickwork at top of icehouse well 2020*



*Floor of north-facing entrance of icehouse with overgrowth of vegetation*



*Padlocked metal grid covering the icehouse well*



*Modern wooden steps leading to well of icehouse*



*Icehouse mound viewed facing west*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The 1979 excavation photographs and detailed plans confirm a mid-eighteenth century icehouse existed in the grounds of the historic Belhus Park estate. The nature of the mound and brickwork and the Chapman & André Map of 1777 suggest that it was included in a mid-eighteenth century landscape design commissioned by Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Lord Dacre. A postcard from the early 1900's, owned by a descendent of a gardener employed on the estate, may depict the arched entrance to the Icehouse. The Lidar image clearly shows the position of the Icehouse in relation to the M25 and the former walled garden of the estate.

**Historic:** The earliest significant period in the history of the Belhus Park icehouse is in the eighteenth century when Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Lord Dacre, owned Belhus Mansion and its park. At this time, between 1753 and 1763, he commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown to design a new layout for the park. However, it is uncertain whether the icehouse was included in Brown's design or whether the design may have been influenced by architect and landscape designer, Sanderson Miller, a good friend of Thomas Barrett-Lennard. The next significant period of history was in 1979 when an excavation took place due to the building of the M25 motorway, cutting through the park close to the site of the collapsed Icehouse. In 1998, when Thurrock Council took over responsibility for the site, they joined with Thames Chase to instigate improvements, clearing the overgrowth and erecting signage to illustrate the site's former history. Currently the site is overgrown with vegetation and without signage.

**Aesthetic:** Although not originally designed for an aesthetic purpose, its current position situated at the edge of the Oak and Ash Plantation, despite the sounds of traffic from the M25, one can enjoy the peacefulness of the wood and the shade of the trees. The area surrounding the well of the icehouse provides a rich habitat for wildlife, flora and fauna.

**Communal:** The icehouse is situated just to the east of the footpath which is a popular route for walkers. The local residents, who know of the location of the Icehouse, enjoy the fact that it is there, a link to the past and the former glory of Belhus Park. Reinstatement of an information board and clearing of the site would encourage more local residents to engage with the past and recognise the significance of the Icehouse and the importance of the former Belhus Park Estate.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The Belhus Park icehouse plays a significant part in the history of Belhus Park as it was included in the eighteenth century landscape plans for the estate. The Chapman & André Map of 1777, written documents, the detailed plans and photographs of the 1979 excavation, historic and current photographs and Lidar images record the history of the site and give insight into the lives of the owners of Belhus Park, the Barrett-Lennard's, and of the working life of their employees. Although only the well and part of the mound remains today, having lost the brick dome and earth cover, the brick walls of the well are an important feature remaining from the eighteenth century design of the icehouse. Maintenance of the site and new information boards would encourage visitors to engage with the past and recognise its significance in an increasingly modern, urban landscape. As one of the last, remaining historic landscape features of the Belhus Park Historic Estate it is vital that the Belhus Park icehouse be conserved for the present population and for future generations.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Vegetation overgrowth, damage caused by the roots of the Horse chestnut tree growing on the mound, litter, erosion of the mound. Lack of signage detailing the history of the site.

**Key References:**

1908, T Barrett-Lennard, The Families of Lennard and Barrett

1910, L. Dickens & M. Stanton, An Eighteenth Century Correspondence 'Letters between Lord Dacre and Sanderson Miller'

1777, A Map of the County of Essex, J. Chapman & P. André, 1777

1980, Panorama: Journal of the Thurrock Local History Society 23, 1980 p 96-106 (Summary of excavation)

Detailed plans and photographs of the 1979 excavation carried out by T.K. Carney, may be consulted at Thurrock Museum, Grays

Postcard of 'The Arch' by kind permission of Stephen Nash through Facebook Group 'The History of Belhus Mansion & Aveley'

2020, Current photographs- Heather Hunter

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 23): BELHUS COUNTRY PARK: BRICKKILN WOODS  
BRICKMAKING STRUCTURE

**Location:** The feature is in Havering (formerly in Upminster parish), just north of the boundary with Aveley.

**NGR:** TQ557064 182428

**Local Authority:** Essex County Council, Thurrock Unitary Authority and the London Borough of Havering.

**Description of feature:** A steep-sided circular mound. Excavation in 2002<sup>1</sup> showed that the mound was constructed using a gravelly clay deposit, possibly a waste product of clay washing elsewhere on the site. A circular brick structure, with walls surviving to a height of six brick courses, is sunk into the top of the mound. A brick floor, partially robbed out, leads to a brick lined culvert running off the top of the mound with walls five brick courses high. At the centre of the brick floor is a hole, approximately 25cm square, possibly associated with a post hole. It has been suggested<sup>i</sup> that the structure was a clay mixing pan or possibly a pug mill associated with brickmaking. The bricks that form the circular structure are dark to medium red bricks with a shallow frog, without maker's marks and measure approximately 23.5cm x 11.5cm x 7cm. The mound and the surrounding woods are within Belhus Woods Country Park, run by Essex County Council in agreement with Thurrock Council. It is a family-oriented amenity park that retains some features of both historic landscape design (by 'Capability' Brown and others) and remnants of previous industrial functions, such as brickmaking.

**Size:** Approximately 2m high. Approximately 17m in diameter.

**Orientation:** The brick lined culvert is at the north edge of the mound.

**Current State:** Relatively good condition. No major degradation noticed since the 2002 report. As in 2002, possible slippage was noted on the south and west sides of the mound. However, the mound and surrounding area is completely enclosed by secondary woodland, brambles, ivy and other undergrowth and numerous saplings grow on and around the mound. The top of the mound is in good condition, although a sapling has rooted in the square hole. Other saplings and mature trees surround the mound and could cause damage if they fall.

**Current Use:** None.

**Existing Designations:** Historic England SMR: 19479

**Brief History:** Brickmaking has taken place in the Belhus area since at least 1603 and there are many local references and place names relating to brickfields, such as Great Brick Kiln field immediately south of the feature (in Aveley parish). However, when the Tithe Survey was taken in 1844, nearby field names were shown as arable land, suggesting an historic brickmaking use, rather than ongoing at that time. In the 1870s, Edward Charles Gibbons

operated the Belhus Brickworks at Aveley and the Ordnance Survey OS map of 1876 shows a large claypit adjacent to Little Brickkiln Wood, with a channel running from it into Running Water Brook and a long range of buildings to the north. These may be the Gibbons works. Other ponds may be seen in the wood, possibly relics of clay/gravel extraction. The 1895 OS map, however, shows no buildings at the site, suggesting that the brickworks were gone by this date. No map has been located that shows the mound. No dating evidence has been found at the mound itself. E. Heppell suggests that it is likely to be the remains of a wash mill or mixing pan. It is unusual, but not unknown, for a wash mill to be constructed on top of a mound.

For the washing process, clay would have been placed in the pan, large amounts of water added at the top of the mound and the clay crushed by rollers, the water running off down the culvert. The floor of a wash mill was normally perforated, to allow for further water drainage. The floor of this mound is not perforated, but the bricks are not mortared, suggesting a similar drainage purpose. The square hole in the centre of the mound may have held a post to which rollers would have been attached and turned by manpower. Given the limited space and height of the mound, it is unlikely that a horse could have been used. It is possible that some of nearby ponds or depressions were used to store the clay under water, after washing until needed for brickmaking.



*Brick edge to circular structure*



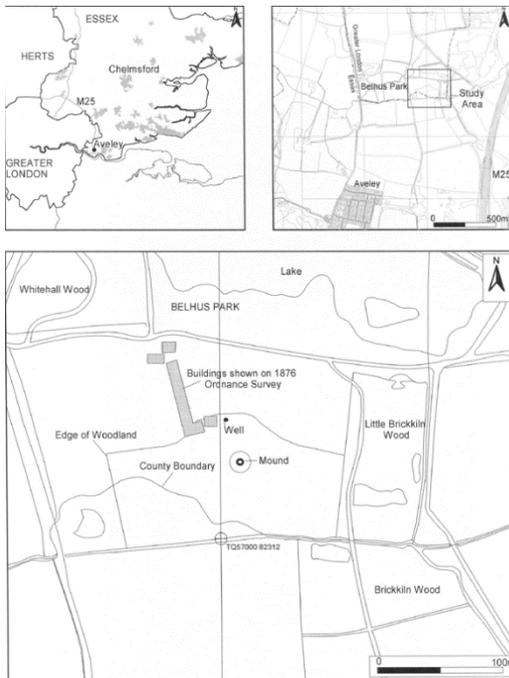
*Brick floor showing edge of culvert*



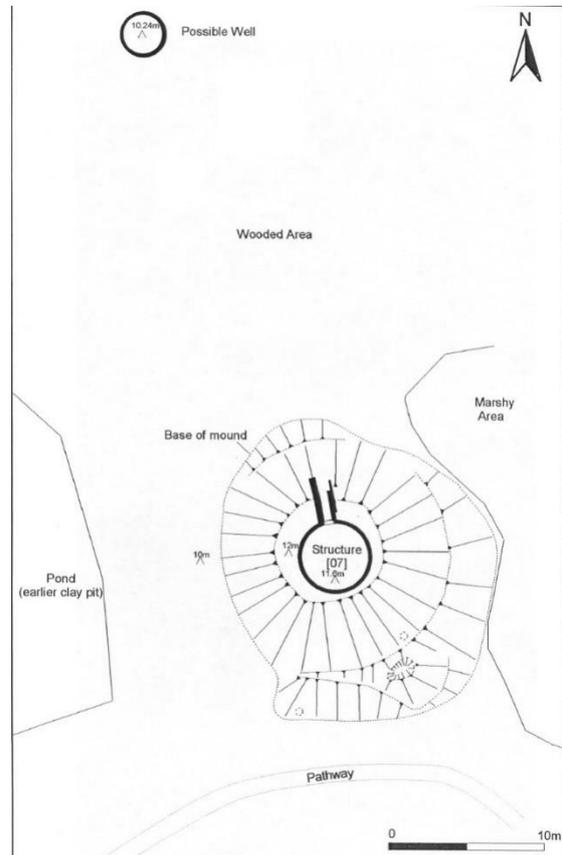
**Brick floor showing raised brickwork edge to circular structure**



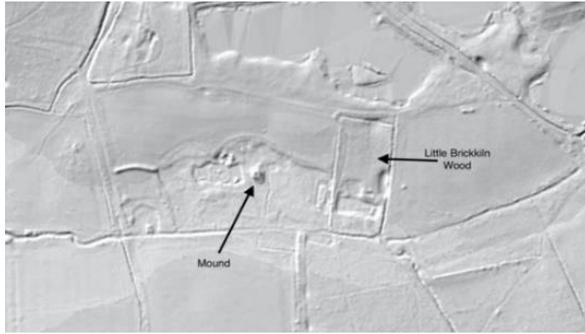
**Brick floor showing central hole**



**Reproduced from Heppell, Ellen, 2002, Site Assessment .Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of HMSO, Crown Copyright Licence No LA076619**



**Image reproduced courtesy of Essex County Council Place Services and UCL Archaeology South East who jointly own copyright**



*LIDAR 1m image reproduced by courtesy of  
lidarfinder.com*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The site is of interest in the context of local and county industrial archaeology. With appropriate protection and interpretation boards, it could provide visitors with an insight into both the short lived nineteenth century brickworks and the much older brickworks that predated them.

**Historic:** The feature appears to be an unusual example of a mid-nineteenth century clay wash mill. It is possible that other contemporary structures associated with the brickworks are located in Little Brickkiln Woods, the area around the mound now in dense secondary woodland and in the open area to the north of the mound.

**Aesthetic:** Within the Belhus Woods Country Park, the mound is only a few hundred metres from the visitor centre and car park. Even in its current condition, the mound would be a point of interest to visitors. Footpaths that pass near to the site are popular with visitors. However, the secondary woodland in which it is located and dense undergrowth entirely hide the structure from view.

**Communal:** The mound is the only above-ground remnant of the short-lived brickworks. As it is hidden by dense woodland, it is unlikely that many members of the community know of its existence. Although there is a Country Park Visitor Centre on the site with interpretation boards showing the park facilities, there is no mention of the mound or the former brickworks. The Belhus Woods Country Park Centre is very popular with the local community. A small improvement in signage and the placing of interpretation boards would improve local understanding of the brickfields, their lifespan and their importance to the local workforce at the time. However, access paths would have to be made, the mound partially cleared and made secure to prevent damage by visitors.

### **Acknowledgements:**

Thanks are due to Essex County Council Place Services and UCL Archaeology South East who jointly own copyright over the 2002 Desk Top and Site Assessment quoted in this report and who have kindly allowed me to reproduce sections of that document in this report.

**Key References:**

2002, Heppell, Ellen, Little Brickkiln Woods, Belhus Park, Essex and London Borough of Havering Archaeological Desk Top & Site Assessment. Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit

**Researchers:** Phil Loble, assisted by Sonia Dewell and Brian Taylor

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 25): BELHUS PARK – STENCH PIPE

**NGR:** TQ557362 181961

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Stench pipe. Probably mid-nineteenth century as part of the improvements made to the 18C sewage system for the now demolished Belhus Hall. It comprises a tall octagonal Tudor-style chimney built of hand-made bricks with occasional black brick dressings, moulded to top and bottom and standing on a chamfered rectangular plinth of 3 stages. A brick-built culvert runs from the site of Belhus Hall to the foot of the south side of the chimney and two openings on its northern side would empty onto a rectilinear earth channel. To the east and west of the chimney the channel is revetted in brick. The chimney probably acted as a foul air vent for sewage flushed into and then pumped along the culvert. After passing through the stench pipe openings the sewage was probably deposited into the earth channel to the east of the stench pipe where after settling it was spread onto nearby fields. A small ditch running north from this channel to join the outlet from the Long Pond would carry away excess liquid.

The chimney would have acted as an eyecatcher and is an unusually elaborate and ornamental example of a rare and interesting building type.

**Size:** Height – approximately 13m    Greatest width of plinth – 2.3m

**Orientation:** Culvert from Belhus House enters the base of the chimney from the south.

**Current State:** Good. Minimal modern graffiti.

**Current Use:** None

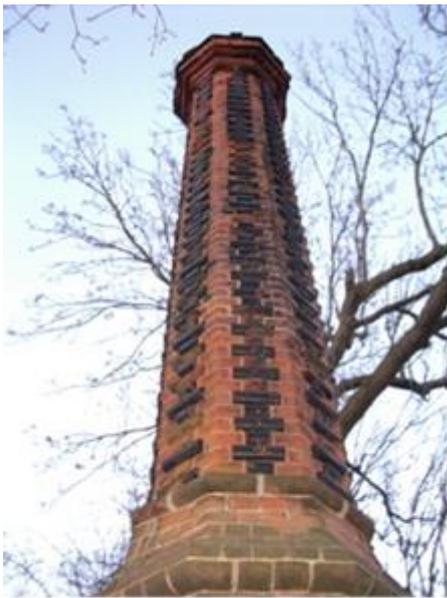
**Existing Designations:** Historic England 1224062

**Brief History:** Lord Dacre employed Sanderson Miller on the transformation of the Tudor mansion into a 'Gothicke edifice' and between 1753 and 1763, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Richard Woods created the modern park landscape. The Chapman and André map of Essex of 1777 shows that new landscape and the removal of the formal gardens.

The second Baronet Sir Thomas Barrett Lennard, on inheriting the title in 1856, entered into correspondence with a London architect, F.B. Wells of Russell Place. The Essex Record Office has a series of letters from Wells to Sir Thomas from December 1857 to June 1859.

In the correspondence, plans for new drains around the house are discussed and the construction of a new 12-inch cast-iron sewer pipe from the house to the corner of 'the 16-acre field', 'Bumpstead Mead' and 'The Park'. These locations correspond with position of

the stench pipe. Letters in January 1858 proposed a reservoir 'sunk, oblong, arched, water tight and with a safety valve towards the ditch in case it should become too full before any of the manure be removed for irrigation'. Another letter suggested that it 'should be made long and narrow with manhole, pump and ventilating shaft which, if raised above the level of drains in the house, would considerably assist in drawing away the foul air that otherwise would remain confined in it'. Later, the reservoir plan was converted to an elongated culvert which would contain 209 cubic yards of liquid sewage. The sewage would then be carted away to be spread on nearby fields, although a letter of December 1857 suggested that the fall in height from the house to the ditch would not be sufficient 'to allow a cart to be backed under it'.



*Stench Pipe*



*Base of Stench Pipe from channel showing brick revetment*

## **Statement of Significance**

### **Evidential:**

The evidential value of the feature lies in its survival, despite the destruction of the house that it served and the evidence it provides for the construction design, technique and usage. Records of its construction do not appear to have survived. However, a series of letters from an architect employed to improve the sewerage of the house have survived. These reveal a number of proposals for the construction of the pipework, reservoirs, pumps and the chimney.

### **Historic:**

The feature is an unusually elaborate and ornamental example of a mid-nineteenth century functional stench pipe. All other above-ground historical features on the Belhus estate, other than the foundations of the house, relate to elements of the parkland that were created by 'Capability' Brown in 1753-63.

**Aesthetic:**

The design of the stench pipe appears out of proportion to its function. Made to resemble an octagonal Tudor chimney, it is built of hand-made bricks with occasional black brick dressings. Its location, although distant from the house, was close to the boathouse of the Long Pond where it could have been easily visible, suggests that it was seen as an unusual eyecatcher.

**Communal:**

The remains of the House, gardens and wider parkland are located within a public golf course and country park. Access to the stench pipe is via publicly accessible footpaths within the country park. However, there is no signage to direct visitors to the site. The nearby Belhus Leisure complex and country park centre are very popular with the local community.

**Statement of Significance Summary**

The feature is an unusually elaborate and ornamental example of a mid-nineteenth century functional stench pipe. Its significance lies in its survival, despite the destruction of the house that it served. Made to resemble an octagonal Tudor chimney, it is built of hand-made bricks with occasional black brick dressings.

The remains of the house, gardens and wider parkland are located within a public golf course and country park. Access to the stench pipe is via publicly accessible footpaths within the country park. However, there is no signage to direct visitors to the site.

The nearby Belhus Leisure complex and country park centre are very popular with the local community. Although there is local knowledge of Belhus House, specifically of its destruction in 1957, a small improvement in signage and the placing of interpretation boards would improve local understanding of the stench pipe and its relationship to Belhus House.

**Key References:**

Essex Record Office: D/DL E13

**Researcher:** Phil Loblely 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 32): BELHUS PARK - VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (I.D.9408)

**Location:** Belhus Park, 1, Park Close, South Ockendon, RM15 4QR Essex

**NGR:** TQ557616 181348

**Description of feature:** Veteran Sweet Chestnut tree. (*Castanea sativa*) Maiden. Public open access in Parkland.

**Size:** Girth 5.15m at a height of 1.20m

**Orientation:** The tree stands on the east side of the M25, north east of the Leisure Centre close by "The Orangery" (Private house) and former walled garden.

**Current State:** Maiden. Alive with good growth. Dead wood in canopy.

**Existing Designations:** Ancient Tree Inventory Id:9408 01/01/2007.

Situated in Grade II registered Belhus Park (H. England At Risk Register - List entry 1000738).

**Brief History:** This veteran tree, a local landmark, stands in an open, prominent position among the parkland of the historic Belhus Estate close to the former walled garden. Its size indicates it could have been planted between 300-400 years ago when the area was a deer park. In 1618, the owner Sir Edward Barrett was granted a licence to make a park. Subsequently, between 1753 and 1763, Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard, employed the landscape architect, Lancelot "Capability" Brown, to remodel the park incorporating both seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements. The Belhus estate was sold in 1922 and is now in local authority ownership, offering both formal and informal recreational uses.



*Veteran Sweet Chestnut Tree – ID9408 circa early 1900's when deer still roamed the park*



*Veteran Sweet Chestnut ID 9408 Spring 2020*



*Veteran Sweet Chestnut ID9408 Summer 2020*



*Trunk of Sweet Chestnut ID9408*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** This significant veteran tree provides substantial evidence relating to its previous connection as part of an historic eighteenth century landscaped estate and in the twenty-first century as one of a scatter of mature trees which survive in the open grasslands of a public park (Grade II Registered Park - At Risk Register). It is recorded as a veteran, maiden, Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). Its appearance and girth of 5.15m confirm its age of approximately 300+years. The surrounding landscape is depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and the tree is marked on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. Interpretation boards throughout the park, detailing this evidential material, would provide insight into the long heritage of the site for current users and local residents.

**Historic:** The tree stands in the parkland of the Belhus Estate owned by Sir Edward Barrett during the seventeenth century and by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard in the eighteenth century. Both individuals were interested in developing the gardens and parkland of the estate. This particular tree is significant because of its age and its links to the historic parkland landscape, remodelled by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown between 1753 and 1763 incorporating seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements.

**Aesthetic:** The size and aged look of the tree gives it high aesthetic appeal. It adds colour to the local area throughout the seasons and contributes to the character of its environment. The girth of its trunk, its height and the width of its canopy provide a visual delight among the open grassland of the park. A tree of such age, growing over hundreds of years, can provide a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before.

**Communal:** Situated in a public park alongside the busy junction 30 of the M25, the tree aids improvement of local air quality combating gaseous pollutants from vehicle exhausts and in reducing small particles emitted in smoke from burning fuel, particularly diesel, which enter

lungs and causes respiratory problems. This tree supports habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. It also provides shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contributes to the overall health of ecosystem services. It provides a visual landmark and pleasure to the many visitors to the park and the nearby Oak and Ash Plantation. Such trees can be a source of great pride to the local community.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of this particular Sweet Chestnut Tree lies in its status being recorded on The Ancient Tree Inventory as a veteran, maiden, Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). Its appearance and girth of 5.15m confirm its age of approximately 300+ years. It stands amid the parkland of the former historic Belhus estate, owned by the Barrett-Lennard family, lying between the settlements of Aveley and South Ockendon next to the busy M25 cutting through the park in a N-S direction.

The estate was sold in 1922 and the house demolished in 1957. The park is now in local authority ownership offering both formal and informal recreational use. The only reference to the park's historic significance is the Clubhouse which is named 'The Capability Brown'.

A grade II Registered Park and Garden (At Risk), Belhus Park is used for both formal and informal recreational activities and can be accessed from Aveley via Park Close or from South Ockendon via the Gatehope Drive Gate. From this gate, an informal pathway leads north to where the tree is located standing to the east of the path. It is one of a scatter of mature trees which survive in the present-day open grasslands of the former deer park, landscaped during the seventeenth century under Sir Edward Barrett and again in the eighteenth century by the renowned landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, commissioned by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard.

The landscape surrounding this tree is depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and is marked on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. Interpretation boards throughout the park, detailing this evidential material and the park's historic background, would provide insight into the long heritage of the site which has adapted and changed to reflect the changing events and society of the area from a rural to urban community.

Such trees can be a source of pride to the local community. Situated close by the busy junction 30 of the M25, the tree aids improvement of local air quality. Significantly, this tree supports habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. It also provides shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contributes to the overall health of ecosystem. The tree provides an important landmark to the many visitors to the park.

This veteran tree provides a sense of peace and tranquillity and deserves special attention and care. The size and old look of the tree gives it high aesthetic appeal. It adds colour to the local area throughout the seasons and contributes to the character of its environment. A local

landmark, the girth of its trunk, its height and the width of its canopy provide a visual delight among the open grassland of the park. A tree of such age, growing over hundreds of years, can provide a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

Neglect – Overgrown with common nettles at base.

Lack of local knowledge and appreciation of the site role and history. Lacks signage.

**Key References:**

[www.atiwoodlandtrust.org](http://www.atiwoodlandtrust.org)

[www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk](http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk) "Ancient Tree Guide No.4"

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk>

[www.maps.nls.org](http://www.maps.nls.org) - online maps

1777, Chapman and André Map of Essex

OS Map 25inch 1891 sheet LXXXIII.2

1619, Belhus Estate Map (ERO D/DL M14 and P1)

Belhus and the Barrett-Lennard Family. Compiled by I. G. Sparkes (Thurrock Local History Reprints. no. 2.)

Early 1900's, Photograph from by kind permission of Stephen Nash through Facebook page 'The History of Belhus Mansion and Aveley'

2020 Current photographs – Heather Hunter

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter – 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 40): BELHUS PARK - ANCIENT SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (I.D.9405)

**Location:** Belhus Park, 1, Park Close, South Ockendon, RM15 4QR Essex

**NGR:** TQ557400 180849

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** Ancient Sweet Chestnut tree. (*Castanea sativa*) Maiden. Public open access in parkland.

**Size:** Girth 5.56m at a height of 1.20m

**Orientation:** The tree stands on the west side of the M25, south east of the Leisure Centre.

**Current State:** Maiden. Alive with good growth. Some dead wood in canopy. Crevice in bark. Overgrown with elderflower and common nettles at base. Lacks signage.

**Existing Designations:** Tree of National Special Interest. ATI Id: 9405 - 01/01/2007. Grade II registered Belhus Park (Historic England At Risk Register - List entry 1000738)

**Brief History:** This ancient tree stands in a prominent position among the parkland of the historic Belhus estate. Its size indicates it could have been planted between 300-400 years ago when the area was a deer park. In 1618, the owner Sir Edward Barrett was granted a licence to make a park. Subsequently, between 1753 and 1763, Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard, employed the landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, to remodel the park incorporating both seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements. The Belhus Estate was sold in 1922 and is now in local authority ownership, offering both formal and informal recreational uses. The tree was recorded as a Tree of National Special Interest in 2007.



*Ancient Sweet chestnut A.T.I. Id. 9405*



*Litter scattered around base of trunk*



*Crevice in bark*



*Trunk of Sweet chestnut A.T.I. Id.9405*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** This Tree of National Special Interest provides an historic landmark in a grade II Registered Park and Garden, Belhus Park which is on the Historic England At Risk Register. It is recorded as an ancient, maiden, Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). Its appearance and girth of 5.56m confirm its age of approximately 300-400+years. The surrounding landscape is depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and this particular Sweet Chestnut tree is marked on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. It is one of a scatter of mature trees which survive in the present-day open grasslands of the former deer park landscaped during the seventeenth century and eighteenth century. Interpretation boards throughout the park, detailing this evidential material, would provide insight into the long heritage of the site for current users and local residents.

**Historic:** The tree stands in the parkland of the Belhus estate owned by Sir Edward Barrett during the seventeenth century and by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard in the eighteenth century. Both individuals were interested in developing the gardens and parkland of the estate. This particular tree is significant because of its age and its links to the historic parkland landscape, remodelled by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown between 1753 and 1763 incorporating seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements.

**Aesthetic:** This tree is beautiful and majestic, providing a sense of peace and tranquillity. The size and old look of the tree gives it high aesthetic appeal. It adds colour to the local area throughout the seasons and contributes to the character of its environment. The girth of its trunk, its height and the width of its canopy provide a visual delight among the open grassland of the park. A tree of such age, growing over hundreds of years, can provide a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before

**Communal:** Situated in a public park alongside the busy junction 30 of the M25, the tree aids improvement of local air quality combating gaseous pollutants from vehicle exhausts and in reducing small particles emitted in smoke from burning fuel, particularly diesel, which enter lungs and causes respiratory problems. This tree supports habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. It also provides shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contributes to the overall health of ecosystem services. The many visitors to the park enjoy its shade in the summer and take pleasure in collecting chestnuts in the autumn. Such trees can be a source of pride to the local community.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of this particular Sweet Chestnut Tree lies chiefly in its status as an ancient tree of National Special Interest recorded by The Ancient Tree Inventory as an ancient, maiden, Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*). Its appearance and girth of 5.56m confirm its age of approximately 300-400+years. It stands amid the parkland of the former historic Belhus Estate, owned by the Barrett-Lennard family, lying between the settlements of Aveley and South Ockendon with the busy M25 cutting through the park in a N-S direction. The Estate was sold in 1922 and the house demolished in 1957. The park is now in local authority ownership offering both formal and informal recreational use. The only reference to the parks historic significance is the Clubhouse which is named 'The Capability Brown'.

A grade II Registered Park and Garden (At Risk), it is used for both formal and informal recreational activities and can be accessed from Aveley via Park Close or from South Ockendon via the Gatehope Drive Gate. From this gate, a formal pathway crosses the M25 leading onto a formal footpath running in a south-westerly direction before joining an informal path to the south where the tree is located to the right of the path. Significantly, it is one of a scatter of mature trees which survive in the present-day open grasslands of the former deer park, landscaped during the seventeenth century under Sir Edward Barrett and again in the eighteenth century by the renowned landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, commissioned by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard.

The landscape surrounding the tree is depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and this particular Sweet Chestnut tree is marked on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. Interpretation boards throughout the park, detailing this evidential material and the park's historic background, would provide insight into the long heritage of the site which has adapted and changed to reflect the changing events and society of the area from a rural to urban community.

Such trees can be a source of pride to the local community. Situated close by the busy junction 30 of the M25, the tree aids improvement of local air quality, combating gaseous pollutants from vehicle exhausts and reducing small particles emitted in smoke from burning fuel, particularly diesel, which enters the lungs of the local population and can cause respiratory problems. Significantly, this tree supports habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. It also provides shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contributes to the overall health of

ecosystem. The many visitors to the park enjoy its shade in the summer and take pleasure in collecting chestnuts in the autumn.

This tree is beautiful and majestic, providing a sense of peace and tranquillity and deserves special attention and care. The size and old look of the tree gives it high aesthetic appeal. It adds colour to the local area throughout the seasons and contributes to the character of its environment. The girth of its trunk, its height and the width of its canopy provide a visual delight among the open grassland of the park. A tree of such age, growing over hundreds of years, can provide a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before.

**Issues and vulnerabilities:** Overgrown at base by Elderflower and nettles. Litter. No signage to inform historical importance.

**Key References:**

<https://atiwoodlandtrust.org.uk>

[www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk](http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk) "Ancient Tree Guide No.4"

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk>

Belhus and the Barrett-Lennard Family. Compiled by I. G. Sparkes (Thurrock Local History Reprints. no. 2.)

National Library of Scotland.org – online maps

1777, Chapman and André Map of Essex - ERO

1891 OS Map 25inch sheet LXXXIII.2

1619, Belhus Estate Map 1619 (D/DL M14 and P1) ERO

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 36): BELHUS PARK - THREE VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE (ATI I.D.24707/24708/24709)

**Location:** Gatehope Drive, South Ockendon, RM15 Essex.  
Within former boundaries of historic Belhus Park.

**NGR:** TQ557674 181047

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:**

Three veteran sweet chestnut trees (*Castanea sativa*) within a fenced domestic garden, on land formerly part of the historic Belhus Park estate.

ATI 24707 - Pollard, Standing, Alive. Girth 4.5m at height of 1.3m. Private, visible to public.

ATI 24708 - Maiden, Standing, Alive. Girth 4.5m at height of 1.5m. Private, visible to public.

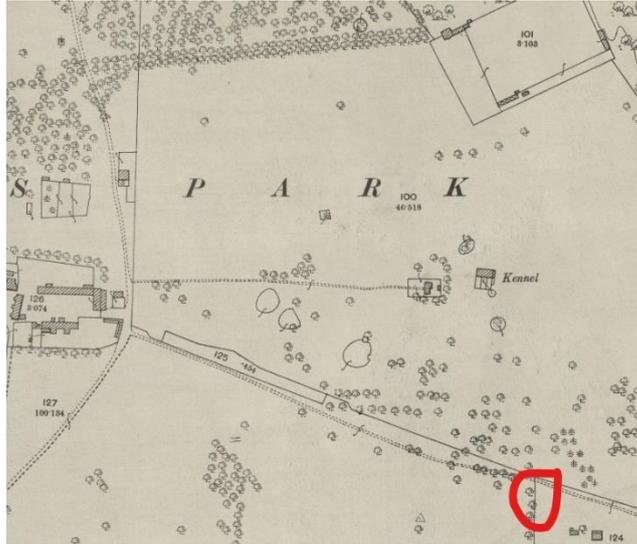
ATI 24709 - Maiden, Standing, Alive. Girth 3.7m at height of 1.3m. Private, partially visible.

**Orientation:** The trees stand in a garden N-S

**Current State:** Three trees are alive with good growth.

**Existing Designations:** Ancient Tree Inventory Id: 24707/24708/24709. Veteran status.  
TPO Number 01/1994. Tree label: T2, T1, T3. Order date 5.10.11

**Brief History:** These veteran trees stand in a private garden formerly part of the historic Belhus Estate owned by Sir Edward Barrett, who was granted a licence to make a park in 1618. Their size indicates that they could have been planted between 300-400 years ago when this area was part of the deer park or subsequently, between 1753 and 1763, when Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard, employed the landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, to remodel the park incorporating both seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements. The Belhus estate was sold in the early twentieth century. When, after the Second World War, the government required new housing, land (1220 acres in Aveley and South Ockendon) was purchased by the London County Council to provide much needed council housing for Londoners. Fortunately, although the plot of land on which the trees stand is large enough to be a building plot, it was kept in its natural state. Under the "Right to Buy" scheme of the 1980's many houses became privately owned but it is only in recent years (twenty-first century) that the trees and the land on which the trees stand have been incorporated into a private garden.



*OS Map 1892 showing location of trees as part of a longer boundary of trees*



*Veteran Sweet chestnut Trees- Summer 2020 (Photograph with permission from owner of private owned garden)*

## **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** These three, significant, veteran trees provide substantial evidence relating to their previous connection as part of the historic seventeenth century/eighteenth century landscaped Belhus Estate and, in the twenty-first century, as a magnificent feature in a private garden. The trees are recorded as a veteran, Sweet Chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*), two of which are maiden and one pollard. Their appearance and girth of 3.7m/ 4.5m and 4.5m confirm an age of approximately 300+years. The surrounding landscape is depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and the trees are marked on the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map.

**Historic:** The trees stand in the former parkland of the Belhus Estate owned by Sir Edward Barrett during the seventeenth century and by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard in the eighteenth century. Both individuals were interested in developing the gardens and parkland of the estate. These particular trees are significant because of their age and their links to the historic parkland landscape, remodelled by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown between 1753 and 1763 incorporating seventeenth century and early-eighteenth century elements. Five more significant trees, which could warrant further research, stand within the grounds of the Thames Rugby Football Club to the south of the houses in Gatehope Drive. When land was bought by London County Council to create council housing known as the 'Aveley Estate', the planners had the foresight to retain significant trees, such as these, within the estate.

**Aesthetic:** The size and aged look of the trees give them high aesthetic appeal. They provide a visual delight and add colour to the local area throughout the seasons and contribute to the character of the surrounding area. Trees of such age, grown over hundreds of years, can provoke interest providing a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before adding a rural touch to an urban environment

**Communal:** The trees give pleasure to the many visitors to the park and local residents. They are a well-known and much-loved landmark located just before the gated entrance to Belhus Park and the nearby Oak and Ash Plantation. Situated within a quarter of a mile of the busy junction 30 of the M25, the trees aid improvement of local air quality in an area of high pollution. These trees support habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. They provide shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contribute to the overall health of ecosystem services. Such trees are a source of great pride and well-being to the local community.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

These three, significant, veteran trees provide substantial evidence relating to their previous connection as part of the historic seventeenth century landscaped Belhus estate and, in the twenty-first century, as a magnificent feature in a private garden. The trees are recorded on The Ancient Tree Inventory as veteran, Sweet Chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*), as well as each holding Tree Preservation Orders. Their appearance and girths of 4.5m/4.5m/3.7m confirm the age of approximately 300+years. They stand in a line running N-S within a private garden close to the gated entrance to the Oak and Ash Plantation in Belhus Park. The garden has a picket fence at the pavement edge allowing two of the trees to be seen fully, however, one tree is partially hidden by a 1.8m wooden fence. Five more significant trees, which could warrant further research, stand within the grounds of the Thames Rugby Football Club to the south of the houses in Gatehope Drive.

This land was formerly part of the historic Belhus estate, owned by the Barrett-Lennard family lying between the settlements of Aveley and South Ockendon. The Estate was landscaped during the seventeenth century under Sir Edward Barrett and again in the eighteenth century by the renowned landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, commissioned by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard. The landscape surrounding the trees are depicted on the Chapman and André Map of 1777 and the trees are marked on the 25inch 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. The Belhus estate was sold in 1922 and the land was bought by London County Council in the 1940's, who built council housing then known as the 'Aveley Estate'. The

LCC planners had the foresight to retain significant trees, such as these, within the estate under local council ownership. Under the 'Right to Buy' scheme of the 1980's many houses became privately owned but it is only in recent years that the trees and the land on which the trees stand have been incorporated into a private garden.

The size and aged look of the trees give them high aesthetic appeal. They provide a visual delight and add colour throughout the seasons and contribute to the character, peace and tranquillity of the surrounding area. Trees of such age, grown over hundreds of years, can provoke interest providing a vision of history and a connection to the events and people who have gone before.

The trees give pleasure to the many visitors to the nearby park and the local residents. They are a well-known and much-loved landmark. Situated within a quarter of a mile of the busy junction 30 of the M25, the trees aid improvement of local air quality in an area of high pollution. These trees support habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. They provide shade, reduction of water and air temperatures and contribute to the overall health of ecosystem services. Such trees are a source of great pride and well-being to the local community.

### **Key References**

1777, Chapman and André Map of Essex - ERO

1891 OS Map 25inch sheet LXXXIII.2

1619 Belhus Park, Survey (part) 'Document D/DL P1A

Belhus and the Barrett-Lennard Family. Compiled by I. G. Sparkes (Thurrock Local History Reprints. no. 2.)

2020 Photograph Heather Hunter( Photograph with kind permission from owner of privately owned garden)

[www.nationallibraryofscotland.org](http://www.nationallibraryofscotland.org) – online maps

[www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk](http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk) "Ancient Tree Guide No.4"

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk>

[www.woodlandtrust.org](http://www.woodlandtrust.org)

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 1): BELVEDERE TOWER AND MOUND

**Location:** Weald Park, Brentwood, Essex

**NGR:** TQ557150 193958

**Local Authority:** Brentwood Borough Council/Managed by Essex County Council

**Description of Feature:** Weald Park has been parkland since 1062 and a deer park was formed during the twelfth century. The Belvedere tower of c1740 was raised on an artificial mound which contained a complex brick structure to stabilise it. A semi-circular segment was cut into this mound, and stabilised with a curved retaining brick wall in Flemish bond, terminating in low brick piers. The central section of the semi-circular segment contained a central arched opening of darker red brick in English bond, which has now been closed with concrete blockwork. A flight of steps climbs each side of the retaining wall to reach the brick base of the Belvedere Tower, which is all that remains. Some of the Portland stone copings have survived on the retaining wall as well as a brick base (centrally placed in the semi-circle) which formerly took a plinth carrying a statue of a stag. This feature is aligned with the northern avenue which runs down from the Belvedere and attractively frames the view of the lake and the landscape beyond. The tower was demolished in 1954 but its floor, the flank walls and the mound have survived. One set of brick steps on the south side of the Mound and nearest to the site of the mansion are now cordoned off. The remains of a ha-ha wall that originally circled the base of the Mound is at the base of the eastern boundary of the Mound. Two pathways lead from the Belvedere: one is the northern avenue leading to the Belvedere field, the other leads to the eastern side of the Mound crossing the remains of the ha-ha wall. The northern avenue no longer has the formal planting depicted on the postcard although many of the conifers lining the path remain but are now much larger. In front of the conifers are deciduous shrubs and elsewhere on the Mound are many native trees.

**Material:** The brick base of the Belvedere is all that remains of the tower. This stood on an artificial mound of earth within which is buried an elaborate vaulted brick structure to provide a solid foundation for the tower on the freshly dumped soil. A semi-circular cut was made into it which has been stabilised with a curved retaining brick wall of Flemish bond with brick piers. The central arched area of this semi-circular cut was originally open but has since been filled with concrete block work. A flight of stone steps climb either side of the retaining wall and some Portland stone copings survive.

**Size:** Approx. 3.5 metres high and 38 metres diameter

**Orientation/Location:** The Belvedere Mound is located in Weald Park which is on the north side of the A12, just to the east of junction 28 of the M25, on the south-west edge of Brentwood. The Park is bounded to the north by farmland, to the east by Sandpit Lane, to the south-east by Wiggly Bush Lane in South Weald village, and to the west by Lincoln's Lane and farmland. The gently rolling land falls to a shallow valley across the centre of the park where

a string of lakes were formed in the eighteenth century from a stream running from NE-SW. The remains of the Belvedere Tower and the Mound are situated to the east of the site of the demolished Hall. The northern avenue from the Belvedere Mound has views across the park to the lake.

**Current State:** The two original paths leading to the top of the mound are still in use and edged by substantial shrubs and larger conifers instead of the original formal planting. The brickwork of the retaining brick wall is in good condition although the Portland stone copings are in a fairly poor condition or missing. The steps either side of the retaining brick wall leading to the base of the Belvedere are in a reasonable condition.

**Current use:** The Belvedere Mound is one small area of Weald Park and is a tourist attraction for visitors to the park. The top of the mound is accessed by pathways from the parkland and is a popular site for walkers and for those interested in the history of the site.

**Existing designations:** The whole of Weald Park is Grade II - List Entry Number:1000747

**Brief History:** Weald Hall and park was in the ownership of the Smith family from 1670 until 1752. A landscape plan of 1738 commissioned by Samuel Smith is attributed to a French surveyor Monsieur Bourginion. The plan records a series of formal walled gardens around the Hall, a Belvedere Tower on a mound surrounded by a wilderness, and an extensive formal landscape with a geometrically styled lake north-east of the house from which straight avenues ran north and south up to the higher ground. Only part of Bourginion's plan was implemented and it wasn't until the estate was held by Smith's granddaughters that the Belvedere Tower and Mound were constructed c1740-50. A herd of fallow deer was well established in the park by the mid-eighteenth century. The Mound had been laid out in a complex series of paths and planting with a ha-ha around the foot to keep the deer out: the planting was softened some time into a wilderness during the nineteenth century. Views from the Belvedere Tower looked north over the Belvedere field towards a 900m chain of informal lakes c450m to the north. The Smith family sold the estate to Thomas Tower in 1752 and it stayed in the Tower family until 1946. Red deer were added 1870 and in 1892 there were also Japanese Sika deer. Thomas Tower added the second storey to the Belvedere and used it as a museum. During the Second World War the park was requisitioned by the army for military exercises. The mansion and grounds were left in a damaged condition: the plantations were felled and the perimeter fence was broken and the deer escaped. A fire in the top floor of the mansion severely damaged the roof and Weald Hall was demolished in 1950 followed by the Belvedere tower in 1954 after which time the estate was bought by Essex County Council for use as an open public space. The ha-ha survived intact until the 1950's when the greater part was bulldozed out.



*Remaining brick base of Belvedere Tower 2020*



*Retaining brick base of Belvedere Tower 2020*



*One of two flights of steps leading to the now demolished Belvedere 2020*



*Remains of the Ha Ha 2020*



*Postcard of the Belvedere Tower and path postmarked 1910*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The remaining structural features for the formation of the mound and its climb to the top, including the remains of the ha-ha at the base, are evidence of the history of the site. Shrubs and trees on the Mound are evident of the nineteenth century wilderness planting. Significantly it is evident that, although the Belvedere has been demolished, the Mound continues today to provide a magnificent view of the lake and park below.

**Historic:** The history of the Belvedere Mound and Weald Park are well documented through maps, images, books, archaeological assessment, historic documents and estate papers. The earliest significant period in the history of the Belvedere Mound is in the eighteenth century when the Smith family owned Weald Hall and its park. At this time Samuel Smith engaged French surveyor Bourginion to design a new layout for the park and included in this design was the Belvedere Tower and Mound with paths radiating from the top. The next significant period of history was when Thomas Tower owned the estate and added another storey to the Belvedere Tower. In the early-twentieth century the mature formal planting either side of the paths leading to the top of the Mound are illustrated on postcards, possibly when the landscaping was in its prime. The remaining footpaths, planting, and structure of the Mound illustrate the site's former history.

**Aesthetic:** There would originally have been far-reaching views from the Belvedere out across the landscape of the park. From the Mound and remains of the Belvedere Tower today there are picturesque views of Weald Park and its extensive lake. Although not much of the formal planting along the pathways leading to the Tower survive there are historic trees which provide different leaf colour throughout the seasons. Rhododendron bushes line one pathway to the summit which gives a hint of how the Mound looked over a hundred years ago. The remains of the ha-ha is a reminder of how the herds of deer were kept away from the formal planting.

**Communal:** Originally this would have been a 'private' feature, but visitors to the family would have had access to it. Today Weald Country Park, including the Belvedere Mound, is owned and managed by Essex County Council and is accessible to the public throughout the year. It is intended as an area for the enjoyment of the countryside and is an important green space where local people socialise. Visitors are often fascinated by the history of the site and the park's rangers organise tree identification walks. Car park charges generated by visitors contribute to the park's upkeep.

### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The Belvedere Mound plays a significant part in the history of Weald Park (Grade II - List Entry Number:1000747) as it was included in the eighteenth century landscape plans for the estate. Written documents, archival information and visual images record the history of the site including its association with its wealthy owners and the French architect Bourignon, attributed to drawing up the 1738 landscape plan. The eighteenth century Belvedere Tower offered picturesque views of Weald Park, its lake, and its surroundings to family and visitors and, although only the Mound remains today, the picturesque views from the summit remain. The flights of steps leading to the base of the tower, the brick walls and piers and Portland stone copings are important features remaining from the Belvedere Mound's eighteenth century design. Although the Mound has lost the formal planting of its avenues many original shrubs and trees remain which give the visitor a glimpse of its historical past. These same shrubs and trees offer a diversity of habitats for fauna and flora. Climbing up the Mound provides good exercise for visitors while the serenity of the area and the scenic views from the summit are beneficial for the mind. Weald Park is well maintained by Essex County Council.

### **Issues and vulnerabilities:**

There is a possible risk of vandalism to the remaining brick and stone work due to all year-round access to the site. The site is rural and public transport links are relatively poor.

### **Key references:**

1598 J. Walker Survey of Thorndon Estate ERO D/DP P5  
1738 Le Sieur Bourignon Design for a landscape ERO D/DP P23/1  
1910 Postcard of Belvedere Tower and path (Jill Plater)  
1961 Gladys A. Ward *A History of South Weald and Brentwood*  
1977 Essex County Council *Weald Country Park*  
1987 Historic England listed park and garden List entry 100314  
1999 Victoria County History of Essex *A History of Brentwood and South Weald*  
2020 Photographs Jill Plater

**Researcher:** Jill Plater 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 14): THE PUMP HOUSE, BEDFORDS PARK

**Location:** Bedfords Park, Broxhill Road, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, Essex RM4 1QH

**NGR:** TQ552090 192310

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Altitude above Sea Level: 98.7m

The Pump House sits on its original footprint and is a rectangular building. It is located in woodland next to a popular path adjacent to the south wall of the Walled Kitchen Garden. Built at the head of a large reservoir pond which is 40 metres long by an average of 7 metres wide and an estimated depth of 1 metre. It sits on a N-S axis. The engine provided both water and electric supply for Bedfords Mansion.

‘The house is lighted throughout by electricity. Water is obtained from a well and the supply has always been ample for all purposes. The engine which drives both the dynamo and the pump is a 9 ½ hp Hornsby -Ackroyd’.

*(An extract from the Sale of the Mansion and all the contents in the late 1920s. A copy of the bill of sale is shown in the accompanying photographs below.)*

**Size:** 5.7 metres in length x 3metres wide, constructed of yellow stock bricks to a height of approximately 2.74 metres from floor level. The measurement taken from within the building itself. The depth of the building is difficult to assess currently, as there are many years of detritus and tipped building and construction waste, broken glass etc covering most of the floor/ground. The interior of the building shows evidence of being rendered on all four walls, but the rendering has mostly fallen off.

**Orientation:** SSE

**Current state:** Currently the bricks are level and in good condition but mainly covered by ivy, bramble and laurel. There is a tall feral ash tree growing in the centre of the building. The ivy does not seem to have penetrated the mortar and forms cascading trails over the top of the bricks which, in a way, has protected them from plain sight, damage and vandalism

A defined line of mortar, approximately on the centre line at the top of the full brick width of the wall and running along all four walls, indicates that there may have been a structure set on top of the existing brick structure. However, operation of the engine involved the use of naked flames and the production of noxious fumes so this structure is likely to have been non-flammable.

At the centre of the north wall there is evidence of existence of possibly a recess for a doorway and there are recesses in the centre of the south wall indicating the presence of perhaps a window or a large grating for ventilation. There would probably have been steps, or at the least a ladder, of metal or wood, leading down to the floor of the engine room to facilitate daily maintenance. Though not discovered in the remains of the building, a steel ladder was found in storage in a potting shed, built in the 1960’s, which may answer the access issues. Of simple construction, it will rely on the finding of fixed upper fastenings in the walls by the

doorway and beneath the assumed threshold level. Inside the structure are the remains of an old Edwardian water tank, and lots of broken thick glass. The profile of a larger tank approximately 1000mm by 1400mm is also evident.

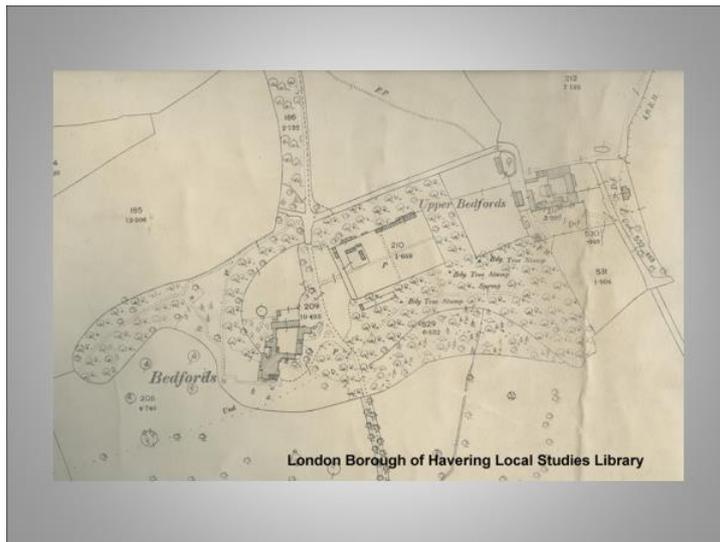
The glass does not look like horticultural grade, thinner glass so may not have been from glasshouses waste from the walled garden. Inside the building there are two steel girders, clearly original and still in place. The girders are rusting badly and flaking. They are resting above the floor, which at the time of inspection was full of detritus and shallow rainwater. Conditions in the woodland have exacerbated rusting. Each girder is supported either side by a structure, possibly of brick, but covered with cement in the form of a buttress. This may have been to help buffer vibrations from the pumping engine.

There is a large water reservoir next to the pump house. This reservoir would have been used to collect and retain spring and rainwater from the surrounding land to supply the pumping engine.

**Current use:** Redundant

**Existing designation:** None

**Brief History:** John Heaton's mansion appears at Bedfords in 1770's. The mansion was significantly altered in the mid-1800's. Set in an estate of over 500 acres of parkland at the time the area was rich with abundant freshwater springs and was often referred to as 'Bellfounts'. In the late-1800's the pump house would have supplied water and electricity to the mansion and the stable courtyard buildings. The first buildings to install private electricity were in Holborn London in 1882. By 1910 only 2% of dwellings had electricity supply. It was not until 1926 that the National Grid supplying domestic electricity was formed. The Pump House Building housed a 9 ½ hp Hornsby Ackroyd engine which was one of the first combustion engines to use heavy oil. It would have been labour intensive to maintain on a daily basis and would be noisy, vibrational and producing a lot of heat and noxious fumes when starting up. Rain and spring water were retained in the reservoir holding approximately 230,000 litres of water at capacity. The Hornsby Ackroyd engine provided the energy to run the dynamo and pump the water to the mansion. The machinery would have needed to be protected from the weather and kept warmer in winter to prevent the oil from becoming too viscous. A solid brickwork structure would have been built for such a purpose.



***OS1862 Map showing the Walled Garden and position of the reservoir with the Pump House building clearly marked. Map by kind permission of Havering Local Studies Library***



***Bedford's Mansion in 1905, approximately 40 years after the installation of the Pump House***



***The Pump House showing the building and proximity of the large water reservoir (thick with duck weed)***



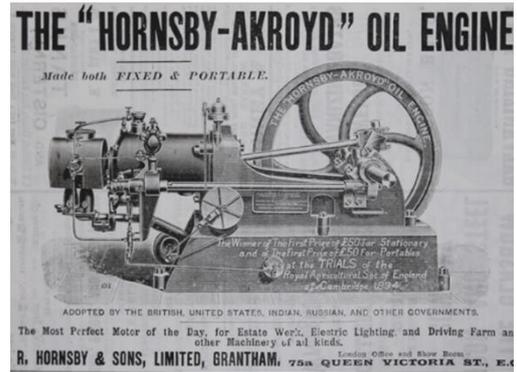
***The Pump House. South wall detail of brickwork showing recesses for perhaps a metal grating?***



***The Pump House looking N-S showing broken walls at the north end. The girders can be seen through the debris and bramble***



**Hornsby Ackroyd Engine - a little larger than the engine of the Pump House**



**Sales detail of similar Oil Engine installed at Bedfords to provide pumped water and generate electricity.**

**SITUATION.**

The Estate is situated in the Parishes of Havering-atte-Bower and Romford, and is about 3 miles to the North of the latter town and only 15 miles from the City.

**RAILWAY FACILITIES.**

Romford Station on the Great Eastern Main Line is about 3 miles from the property. There is an excellent service of trains to London, the journey occupying less than half-an-hour.

**CHURCH, POST OFFICE AND SHOPS.**

These are all within 1/2 of a mile from the house. There is a Roman Catholic Church at Romford.

**ELECTRIC LIGHT AND WATER.**

The House and Buildings are lighted throughout by electricity. Water is obtained from a well and the supply has always proved to be ample for all purposes. The engine, which drives both the dynamo and the pump, is a 9 1/2 h.p. Hornsby-Akroyd.

**CENTRAL HEATING.**

The Principal Reception Rooms, Halls and Corridors on the ground floor are heated by radiators.

**DRAINAGE.**

The system is believed to be in thorough working order.

**TELEPHONE.**

The Telephone is installed.

**HUNTING.**

Meets of the Essex and the Essex Union Foxhounds are generally within easy distances.

**GOLF.**

The Romford Golf Links are about a mile from the property and the Hainault Course is about 5 miles distant.

**TENANCIES.**

All Tenancies will expire on the 24th day of June next, and Vacant Possession will be given of the Entire Estate on completion of the purchase, subject only to no tenancy being held over.

**TIMBER.**

The whole of the Valuable Timber on each Lot will be included in the purchase price.

**METHOD OF SALE.**

Should the property not be sold by Private Treaty, prior to the Auction, it will, in the first instance, be submitted as a whole. If an acceptable bid is not forthcoming Lots 1, 2 and 3 will be offered together, and if not so sold the Sale will be proceeded with as lotted.

**DISPUTES.**

Should any dispute arise between the Vendor and any Purchaser or between Purchasers, as to the boundary of any Lot or Lots, or any point whatsoever in reference to the Plans or Particulars, or in the interpretation of any part thereof, the matter in dispute shall be referred to the arbitration of the Auctioneers, whose decision shall be binding and conclusive on all parties, and who shall also decide how the costs of such reference shall be borne.

**Details of Sale of the Mansion in the late 1920's. Note the detail under 'Electric light**

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The Pump House is essential evidence as part of the fabric of a large country estate of 215 acres which is largely intact, (though much was sold off in parcels at the turn of the century) and whose main extant features are little known, seldom appreciated or celebrated. The hydrology of the estate and wider environs is not widely investigated or known and the movement of water in the neighbouring villages of Havering-atte-Bower and

Stapleford Abbots is little documented and seldom mentioned. Nowadays we tend to take water and power supply very much for granted. The building exists alongside and adjacent to a late Georgian/Victorian walled kitchen garden which supplied the mansion with vegetables, fruits (even pineapples), flowers and herbs. Within the walled garden are three wells. One is still functioning and the other two capped for safety reasons. There is a live spring and possible 'Holy Well' known locally as 'Queen Anne's' just beyond the reservoir and, along with the large reservoir, these features all add up to give clues to the importance of water on the estate to people and animals alike.

The water tower at Havering-atte-Bower, built in 1934, still supplies the two villages of Havering -atte-Bower and Stapleford Abbots and holds 11 million litres of water which is used and replaced every 48 hours from a large reservoir within the park. Since 1934 the water supply to the mansion/park's visitor centre, grounds maintenance depot and the walled garden has been supplied by the tower which can now be seen clearly from the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of City Hall in London- 15 miles away!

The fact that the remains of the building have survived for 130 years relatively intact, despite the lack of machinery within, is testament to it being solidly built. It is probably 130 + years old. It is part of the social and industrial heritage of Havering-atte-Bower. The Pump House is probably constructed of local bricks, clay dug and bricks fired only a mile or two away. The brick workers cottagers are still standing in Broxhill Road.

**Historic:** The Pump House is part of the history of the park. It is important to local, social history and both local and national industrial history. Studying the hydrology and geology of the park could make an interesting subject for local schools and visitors and residents alike.

**Aesthetic:** The Pump House is a sturdily built, if incomplete, structure. Were it to be cleared and some interpretation used to inform about the use and importance of it then this would make an interesting additional feature of the park, helping to celebrate its rich history.

**Communal:** The community value of interpreting and valuing historic structures that seemingly are quite uninspiring at first glance can lead on to discovering new areas and subjects of interest. Increasing the Park visitor's knowledge of the environs and setting within the landscape increases the pleasures derived from their visit, walk etc. There are two schools close by at Dame Tipping's and Bower Park and school visits would be easily accommodated. It is important to inform school children about the past and something as fundamental as water supply is seldom a matter for study!

## **Statement of Significance Summary**

The construction of the Pump House and the fact it was supported by a large volume reservoir is testament to the intention of a long term and effective investment. The constant supply of clear spring water had been recognised. Interestingly, despite seasonal and annual changes, the level of water in the reservoir changes little. The inclusion of a heavy oil engine to provide supplies to the Manor House and other ancillary locations on the estate is a key historical moment. The owners of the Mansion were at the forefront of the latest developments.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The visible structure of the pump house appears well constructed and in good condition. The structure has over many years clearly been used as a dumping area. The actual floor level is thought to be 2.74 metres below the top course of brickwork. Only 540mm of brickwork shows above ground level and 1300mm show above the current water level in the reservoir. Two steel girders that cross the structure at a lower level are rusted but generally sound. These in turn have supporting buttresses that are mostly covered by rubbish and debris so their condition is also unknown. Similarly, the condition of the floor and the possibility of a tiled finish remain unidentifiable.

### **Key References:**

Ordnance Survey 25inch 1892 to 1914 showing structure and reservoir  
Ordnance Survey 6inch 1888 to 1913 showing structure and Reservoir  
Bill of Sale referring to heavy oil engine pump and generator  
OS1862 Map by kind permission of Havering Local Studies Library

**Researchers:** Lois Amos and Eric Mitchell 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 12): BEDFORDS PARK, QUEEN ANNE'S WELL

**Location:** Bedfords Park, Broxhill Road, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, Essex RM4 1QH

**NGR:** TQ552209 192362

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Altitude: 102.5 metres above sea level.

The feature known locally as Queen Anne's Well is a brick, slate and stone arched building set beneath a woodland path and entwined in thick strong roots of a laurel tree. This gives it an eery presence. The feature is a rectangular brick and rendered structure with internal measurements of 1400mm wide by 2100mm deep. The floor level is not immediately identifiable but 900mm headroom from the mud and other deposits is measurable as minimum headroom. Wall thickness appears constant at 800mm. The arched entrance is 800mm in width. The Norman style arched doorway has its front keystone missing. It has a domed roof which appears to be of brick, stone and slate. There is evidence at the entrance of two large stones either side, on one side the stones has slipped into the ditch in front of the well. These large stones are of greensand stone, which is not of local origin and was often used in ecclesiastical buildings. One wonders whether this stone was specially brought in or was it recycled stone from a demolished palace chapel or from the refurbishment of the local church. Some years ago, the Friends Group cleared the debris away from some of the ditch to allow a better flow of water to reach the Valley Marsh. Whilst investigating the well we noticed a flattened area immediately to the front. On thrusting a stave down at several points, we established that there is some kind of flat even structure to the front of the well. This maybe a capped cistern, or just a flat area where one would have stood water containers or stood to reach the spring water without getting muddy. We do not know whether this is of stone, brick, cobbles or metal. It would take many hours of debris and mud removal to find out!

**Orientation:** Averaging a N-S axis, It is almost hidden completely from view to the visitor using the woodland path. Using the SE corner of the walled garden as a rough guide the well is at an angle of about 45 degrees from the corner and about 15 metres away. The only evidence is that the sloping ground shows that the woodland floor and shallow ditch is very damp and at times running with water. It runs N-S and the water flows down towards the area known as Valley Marsh.

**Current State:** The structure is of very thick walls of local brick, stone and tile/slate. The keystone appears to have disappeared but may be found in the ditch in front of it. To the front is a long heavy stone, maybe Portland stone, which looks like a piece of Gothic type window sill or architrave. It is moss covered and is sitting in the leaf litter and mud. Clearly it has been in that position for many, many years.

The outside of the arch is quite decoratively built, but the mortar is damaged and is crumbling away. The laurel is helping to hold everything together. The interior has a level flat floor of cement or maybe of stone. It is still holding water. Upon shining a torch into the cavernous

arched structure one can make out the rendered lining which is largely intact. There is a small hole in the domed roof through which one can peer into the subterranean structure.

There is a log placed over this to prevent people hurting their ankles in the depression which is just off the path.

**Current Use:** None in social or practical terms. The natural spring water source feeds other systems at lower levels

**Existing Designation:** None

**Brief History:** There follows a description by Pixyled publications from a visit to Bedfords a few years ago. Experts on the research of Wells and Holy Wells in Great Britain and Europe.

*'The well consists of a brick and sandstone arch well house set into a bank. Inside the well house is plastered brickwork and sits up a small platform. The water arises in a roughly rectangular aperture and flows to fill Nursery pond below. A gnarled tree grows over the well holding some of it together, although the quoin stone is missing, which may have given some clue to its origin.'*

This notwithstanding this does not explain how old is the well? Is it a mediaeval? Tudor? Or a folly or Victorian piece of gothic? The lack of embellishment or indeed history suggests that the site is not a result of any landscape improvements in either the 1700's or 1800's. The fabric may give the best evidence. The well is not built wholly of brick, which would suggest a post-1600 construction perhaps, but a high-quality green sandstone. This is noted by Nigel Oxley, the Boroughs buildings Conservation Officer,

*'that such a high-quality material is used in a number of local churches, emphasising its importance. It is similar to that of Charlotte's Well in Stratford which suggests a Tudor origin.'*

There is little documentation discovered thus far on the history of the well. It goes almost completely ignored. We know that the well was used to supply water for the Gardener's Cottage and in fact we were lucky enough to meet Alf and Edie Haley who lived in the Gardener's Cottage in the early 1920's and it was Alf, then in his eighties, who first showed me the well. He remembered having to collect water for his mother from that spring/well. The spring is still 'live' and flows continually, varying from a dribble in times of drought to a flowing tiny stream in the wettest of winter months.

This map extract shows the Walled Garden the Reservoir and Pump House and also the position of Queen Anne's Well which is just referred to as a spring. We know however that the well was there maybe centuries before. Earles estate was renamed Upper Bedfords when that parcel of land had been sold off from Bedfords. You can just see the indication on the east wall of the garden where there was a door into that estate. The door was bricked up, but originally the estate owners could possibly have used that path to gain access on to their Home Farm buildings. Of late there has been significant changes to the Earles Estate several large buildings have been erected on that site. Is that a hint of a feature/exit/ possible pipework leading out from the centre of the South Wall of the reservoir?



*Extract from a Bedfords Park Estate Map 1937*



*'Queen Anne's Well' after heavy rain in 2011. The rain increases the flow of the spring*



*'Queen Anne's Well' showing brickwork arch detail. Note slate/tile inserts. The walls are very thick and of substantial construction*



*Stem/roots of the Laurel that has grown to entwine the well over the last century*



*'Queen Anne's Well' giving some indication as to the size and state of the interior August 2020*



*Inside 'Queen Anne's Well'*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The 'Queen Anne's Well' is probably one of the earliest structures in the park, especially if it can be traced back to the Tudors, as yet unproven.

**"The Cult of Queen Anne"** - I believe that the significance of the occurrence of wells associated with Anne Boleyn has been missed by researchers. Ann was a convenient figure to apply to wells at a time of flux. The cult of Saint Anne and its association with wells is a relatively recent one, dating from the fifteenth century. Could it be that at the Reformation, that local community or rather a local landowner, realizing that the population would have divided into those following the old ways, would focus on re-dedication to this popular Queen. Anne was of course, the mother of Elizabeth, the first Protestant figurehead, who herself had a cult and feast day associated with her. So, the mystery deepens!

**Historic:** The historic structure is a valuable edifice within the Park. Although we are not sure which Anne it is named after it is one of the most significant springs in the Park from which the Park's old name of 'Bellfounts' was derived. This is the oldest of the water related structures previously noted, the Reservoir and the Pump House. Indeed, the fact that it exists is probably the driving force for the building of the reservoir with its attendant Pump House, both of which are within close proximity.

**Aesthetic:** Originally perhaps predominantly a functional feature, the structure is currently a mystery waiting to be solved. The situation is quite magical and, beneath the path out of the way of visitors, gives it an air of something waiting to be discovered, yet, hiding its light under a bushel so to speak, waiting quietly in the wings. It is an intriguing structure, and the quiet surroundings and gnarled roots and woodland canopy add to its beauty. It fires the imagination – asking more questions than giving answers. If it were to be cleaned out and the debris and detritus removed it would come to life.

**Communal:** Queen Anne's Well is a valuable artefact of immense historical, social, architectural and educational value. It could form the base of interesting projects linked to the history of religious cults, or a hydrological study of the Park and old estate, the way we lived centuries ago etc. It would probably be of interest to archaeologists and hydrologists as well as social historians. Queen Anne's Well makes a good subject for artists and photographers. There are customs of Well dressing. Perhaps these could be explored and interpretation developed to explain and celebrate these.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

If the well was researched, documented, interpreted, protected, and conserved, it would be a fascinating glimpse into the park's past and be of additional interest in the park. It is important as it does not stand alone, but is part of a much wider historic fabric of the park. Though the park no longer has the impressive mansion, the local schools and park visitors could visit, perhaps, a trail, taking in the Well, Reservoir, Pump House and Walled Garden and learn about their local history and the way people lived centuries ago.

### **Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

The brickwork and interior will continue to crumble and fall into total disrepair if it is left to decay away in the park. Trees roots, and fallen trees will damage it beyond repair.

It is vulnerable to damage by vandalism. If it were to be brought to the public's attention it should be behind railings etc. to prevent climbing and damage occurring.

If it is over publicised and glamourized it could be seen as a destination by some cults.

If it is not cleaned out soon, the water will find it difficult to escape the ground and it will silt up entirely. This will not only be disastrous for the well, but also for the flora and fauna of Valley Marsh who will perish if it dries up.

There is a possibility that the well would lose its magical, mysterious quality if it were to be over restored and made too clean.

### **Key References:**

London Borough of Havering. Conservation Officer  
Pixyled Publications. Report on Queen Anne's Well  
2020, Current photographs, Lois Amos

**Researchers:** Lois Amos and Eric Mitchell 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 13): BEDFORDS PARK, WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN WELL

**Location:** Bedfords Park, Broxhill Road, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, Essex RM4 1QH

**NGR:** TQ552113 192353

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Height above sea level: 320.6 feet/98m

The Garden Well built in the late 1780s is a circular brick built well of 20feet/6m in depth, relatively typical for the period. It is situated at what would have been just off to the right of the main central axial path of the original garden. It is built of brick and would have had a well head and winding gear for raising water. The new well head was constructed in 2015 and is of yellow stock bricks recovered from the demolition of the Pinery, and the storm damaged garden wall in 2010. The interior has a diameter of 4feet /1.2m and the entire structure has a diameter of 6 feet/1.8m. The rebuilt well head is of 10 courses of brick. Inside, at what is now just below ground level, approximately 3feet/92cm, a new steel grating has been installed for safety reasons, although it still allows a good view of the well's interior and water level below. The interior of the well has a continuous ledge of brickwork that is approximately 5 inches/12.7cm in width. The brickwork of the well head is of 9inches/ 22.9cm yellow brick.

It has been rebuilt fairly recently and was inspected and cleared of debris. In 1965 when the walled garden was taken over by the newly formed London Borough of Havering, for use as a borough nursery, the well was considered to be redundant and a danger and was consequently filled in with rubble and all sort of metalwork and capped with a metal drain cover and cemented in. It remained sealed until 2015.

A well master came and inspected the well, worked to empty it of rubble and inspected the original brickwork which was subsequently dated and deemed in excellent condition and certainly worth restoring.

**Orientation:** 130° SE

**Current Use:** The well is currently used as an attractive feature within the restored Walled Garden. It forms part of the fabric of the garden and is an important historic feature of the garden. Indeed, it is the only surviving feature inside the walled garden. The other features of the Pinery and Melon House have been completely rebuilt. The water level remains fairly constant, but is not drawn, as the garden now has mains water installed.

**Existing Designation:** The well falls within the Bedfords Walled Garden Borough Registered Heritage Asset of Local Historic Interest and Significance.

**Brief History:** The well sits inside the 1.6-acre Georgian Walled Garden within the 215 acres of Bedfords Park. The park is an LNR and sits within an Area of Metropolitan Importance. Havering-atte-Bower is rich in history and had two royal palaces. The park is part of an historic outwood of the royal hunting forest.

The well was dug and built in the late 1780's and constructed to contain fresh spring water for use in the garden, on plots and in glasshouses, Pinery and Melon Pit House. Use of wells of this type was common at this time, and larger walled gardens usually had a dipping pond for their water source. Water bodging carts on wheels would have been filled with buckets from the well and then the carts moved about the garden. The water would have been obtained by dipping in watering vessels and cans and also by using brass syringes for spraying and more direct contact, especially for spraying and damping down.

In the mid-1960's it was filled in with rubble and debris. When the well was excavated in recent years the cast iron pump handle was discovered and is now retained in our little artefacts collection of objets trouvés. We have also come across a short metal ladder in a potting shed which we believe may have either been used in the well or the Pump House.



*The Walled Garden Well c1786  
An historic feature of the garden*



*The Walled Garden Well c1786*



*Older bricks of garden well*



*Walled Garden Well, Bedfords Park 2013  
showing old brickwork on the interior*



*Interior of Walled Garden Well showing both modern and older brickwork*

The Maidenhair and other ferns must have come from spores conserved when the well had been capped in the mid-1960's. They add to the attraction of the well. Water on the day of photograph was approximately 4.5 metres deep.

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The walled garden well is an historic garden well that was built in the late 1780's. It is of excellent construction and is complete such that it provides evidence of constructional technique and usage.

**Historic:** It is the only surviving historic feature in the walled garden apart from the walls. Together with Queen Anne's Well, the Reservoir and the Pump House it forms a quartet of buildings and remains of the Georgian and Victorian country estate of Bedfords. It is of interest to historians, brickwork and structural historians as well as professional horticulturalists, home gardeners and visitors to the garden and park. The fact that it is spring fed, links up with the other hydrological features of the park that are being researched and surveyed. It is believed that the well is a survivor of many centuries of gardening and endured throughout. It was in use until the 1940's and has served the horticultural needs of the garden admirably. It is believed that excess water is drained off from the well to the adjacent reservoir.

**Aesthetic:** The walled garden well is an interesting construction and of very pleasantly coloured brick. It is always of great interest to garden visitors, especially children. There are several very old ferns still living in the brickwork and the glimpse of water in the well and seeing one's reflection is quite intriguing. Being in almost the centre of the garden and with a situation which has been celebrated by a raised platform and interpretation around, it makes a lovely place from which to view the garden and relax.

**Communal:** It is difficult to assess the communal significance of the well. It is an asset to the Walled Garden, park and to local history. It is of social and historic value and provokes conversations about the past in the garden. It is a tangible link with the past and horticultural practices of the past. Many of our garden visitors photograph the well as they have never seen 'a real one'! It would be interesting to sample the well water and test the pH. The

surrounding land is mainly a sandy silty clay, but the forest and woodland canopy will have formed carbonic acid which may have had an effect on the water's alkalinity. This could be a proposal for a practical science project.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The major significance of the well is as a heritage asset within the restored walled garden. Within that role it is significant for current usage. It could form part of a discovery trail in the park. It can also be a subject for artists and photographers alike. It forms a good assembling place at which to talk to garden visitors and a good place from which to view the garden. All the hard work of conservation and interpretation has been done, but it could be used as a basis for quiz questions etc.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The well has recently been refurbished. The only anticipated problem may be that people throw small objects into the well. If the spring dries up the Well will dry, and that is a possibility with climate change and local development affecting aquifers. There has been lots of development of the adjacent site at Upper Bedfords Farm (Earls), which no doubt has entailed lots of new water supply and drainage. There have been many trees felled nearby to make way for development and these too will have an impact on the way water is used and moved in the landscape. There is also an increase in the area of new hard surfaces laid for parking etc, all of which will affect water flow nearby, and may have consequences for the underground springs. Currently the well is looking very healthy and the water level is high and the water clear.

### **Key References:**

Google maps- [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)  
1862 OS map  
1937, Bedfords Estate maps  
Photographs Lois Amos

**Researcher:** Lois Amos 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 16): BEDFORDS PARK BRIDLEWAY/ CARRIAGE DRIVE

**Location:** Running north from Lower Bedfords Road, Romford, RM1 4DQ

**NGR:** TQ552431 192252

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** The bridleway originated as the southern part of a lane that connected Havering-atte-Bower and Romford. In 1774 John Heaton closed the lane as a public thoroughfare creating a private carriageway to Bedfords House and during the Enclosures he added further land to the east. Bedfords was described in the 1780s as having 'much the appearance of a park and all the uses of a farm'.

The bridleway runs from Lower Bedfords Road to the setting of the Bedfords Park Visitor Centre. Its passage through the fields is bounded by a well-defined ditch and bank on one side, the west side. The mature horse chestnut trees planted at regular intervals on both sides border the length of the bridleway enclosing the linear space so that the avenue becomes a feature by design, irrespective of whether it still fulfils its original function as a main thoroughfare to Bedfords Park.

Neale's engraving of Bedfords 1818 is from a direction that does not include the bridleway but by the time of the 1862 to 1871 survey for the 1881 OS map the closed lane has become a private drive through fields to the house, with a lodge at Lower Bedfords Road. The reinstatement of the lane as a private drive is shown more clearly on the 1896 OS map with the avenue of chestnut trees featured as well as the lodge and boundary gate.

The entrance on Lower Bedfords Road is signposted and passes through a narrow opening between two gateposts. To the west of the narrow opening a third gatepost marks an opening equivalent to the full width of the bridleway but this has been barred to restrict entry. Adjacent to the entrance a mound of rubble is thought likely to correlate with the position of the demolished lodge house. Further west is a rectangular set of ponds, perhaps a moat, and the former site of Lower Bedfords Farm.

In plan the bridleway curves. It follows the lie of the land uphill, rising 100 feet/30 metres. Within Bedfords Park it provides access to nature conservation assets including the wildflower meadow and the damselfly pond. Signage is limited to way marker posts for a nature trail and the direction post at the entrance.

**Size:** Approximately 500 metres in length

**Orientation:** Running N-S

**Current State:** The track no longer functions as a carriageway route to Bedfords House but it gives public access to Bedfords Park. The bridleway is Route Number 23, a 'rural' path managed by the Parks Service, Havering Council

**Current Use:** A dedicated bridleway between Lower Bedfords Road and Broxhill Road. Bridleways are also footpaths, but additionally users are permitted to ride or lead a horse, and ride bicycles. Horse drawn and mechanically powered vehicles are not allowed. Bridleways are not necessarily surfaced, and a well-used bridleway can sometimes be effectively impassable for pedestrians. In February 2020 the surface of Bedfords Bridleway was visible where leaf mulch and mud had been scoured out by surface water flowing down the track. The photo shows its solidly constructed base of compacted flint and brick and stone, presumably dating to its use as a carriageway to the house.

**Existing Designations:** Bedfords Park is a Designated Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, with the designation M150 Site of Metropolitan Importance.

**Brief History:** Formerly a medieval royal hunting forest, the land that makes up Bedfords Park originates in the two adjoining estates of Bedfords and Earls. Earls references ownership by William d'Aubigny, 3rd Earl of Arundel recorded in 1212 as a gift from King John, while Bedfords references John Bedford, who held the land in 1362.

Thomas Cooke, later Lord Mayor of London, took possession of the manor in 1452 as part of the Gidea Hall estate. His family held the estate for 200 years before it passed to the ownership of a succession of London merchants. It seems that none of them lived in it. John Heaton bought the manor of Bedfords and Earls from Nathaniel Houlton in 1771, rebuilt the house as a two-storey brick mansion rendered with cement, and did live there. He contributed to the development of the Havering area. The enclosure of common land in the period between 1770 and 1850 transformed Havering into a region of intensive farming. John Heaton was instrumental in that transformation. As well as adding land to the Bedfords estate he set up Heaton Grange Farm on land enclosed from Romford Common.

The bridleway was the southern part of a lane that connected Havering-atte-Bower and Romford. In 1774 John Heaton closed the lane as a public thoroughfare and during the Enclosures he added further land to the east. Bedfords was described in the 1780s as having "much the appearance of a park and all the uses of a farm". After several changes of private ownership, the house was further embellished by the Victorian owner Charles Barber from 1865 - 1867 and in the surrounding garden he planted exotic trees and established woodland walks. (including the avenue of horse chestnuts along the then carriageway?)

The lane existed before Heaton's arrival as a route connecting Havering-atte-Bower with Romford. At this earlier stage the entrance at Lower Bedfords Road was further west. The characteristic curve that diverts the bridleway so that it is at right angles to Lower Bedfords Road is shown on Chapman and André's 1777 map and possibly the change may be attributed to John Heaton. Certainly, he closed the lane in 1774 so that it was no longer a public thoroughfare. The bridleway, which is the southern half of the old lane, is a parcel of land within the Bedfords Park Estate. The enclosure of common land in the period between 1770 and 1850 transformed Havering into a region of intensive farming and Heaton was a key

landowner instigating that transformation. His name is commemorated in a cluster of suburban streets: Heaton Avenue, Heaton Way, Heaton Close and Grange Road, 1930s housing built over Heaton Grange Farm.

In 1933, like so many large houses on the fringes of London, Bedfords was bought by the local council, Romford Urban District Council, and opened to the public as a museum. It saw service in WWII being occupied by the National Fire Service and as a base for Home Defence.

Decay and damage by vandals led to demolition of the house in 1958. In its place came first a cafeteria in 1964, then the Visitors Centre was opened in 2003 in partnership with the Essex Wildlife Trust. The Friends of Bedfords Park formed in 2004 as a volunteer group to reinstate the two acre Walled Garden.



***Bedfords Bridleway road surface***



***Old track.***

*Copyright Marathon and licensed for reuse under this Creative Common Licence. <https://www.geograph.org.uk>*



*Bedfords Bridleway bank and ditch*



*Old Iron Gateposts at the start of Bridleway 23*

Copyright Glyn Baker and licensed for reuse under this Creative Commons Licence  
<https://www.geograph.org.uk/>

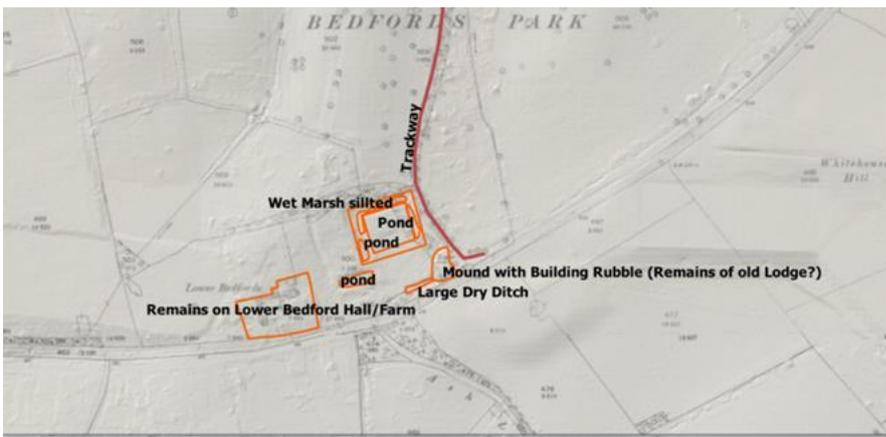


*Bedfords Bridleway looking south*



**Map of Essex 1777 John Chapman & Peter André**

Digital map Version 2 Tim Fransom. Digitised engraved sheets courtesy of Biblioteca Virtual del Patrimonio Bibliográfico



**LIDAR (www.lidarfinder.com) combined with OS Map (1896) by courtesy of Rob Adams**

**Evidential:** The bridlepath marks the original route of a public lane which was then turned into a private carriageway. The materials used in construction and the trees lining it evidence these changes. One of the reasons the bridleway has survived is its robust construction with a base structure of compacted flint, brick and stone and a well-defined ditch and bank on the west side. The horse chestnut trees emphasize its identity.

Three iron gateposts mark the entry at Lower Bedfords Road, but the gates are no longer in evidence. Users must take the narrow entry which in the past would have been the pedestrian gateway because the wider opening is barred to deter motor bikes and a sign warns "NO MOTOR CYCLES". A mound of rubble adjacent to the entrance may correlate with the demolished Lodge House on the 1896 OS Map and further remains of ponds and the site of Lower Bedfords Farm may yield future areas for research.

**Historic:** The Bridleway appears as a lane on Chapman and André's 1777 Map of Essex passing on the eastern side of 'Bedfords' and 'Jn Heaton Esq' is identified as the owner. The new mansion built by John Heaton is shown on the map but the walled garden and adjacent house at Earls are not. Heaton (1740-1818) was a lawyer, and agent to the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Portland but his name on the map demonstrates that he had achieved the status of landowner. Havering history tells that he instigated much of the local Enclosures.

The exotic trees around the house site were planted under Charles Barber's ownership. The horse chestnut trees that line the bridleway may well have been planted at this stage in Bedford Parks history.

Today the Havering Council owned Wildlife Park and Walled Garden flourish but Bedfords mansion has gone, demolished in 1958. The privately owned house at Earls, renamed Upper Bedfords Farmhouse, remains and is Grade II listed.

**Aesthetic:** The avenue of trees creates an enclosed well-defined linear space. The Horse Chestnut trees are mature and impressive but the bridleway now has the appearance of a track rather than a main thoroughfare. There is an air of past grandeur and an awareness of time and change - the time these trees have taken to grow and the change in status of Bedfords Park, from private estate to public park.

**Communal:** The bridleway into Bedfords Park is an invitation to explore a world which is different from the urban or suburban environments that most of us live in. Bedfords Park functions for the community providing open green space and the bridleway defines movement through this open space and gives opportunities to exercise, explore at leisure, relate to nature and relate to heritage. Recently, the proposed destruction of avenues of trees in urban settings has raised outcry indicating that avenues of trees are landscape features much valued by communities at both the local and national level.

## **Statement of Significance Summary**

Bedfords Bridleway has significance within the broader context of the park because it has survived from the most formative period in Bedfords' history, 1771 – 1818 when John Heaton Esq. was the owner. The other elements that remain from this period are the 2-acre Walled Garden and two sets of marble steps leading down from the terrace south of the site of the mansion. The mansion itself has gone. Existing gateposts on Lower Bedfords Road mark the position of the entrance but just a mound of rubble correlates with the lodge house shown on the 1896 OS map.

A succession of private owners followed Heaton's ownership but in 1933 Bedfords was bought by Romford Urban District Council and the mansion opened as a museum. It saw service in WWII, again using the bridlepath access, but decay and vandalism led to its demolition in 1958.

Bedfords Park Bridleway with its avenue of trees makes a positive contribution to the local community providing a peaceful, car-free route into Bedfords Park. Understandably it is less well-used than the route from Broxhill Road to the Visitor Centre but this increases its attraction as an alternative route for walkers and cyclists. There is potential to promote this route, first as part of a cycle route from Romford to Havering-atte-Bower and second as part of a walking route.

## **Key References**

London Borough of Havering:

1971, Definitive Map of Special Review of Public Rights of way Scale 6 inches to One Mile

London Borough of Havering: [https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20037/parks/690/bedfords\\_park](https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20037/parks/690/bedfords_park)

Geograph: <http://www.haveringeastlondonramblers.btck.co.uk/>

2019, "Parishes: Havering-atte-Bower". British History Online. University of London.

<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol7/pp9-17>

Havering and East London Ramblers - [www.haveringeastlondonramblers.btck.co.uk](http://www.haveringeastlondonramblers.btck.co.uk)

**Researcher:** Christine Wallace 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 15): STONE TERRACE STEPS, BEDFORDS PARK

**Location:** Bedford's Park, Broxhill Road, Havering-atte-Bower, Romford, RM4 1QH  
**Positioned at the western extent of a former garden terrace, adjacent to very well used temporary replacement timber steps next to tall deer fencing.**

**NGR:** TQ551933 192225

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of feature:** The flight of seven treads approximately 2330mm in width rises between the falling away ground level to the south and a former grass banked terrace. The treads terminate at their sides in a low, stone-capped, solid, extended height stringing with brick and stone pillars top and bottom. Currently fenced off for safety reasons, the terrace steps are all but identical to a further renovated flight located adjacent to the Visitor Centre. Sections of the stonework are intact but in a badly worn condition. Salvaging repairs are evident. One of the upper terminating pillars is missing along with most of the left hand (rising facing north) extended height stringer. Some of the tread nosing's are damaged. Soil subsidence has caused misalignments of some stone and brick components. Weed and brambles currently dominate the fenced off terrace steps. Attached photographs refer.

**Material:** Dressed shaped and machined Portland derivative stone slabs. The terminating piers and parts of the extended stringer section indicate partial brick and render.

**Size:** With a total rise of around 1200mm, the structure has a plan length of around 2380mm and an overall average tread width of 2330mm.

**Orientation:** Average on a N-S axis.

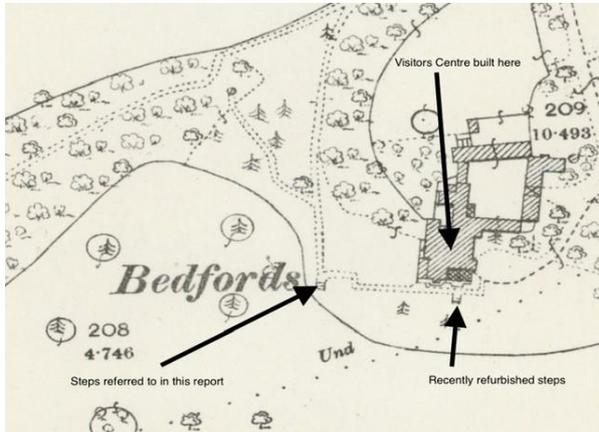
**Current state:** Fenced off for safety. Identifiable as a flight of terrace steps. Some stone and brick components are damaged or missing. Overgrown with a dilapidated feel.

**Current use:** Fenced off for safety, redundant. Temporary timber and soil steps built to the side (West).

**Existing designations:** Designated Country Park/Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve with Visitors Centre/ Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation.

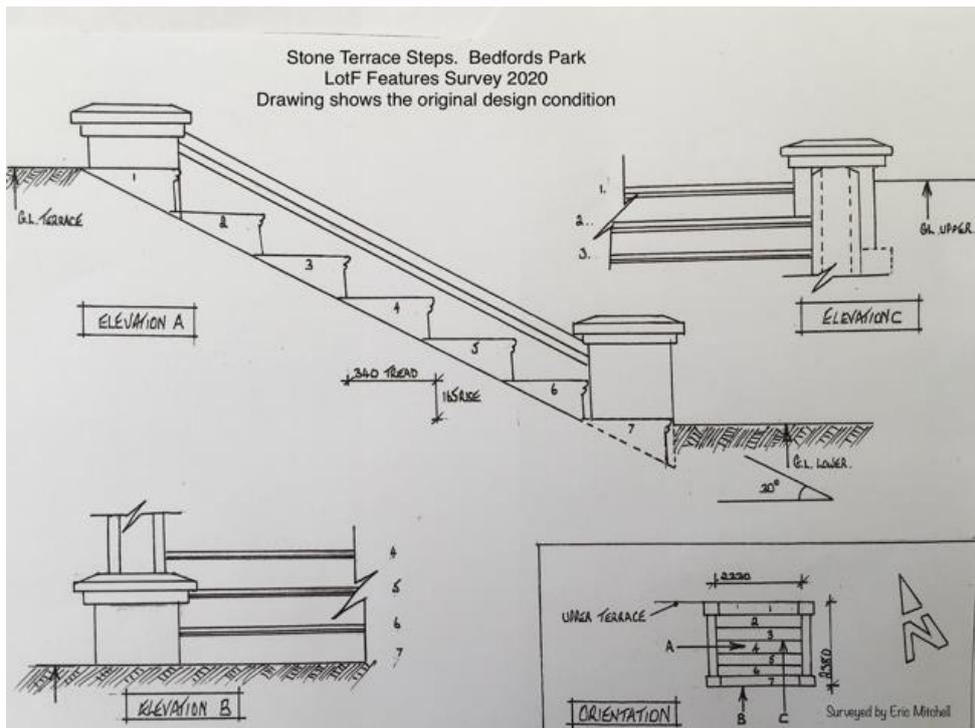
**Brief History:** From 1326 four centuries of owners and tenants. In 1771 John Heaton acquired the estate and rebuilt the Manor House. By 1846 Heaton's grandson was in possession of the now 537acre manor. In 1854 Charles Barber owned the estate and between 1865 and 1867 laid out the surrounding hilltop in gardens with specimen exotic trees. There were two further occupants until 1933 when Emily, former wife of deceased Henry Stone, sold Bedfords to Romford Urban District Council. Under that ownership, it reopened as a public museum and during World War II the house was used by the National Fire Service as a base for home

defence. The 1950s saw rapid decay of the house which was demolished in 1959. In June 2003, the current Essex Wildlife Visitors Centre opened on the site of the old Manor House. The 25inch Ordnance Survey map dated 1892 to 1914 shows clearly the existence of this and indeed the near identical flight of steps descending South from the Terrace.



*OS25inch map 1892-1914 showing location of steps*





### Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The steps provide evidence of the location of house and terrace, and the structural methods used.

**Historic:** The two sets of terrace steps may be attributable directly to Heaton's rebuild or the extensions and gardens laid out by Charles Barber or one of the flights to either development. Using unscientific likelihood, I'm minded to attribute the installation of the Terrace Steps to Charles Barber, between 1865 and 1867, being part of the re-landscaping and planting scheme. The installation would then be around 150 years old. It is likely that the stonemason marked the underside of the steps with name or company and date of preparation. This dating method would only be confirmed should refurbishment be undertaken. Whilst there is no guarantee that this is the first and only location of the stone steps, it could be a definitive start.

The "sister" flight of stone terrace steps is featured on a Frith Collection postcard. Although near identical, the terrace steps highlighted in this report are cropped from view. Interestingly, the photograph shows the four terminating piers each adorned with ornamental, stemmed planting urns. (material unknown possibly cast iron). The postcard depicts the "final" version of the Manor House.

**Aesthetic:** The overall structure is one that sits very comfortably in its surroundings. Raked at 30 degrees and of ample width it's easy to imagine couples taking an afternoon or evening stroll on the garden terrace, then descending effortlessly to the lower lawn and taking in the views beyond. A real compliment to the designer and the stonemason.

**Communal:** Originally part of a private house and gardens. Fenced off, the terrace steps are clearly missed by visitors, as a temporary timber and soil version is built alongside. They sit as much now on a walkers' N-S desire line as they did when shown on the early Ordnance Survey maps. Today, the wear patterns evident on the temporary timber and soil steps, show this location being part of a popular walking route.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

Originally one of a close matching pair. With refurbishment this flight could again be functional as well as forming part of the historic structure and evidence for the old house and gardens.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Currently fenced off for safety, the construction is mostly uneven, in poor condition and suffering from soil erosion and subsidence. Where the tread nosing's are damaged, a refurbishment project will require a considerable amount of stone to be repaired and/or replaced.

### **Key references:**

OS 25inch map 1892 to 1914

London Gardens Trust

[www.parksandgardens.org](http://www.parksandgardens.org)

1908, The Francis Frith Collection (since 1860) View only on copyright. Bedfords

2020 Drawing Survey of Steps - Eric Mitchell

2020 Current photographs – Eric Mitchell

**Researcher:** Eric Mitchell 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 11): THE MOATED SITE OF MAYLAND'S HOUSE AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ555560 192940

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Earthworks situated within Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland which could be a medieval moated settlement. Currently hard to discern due to fallen deadwood.

**Materials:** Earthworks

**Size:** 40 by 40m square island with moat up to 5m wide and 2m deep.

**Orientation:** NW-SE

**Current State:** Very poor

**Current Use:** None: Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW)

**Existing Designations:** ASNW

**Brief History:** The location of these earthworks within ASNW suggested they were present before 1600 and the nearest site to them was Mayland's. A conversation with Don Tait (Friend of Dagnam Park) identified Mayland's as the most likely site. The transposed map (1633) shows a house surrounded by trees which supports the location shown on the LiDAR. A projected ancient trackway is also shown, this was pointed out by Don Tait during a walk around and bisects three moated sites within the parkland.

*Mayland's House transposed from the 1633 map with the projected ancient trackway and earthworks of a moated site located within ASNW site*



***Standing in the southern end of the moat with a bank (right) and treeline (left) marking the top of the moat***

Ernie Herbert (Herbie) indicated that

*'Maylands was part of the manor of Dagnams as early as the thirteenth century, although it seems to have been let out on lease.'* (Herbert, E. (c.2006) *The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.*)

Mayland's was sold off in 1919 and later became an aerodrome before assuming its current use of a golf course in 1936. The remains of the moated site are still within the Dagnam Park boundaries.

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** These earthworks are believed to be the medieval remains of Mayland's house and provide another example of lost or forgotten settlements at Dagnam Park. This site is situated with the ASNW boundaries suggesting a wooded and secluded location for the house.

**Historic:** The 1633 map shows Mayland's house in a semi-wooded location to support the possibility these earthworks are a medieval moated settlement. Dagnam's, Cockerels and Mayland's all appear on this map and an ancient trackway bisect all three moated sites. This provides an insight into the medieval settlement layout in this area and suggests the high status of this landscape due to its proximity to London.

**Aesthetic:** Mayland's appears on the 1633 map with trees around it creating a secluded site with views out across the valley. The site today is hidden within ASNW and adjacent to the golf course that now takes its name.

**Communal:** The current Dagnam Park Friends group from the local community is currently researching the site and encouraging local usage of the park.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of this site is that it provides an example of a medieval moated farm settlement, it is smaller than Cockerels but not the less an important part of this landscape. The distribution of the three settlements and the presence of an ancient trackway running between them provides an extensive insight into the layout of this medieval landscape. This layout fit will with the land being a royal hunting ground for many centuries before passing into private hands and being maintained as parkland.

Today it's easy to walk past this site without noticing anything other than fallen dead wood in a woodland. The fallen wood is preventing further damage to this area as it makes the site difficult to access. A site that could well go unnoticed without the aid of technology like LiDAR terrain modelling.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Site is difficult to access because of fallen deadwood and a section of the moat on the west appears to have gone completely.

### **Key References:**

1633 Map Dr Laurence Wright (commissioned)Map.  
OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96 (c.1875)  
2006 Herbert, E. The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.  
Dagnam Park.  
2020 Adams, R. Site Walking and Desktop Survey.  
[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 5): FISH POND AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ555121 193373

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** The Fish Pond, southeast of the manor is a long, narrow water feature between the park and adjacent farmland. It is heavily silted up and surrounded by dense woodland on three sides but more open to the east. A path through woods and rough grassland also runs along the eastern side. The site provides an important haven for wildlife in a relatively secluded location with minimal human disturbance.

**Materials:** Earthworks

**Size:** 156m long by 10 to 29m wide.

**Orientation:** North-South

**Current State:** Poor

**Current Use:** Silted body of water useful for wildlife.

**Existing Designations:** None

### **Brief History:**

Dagnam Park was a medieval hunting ground and the park was enclosed by a pale on the 1748 map. The early fish pond was just outside the pale away from grazing animals and a second pond was located between the paddock and meadow. . The woodland around is quite young but one standout oak pollard next to the Pond appears contemporary to the 1748 map. This has an enclosure around it on the OS 1st Ed map (Figure 2) suggesting it's more than a fenced-off clump of trees (Possible a Serpentine Lake), It appears that the Pond and Fish Pond (Figure 2) have been joined together, to create a very large earthwork 156m long and up to 29m wide.



**Figure 1. Transposed map (1748) on LIDAR terrain model (North to the top)**



**Figure 2. OS 1st Ed map showing the wooded enclosure**



*Figure 3. Current condition of the pond June 2020*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The earthworks for the ponds are extant and provide evidence of the original layout and structure. The pale runs along the northeast side of the meadow and paddock with the park itself to the southeast. Note the fish pond is outside of the pale. The overlaid 1748 map (Figure 1) is out of alignment with the LiDAR but Section 1 provides a similar shape to the Fish Pond and pond serving the meadow and paddock would also move into section 2.

**Historic:** The location of the pond on the edge of the park pale/fence line and the proximity to the house suggests it was part of the food supply for the house. The 1748 map refers to the land south of the house as a park and the modern classification is wood pasture suggesting grazing land for livestock and possible a deer park.

**Aesthetic:** The 1748 map shows an open body of water without trees surrounding it with views out from the house and driveway across the paddock and meadow to the southeast. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS map (1875) shows the feature enclosed with trees and extended possible making it more of a feature with glimmering water shaded by trees. The feature today is hidden by woodland on three sides, the occasional dog walker passed by on a rough track to the east.

**Communal:** The current Dagnam Park Friends group from the local community is currently researching the site and encouraging local usage of the park.

### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The significance of the fish pond to medieval and post-medieval parks lies in the food supply chain for the manor, grazing animals, rabbit warrens and fishponds are often associated with deer parks. Deer parks indicate high social status and permission from royal authority was required to enclose these landscapes. Today it's difficult to see the scale of this feature but it undoubtedly was modified to join the two ponds together. The excavation could be a water feature (Serpentine Lake) have provided soil to build other features in the designed landscape

e.g. The Circular mound and the Horseshoe Plantation. These features appeared post-1748 and could be associated with Humphry Repton's work at Dagnam Park.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Its current condition is poor and in the process of succession with heavy silting and vegetation gradually taking over. The trees provide dappled shade across the water but are gradually encroaching on the water. The pond is heavily silted and gradually being taken over by succession vegetation.

**Key References:**

1748, James Crow , A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3

1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96

2020, Adams, R. Site Walking and Desktop Survey.

2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance for The Historic Landscape of Dagnam Park.

2006, Herbert, E.The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.

London Gardens Trust History of Dagnam Park - <https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>

Friends of Dagnam Park accessed at <http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/Priory>

[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 10): ROUNDEL MOUNT AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ554835 193022

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Circular feature situated in designed parkland, now a public park used for recreation and grazed by deer.

**Materials:** Earthworks

**Size:** 38m Diameter and up to 2m high.

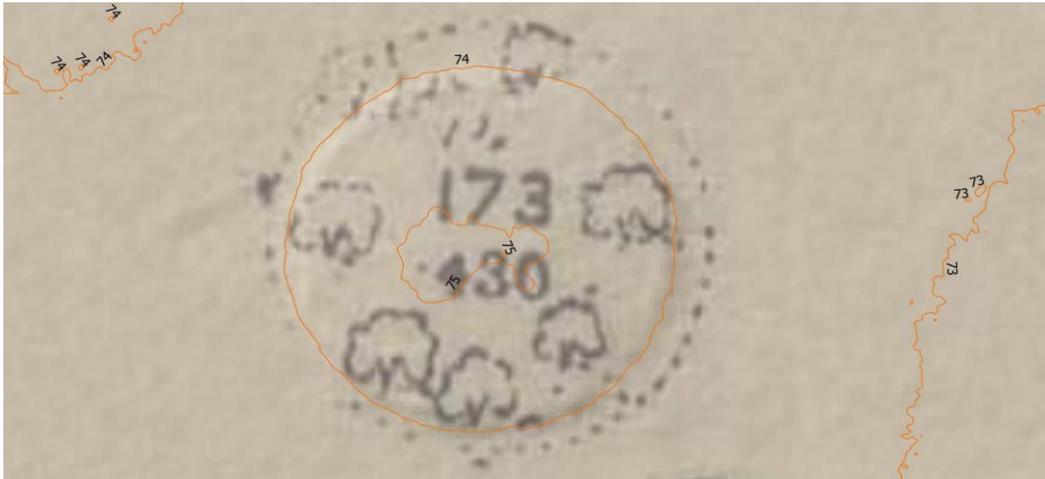
**Orientation:** Roundel mound southeast of the manor house.

**Current State:** Deteriorating.

**Current Use:** Grazing.

**Existing Designations:** Priority Habitat Parkland and Wood Pasture.

**Brief History:** The Roundel mount has been attributed to Humphry Repton and certainly fits with his style of design but no documentary evidence appears to exist e.g. a Red Book. Therefore, any assumptions are made by science and archaeology. There has been dendrochronology carried out on trees (possible on fallen deadwood!) which puts the original trees into the right timeframe for Repton's visit. The date of the pond excavation (suggested by author) is difficult to pin down but it occurred between 1748 and 1875 as demonstrated by the map evidence. To create the roundel mound would take approximately 1700m<sup>3</sup> of soil and the volume of soil excavated to join the fish ponds could be between 2000 to 3000m<sup>3</sup>. This could also have formed the mound by the cow pond (which also appeared between 1748 and 1875) to create a viewing platform looking out across the parkland and valley beyond. These features work in combination to create the picturesque vision across the landscape and driveway, also accredited to Repton's presence at Dagnam Park.



*1st Ed. OS map overlaid on the LIDAR to create contours*



*Roundel Mount 2020*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The feature provides evidential material of the creation of a landscaping mound probably from the soil resulting from nearby pond excavation. Two ponds southeast of the walled garden were excavated and joined together between 1748 and 1875. The volume of soil excavated could easily equate to the volume required to create the roundel mound. This would create two features associated with the picturesque movements design style. The water feature (fish pond) is similar in size to the serpentine lake at Hylands Park in Chelmsford, which was also designed by Repton.

Dendrochronology (carried out for Havering Council) on the original trees shows they were contemporary with the visit of Humphry Repton.

**Historic:** Humphry Repton was commissioned to work at Dagnam Park c.1802 and re-designed the driveway approach from the south. The Roundel mound is considered to be a feature created under Repton's advice, although no Red Book has been found. The trees around the mound today appear much younger and were possibly re-planted to maintain continuity of this feature.

**Aesthetic:** This feature breaks up the views across the parkland and contributes to design effects envisaged by the designer. Several individual specimens and small clumps of trees contribute to the effect creating perspective as well as the picturesque landscape. Today many specimen and clumps of trees remain to the west and southwest but the eastern side has become more succession woodland than open parkland.

**Communal:** Originally within a private landscape, it is now used by the local population for recreation who may also enjoy observing the grazing animals. The current Dagnam Park Friends group from the local community is currently researching the site and encouraging local usage.

#### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The Roundel Mount lies southwest of the manor house and pleasure grounds and breaks up the vistas in and out of the house and park. This feature demonstrated a technique used during the eighteenth century by the picturesque designers. Humphry Repton was a famous designer using this style and the Roundel Mount is attributed to his work at Dagnam Park.

Today this feature is primarily used by grazing animals and human recreation with its trees providing shade and food for the deer. The trees all appear too young to be part of the original planting but are there for continuity of this feature.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Succession woodland to the east has altered the designed landscape that was intact in 1946 as shown by aerial photos taken after the Second World War.

#### **Key References:**

1748, James Crow, A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3  
1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96  
2020, Adams, R. Site Walking and Desktop Survey.  
2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance for The Historic Landscape of Dagnam Park.  
2006, Herbert, E. The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.  
London Gardens Trust, History of Dagnam Park accessed at <https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>  
Friends of Dagnam Park accessed at <http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/Priory>  
[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 9): HORSESHOE PLANTATION/ VIEWING PLATFORM AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ554746 193108

**Description of Feature:** A pond with a mound on the western side surrounded by young trees. The mound is suffering erosion where visitors and animals climb up. An enclosure to the west of the Pleasure Ground and the Dogleg Avenue appear to make a second enclosure with estate railing closing up to the woodland belt on the western side.

**Materials:** Earthworks, trees and estate railings

**Size:** Overall 14,212m<sup>2</sup>

The viewing platform 20m diameter base, 7.5m diameter top and 4m Height, Area of Horseshoe Plantation 3000 m<sup>2</sup>

**Orientation:** E-W

**Current State:** Deteriorating

**Current Use:** Recreation and grazing

**Existing Designations:** Priority Habitat Parkland and Wood Pasture

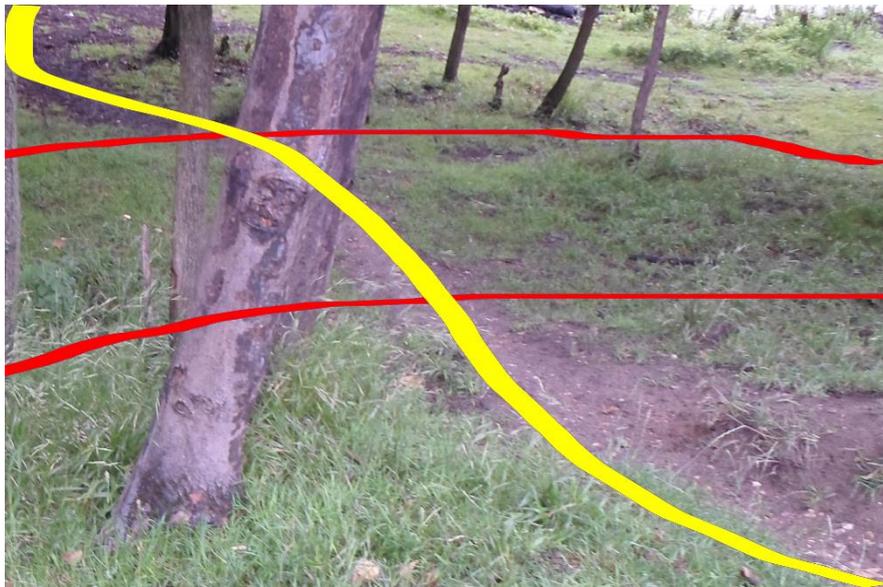
**Brief History:** Mid-nineteenth century (c.1857) viewing platform and enclosure extending the pleasure ground at Dagnam Park. The 1748 map refers to Cow Pond without any planting around it, but the 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS (1875) shows a mixed broadleaf and coniferous plantation, east of the expanded Cow Pond. Evidence suggests the viewing platform planting is post-1853 as there is *Sequoiadendron giganteum* tree stump on the eastern side and the OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map shows a mixed broadleaf and coniferous planting. Vistas out from the viewing platform, which is situated at the highest point southwest of the house (Figure 2) could offer a 360° overview of the parkland. This design phase has no documentary evidence and dating is based on surviving trees. 3 oak trees with their (yellow dots with dates indicated Figure 2) show evidence supporting a post-1853 installation. One tree appears to be the last in the dogleg avenue with a nearby tree a much older possible part of Repton's design and an oak tree in the horseshoe shape similar in size to the avenue tree.

However, the later phase appears to reinstate some more formal features into the landscape. Once again there is no known documentary evidence so theories are drawn from site walking, archaeology and tree dating and introduction dates providing evidence supporting a later phase of landscape design.

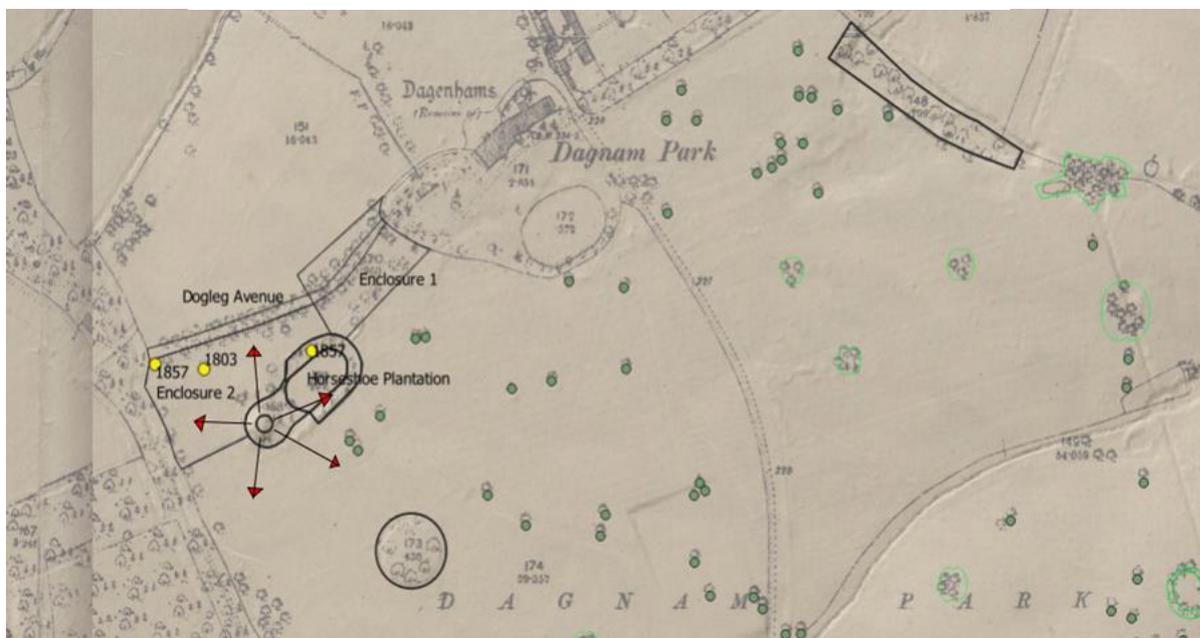
### **Explanation of Figures:**

Figure 1 The yellow line shows a desire line running up the mound if you walk around the mound as a semi-circular path rises from ground level (South) to the top (North). A comment made by Heather Hunter and Sonia Dewell (LotF) during a walk around Dagnam Park in February 2020.

Figure 2 shows some of the projected views out from the viewing platform in all direction and with a 4m platform seeing over the young trees of the avenue and the plantation. Figure 3 and 4 offer an artistic impression of how the viewing platform and planting around the old cow pond might have looked. The mound is distinctly sculpted on the eastern side with what appears to be a path. Figure 1 shows the mark of this path but it is difficult to see in a photograph hence the model to illustrate it.



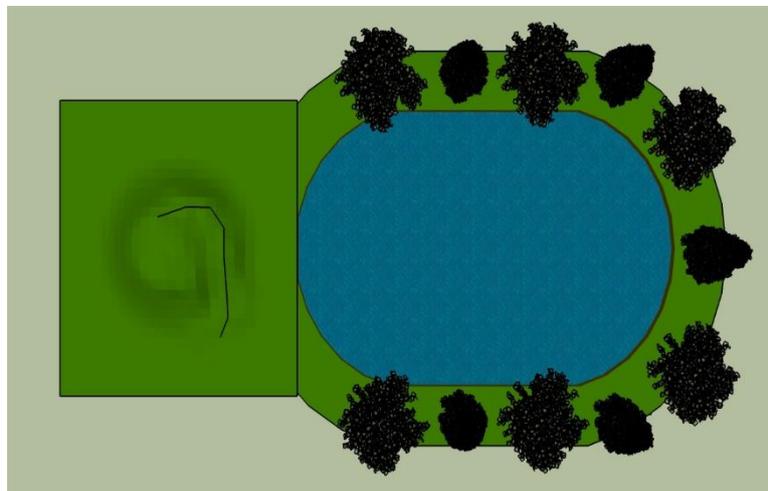
**Figure 1. Possible spiral path around a viewing platform at Dagnam Park**



**Figure 2 View out from the Horseshoe Plantation Mount on the OS 1st Ed. Map (1875)**



*Figure 3. Model of Horseshoe Plantation with mixed coniferous and broadleaf trees and the mound with a line marking what appears to be a semi-circular path*



*Figure 4. A plan view impression of how the plantation may have looked*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The Horseshoe Plantation has a semi-circular path running the mount leading up to the viewing platform at the apex to create a flat standing area. Joining up with other features it extends the pleasure ground to the shelterbelt with the dogleg avenue creating a walk to the shelterbelt on the west. The viewing platform has young trees around it today obscuring the views out, but standing in front of these trees inline provides an idea of the original intention (but 4m lower). Most of the avenue trees have gone but one appears to survive as does one of the horseshoe trees. Some estate railing also remains where the OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map shows enclosure.

**Historic:** The Horseshoe Plantation appears between 1748 and 1875 at Dagnam Park sometime after Repton's parkland re-design. The planting on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map and surviving trees helps to estimate the design date to the mid-nineteenth century. The formal features have been removed and replaced with planting and feature creating informal vistas across the parkland by Repton.

**Aesthetic:** This viewing platform appears in a key location to oversee the designed landscape. Map evidence suggests this high point in the landscape was chosen to emphasize parkland and provide a view in all directions. Today the young trees obscure the views out making it difficult to perceive the desired effect of this viewing platform. Desire lines have caused erosion on the compass points (N, S, E, W) hiding the semi-circular path running from the bottom of southern side to the apex of the northern side (Figure 3).

**Communal:** Originally within a private parkland. The current Dagnam Park Friends group from the local community is currently researching the site and encouraging local usage of the park.

#### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The Horseshoe Plantation/ viewing platform extends the pleasure grounds to the woodland shelterbelt but is a later design (c.1857) by an undocumented designer. Different owners adding their interpretation onto the design landscape and during this later phase formal gardens around the house have been softened to create a more picturesque style, with this later phase adding a little more formality back into the landscape. The straight drive illustrated on the 1748 map has become serpentine and introduces movement through the parkland. Some of these vistas have been lost because of trees and scrubland vegetation to the southeast of the old manor house and walled garden.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The mound is gradually being taken over by succession vegetation and the boundaries illustrated in enclosures one and two have been lost. Trees have been removed and sections of railings are missing or removed.

#### **Key References:**

- 1748, James Crow, A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3
- 1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> ed 25" map
- 2006, Herbert, E., The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.
- 2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance For The Historic Landscape Of Dagnam Park.
- 2020, Adams, R., Site Walking and Desktop Survey.

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 6): PLEASURE GROUND AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ554905 193258

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Estate railing and gate posts still delineate the area of the Pleasure Grounds. The trees and shrubs are reverting to their natural forms and some uncovered archaeology is visible (earthworks, brickwork and demolition rubble scattered around the site). The Lily Pond is the main surviving element within the pleasure ground attributed to Humphry Repton.

**Materials:** Earthworks

**Size:** 13,000m<sup>2</sup>

**Orientation:** East to West

**Current State:** Very poor

**Current Use:** Grazing and Recreation

**Existing Designations:** Priority Habitat Parkland and Wood Pasture.

**Brief History:** *'There have been at least three manor houses - and possibly as many as five - on the site of Dagnam Park, including a moated Elizabethan manor house in the sixteenth century. From the house, a drive led over the northern end of the surrounding moat via a causeway and then north towards Noak Hill and the South Weald road.'*

*In 1772 successful City merchant Sir Richard Neave (1721-1814), then living at nearby Havering-Atte-Bower, purchased the Dagnams Park estate and demolished the existing manor house to replace it with an elegant Georgian mansion with far-reaching views.*

*The gardens had been laid out in the late seventeenth or early-eighteenth century but Sir Richard had money and a social position to maintain (he was made Governor of the Bank of England in 1780). In 1812 he commissioned leading garden designer Humphry Repton to advise on a makeover of his estate.*

*(In regard to the Pleasure Grounds area) Repton later recorded in "Fragments" (1816) that he found "the distance presented a pleasing offskip" but thought the round pond in front of the house (a legacy from earlier layouts) was disfigured by a hurdle used to keep out the cattle.*

*However, Repton felt that "there is something so cheerful in the glitter of water: we must always give it up with reluctance" and devised a fence to be planted out around the water's edge. He also devised a post and chain just below the water's surface opposite the house, to*

*fence off a paved area which the cattle could enter, so that their reflections could be admired in the water's surface by the house's residents. The Neaves' famous stone dog stood guard over the pond.*

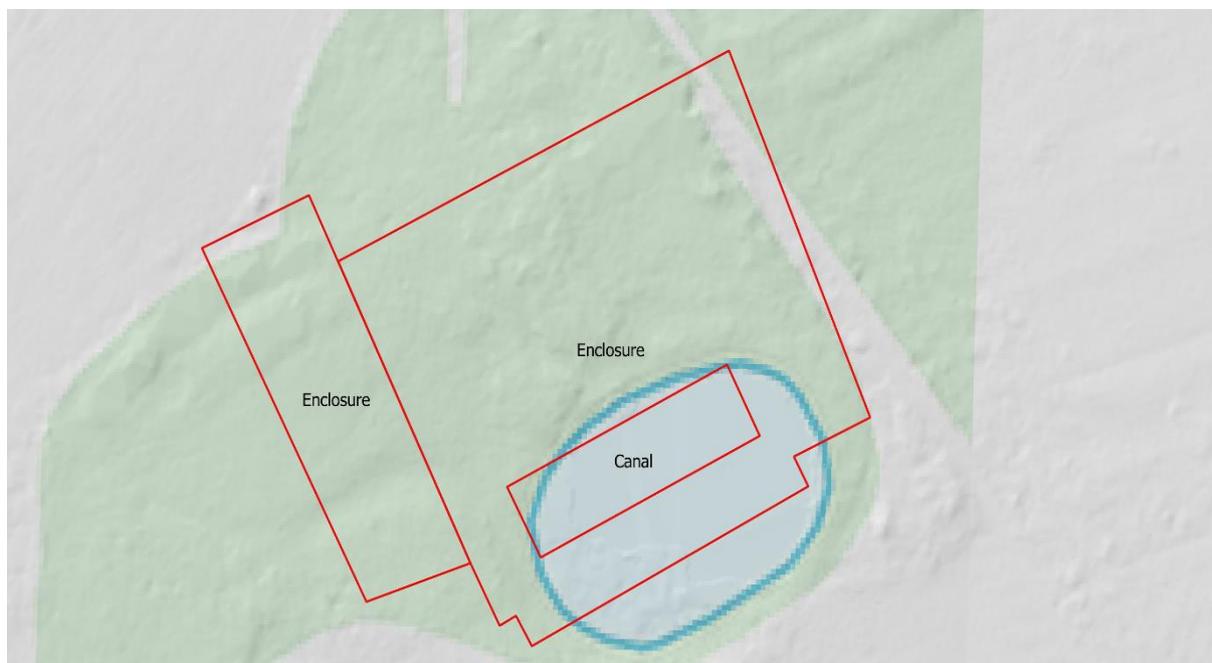
*In the nineteenth century the old walled garden was converted into a rose garden entered by wrought-iron gates. There were also magnificent elms and specimen trees in the park and a vast oak on the corner of the house supported by 26 pit props.*

*Before the first World War, the Neaves had a staff of over 40 servants. Afterwards, in 1919, Sir Thomas Neave, the fifth baronet, sold a large portion of his estates and retained only Dagnams, the park and Dagnam Park Farm, which amounted to 550 acres. The sitting tenants of the farms were given the option to buy their land before the sale and most did so.*

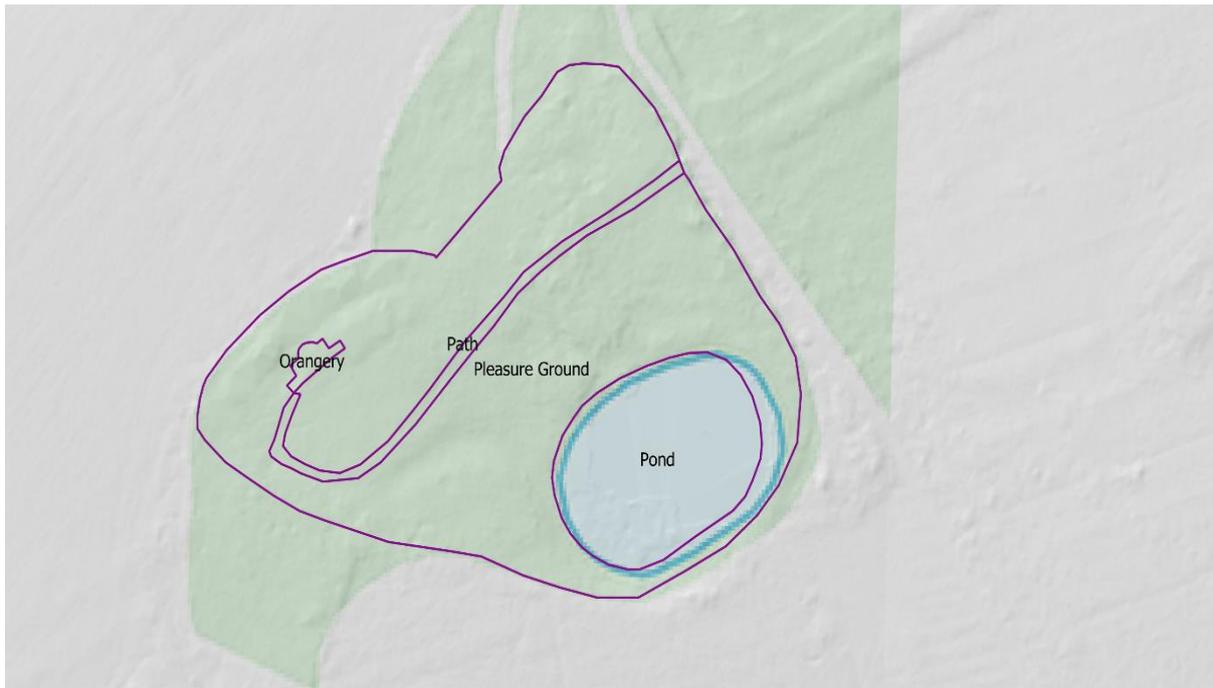
*The end for Dagnams came in World War 2: the house was requisitioned for the army, Sir Thomas died in 1940 and at the end of the war the house suffered a direct hit from a rocket which cracked the front wall.'*

Taken from <https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>

The detailed history of the site is still being researched, most particularly by the Friends of Dagnam Park. Excavation of the buildings is proceeding and a more detailed picture is being revealed through field walking and LiDAR technology combined.



**Figure 1. The 1748 layout imposed on modern OS and LIDAR**



*Figure 2. The post Repton pleasure ground layout as shown by the OS 1st Ed map (1875)*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The surviving features enable a good appreciation of Repton's original design for this area of the site, comprising pond, trees, modified features from the earlier design iteration, routeways and estate Railing (possibly post Repton but possibly contemporary).

**Historic:** Repton was one of the most desirable and high-status designers of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century and he lived locally. His techniques to soften the man-made landscape to create a more naturalistic parkland are evident at Dagnam Park, one of the most prominent features is the Lilly pond in the pleasure grounds (Figure 1). Where two formal enclosure and a formal seventeenth century canal were modified to form a curvilinear compound and oval pond (Figure 2).

### **Aesthetic:**

This site illustrates the impact of the picturesque landscape philosophy on the later design of one of Humphry Repton. His designs transformed formal gardens into informality to create a semi-natural appearance to a designed landscape. Joining 'convenience' to nature without the strongly imposed formality seen in seventeenth century landscape design.

### **Communal:**

The pleasure ground around the house was designed for entertainment to show off the status of the family and the estate beyond while maintaining the subtle intimacy of a garden. The current Dagnam Park Friends group from the local community is currently researching the site and encouraging local usage.

## Statement of Significance Summary

The Pleasure Ground is located at the heart of the park surrounding the relict house and walled garden, it is thought to have been laid out by Humphry Repton whose design work is nationally significant. Repton lived locally in Essex. There is no surviving Red Book of Repton's work on the site (although he does discuss this in a later publication: see above). Exactly what he advised is not known and so relict features are of particular significance.

More generally, the Pleasure Grounds evidence the change from the formality of seventeenth century design to naturalistic approach popular in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century landscape design.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The site is not registered and is vulnerable to inappropriate planting or development. It is also subject to the increasing pressure of usage. A greater understanding of the site mitigates this vulnerability and the work of the Friends of Dagnam Park has greatly enhanced the community involvement and protection.

### Key References:

1748, James Crow, A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3  
2006, Herbert, E., The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.  
2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance For The Historic Landscape Of Dagnam Park.  
2020, Adams, R., Site Walking and Desktop Survey.  
1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96  
London Gardens Trust History of Dagnam Park accessed at <https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>  
Friends of Dagnam Park accessed at <http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/Priory>  
[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 4): STABLES AND WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

**NGR:** TQ554998 193416

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Low walls and associated paths etc of the original and re-built productive gardens and stables at Dagnam park. The site is partially uncovered archaeology in public parkland used for deer grazing and recreation.

**Materials:** Earthworks, brickwork and pathways

**Size:** 20,800m<sup>2</sup>

**Orientation:** East to West

**Current State:** Very poor

**Current Use:** Grazing and Recreation

**Existing Designations:** Priority habitat Parkland and Wood Pasture

**Brief History:** *In 1772 successful City merchant Sir Richard Neave (1721-1814), then living at nearby Havering-atte-Bower, purchased the Dagnams Park estate and demolished the existing manor house to replace it with an elegant Georgian mansion with far-reaching views.*

*The gardens had been laid out in the late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth century but Sir Richard had money and a social position to maintain (he was made Governor of the Bank of England in 1780). In 1812 he commissioned leading garden designer Humphry Repton to advise on a makeover of his estate.*

*In the nineteenth century the old walled garden was converted into a rose garden entered by wrought-iron gates.*

*In 1919, Sir Thomas Neave, the fifth baronet, sold a large portion of his estates and retained only Dagnams, the park and Dagnam Park Farm, which amounted to 550 acres. During World War II the house was requisitioned for the army, Sir Thomas died in 1940 and at the end of the war the house suffered a direct hit from a rocket which cracked the front wall.*

*(From <https://www.londongardentrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>)*

Dagnam Park is now a public park but the remains of the walled gardens, stables etc remain in close association with features relevant to the twentieth century wartime usage.



**Figure 1.** Transposed 1748 plan showing the stables and Charles II walled garden



**Figure 2.** OS 1st Ed map shows the walled garden with a buffer of trees on the southern edge, hiding the walls of the stable block and walled garden

NOTE: The following visualisations have been created using images and maps from research by the Friends of Dagnam Park and added to aiding interpretation of the site.

Models produced from images and the 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS map, help to visualise the walled garden and its surrounding area as they may have appeared in the late-nineteenth century (Fig1& 2)



*Figure 3. Impression of the walled garden (c1875) looking towards the stables with the manor house beyond*



*Figure 4. Impression of the stables and walled garden as they may have appeared from the manor house*

The following notes were made following the survey of the site:

The walled garden is thought to originally date to c.1667

The layout, as it is now, retains evidence of changes, with some elements of the structures being relocated and walls possibly extended at some period. The south-eastern section of the wall in the eastern section of the garden appears to be on a slightly different alignment to the rest (Figure 2).

The later stable block was added to the western end of the (c.1803) walled garden, so the extension might have been created to compensate for this.

On the 1748 map, the layout (Figure 1) is slightly out of line (Figure 3 was confirmed by site walking and GPS survey) but the pool shows the approximate centre. The eastern section appears open, not enclosed by walls. The shelterbelt on the southern side may have been a recommendation to hide the formal wall from the parkland view towards the house.



*Figure 5. GPS point on the LIDAR confirming wall alignment*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The walls and structures were demolished (c.1951) but the footings along with paths and circular pond and the footprint of the stables and associated buildings survive to provide considerable material for an understanding of the history of this area of the site. Today the remains have been partially uncovered and brickwork and paths etc. are visible when walking the site. There is substantial evidential material for the history of this element of the site, which would also inform the wider history of designed landscape at Dagnams Park.

**Historic:** The walled garden is assumed to have been originally part of the seventeenth century house and gardens as Herbert (c.2006) indicates "*The map which was produced in 1748, shows that Dagnams house, the garden, and the Charles II walled-garden, were in the tenancy of Lady Petre...*". The layout appears to have been altered between 1748 and 1875 probably during the redevelopment of the pleasure grounds in 1812-16. The garden was re-purposed in the late-nineteenth century as a rose garden. The relict archaeological material retains evidence of these various alterations as well as evidence of war-time usage.

**Aesthetic:** The formal layout (shown on 1748 map) fits with seventeenth century fashion and appears to have been partially retained into the subsequent period with modifications (shown on OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed 1875). The formal courtyard and stables north of the house (1748 map) were demolished and moved to the kitchen garden (c.1803) to open up views out from the main entrance towards Noak Hill. The shelter belt of trees around the walled garden created in (c.1803) would have screened the walls on the approach to the house. Today an earth bank running parallel to the southern wall has several large oaks that would have shielded the walls from view.

**Communal:** The Friends of Dagnam Park group, from the local community, is currently undertaking research on the site and encouraging local usage.

### Statement of Significance Summary:

A productive garden with, fish pond and the deer park was an ideal part of an estates designed landscape, combining aesthetic, status and practical elements.

The relict walled garden that survives at Dagnams incorporates several periods of change within the designed landscape.

The historic walled garden area is easily seen and 'experienced' and has a high modern communal significance as it allows appreciation of the physical history of the site, including relict from the twentieth century usage for military occupation. (which is explained during site tours by the Friends).

There is also considerable scope for community archaeology and research to gain further information on this aspect of the site.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The site is not registered and is vulnerable to inappropriate planting or development. It is also subject to increasing pressure of usage. Greater understanding of the site mitigates this vulnerability and the work of the Friends of Dagnam Park has greatly enhanced the community involvement and protection.

With specific reference to the remains of the walled garden: Exposed archaeology with grazing and recreation activities could lead to damage as could exposure to weather.

**Key References:**

1748, James Crow, A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3

2006, Herbert, E., The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.

2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance For The Historic Landscape Of Dagnam Park.

2020, Adams, R., Site Walking and Desktop Survey.

1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96

London Gardens Trust History of Dagnam Park accessed at

<https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>

Friends of Dagnam Park accessed at <http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/Priory>

[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 2 and 3 ): PRIORY AND NORTH LODGE AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3

**NGR:** Priory TQ554469 193534, North Lodge TQ554549 193639

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Earthworks visible by use of LIDAR.

**Materials:** Earthworks

**Size:** Priory and Lodge 14,750m<sup>2</sup>

**Orientation:** East to West

**Current State:** Very poor

**Current Use:** Grazing and Recreation

**Existing Designations:** Temporary Residential and Nature Reserve

**Brief History:** Dagnam's and surrounding parkland was part of royal hunting grounds in medieval times that transitioned into private parkland.

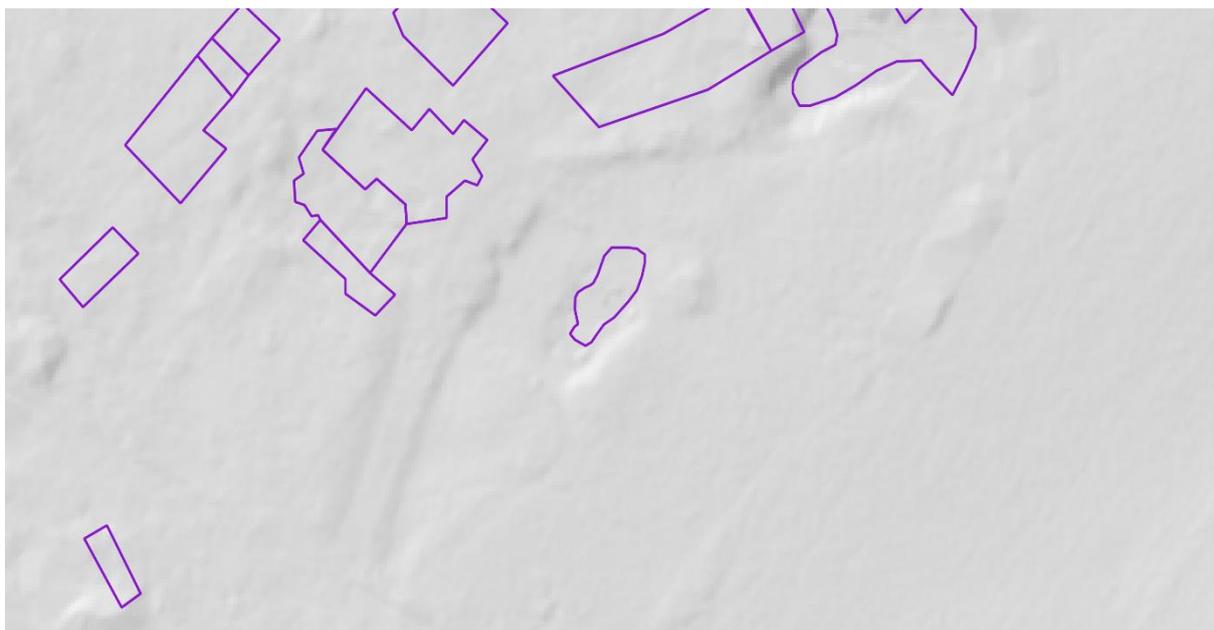
The priory and lodge formed part of the historic package of land ownership through the centuries which included the moat, lodge, priory, deer park, fishponds etc. A deer park is illustrated on a map 1748 with the park pale is clearly illustrated.

The images of the priory before it was demolished show elaborate gardens which can be seen as earthworks on the LiDAR. Other features are shown on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map include the lodge and graveyard associated with the priory (Figure 4 and 5). The OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map (1875) indicates the presence of the graveyard and shows details for the garden layout of the lodge, evidence that can't be seen on the ground due to access restrictions and vegetation cover.

Using map evidence with modern technology these earthworks are still visible and overlaid on modern aerial photography the extent of surviving elements can be priory, deer park, fishponds etc.



**Figure 1. Dagnam Priory and North Lodge (yellow area shows no current access)**



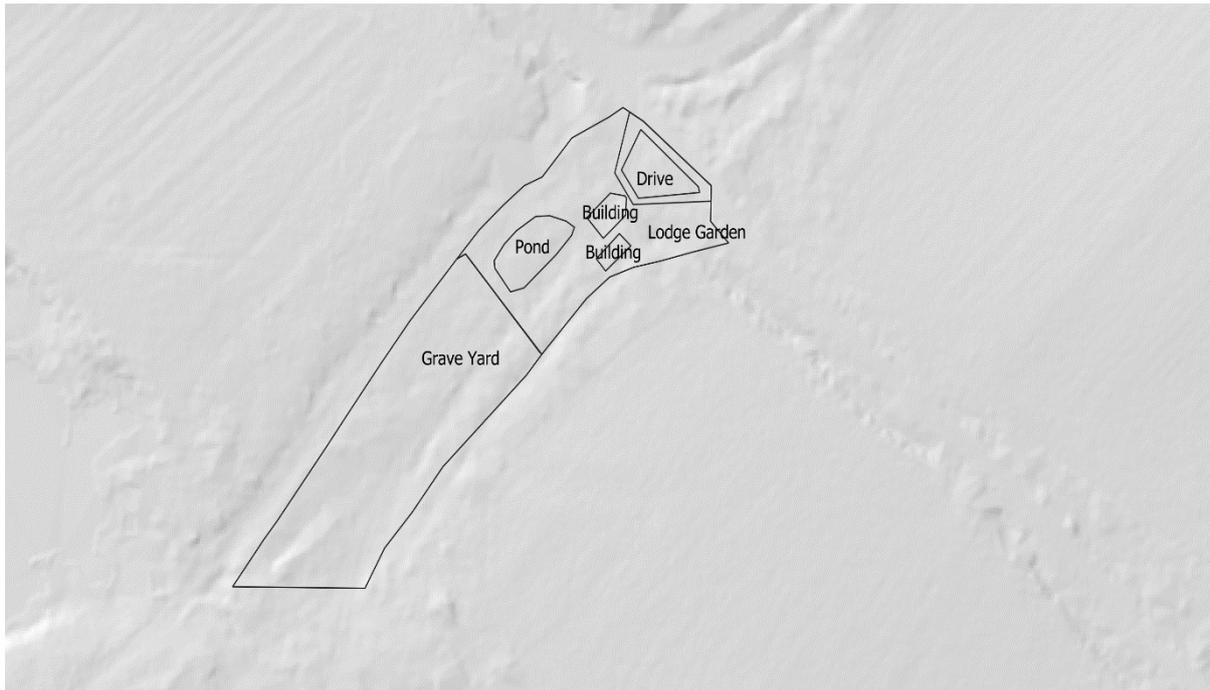
**Figure 2. Priory Garden earthworks on the LIDAR**



**Figure 3. Priory Garden marked out on the LIDAR for images on the Friends of Dagnam Park website**



**Figure 4. The Lodge, gardens and graveyard associated with the Priory**



*Figure 5. Earthworks of the Lodge, garden and graveyard*

### Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The earthworks provide archaeological evidence for the original location of the manorial priory and lodge. They contain evidence for the design, layout and construction of these features. The Deeds for Dagnam Priory were passed to the records office in Chelmsford in the early-twentieth century (and the land sold to London County Council (1946) included the Priory) such that the archaeological earthworks have a documentary complement.

**Historic:** The priory and lodge formed part of the historic package of land ownership which included the moat, lodge, priory, deer park, fishponds etc. Dagnam's and surrounding parkland was part of royal hunting grounds in medieval times that transitioned into private parkland. A deer park is illustrated on a map 1748. The park pale is clearly illustrated suggesting the status was passed on to the landowner. Maintaining a continuous connection between the manor and priory until both were demolished in the 1950s.

**Aesthetic:** The Priory had substantial land holdings and elaborate gardens around it, as well as two ponds to the south and a large lake to the north (Figure 1)

**Communal:** The earthworks are not physically accessible by the community, but the history can be accessed virtually via the Friends of Dagnam Park website.

## **Statement of Significance Summary**

The Priory and Lodge form part of the extensive and long-standing status landscape of Dagnam Park, being part of the earliest iteration of the manorial holdings which culminated in the Dagnam Park mansion and gardens and designed landscape. The final sale before demolition included all three properties, which had a shared history for hundreds of years. All three properties (Priory Lodge and Mansion) are now only evidence in relict form, but evidence of their presence can be found all over this site to provide a picture of very high-status landscapes over 700 years.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The area of the earthworks is now temporary accommodation with vehicular traffic and static caravans on the site.

## **Key References:**

1748, James Crow, A plan of an estate called Dagnams situated in the hamlet of Rumford. ERO D/DNe P3  
2006, Herbert, E., The Farms of Harold Hill and Noak Hill. Brief History.  
2011, Havering Council Statement of Significance For The Historic Landscape Of Dagnam Park.  
2020, Adams, R., Site Walking and Desktop Survey.  
1875, OS 1<sup>st</sup> Ed map sheet LXVII 5 Surveyed 1886-96  
London Gardens Trust History of Dagnam Park accessed at <https://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/dagnam.htm>  
Friends of Dagnam Park accessed at <http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk/Priory>  
[www.lidarfinder.com](http://www.lidarfinder.com)

**Researcher:** Robert Adams 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 7 and 8): COLUMN BASES AT DAGNAM PARK

**Location:** Dagnam Park, Dagnam Park Drive, Romford, RM3 9DR

The pair of column bases are currently in the undergrowth south of the house site.

**NGR:** TQ554949 193207, TQ554960 193217

**Local Authority:** The London Borough of Havering

**Description of feature:** Each base is approximately 50 centimetres square and of similar height, apparently constructed of limestone. The bases are in the Attic style and are thought to have supported a pair of Ionic columns which flanked the front entrance to the mansion. Del Smith (Friends of Dagnam Park) has accurate drawings and precise measurements which he has carried out in conjunction with the archaeological excavation of the mansion's foundations.

**Material:** Limestone

**Current state:** Both bases are partly concealed by undergrowth, but they appear to be in sound condition, despite some superficial moss growth. They are partially sunk into the ground, so it is difficult to make an accurate assessment of their overall structural integrity without further excavation work.

**Current Use:** None

**Existing Designation:** None

**Brief History:** The last house on the site was an elegant Georgian mansion commissioned by Sir Richard Neave and built between 1772 and 1776. Unusually, the house faced North over fairly mundane grassland and distant woods, while the Southern aspect, enhanced by the contributions of Humphry Repton, was much more impressive. This vista across the remodelled lake and landscaped deer-park would only have been enjoyed fully by the resident family and their favoured visitors. The Northern main entrance was in the classical style, with a pair of Ionic columns supporting a triangular pediment and framing a semi-circular stained-glass window. It is believed that the attic bases would have supported these impressive columns.



### Statement of Significance

The column bases provide valuable evidence of construction techniques used in neo-classical Georgian architecture, while further inspection of the material used may provide indicators of its origin and possibly even the craftsmen employed in making the items. Their harmonious design and finish offer a pleasing aesthetic dimension, and if, as intended, they are replaced in their original positions by the house entrance, they would provide visitors with an insight into the grandeur and ambition of the original house design.

In summary, the principal significance of the pair of Attic column bases lies in their value as examples of the architectural style in vogue when the house was built in the late-eighteenth century. The quality of the materials used would provide an indicator to the status and wealth of the mansion's owner, with implications for his role in the local community.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Because Dagnam Park has open access, sites like the house foundations will always be vulnerable to those of an anti-social disposition. The park was formerly threatened by joy-riders and intrusive motorcyclists who caused some damage to the terrain. The local council has created a series of natural barriers across the site, which currently seems to have eliminated that problem. Once the house site is made more accessible to visitors, thought will need to be given to its protection for future visitors to enjoy this fascinating relic.

### Key References:

1777 Chapman and André- Map of Essex  
1805, Ordnance Survey  
1844, Tithe Maps  
1881, Ordnance Survey- 1881  
1919, Auction Map  
[www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk](http://www.friendsofdagnampark.org.uk)  
LCC photo archive

**Researcher:** John McLaughlin 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 22): PARKLANDS BRIDGE, GAYNES PARK

**Location:** Corbets Tey Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2XU

**NGR:** TQ555886 185116

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Parklands with its lake and bridge was formerly part of Gaynes (or Engaynes) Manor but today the lake, bridge and grass walk are all that is left of the 100-acre park laid out by Sir James Esdaile c1770 when he also dammed a stream to create a lake with a bridge built at its east end. The bridge is listed Grade II by Historic England and was on the 'at risk' register in 2000. Since that time, with the help of Havering Council and various grants, restoration to the bridge began in 2015 and finished a year later. New balustrades were installed using stainless steel rods and the bridge was given a lime wash coating and the footpath across the bridge was replaced. Historic England describe the bridge as stuccoed over brick with a central large semi-circular arch with a stepped wedge-shaped stone at the crown of the arch and two smaller blocked side arches of similar form. There are four piers with raised rectangular panels. It has a balustrade parapet with panelled standards and arched cap-stones. The approach walls are curved and the bridge is crossed by means of a concrete path. The bridge is accessed from the willow lined northern bank of the lake by a grassed walk while on the southern side is rough pasture and school grounds. The narrow steep banks of the lake support a mix of tall herbs, willow trees, and marginal vegetation. The surrounding woodland includes various dominant species including sycamore, oak, and ash while the northern bank of the lake has an impressive treeline of white, weeping and grey willows as well as black and Lombardy poplars.

**Material:** The bridge is stuccoed over brick with a central large semi-circular arch with a stepped wedge-shaped stone at the crown of the arch and two smaller blocked side arches of similar form. There are four piers with raised rectangular panels. It has a balustrade parapet with panelled standards and arched cap-stones. The approach walls are curved and the bridge is crossed by means of a concrete path

**Size:** Parklands Park is 11.4 acres (4.63 hectares)

**Orientation:** The eighteenth century Parklands Bridge is situated in Parklands and is at the eastern end of the lake. The park is a public open space situated at the Corbets Tey end of Upminster in the London Borough of Havering. The site is accessible on foot from Corbets Tey Road and the western end of Parkland Avenue and by car from Park Farm Road where there is a small car park. The landscape is rural to the west and south of the park and suburban to the east and north.

**Current State:** Funding was raised to restore the Bridge in 2016 following years of deterioration and although the Bridge now looks structurally as it did c1770 some of the Bridge's new lime wash is already flaking.

**Current Use:** The Bridge and the lake it crosses are the major features of Parklands Open Space which is a public amenity. The Bridge can be crossed from the north to a narrow footpath on the southern side and the whole area is used by the public for recreational purposes. A fishing club uses the lake.

**Existing designations:** The Bridge has been listed by Historic England as Grade II.

**Brief History:** Parklands and its bridge are on the site of Gaynes or Engaynes manor, which in 1086 was the largest of the three manors in Upminster. At the time of the Domesday Survey Gaynes manor covered c1,600 acres including forest. During the following years the manor had a catalogue of owners until Sir James Esdaile acquired the estate c1766. Sir James was a wealthy banker and had the previous house demolished and built an elegant mansion c1770 designed by James Paine. The stream flowing through the south part of the 100-acre estate was dammed to form a lake and a bridge built at the east end, also designed by James Paine, and an island formed in the middle of the lake, the whole area being surrounded by trees. A pavilion and small waterfall were built at the west end of the lake. The improvements to the grounds were described as being 'with great taste' and in the park 'beautiful clumps of trees were planted by Sir James, who likewise formed the lake, a handsome sheet of water, and planted the charming shrubbery walks at great cost'. On Sir James' death in 1793 the estate passed to his son Peter and then to his son James who began to sell off significant parts of the estate his grandfather had increased to 750 acres. By 1820 540 acres had been sold and the estate broken up into smaller properties. In 1819 and 1820 attempts were made to sell the manor house but without success the central mansion and west wing were demolished and the remaining east wing and park sold. In 1821 the Reverend John Clayton bought parts of the estate and his son the Reverend George in 1844 bought the remainder of the park and had a new manor built.

The Victorian Gaynes Park: After his death in 1862 his widow married Henry Joslin: Mrs Joslin died in 1873 and in June 1874 Hubert Atkin Gilliat became the owner, soon after adding the adjoining 54 acres of the Londons estate. Gilliat attempted to set up a large-scale dairy farm which was unsuccessful and in 1877 he sold the estate to Henry Joslin. After Joslin's death in 1927 the estate was unsuccessfully offered for sale. The estate was then split up into 17 lots and auctioned in 1929 mostly to developers. The new manor was demolished and the Gaynes Park housing estate was built with only the lake, the bridge, and a grass walk surviving from the historic estate which was acquired by Hornchurch Urban District Council who, in 1956/57, cleaned the completely silted up lake which had been overgrown with wild iris.

Over a number of years, the bridge had fallen into disrepair, it had lost its parapets and grey metal railings had been erected along both sides of the bridge. By the end of the 1990's weeds and shrubs were growing on the bridge and many of its ornamental features were missing and the footpath over the bridge had eroded. By this time the Grade II historic bridge was on Historic England's 'at risk' register and funding sought for its restoration. It took another fourteen years to raise enough money to carry out the restoration but by 2016 the bridge was restored to its former glory.



*Parklands Bridge post- restoration 2020*



*Parklands Bridge pre-restoration*



*Nineteenth century old series OS Map of Gaynes Estate showing fishpond and bridge*



*Victorian Gaynes Manor House early twentieth century*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The bridge provides evidence for the history of the site, the structural materials and methods of the period and also the aesthetic fashion in landscaping of the period and subsequent.

### **Historic:**

The history of the Parklands Park and its historic Bridge are well documented through maps, images, books, archaeological assessment, historic documents and estate papers. James Paine's c1770 design for Parklands Bridge is a fine example of his work in the Palladian revival style: a few years earlier Paine had designed the new Thorndon Hall. Although the Bridge was not affected the Gaynes estate was broken up following Sir James Esdaile's death in 1793 and the gardens, lake and its bridge survived under different owners until the estate was sold in parts to developers in 1929. The Hornchurch Urban District Council bought eleven acres including the lake and bridge for use as a public park. The next significant period of history for the bridge is its restoration completed in 2016 following years of the Bridge being on Historic England's 'at risk' register. The restoration of the bridge received extensive local press coverage. The Friends Group held an 'open house' event in Parklands in 2016 to celebrate the completion of the restoration and to enable the public to learn more about the bridge's history.

James Paine, architect of Thorndon Hall, was designer of the now demolished Gaynes Manor c1770, and within the Manor's 100-acre park Paine also designed the impressive Parklands Bridge. At the time of acquiring Gaynes Manor Sir James Esdaile's wife was already owner of the prestigious New Place estate in Upminster. Sir James spent considerable sums building many of Upminster's largest residences including Londons and Harwood Hall. Parklands Bridge linked the route from Gaynes to Londons.

**Aesthetic:** The eighteenth century bridge is an aesthetically pleasing design attributed to designer and architect James Paine, who was also the architect of Thorndon Hall. From the bridge there are beautiful views along the lake and of the northern bank with its impressive willow trees. The bridge is an excellent place to watch the abundance of wildlife on the lake.

**Communal:** Parklands Park and bridge are owned by Havering Urban District Council and they support the Friends of Parklands, who were formed in 2012 and have monthly working parties with the aim of preserving and enhancing the natural environment. The park and bridge are open to the public throughout the year and it is an important green space for walkers, dog walkers, and for the public to enjoy the peace of the area. The lake is well used for angling.

### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The significant period for Parklands Bridge is in the 1770's when it formed part of Sir James Esdaile's vision for improvements to his estate as well as its link to renowned architect James Paine. Today the Bridge is of great heritage interest to visitors and is a wonderful survivor of the lost Great Gaynes estate and its 100-acre park, while also being a fine example of the design of architect James Paine. Celebrations in 2016 following the bridge's restoration enabled the public to learn more of the history of the site. The view from the bridge along the lake is aesthetically pleasing and is an excellent place to study the wildfowl. Parklands is an important green space for local residents offering enjoyment and relaxation from the busy London commuter town of Upminster. The bridge and its ancient poplars make a strong contribution to the town's heritage.

### **Issues and vulnerabilities: (vandalism, decay, access, specific threats)**

There is a possible risk of vandalism to the structure of the bridge due to all year-round access to the site as well as the risk of general disrepair and the lack of funds.

### **Key references:**

- 1856 Wilson T L *Sketches of Upminster* pp 25-32, 74-77
- nineteenth century Old Series Ordnance Survey map RM2734
- 1958 Upminster Workers' Educational Association, *The Story of Upminster* Book 3 *Historic Buildings II* p 18
- 1959 Upminster Workers' Educational Association, *The Story of Upminster* Book 7 *The Manor of Gaynes* pp 11-26
- 1973 Body, Valerie *The Upminster Story* Swan Libraries p 3
- 1983 Victoria County History of Essex *vii* pp 149-152
- 1986 Drury, John A *History of Upminster and Cranham* Ian Henry Publications Ltd pp 42-3
- Early-twentieth century postcard of Gaynes Park house
- 1996 Benton, Tony *Upminster The story of a garden suburb* Gates Parish & Co pp 55-60
- 2004 and 2020 photographs Jill Plater
- [www.londongardensonline.org.uk](http://www.londongardensonline.org.uk)
- [www.friendsofparklands.org.uk](http://www.friendsofparklands.org.uk)
- [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk)

**Researcher:** Jill Plater 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 19): KISSING GATE, LANGTONS GARDENS

**Location:** Langtons Gardens, Billet Lane, Hornchurch, RM11 1XJ

**NGR:** TQ553676 187518

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of feature:** A kissing gate is a type of gate that allows people, but not livestock, to pass through. The gate has a half round part-enclosure section, constructed with 6 rounded horizontal bars supported by 4 long and flat vertical bars, made of a ferrous metal. The hinged gate that would be trapped between its arms no longer stands. A small section of metal estate fencing stands to the left of the gate.

**Material:** Ferrous metal, possibly cast or wrought iron.

**Size:** approx. 1.2 meters high and wide

**Orientation:** The feature is aligned with the historic driveway or path which used to run from Langtons House to the wider estate landscape beyond, and what is now the junction to the High Street and Abbs Cross Lane.

**Current State:** Overall the site is successfully maintained to a high standard by the London Borough of Havering. However, the gate is rusted and almost fully obscured by the holly hedge. This area is generally little used except for informal recreation.

**Current Use:** Langtons Gardens is a popular amenity for local residents and is used by a number of different user groups for informal recreational activities and formal events. In contrast to the garden's other features, the Kissing Gate is a hidden treasure on the site with no interpretive signage, or use, and only a handful of the staff and volunteers have awareness of its existence and significance.

**Existing Designations: Local Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest:** Langtons Gardens, including Fielders Field is a grade 1 Historic Park and Garden of Local Interest, as set out in the LBH Heritage Supplementary Planning Document (2011). The Gardens are also recorded in the London Inventory of Historic Green Spaces compiled by the Historic Parks and Gardens Trust on behalf of English Heritage, and are also included on Havering's Heritage Asset Register. **The Kissing Gate would fall under this non-designated protection.**

**Langtons Conservation area:** Langtons Gardens and Fielder Field form a key part of the Langtons Conservation Area. **The Kissing Gate would fall under this non-designated protection.**

**Archaeological Priority Area and Archaeological Priority Zone:** The Kissing Gate is a heritage asset and should be recorded as part of the above-ground archaeology of the site.

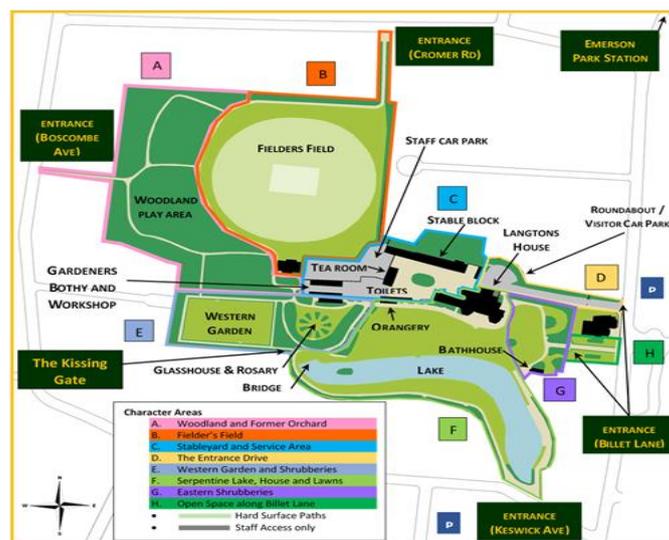
**Brief History:** Langtons House, as it appears today, is mainly a Georgian red brick mansion set in a historic public pleasure garden, both owned by the London Borough of Havering.

The garden includes a large grass area surrounded by box hedging, shrubberies, flower borders etc. The current path layout dates from the nineteenth century, having been laid out sometime between 1850 and 1872. The 1872 OS Map also shows the horse shoe shape lined by trees. The rose garden is a twentieth century addition, with earlier plans showing a grassy space with a few trees and shrubs.

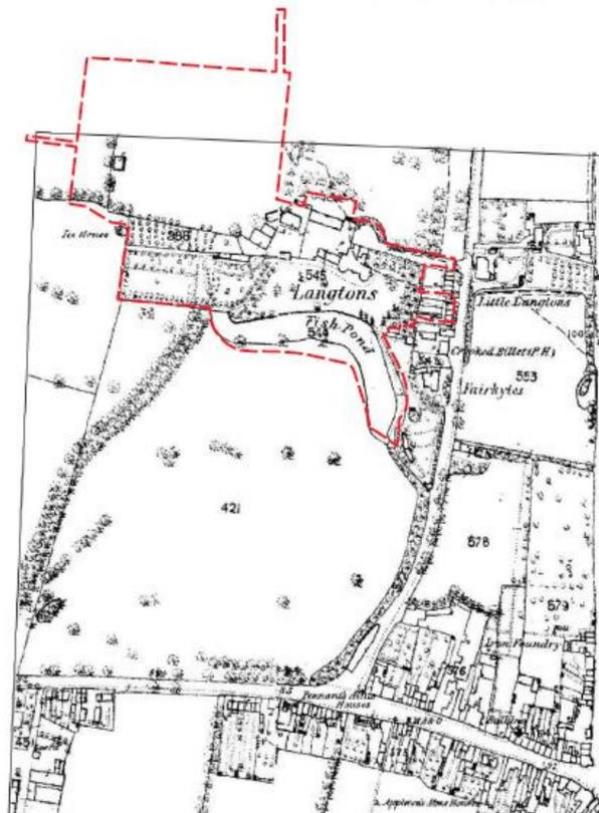
The western half of this area contains a rectangular shape lawn, which is bordered by box hedging and a path running along its eastern, northern and southern sides. To the south east of the boundary wall in this area, and to the north-west of the lake and sham bridge constructed in 2016 (over the remains of an eroded lake embankment wall) are the remains of estate fencing and a 'kissing gate' standing within a holly hedge.

This feature is aligned with the historic driveway or path which used to run from the south west of Langtons House to the south-west of the wider estate beyond (approx. 90 acres). The path is not at all visible on the earlier Hornchurch Tithe Map 1812 The avenue is not visible on the Sales Details 1850, however a similar line of trees suggesting a walking pathway could possibly have existed in the same place at that time. The driveway is clearly visible on the Ordnance Survey Map 1st Edition, 1872. Therefore, it is estimated that the gate was built sometime around 1872 and before 1914 when the landscape was still used for pasture. Estate Fencing became popular in Victorian times to contain cattle and other livestock.

In 1876 a crenelated Victorian mansion called Grey Towers House was constructed at the west side of the 'Great Langtons' estate, and the driveway or path was remodelled to lead to that estate instead. It is possible that the gate (if built in the Victorian times) remained standing so to provide access for walkers from Langtons Gardens to Grey Tower.



*Site map of Langtons Gardens showing site of Kissing Gate*



*OS map 1st ED 1872. The Kissing Gate aligns an historic driveway to Langton's House, from what is now the junction to the High Street and Abbs Cross Lane. The driveway is clearly visible.*



*Remains of Kissing Gate and estate fencing, the entrance to the pathway to Grey Towers in the western garden (2020)*



*Kissing Gate showing overgrowth*



*Remains of Kissing Gate*



*Langton Gardens 1917. Similar estate fencing to the Kissing Gate is visible. (Postcard origins unknown)*

## Statement of Significance

### **Evidential:**

The estate fencing associated with the Kissing Gate, is also an example of a significant architectural trend of the time. Estate fencing became popular in Victorian times both amongst owners of pleasure grounds and wealthy estate owners with large open rolling parklands, due to its ability to provide a graceful and unobtrusive barrier for reasons of security, and with the strength to contain cattle and other livestock.

**Historic:** The estate fencing and kissing gate in the western garden are some of the only lasting reminders of the once open fields, or landscaped parkland and pastoral landscape of Hornchurch, before the 1930's inter-war housing developments. The Kissing gate and fencing is the last physical link on the site to the path that led to the now demolished Grey Towers, built by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Holmes (1828-1913) of the Essex Artillery Volunteers and the Old Hornchurch Brewery.

**Aesthetic:** The picturesque views that once lay beyond the gate no longer exist, and are instead replaced by inter-war housing. However, the view towards the house remains the same. The overall effect of the gardens design, created by the juxtaposition of landscape and architecture and by the interplay of landscape garden features can be viewed from the gate. The serpentine paths and box hedging that pass by the kissing gate, combined with the presence of the black mulberry tree have a strong appeal.

Langton's gardens are reputedly the design of renowned landscape gardener Humphry Repton. Strategic views are an essential element of the design allowing the visitor to appreciate the subtleties of the design to full effect. Repton referred to the 'burst' or the sudden striking view, such as those across the lake and towards Langtons House. Although the Kissing Gate feature is a later addition to the gardens, the gate leads to some key Repton-esque 'burst' views of the site.

**Communal:** The Kissing Gate is all that is left behind in Langtons Gardens to remind you of the parkland and historic Grey Towers estate that used to exist beyond the gate. It is a reminder of the owner of Grey Towers Henry Holmes, who was involved in the Hornchurch community, and people from the First World War such as the famous Sportsman's battalion and New Zealand soldiers who lived there.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The Kissing Gate and its estate fencing is an example of a significant architectural and aesthetic trend of the late-nineteenth century. The Kissing Gate is a vital relict element of the historic parkland aesthetic that existed before the inter-war development of housing in Hornchurch, and the Grey Towers estate that used to exist beyond the gate. It is also strongly associated with the phase of the site under the ownership of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Holmes

### **Key References:**

2020 <https://mileshenderson.co.uk/blog/history-of-traditional-estate-fencing/>  
2013 Langtons Gardens and Fielders Field Conservation management plan, by Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) and the London Borough of Havering  
2019 Historical timeline by Deborah Kirk, Volunteer local historian, and Lisa Lock.  
Maps from the London Borough of Havering Local Studies  
Photographs (2020) Lisa Lock

**Researcher:** Lisa Lock - London Borough of Havering 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 21): CASH'S WELL

**Location:** In Martinhole Wood, Fobbing, on the east bank of the parish boundary stream between Fobbing and Corringham parishes.

**NGR:** TQ569926 186266

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Formerly an open farmland site, secondary woodland now encloses the remains. The structures are:

- i) A pump house – in the style of a 'classical' temple, mostly intact. The pump house is octagonal, with four long outer faces (4.5m wide and 3.5m high), each with positions for two pillars, and four short outer faces (1.5m wide and 3.5m high) each with a window of simple Romanesque arched style and a drop-bevelled sill. The east facing entrance leads to an inner octagonal chamber (each face of which is 1.7m wide by 4m high) with three rectangular window positions and a central, oblong-headed well. The floor of this chamber is tiled, with half remaining in situ. Above this chamber is the angle metal roof dome and frame. There is no evidence that the roof was a solid structure at any time. It was, perhaps, originally covered in tarpaulin.
- ii) A bottling shed or bottle store to the south-east. Only the brick foundation and cement floor remain;
- iii) Two subsidiary well heads to the south-west, one in an extension to the bottling shed;
- iv) A retaining wall of brick and concrete to the south-west;
- v) An access road formerly linked the site to the Southend Road (now B1420). The section of this route within the boundary of the country park is evident as a bridleway. Outside the park boundary, the line of the access road is visible in the field to the north-west of Hovell's Farm.

**Size:** The site, including pump house, bottling shed and two additional wells covers approximately 450m<sup>2</sup>.

**Orientation:** The long sides of the pump house are aligned approximately N-S. The long sides of the bottling shed foundations are aligned approximately NE-SW.

**Current State:** The site is within the Langdon Hills Country Park, managed by Thurrock Council. When in use, the site abutted Martinhole Wood. However, it is now wholly within secondary woodland.

- i. Pump House: Vange Well No. 5. The sole standing building on the site. Although the concrete platform is sound and appears unaffected by root damage. The vertical faces are seriously compromised. The metal dome frame is intact, although it does not appear to be tied in to the walls.

The following serious damage is evident:

- East pillars, both fallen

- West pillars, both fallen. Concrete lintel also fallen
- South pillars, both standing, but badly cracked
- North pillars, one fallen, one standing but badly cracked.
- West outer colonnade wall has fallen and its bricks have been removed. The wall was fissured, but still standing when surveyed in 1998.

In the inner chamber, only the foundations survive of the well head brick surround. The central shaft of the well appears largely intact, but open and rubbish filled.

- ii. Bottling shed: The concrete floor and remains of brick foundations survive (18.4m by 6.2m). The floor of one room of the two-room structure is littered with broken glass bottles. The brickwork foundations of the bottling shed are covered with ivy.
- iii. Subsidiary well heads: Partially obscured by undergrowth. A small chamber enclosing a subsidiary, brick-lined well head is situated at the south-western end of the bottling shed. Outside this chamber to the south-west is a further brick-lined well head. Both of these well heads are open and dangerous, but partly debris filled.

**Current Use:** None. Although situated near to a well-used path through Martinhole Woods, other than a mention on one board at the One-Tree Hill Visitor Centre nearby, there is no signage or easy direct access to the site.

**Existing Designations:** Within the boundary of the Langdon Hills Country Park. No other designation. In 1998, an application for listed status was prepared by Thurrock Heritage Forum, processed by Thurrock Council and submitted to English Heritage. English Heritage were of the opinion that the structure did not possess sufficient architectural or historic interest to merit listing and rejected the application.<sup>1</sup>

**Brief History:** In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, along with many other counties, Essex enjoyed a boom in the demand for mineral waters from local springs. In the south of the county, springs in Romford, Chadwell, Weald Hall (Brentwood), Hornchurch, Upminster, Hockley and West Tilbury were renowned for their healing properties.

In 1899, Mr King, of Hovell Farm, Fobbing dug a well that appeared to have beneficial effects on his cattle. Edwin Cash who, at the turn of the twentieth century, was the licensee of the Angel Hotel, Islington, had some of the water tested. The sample was found to be high in mineral content, and in 1900 Cash bought land just north of Hovell Farm from a John Frederick Hodgson<sup>1</sup>. Although he dug a well of his own, it was not until twenty years later, now retired from the licensed trade, that Cash formed 'The Vange Water Company'.

Edwin Cash dug further wells, erected a wooden hut and bottled the water. 'The Vale of Health', as it became known, was booming in the early 1920s and people poured into the area to taste the water and take bottles home. Business went well, with an endorsement from the Consulting Medical Officer of Essex County Council<sup>2</sup>.

Despite rumours in 1922 that the well had dried up, a 5th well was dug in 1923. Known as 'Vange Well No. 5, a temple like structure with Doric columns was built over the wellhead. However, its use was limited, as by 1924, little more was heard of the company and in 1926 the property was put up for sale as “an ideal site for the erection of a Hydropathic establishment or Country hotel – if acquired in conjunction with medicinal springs”<sup>3</sup>. Its decline may have been caused by a suspected contamination of the waters from a nearby tuberculosis sanatorium and by competition from another, short-lived enterprise – the Vange Crystal Well Company.

Edwin Cash died in 1931 and the site fell into disrepair. The well site and surrounding area were saved from a planned housing development in the 1930s, when Essex County Council bought the land under the Green Belt scheme. Surviving the later development of Basildon New Town, in 1973 the Langdon Hills Open Spaces were designated a Country Park. The site is recognised by Thurrock Council as being of historical significance<sup>4</sup>.

When the well site was in operation, coaches and other motorised vehicles were able to access the site. An access road is shown on a 1922 OS map<sup>5</sup>. After the well closed, the site became overgrown with secondary woodland extending from Martinhole Wood. Although some of this secondary growth has been cleared, the site is now completely within woodland.

In 1998 the Thurrock Heritage Forum researched this site as they felt it warranted a 'listed building' status<sup>6</sup>. The application was processed by Thurrock Council's Planning department in 1999 and submitted to the Department of Culture Media and Sport<sup>7</sup>. The application was not successful.

**Location:** Although the site was known as 'Vange No. 5 Well', the location of the well head is on the east bank of a small stream that marks the boundary between Corringham and Fobbing parishes. It is, therefore, in Fobbing parish at TQ 70021 86265.

**1998 Survey:** In 1998, a comprehensive site survey was carried out by Randal Bingley for the Thurrock Heritage Forum as part of an attempt to obtain 'listed' status. Full details of the survey are in his accompanying 'Field Notes'<sup>6</sup>.



*Pump House nineteenth c1924*



*Pump House from the north*



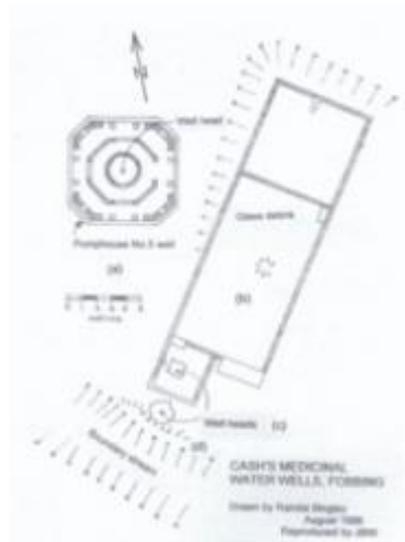
*Advertisement for Cash's Medicinal Water*



*Bottling Plant nineteenth c1924*



*Bottling Plant Floor from south west*



*Cash's Well Site Plan 1998 August 1998 sketch of site. Reproduced with kind permission of the Bingley family'*



*Pump House from the south*



*Well head inner chamber*



*Pump House from the east*



*Subsidiary well head in bottling shed*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The site is of interest in the context of local and county industrial archaeology. Within Thurrock it is unique evidence of a medicinal water 'spa' linked to the London-Southend holiday motor route (A13) of the 1920s. It features a pump house built in the 'classical' style. With appropriate protection and interpretation boards, it could provide visitors with an insight into the 'spa' tradition which had flourished locally in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

**Historic:** Cash's Well has the following significance to the history of the area:

- a surviving early-twentieth century water 'spa' that continued the tradition of meeting a demand for 'healing' mineral waters from local springs. Eighteenth and nineteenth century sites in south Essex included Romford, Chadwell St Mary, Weald Hall, Upminster, Hockley and West Tilbury;
- as an example of an enterprising and lucrative business exploiting, for a brief period in the early 1920s, a national demand for healing mineral waters.

**Aesthetic:** Within the Langdon Hills Country Park, Cash's Well is only a few hundred metres from an existing visitor centre and car park. Even in its current condition, the pump house remains an imposing structure. Now surrounded by woodland, the paths that pass the site

are popular with visitors. There are bluebells in the woods and a wide variety of birds and insects. Outside the woodland and within metres of the site, extensive views of the surrounding countryside are to be enjoyed, including due south to the Thames Estuary.

**Communal:** The wider site makes a positive contribution to the local community as a green lung for the area, a picnic area, woodland walks, horse and cycle paths and viewpoints. The park has been awarded a Green Flag Award the national standard for parks and green spaces since 2010 and is also designated a Living Landscape area. During the present brief survey twelve people stopped to look at the site. Some had an awareness of its history; others were interested in finding out more. Finally, the site has some reputation as a centre for paranormal activity. This may attract additional visitors to the site.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of Cash's Well is within the context of local and county industrial archaeology. It preserves the evidence of a medicinal water 'spa' linked to the London-Southend holiday motor route of the 1920s.

In south Essex, mineral springs had been exploited since the eighteenth century. Constructed in about 1923, the domed 'classical' temple-like structure, known as Vange Well No.5 was the final stage of a business started by Edwin Cash in 1920 to exploit a continuing demand for the healing properties of natural mineral waters. However, this enterprise was short lived, as competition and rumours of contamination and supply issues contributed to the sale of the site in 1926. The site was saved from later residential development by its inclusion in the Langdon Hills Country Park.

The site is only a few hundred metres from a country park visitor centre and car park and already has regular visitor-usage, despite the almost complete lack of signage. During the present brief survey, 12 people stopped to look at the pump house, and more than half had some level of awareness about the building's purpose and history. Its potential as an 'interpretation' site is high and restoration to a meaningful and vandal-safe condition would seem to be quite achievable.

Cash's Well makes a positive contribution to the local community as part of a green lung for the area. Now surrounded by woodland, the paths that cross the site are popular with visitors.

## Key References:

1 Essex Record Office D/DQ 42/3 – Sale of Land

2 'The Lancet' 1258, 12th December 1922

3 Essex Record Office D/F 201/25 and D/F 36/11/13

4 <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/historical-places-in-thurrock/cashs-well-fobbing>

5 Ordnance Survey: Essex (New Series 1913-) n LXXXIX.2 (Billericay; Thurrock). Revised: 1915, Published: 1922

6 The journal of the Thurrock Local History Society: 'Panorama' 43 – Feb 2005, pp 8-11: 'The Vale of Health' (Deborah Roberts), and 'Panorama' 43 – Feb 2005, pp12-16: 'Field Notes on Cash's Well' (Randal Bingley). Extracts from the 'Panorama' articles and from the Field Notes are reproduced with kind permission from the Thurrock Local History Society and from the Bingley family

7 The journal of the Thurrock Local History Society: 'Panorama' 39 – Dec 1999, pp19-22 (Alan Leyin) and 'Panorama' 39 – Dec 1999, p57: Notes & Queries No. 78. Extracts from the 'Panorama' articles are reproduced with kind permission from the Thurrock Local History Society

## Notes:

1 The journal of the Thurrock Local History Society: 'Panorama' 39 – Dec 1999, pp19-22 (Alan Leyin) and p57: Notes & Queries No. 78. Also 'Panorama' 43 – Feb 2005, pp 8-11: 'The Vale of Health' (Deborah Roberts), and pp12-16: 'Field Notes on Cash's Well' (Randal Bingley). Extracts from the 'Panorama' articles and from the Field Notes are reproduced with kind permission from the Thurrock Local History Society and from the Bingley family.

**Researcher:** Phil Lobley

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 20): CLOCKHOUSE GARDENS

**Location:** St Mary's Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 3DU

**NGR:** TQ556412 186547

**Local Authority:** London Borough of Havering

**Description of Feature:** Clockhouse Gardens is a small public park occupying the site of the former gardens and stables of New Place, which was built for Sir James Esdaile in 1775. Clockhouse gardens and stables with turret clock are all that remain of the New Place estate which in 1909 comprised 70 acres. Today the gardens comprise 3 acres with part of a former moat at the eastern end of the park. The lake, fenced by low railings, has a central island overgrown with trees and shrubs. Various wildfowl are always present on the lake and are an attraction to the public throughout the year. The park is surrounded by large trees including poplar and horse chestnuts and is encircled by an asphalted perimeter walk with a few municipal-style beds. At the south-west corner the perimeter walk leads to an alcove seat or arbour. At the western section of the gardens is a bowling green which is used by the Clockhouse Bowling Club. A recent addition to the area surrounding the lake is a sculptural feature of wooden figures, animals and seats providing a setting for children's play. The turret clock on the former stables and outbuildings, now known as the Clockhouse, is dated 1774. The entrance to the park is from St Mary's Lane where, in front of the Clockhouse, is a small car park. The site is owned by the London Borough of Havering and managed by Parks and Open Spaces and Friends of Clockhouse Gardens. The park closes at dusk.

**Material:** The Clockhouse building is of red brick and has a small rectangular white wooden cupola with a circular black clock face with gilt figures. The clock is signed 'Edward Tutet, London 1774' and is said to have come from the Woolwich Arsenal. The main feature of the gardens is the lake, which was part of a moat with a central island, and is fenced by low railings. The park is surrounded by large trees and ornamental shrubs.

**Size:** Clockhouse and gardens: Approximately 1.3 hectares.

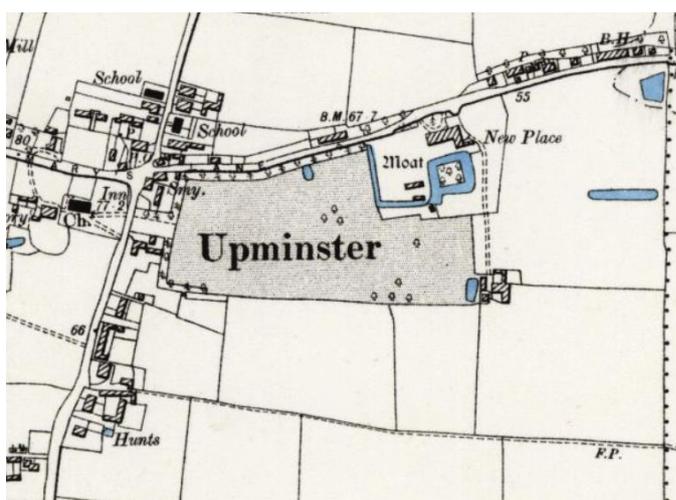
**Orientation:** The turret Clock is on the northern side of the old stables while the lake is to the east of the park and the bowling green to the west.

**Current State:** The eighteenth century dammed lake retains its shape and island although many of the trees and shrubs around it are of the twentieth century. The eighteenth century turret clock and building is well preserved today. The whole park is well cared for by Havering Council.

**Current Use:** The gardens are open to the public until dusk and are popular with local residents and young children who enjoy feeding the wildfowl. The former stables and clock tower are now residential premises. A bowling green in the western section of the garden is used by the Clockhouse Bowling Club.

**Existing Designation:** The Clockhouse is registered by Historic England Grade II No 1358523

**Brief History:** The Clockhouse, from which the gardens get their name, was once the stable block of the eighteenth century New Place estate. New Place was a manor house with no manorial rights and there had been a building on the site since at least the fifteenth century. In 1775 Sir James Esdaile rebuilt the New Place mansion on the site of a previous building. Adjacent to the house was a large stable block over which was erected a turret clock brought from the Arsenal at Woolwich and dated 1774: the cupola used to support a weather vane dated 1700. There being no other clock in the village at that time it was referred to as the village clock. James Esdaile died in 1812 and New Place was sold by the Esdaile family in 1839. The 1839 sales particulars describe the extensive grounds which included a flower garden, moat and canal, greenhouse, kitchen garden, hot house with vines, brick melon pit. There were also shrubbery walks and plantations. At that time the grounds encompassed sixty-three acres. Further descriptions of the grounds are to be found in T.L.Wilson's 1856 *Sketches of Upminster* where Wilson describes the spacious garden, the moat stocked with fish, and the many cedars. New Place was in the hands of the Harmer family until 1909 when the estate was sold with some seventy acres to W.P.Griggs, the estate developer. The house was tenanted until 1922 when the last tenant died and in 1924 the Clockhouse and part of the land was purchased for Council offices. As well as becoming the parish council offices the Clockhouse was used as an ambulance garage as well as being home to the fire brigade. New Place was considered too costly to run and was demolished in 1924. From 1936 the Clockhouse was used as a public library and the grounds at the rear of the building were laid out as a public garden retaining the moat, its island, and many of the specimen trees. A bowling green was constructed in 1952/53 on the site of the old mansion's kitchen garden and lawn. The granddaughter of the last tenant of New Place recalls an enormous cedar of Lebanon tree in the centre of the front garden, reputedly at that time the second largest tree in England. When a modern library was built in Upminster in 1963 the Clockhouse was vacated and converted for residential use.



*1888 OS map 6inch to a mile showing New Place Estate*



*The Clockhouse, Upminster*



*The Clockhouse Building 2004*



*The Clockhouse Lake and Island 2020*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The eighteenth century Clockhouse and turret clock, built c1775, are evidence today of the estate's history. James Esdaile's late-eighteenth century extensive plans for landscaping the grounds of his estate continued to be documented in nineteenth century sales particulars and other documentation. Today the lake, part of a former moat, its island, and some original perimeter planting, are evidence of how this area of the landscaped grounds appeared from the end of the eighteenth century. The history of Clockhouse gardens and clock are well documented through maps, images, books, historic documents and estate papers.

**Historic:** The most significant period of history for the Clockhouse and gardens is the eighteenth century when the then New Place estate was in its prime with impressive gardens. Sir James Esdaile rebuilt the house and laid out the gardens in c1775. He was a prominent figure in Upminster and having already transformed the Gaynes and New Place estates he then embarked on a programme of building, renovating and landscaping throughout Upminster. The grounds continued to be impressive until the sale of the estate for redevelopment in the 1920's. The next significant stage in the garden's history is the purchase of the remaining acres by the local council and how, since 1936 they have been a prominent feature as a public park.

**Aesthetic:** The lake in the Clockhouse gardens is an eye-catching feature with its central island providing a habitat for the many wildfowl sheltering among the vegetation. The lake is surrounded by several different species of trees which together provide a variety of leaf forms and colour throughout the seasons. The lake, trees and Clockhouse are reminders of the estate's former grandeur.

**Communal:** The Clockhouse and its public gardens are owned by Havering Urban District Council and managed by Parks and Open Spaces and Friends of Clockhouse Gardens. The gardens are open throughout the year daily until dusk and provide an important green space for the local residents of a busy town. All age groups enjoy the gardens, particularly popular with young children who enjoy feeding the many wildfowl on the lake. Although the gardens are not large, they provide a pleasant circular walk around the lake which is surrounded by many interesting trees and shrubs.

**Statement of Significance Summary:**

Clockhouse Gardens is a wonderful reminder of the loss of the once grand New Place estate. Despite the majority of the estate being sold to a housing developer the purchase by the Havering Council of the three acres that now form the gardens and the Clockhouse building has proved to be an important asset to the local community. The gardens provide a calm oasis in the middle of a busy town and offer peace and relaxation to the residents. The Clockhouse building provides a tranquil setting as a sheltered accommodation complex. The historic Clockhouse and gardens are a significant landmark in the town providing an excellent green space for residents while the remaining historic features provide a glimpse of an earlier era.

**Issues and vulnerabilities:** There is a possible risk of neglect should there be a lack of local council funds to maintain the site.

**Key references:**

- 1856 Wilson T L *Sketches of Upminster* p 98-99
  - 1888 6" to the mile Ordnance Survey map of the New Place estate
  - 1958 Upminster Workers' Educational Association, *The Story of Upminster Book 2 Historic Buildings I* p 25
  - 1959 Upminster Workers' Educational Association, *The Story of Upminster Book 7 The Manor of Gaynes* p 9
  - 1973 Body, Valerie *The Upminster Story* Swan Libraries p 8
  - 1983 Victoria County History of Essex *vii* pp 149-152
  - 1986 Drury, John A *History of Upminster and Cranham* Ian Henry Publications Ltd pp 52, 114, 132, 135
  - 1996 Benton, Tony *Upminster, the story of a garden suburb* Gates Parish & Co pp 46-50
  - 2004 and 2020 Photographs Jill Plater
- [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk)

**Researcher:** Jill Plater 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 50): NINETEENTH CENTURY PARISH BOUNDARY POST

**Location:** Located at the inner edge of the pavement at the east side of Bridge Road, Grays, Essex, (opposite the south-eastern corner of Grays Town Park) immediately south of the boundary between Thurrock Adult Community College (formerly Bridge Road board school) and a stepped passageway running between Bridge Road and Richmond Road.

**NGR:** TQ561945 177999

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** Upright, black, cast iron, fluted tubular shaft with knob-like finial, 1.06 metres high, 15cm diameter. Bulbous knob-like head, with square section at base of shaft. Lettering on the north and south facing sides of the base "GTP" and "LTP".

**Current State:** Good

**Current Use:** Acts as a deterrent to children from running out of the passageway onto a busy road (although more modern railings have now been erected on the kerbside).

**Existing Designations:** None

**Brief History:** One of a number of parish boundary marker posts erected between Grays Thurrock and Little Thurrock parishes in 1882, this boundary post has been moved, date unknown, to its present location to narrow the entrance to a passageway and no longer marks the parish boundary.



*Boundary Post from the south*



*Base of Boundary Post showing 'LTP'*



*Boundary Post from passageway*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The lettering on the base of this post "LTP" and "GTP" indicate that this is likely to be one of the original posts and not simply a later post put in for reasons of health and safety. It is not known why this post was moved to its present location, at least 350 metres from the parish boundary. However, it is suggestive of a later need to restrict a passageway, adjacent to Grays Park school, that opens onto a busy road. Further research into local council records may reveal when the post was moved, why this post was chosen and whether it was moved due to an incident at the new location.

Examination of the relevant OS Maps (25", 1st Edition, revised 1897) has shown 10 boundary posts had been erected between the two parishes (and one between Little Thurrock and Orsett parishes).

**Historic:** Documentary evidence: Vestry minutes of Little Thurrock parish, 7 April 1881, note a willingness "to share the expense of putting up permanent boundary marks to show the division between the parishes". One year later, a series of cast iron posts were put up to mark the common boundary. It is believed that this post is the only remaining example of the 11 boundary marker posts set up in 1882. Further research into vestry minutes and council records has been unable to reveal the whereabouts or fate of the other posts. It is also possible that the maker's name might be discovered on the part of the post now below ground.

**Aesthetic:** The boundary post, even though now incorrectly positioned, has not been vandalised, perhaps indicating that it is now recognised simply as a part of the built landscape

and not an intrusive feature. It has a tactile form and the head of the post shows marks of general wear from day to day handling.

**Communal:** Although not recognised or used as a boundary marker, its value is in its survival as a symbol of civic pride at the time of the growth of Thurrock at the end of the nineteenth century.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The parish boundary marker is not registered. However, it may be the sole surviving example of a set of boundary posts erected between Little Thurrock, Grays Thurrock and Orsett parishes at the end of the nineteenth century, as the area was developing from a rural to an urban environment.

There are no apparent issues of vandalism or decay. It is protected from accidental damage by a more modern railing and is unlikely to be accidentally removed during roadworks or pavement repair.

**Note:** A similar parish boundary post at Goldhanger in Essex has been listed as a Grade 2 listed building by Historic England (List Entry number 1256978).

### **Key References:**

2008, Exploring Thurrock, Thurrock Local History Society, Ed. Christopher Harrold, 2nd Edition. Published by the Thurrock Local History Society ISBN 978-0-9558352-1-6  
1991, Boldly from the marshes, Tony Benton, ISBN 0-9506141-3-0. Published by the author  
Vestry minutes - Little Thurrock and Grays Thurrock - accessible at Grays Library

**Researcher:** Phil Lobley 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 17): THE ALPINE GORGE AND FILMY FERN CAVE

**Location:** Warley Place Nature Reserve, Warley Road Great Warley Brentwood CM13 3HU  
The Alpine Gorge and Filmy Fern Cave are part of the extensive grounds, structures and former landscaped gardens, currently managed as a nature reserve known as 'Warley Place'. The entrance gate to the reserve is adjacent to The 'Thatcher's Arms' public house. Two historic parkland sites, Thorndon Park North and Thorndon Park South are close by.

**NGR:** TQ558326 190856

**Local Authority:** Brentwood Borough Council/ Managed by The Essex Wildlife Trust

**Description of Feature:** An artificially constructed Alpine Gorge and an adjacent former glass roofed Filmy Fern Cave. Both elements were designed and constructed to create differing but ideal microclimates that suited a vast collection of plants from around the world. The Alpine Gorge has a dry bed of a former artificial stream. Cascades and rock pools are not readily identifiable. Extensive formations of imported rocks define the outline of the structure. Considerable natural soil erosion, excavations by burrowing animals and tree root disturbance leave some areas vulnerable to collapse. The undergrowth, weed, plant and wildflower cover are managed by conservation volunteers. A timber footbridge allows the Reserve's circular pathway to cross the gorge. The gorge terminates at South Pond. The Filmy Fern Cave is located at the lower end of the Gorge and consists of three chambers originally covered by glass. There is evidence of four metal structural roof beams which in turn were supported by stone arches. It is considered a dangerous structure with the potential of further collapse.

**Material:** Alpine Gorge - Numerous large to very large pieces of rock and stone, imported and positioned on-site.

Filmy Fern Cave - Stone, some of which is bonded in hard grey cement, with evidence of metal supports for a thick glass roof.

**Size:** Gorge - Ravine length is 65m. The width has extensive variations ranging from 3m to 15m wide with some sections currently undefined. The artificial stream bed falls between OS contours at 105m and 100m. It feels far more than a 5m top to bottom fall which is a further attribution to the skill and illusion created by its designer.

Filmy Fern Cave - 12.5m by 5.7m at its widest with an estimated original height of 2m.

**Orientation:** Gorge - The average orientation of the lower section is south facing (axis S-N). Upwards beyond the bridge the ravine swings north east. (axis SW-NE) The design was such that planting pockets within the structure would provide the ideal shelter and growing requirements for each individual plant specimen in the collection.

Filmy Fern Cave - Average orientation E-West with two entrances discovered. The full extent of the Cave is unclear due to a large amount of re-deposited sand

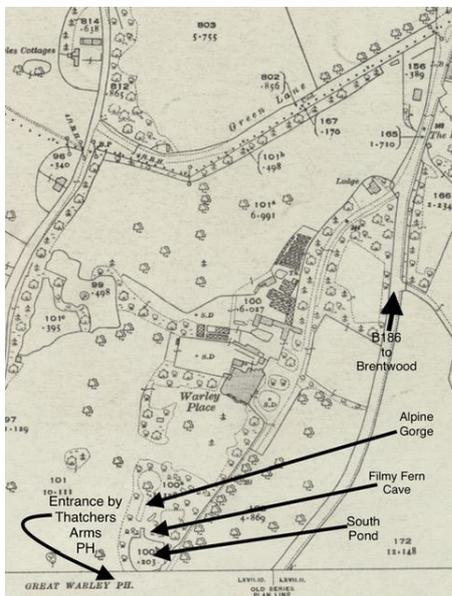
**Current state:**

Gorge - Outline and some areas identifiable. Deteriorating with signs of erosion.  
Filmy Fern Cave - Deteriorating. Dangerous structure.

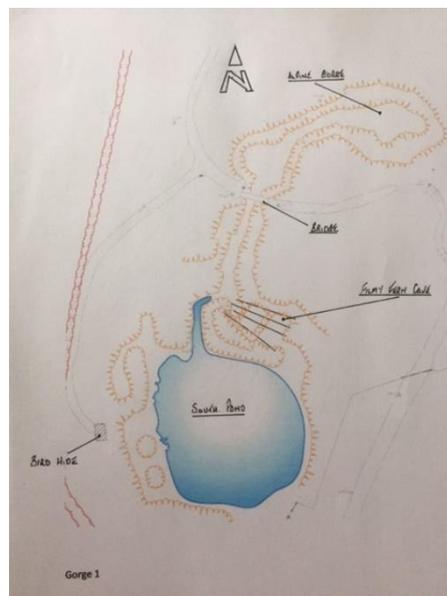
**Current use:** The site is managed by Essex Wildlife Trust as a nature reserve. A dedicated trail guide is available for the visitor. The Gorge and Cave provide visual impact that help describe the lengths that horticulturist Ellen Willmott went to in her quest for the ultimate plant collection. Although mostly devoid of original planting, the structure of the lower section of the Gorge is visible from a relatively modern timber bridge across the ravine, which in turn forms part of the nature trail. Due to safety issues, the Filmy Fern Cave is not referred to in the trail guide.

**Existing Designations:** Nature Reserve EWT. Heritage Category Park and Garden Grade II. List Entry Number 1000746. First Listed 01 July 1987 UID 1738

**Brief History:** Warley Place was formerly the home of one of the most famous women gardeners, Miss Ellen Willmott who died in 1934. Her garden extended to 16 acres, which was landscaped and engineered to propagate, grow and enjoy plants from around the world. In 1882, at the age of 24, she started work on the construction of the alpine garden. The excavations and supplying of the stone are attributed to James Backhouse and Son of York. In 1894 the Swiss gardener, Jacob Maurer, was employed to oversee the alpine garden and was employed up until Ellen Willmott’s death in 1934. After a failed planning application, the main house was demolished in 1939 and the gardens reverted to wilderness. Since 1977, Essex Wildlife Trust has managed the estate as a nature reserve.



*Location of Alpine Gorge and Filmy Fern Cave*



*Extract from volunteers digital mapping*



*Gorge entrance to Filmy Fern Cave showing remains of timber entrance gate, stone arch with keystone and steel roof supports*



*Alpine Gorge and Bridge looking south towards lower pond*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** A huge and expensive undertaking, the outline features of the Gorge and Filmy Fern Cave are in place and provide considerable evidence for:

- the style of rock gardens of the period
- the work of the Backhouse company in particular
- the dedication of Miss Willmott to creating specific conditions for alpine planting
- the Filmy Fern Cave is a rare survivor of this type of glasshouse and gives particularly important evidence on structure/design etc.

**Historic:** An important part of the early development of Warley Place and the work of renowned plant collector Ellen Willmott. Queen Mary and Princess Victoria were visitors to her garden. Her work is also associated with Gertrude Jekyll who in her time described Ellen Willmott as ‘the greatest living gardener’. The construction of the Gorge and Cave is attributed to James Backhouse and Son, a company that developed a similar project at their nursery in York. The Alpine Gorge and Filmy Fern Cave were recorded in several articles in periodicals of the period.

**Aesthetic:** Formed perfectly in the hillside, one could easily assume that the Alpine Gorge had not been manually constructed and was a perfectly natural feature in the landscape.

**Communal:** Interpretation of the scale and significance of this and other structures can help with an understanding of the dedication, determination and costs that are involved when building a world-renowned plant collection. There is potential for interpretation to include the Filmy Fern Cave now that it is visible from a branch of the Trail towards South Bird Hide.

## Statement of Significance Summary

1. The scale and cost of the undertaking. The rocks and boulders had to be quarried, transported and delivered to the site. The structures suggest a considerable amount of soil excavation and reshaping to form the Gorge and the Cave.
2. Designed and constructed to provide exacting locations for specific plants collected from around the world.
3. This was one of the first areas developed by Ellen Willmott in the late-nineteenth century.
4. The logistics and construction are attributed to James Backhouse and Son, nurserymen from York. A similar Gorge and Fern Cave were constructed and showcased at their nursery. Glass Lantern Slides of that project dated around 1891, show matured alpine planting, a rudimentary planked timber bridge crossing the nursery Gorge and a stepping stone providing access across the stream to a fern cave.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** The Gorge and Filmy Fern Cave structures have been outlined on the Volunteers Digital Mapping System. No details showing rock placements and configurations in the Gorge are currently available. There is the threat from soil erosion. The remaining structures of the Filmy Fern Cave are in danger of collapse. Health and safety issues make some areas difficult to access. The Filmy Fern Cave is classed as a failing structure with no direct access or admittance to view allowed. The Filmy Fern Cave is not mentioned on the trail guide.

### Key References:

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

Wikipedia/Parks and Gardens. James Backhouse

1991, Historic England (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Group) April

York Digital Library (Lantern Slides) Nursery of James Backhouse and Son. Alpine Gorge

1990, Audrey le Lievre. "Miss Willmott of Warley Place. Her Life and Her Gardens",

1894, Article from "The Garden" 3rd March 1894, No 45, pp 167-168 by Henri Correvon

1920, Essex 25inch new series surveyed 1915/published 1920 Sheet nLXXX.1

**Researcher:** Eric Mitchell 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 48): GRAYS TOWN PARK SHELTER

**Location:** Grays Town Park, Park Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6RB  
North of circular flowerbed by Bedford Road Entrance

**NGR:** TQ561760 178108

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** Single-storey brick building with pitched tiled roof. Two windows to front in the shape of elongated octagons, now bricked in. Metal shutters to front, evidence in brickwork and old photographs of previous glazed doors. No external features on side and rear elevations.

**Material:** Red brick with tiles horizontally set in mortar around windows. Tiled roof.

**Size:** 9.6m by 4.2m. Brickwork approx. 3m high where it meets pitched roof. Door opening approx. 5m wide.

**Orientation:** South facing.

**Current state:** Good on external viewing. Appears structurally sound with no exterior signs of damage. Graffiti recently removed by local authority.

**Current use:** Unused.

**Existing designations:** None found

**Brief History:** Grays Town Park opened in July 1899 and was the first public leisure facility in the area. It occupies the site of a former brickfield which was acquired by Grays Urban District Council to provide the town with a green open space for recreational use.

The shelter was erected in 1930 by the Seabrooke family, in memory of local brewer and wine merchant Jonathan Seabrooke and contains a plaque inside which reads:

*'Erected in 1930 by the wife and sons of Jonathan Seabrooke as a place of rest for the old men of Grays with whom he spent many happy hours'.*

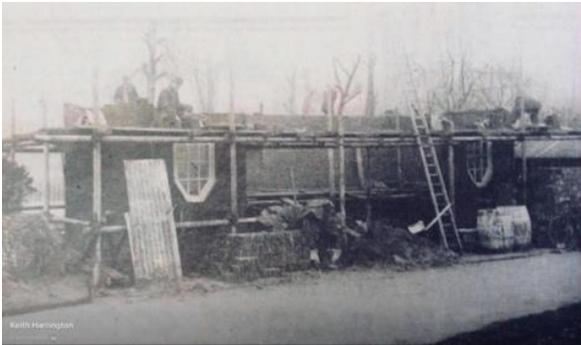
The Seabrooke family played a major part in the development of Grays from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards and are commemorated in a local street name Seabrooke Rise.



*Dedication plaque inside the shelter*



*Grays Town Park Shelter c1930*



*Construction of Grays Town Shelter c1930*



*Grays Town Park Shelter c1960  
Copyright The Francis Frith Collection*



*Grays Town Park Shelter 2020*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The shelter and its immediate environs provide opportunities for further research into many aspects of life in Grays during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the brick making industry, local building styles, attitudes to leisure time and the importance of green spaces, and uses made of this building during its 90-year life. Further research could also be carried out into the local council's acquisition of the land and the planning of the park and its facilities. The octagonal windows could be evidence of the work of one local builder, as an identical example can be found in a building in Orsett Road, Grays, approximately 100m from the shelter. The bricks could be locally made, as the shelter is on the site of a former brickfield, and brick making was a major industry in the area.

**Historic:** The park provides evidence of the ethos which gave rise to the provision of green open spaces in urban environments from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, with the local authority showing a forward-thinking vision of change of use of the land from spent industrial site to one of benefit to the community. The shelter itself provides a direct link to the Seabrooke family, who started their brewery business in Grays in around 1800 and became major employers. The brewery, together with a wine and spirit business, lasted until well into the twentieth century. They were also influential in the community, holding posts including those of magistrate and school governor. They were frequently mentioned in the local press.

**Aesthetic:** The shelter and its immediate environment of Grays Town Park have hardly changed over the past 90 years. The park is a valuable community asset, providing a green space where local people can enjoy trees, grass, flowers and quiet in the midst of a busy town. There is children's play equipment and tennis courts, and the old Health Clinic in one corner has recently been converted to a mosque. The shelter is an attractive and well-proportioned building, despite its neglect, and its brickwork and windows show similarities with other local buildings in the vicinity.

**Communal:** The shelter is a tangible link to the history of the park, which has hosted among other things concerts e.g. Pierrot Shows, religious music on Sundays, and in the mid-twentieth century children's fancy dress competitions. Old photographs, likely from the 1930s, show large groups of people gathered in the doorway of the shelter, and press reports tell of regular meetings of local businessmen in the shelter. Many local people will have memories of using the park and the shelter in their childhood and might be able to help date and identify people and events in the photographs. The Friends of Grays Town Park are hoping to work with the local authority to restore the shelter and use it to provide an amenity such as a cafe with display space about the history of the shelter and park.

## Statement of Significance Summary

The Grays Town Park Shelter is a basically sound, though neglected, building which provides many opportunities for further research, including possible evidence of a local vernacular building style using local materials. Its situation in a former brickfield provides a link with industries of brick earth and chalk quarrying which were major factors in the expansion of

Grays in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Old photographs show that it was well-used by the local community from the 1930s, and it has a connection with the influential, well known and well respected Seabrooke family of Grays. It has the potential to be used once again as an asset for the local community.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** At risk of general decay due to weather, neglect and vandalism.

**Key References:**

The Essex Field Club [www.essexfieldclub.org.uk](http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk) *Geology Site Account of Grays Town Park*

British News Archive - Grays and Tilbury Gazette 8th July 1899 et al.

Thurrock Council - [www.thurrock.gov.uk](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk)

Facebook group Grays Memories - various undated photographs of the shelter

Friends of Grays Town Park - photographs of construction and dedication plaque inside shelter

National Library of Scotland OS Map series

Thurrock Local History Society - History of The Seabrooke family

**Researcher:** Julia Cosby 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 49): GRAYS TOWN PARK ROCKERY

**Location:** Grays Town Park, Park Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6RB  
On east side of Park, by the Bridge Road entrance

**NGR:** TQ561942 178123

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** Material: appears to be constructed of artificial rock, at least in part. It has been suggested that the rockery contains Pulhamite, but Covid 19 restrictions in place at the time of writing have delayed any attempts at confirmation. Has at some time included a water feature. The remains of a pond or basin with concrete sides are still visible, together with what appears to be a pump housing, of brick and concrete construction and with water pipes inside. There is a broken manhole a few metres from the pump housing. The remains of a set of steps runs beside the pump housing, cut across by new steps constructed in the 1970s.

**Size:** approximately 1,100 square metres.

**Orientation:** At its highest, on its eastern side, it runs parallel to Bridge Road. The rockery slopes westward down to the Park.

**Current state:** Fairly overgrown and littered. Some 'rocks' show signs of wear, exposing what appears to be a brick core.

**Current use:** Forms part of Grays Town Park

**Existing designations:** None found

**Brief History:** Grays Town Park opened in July 1899 and was the first public leisure facility in the area. It occupies the site of a former brickfield which was acquired by Grays Urban District Council to provide the town with a green open space for recreational use. The first mention found of a rockery is a 1907 press report of instructions to the town Surveyor, Mr. A C James, that 'an unclimbable iron fence, three feet high, be erected on the top of the rockery supporting the upper path on the bank'. There were originally several hard-surfaced paths with sets of steps running through the rockery, which met at the Bridge Road entrance to the Park. They were replaced by new concrete steps leading up to the entrance in the 1970s. Maps from the early-twentieth century show a structure at the base of the rockery next to one of the main paths, probably the shelter mentioned in press reports about the opening of the Park. This was not present in the late 1960's-early 70s maps.



*Grays Town Park Rockery c1960  
Copyright The Francis Frith Collection*



*Grays Town Park Rockery looking east c2020*



*Grays Town Park Rockery looking south c2020*



*Possible pump house for water feature  
with remains of early steps*



*Closeup of rock with possible brick core showing  
through outer layer*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The rockery and its immediate environs provide opportunities for further research into many aspects of life in Grays during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the brick making industry, local building styles, attitudes to leisure time and the importance of green spaces, and uses made of this feature. Further research could also be carried out into the local council's acquisition of the land and the planning of the park and its facilities once council records of that period are made available.

**Historic:** The park provides evidence of the ethos which gave rise to the provision of green open spaces in urban environments from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, with the local authority showing a forward-thinking vision of change of use of the land from spent industrial site to one of benefit to the community. If the presence of Pulhamite is confirmed this would be a significant find, and add to the historical importance of the Park.

**Aesthetic:** The rockery and its immediate environment of Grays Town Park have hardly changed over the past 120 years. The park is a valuable community asset, providing a green space where local people can enjoy trees, grass, flowers and quiet in the midst of a busy town. There is children's play equipment and tennis courts, and the old health clinic in one corner has recently been converted to a mosque.

**Communal:** The Friends of Grays Town Park are hoping to work with the local authority to restore the rockery and water feature. The restoration of the rockery and water feature would add considerably to the value of the park for the local community.

**Note on Pulhamite:** It has been suggested that the rockery contains Pulhamite, a mortar used as a render in artificial rockwork and produced by James Pulham and Son. The render was applied to a masonry core or backing structure to produce texture and colour variations in imitation of natural rock.

Attempts have been made to verify whether the rockery contains Pulhamite. Contact has been made with Claude Hitching, who set up and maintains *The Pulhamite Legacy* website and publications, including a register of known examples of Pulhamite. He suggested that Pulhamite expert Valerie Christman be invited to comment on the rockery, either by personal visit or by examining photographs. However, a combination of personal circumstances and Covid-19 restrictions have meant that neither of them has been able to pursue the matter further, although Claude Hitching states, based on photographic evidence, that the rocks are quite likely to be Pulhamite. Since then an approach has been made to Edwin Trout of the Concrete Society, who has written on Pulhamite, and a reply is awaited.

It has not been possible to confirm the presence of Pulhamite via local archives. The archives for Grays Urban District Council were originally placed with Essex Record Office, but were sent back to Thurrock when it became a unitary authority in 1998. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, it has not been possible to confirm whether they are stored in the basement of Thurrock Central Library. If the presence of Pulhamite in the rockery were to be confirmed it would add significant historic value to the rockery and to Grays Town Park. The Pulham family created

a wide variety of artificial landscapes, incorporating many of the features that were fashionable in late-nineteenth century garden design. There are currently only two known examples of Pulhamite in Essex, at Audley End and Knighton Wood, Buckhurst Hill.

Grays was a centre of brick making and cement production from mediaeval times to the late-twentieth century, with Grays Town Park itself built in a disused brick field. This industrial heritage would be considerably enriched if it were possible to establish whether local materials were used in the production of artificial rocks in the rockery.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** At risk of general decay due to weather, neglect and vandalism.

**Key References:**

The Essex Field Club [www.essexfieldclub.org.uk](http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk) *Geology Site Account of Grays Town Park*  
1899, British Newspaper Archive - Grays and Tilbury Gazette 8th July 1899 et al.  
Thurrock Council - [www.thurrock.gov.uk](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk)  
Francis Frith - undated photograph of the rockery  
Friends of Grays Town Park  
National Library of Scotland OS Map series  
Old-Maps UK OS Map series  
Heritage England *Durability Guaranteed. Pulhamite Rockwork - its conservation and repair*  
Claude Hitching, *The Pulham Legacy*  
John Webb, Thurrock Local History Society  
Thanks to Paul Woloschuck for his memories of the park.

**Researcher:** Julia Cosby 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 43): THE ELMS GARDEN RAILINGS

**Location:** The railings are located to the east of Dell Road, Grays, Essex

**NGR:** TQ561676 178605

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Railings partially surrounding a derelict quarry garden. Painted metal railings, to the north, east and south of the derelict garden. They are relatively plain without significant ornamentation. Some sections of the railings are painted green and some painted black. They are about five feet high. The vertical sections are about six inches apart and they are joined by horizontal sections at ground level and also about four feet above ground. The vertical sections come to a flat point that appears to be ornamental rather than functional.

**Size:** The railings partially surround an area roughly 12,000 square metres in size.

**Orientation:** The railings are on the north, east and south side of the quarry garden.

**Current State:** The visible railings are in reasonable condition. Some portions are not accessible. These were observed, but not documented in visits by the Thurrock Local History Society in September 2014 and April 2015 (Leyin, Alan; Panorama 54, p. 38) at which time some of the railings were seen to be bent out of place, allowing access to the land beyond.

**Current Use:** The railings continue to remain in place following the development of the adjacent land for residential housing and continue to delineate the boundary of the quarry garden formerly belonging to The Elms. This garden was established during the nineteenth century in an abandoned chalk quarry. The steep sides of the quarry provide a dramatic setting for the garden features.

**Existing Designations:** The land enclosed by the railings has an area TPO. (Thurrock TPO 01/2015)

**Brief History:** Railings were apparently erected after the 2nd World War to prevented access by pupils to the hazardously steep slopes of the garden. The railings were originally internal, except on south side of the garden. The railings remained in place after the site was no longer used by the school and the school buildings were demolished.



*Map showing the location of Elm's Garden by kind courtesy of Openstreetmap and its contributors*



*Railings to the right of the (now boarded) access to viewing platform*



*Brick and concrete wall on west side of site*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** Detailed examination of the railings could provide evidence that identifies the manufacturer and date of manufacture of the railings, as well as the material (cast iron, wrought iron or steel). This would illustrate the changing taste and technology used for park railings and could establish whether the green and black sections were contemporary (and which was the original colour).

**Historic:** Railings were placed around the gardens when the site became used as a school (Tree Tops) in the mid-twentieth century. These railings mark the boundary of the garden and restricted access by pupils to a hazardous environment beyond, illustrating different attitude towards the garden consequent on the change of use.

**Aesthetic:** The railings have a traditional and solid look, more sympathetic with the location and visually more appealing than the boards now being used to prevent access to the viewing platform or the brick and concrete wall on Dell Road at the west side of the site. The railings were designed to be attractive as well as functional.

**Communal:** The railings provided an irresistible challenge to generations of school children who continue to speak and write about the site. These pupils have fond memories of evading the barrier to explore the wilderness beyond. They remember it as a forbidden place which they could explore surreptitiously. As a result of the deterioration of the gardens when they ceased to be maintained, some of what we know about the original gardens is only known from the memories of former pupils.

## **Statement of Significance Summary**

The railings have a traditional and solid look, more sympathetic with the location and visually more appealing than the boards now being used to prevent access to the viewing platform or the brick and concrete wall on Dell Road at the west side of the site. They have direct association with the Quarry Garden.

### **Key References:**

Thurrock TPO 01/2015

Leyin, Alan; Panorama 54, p. 38, Thurrock History Society

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 42): THE ELMS GARDEN CASCADE

**Location:** East of Dell Road (RM17), close to the entrance to Woodward Heights.

**NGR:** TQ561598 178692

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** A relict water feature in a quarry garden. Originally a water cascade fed by a pump. The water travelled through individual features beside a path, eventually reaching a small pond.

**Size:** The water fell about 100 feet as it travelled about 150 feet.

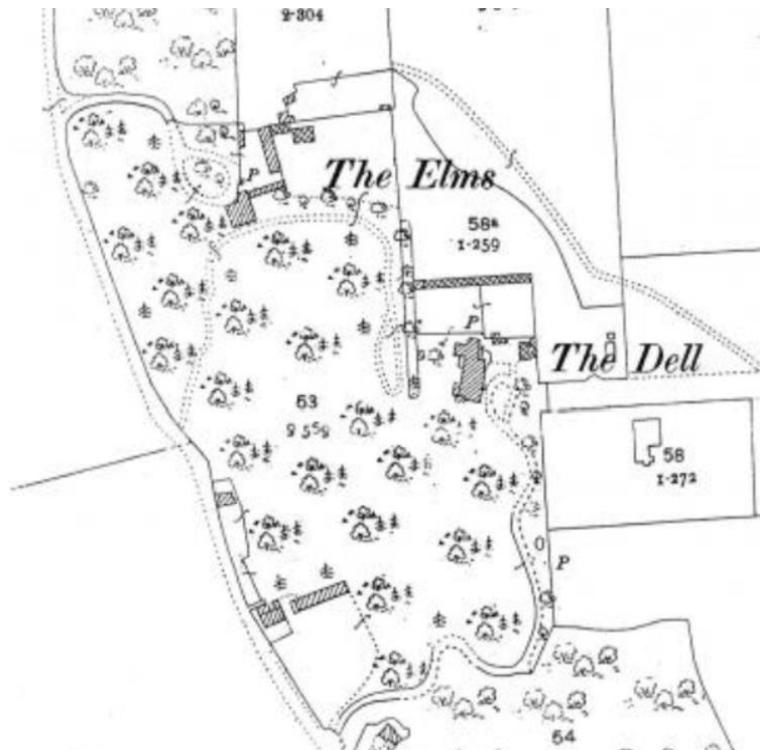
**Orientation:** Roughly E-W

**Current State:** Site visits in 2014 and 2015 noted only a few fragments survive, and the pond had dried up although clearly visible.

**Current Use:** Not currently used.

**Existing Designations:** It is within an area TPO (Thurrock TPO 01/2015).

**Brief History:** The water feature was probably added when the former chalk quarry was landscaped around 1860 by the then owners, Alfred and Thomas Sturgeon. They also installed a water pump to supply the house which probably also fed the water cascade.<sup>1</sup> The resulting garden was described as “a fairy land, with its deep and picturesque ravine and pleasure grounds”.<sup>2</sup>



*1892 OS Survey Map showing location of pump and paths*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** Archaeological investigation could reveal construction methods, materials and date, increasing our knowledge of Victorian quarry gardens and enabling comparison with other artificial water features such as the alpine gorge at Warley Place.

**Historic:** The feature appears to be a locally unique and regionally important example of Victorian landscape gardening.

**Aesthetic:** If restored and maintained, with safe access provided, the cascade would form an extremely attractive feature within a public amenity.

**Communal:** If restored and maintained, with safe access provided, the cascade would enhance the local community's understanding of its heritage.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The water feature appears to be a locally unique and regionally important example of Victorian landscape gardening, which if restored and maintained, with safe access provided, would form an extremely attractive feature within a public amenity.

### **Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

#### **Key References:**

- 1 Leyin, Alan; 2015; *Wallace's Welsh Valley and a Private Victorian Pleasure Garden in Essex*; in *Panorama 54: Thurrock Local History Society*, pp 29 - 38
- 2 Palin, William; 1871; *Stifford and its Neighbourhood Past and Present*, p. 84; Privately printed.

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 42): THE ELMS GARDEN GROTTTO

**Location:** East of Dell Road (RM17), close to the entrance to Woodward Heights.

**NGR:** TQ561598 178692

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Grotto adapted from an Industrial Working. Artificial cave, with a central column and four smaller chambers.

**Size:** Approximately 20 feet long; chambers approximately four feet in diameter.

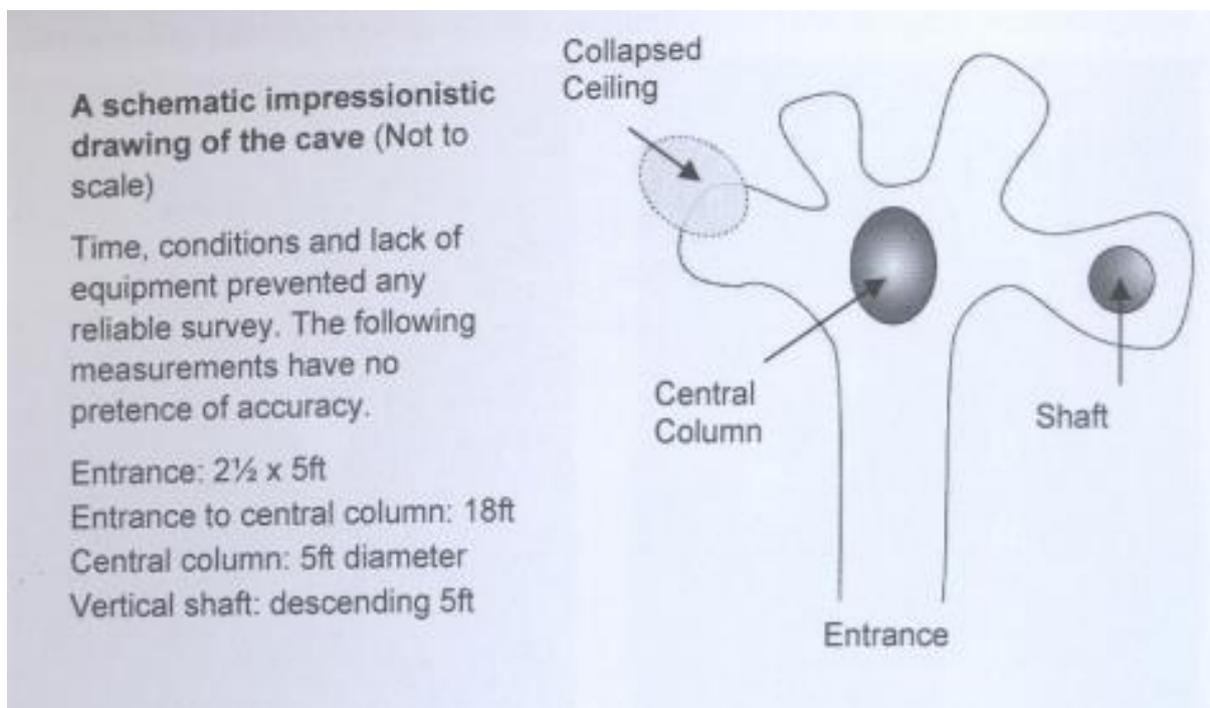
**Orientation:** Cut into the western chalk face.

**Current State:** The ceiling of one of the side chambers has collapsed.

**Current Use:** Disused

**Existing Designations:** It is located within an area TPO (Thurrock TPO 01/2015).

**Brief History:** Originally, this was an industrial feature (part of the quarry workings) adapted in the nineteenth century as a romantic grotto within a landscaped garden.



*Diagram of the cave by courtesy of Alan Leyin*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** Detailed examination of the grotto might reveal dating evidence for the original industrial use and subsequent Victorian conversion.

**Historic:** The grotto is believed to be a locally unique example of a Victorian romantic garden feature. It is part of what was described as a 'Fairy land, with its deep and picturesque ravine and pleasure gardens'.

(Palin, W; *Stifford and its Neighbourhood Past and Present*, p. 84; *Privately printed.*, 1871)

**Aesthetic:** If restored and maintained, with safe access provided, the grotto would form an attractive feature within a public amenity.

**Communal:** Access to the grotto was prohibited when the gardens were part of the Treetops School. Nonetheless, generations of school children have fond memories of illicit exploration of a forbidden wilderness. If restored and maintained, with safe access provided, it would become an interesting local amenity and would enhance the local community's understanding of its heritage.

## Statement of Significance Summary

The grotto appears to be a locally unique and regionally important example of Victorian landscape gardening, which if restored and maintained, with safe access provided, would form an extremely attractive feature within a public amenity.

## Key references:

Palin, W; *Stifford and its Neighbourhood Past and Present*, p. 84; *Privately printed* (1871)

Leyin, Alan; *Panorama 54*, Thurrock History Society

Diagram by kind permission of Alan Leyin

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 45): HERBERT E BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDENS  
NAME SIGN

**Location:** The sign is at the main entrance to the Brooks Memorial Garden at the junction of Palmers Avenue and High View Avenue.

**NGR:** TQ562038 1783361

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** The sign is green painted metal with negative space lettering giving the full name of the gardens which is flanked by two birds (doves?). The name is intended to be read from outside the gardens.

**Size:** Roughly twelve feet across and about ten feet above ground.

**Orientation:** NW – SE

**Current State:** Apparently in good condition.

**Current Use:** The sign continues in its original use as a name sign.

**Existing Designations:** None

**Brief History:** : In the 1900s, the idea of a public park on the unfenced triangular section of land between Palmer’s Avenue and High View Avenue was being discussed.<sup>1</sup> On the 26th November, 1932 the council approved the plans for the Herbert E Brooks memorial rest garden at the top of Orsett Road<sup>2</sup> which was opened in 1933.<sup>3</sup> The sign is believed to be original. Despite the sign, the gardens are sometimes referred to as the “Palmers Memorial Gardens” or the “High View Memorial Gardens”



*Map showing location of Herbert E. Brooks Memorial Rest Garden by courtesy of OpenStreetMap and its contributors.*



*Entrance Sign to Herbert E. Brooks Memorial Rest Garden*

## **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** Detailed examination of the sign could provide evidence that identifies the manufacturer and confirm the date of manufacture, as well as the material (cast iron, wrought iron or steel).

**Historic:** The sign commemorates an important local figure who was a leading figure in the cement industry, a senior public servant and a local historian.

**Aesthetic:** The use of negative space was a popular feature for graphic design during the Art Deco period and especially within the Bauhaus movement. The trees on either side have grown to form a visually attractive entrance, although the leaves can partially obscure the sign making it difficult to read.

**Communal:** The sign serves to remind local people of the importance of the cement industry to Grays, South Stifford and West Thurrock and is one of the few remaining references to an industry that dominated the local environment for over a century.

**Statement of Significance Summary**

In addition to commemorating an important local figure, the sign appears to be a locally unique example of the use of negative space popularised by the Bauhaus movement in the 1920s and 1930s.

**Key References:**

1 Grays & Tilbury Gazette, and Southend Telegraph; 9th June 1906

2 <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock-historical-figures/herbert-e-brooks-memorial-garden-grays>

3 Chelmsford Chronicle; 5th May 1933

[www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 44): THE SHELTER, HERBERT E BROOKS MEMORIAL REST GARDENS

**Location:** The shelter is at north-east corner of the Brooks Memorial Garden at the junction of Palmers Avenue and High View Avenue.

**NGR:** TQ562080 178380

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** The shelter is brick built and has six sides. It is shaped (roughly) like a bisected octagon.

**Size:** Roughly 6 feet by 18 feet.

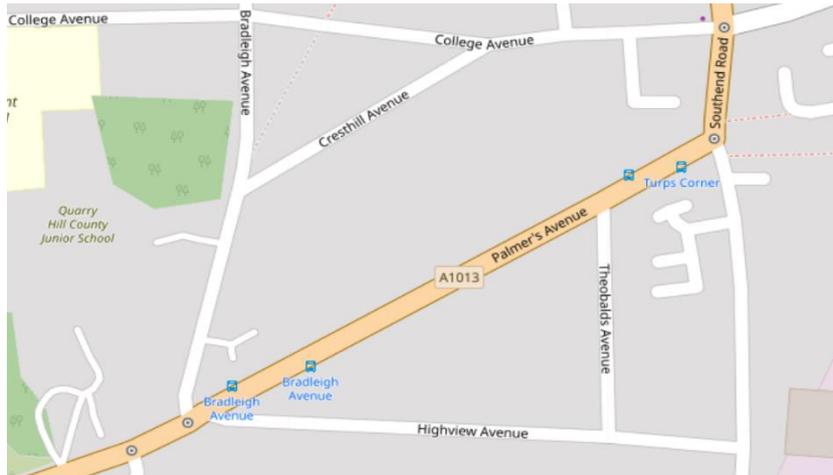
**Orientation:** N–S

**Current State:** Apparently in good condition but shuttered, preventing public use.

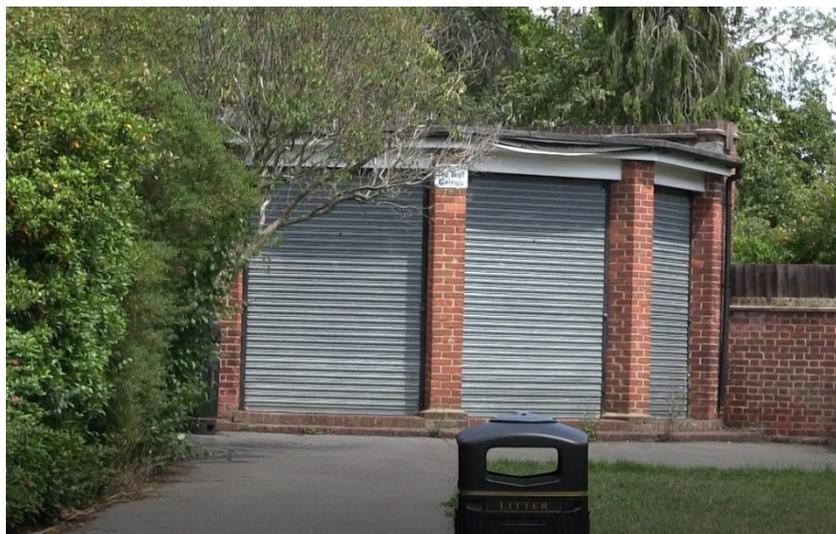
**Current Use:** Current use is unclear – it may be used as a storage facility for the workmen who tend the garden.

**Existing Designations:** None

**Brief History:** In the 1900s, the idea of a public park on the unfenced triangular section of land between Palmer’s Avenue and High View Avenue was being discussed.<sup>1</sup> On the 26th November, 1932 the council approved the plans for the Herbert E Brooks memorial rest garden at the top of Orsett Road<sup>2</sup> which was opened in 1933.<sup>3</sup> The shelter itself is believed to be original, but the shutters are probably a later addition.



*Map showing location of Herbert E. Brooks Memorial Rest Garden by courtesy of OpenStreetMap and its contributors.*



*The Shelter, Herbert Brooks Memorial Rest Garden*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** Detailed examination of the shelter could confirm the building date and as to whether the bricks are local.

**Historic:** The shelter appears to be an intrinsic feature of the 1930s garden illustrating architectural fashion of the period.

**Aesthetic:** The angular nature of the shelters exterior walls is typical of the Art Deco style, popular in the 1920s and 1930s. There are relatively few examples of Art Deco architecture in Thurrock.

**Communal:** If opened up, the shelter could return to its original function and provide an amenity for local residents.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The shelter appears to be an intrinsic feature of the 1930s garden and a relatively rare example in Thurrock of the Art Deco architectural fashion popular in the 1920s and 1930s.

### **Key References:**

1 Grays & Tilbury Gazette, and Southend Telegraph; 9th June 1906

2 <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock-historical-figures/herbert-e-brooks-memorial-garden-grays>

3 Chelmsford Chronicle; 5th May 1933

[www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 46): HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL, HERBERT E. BROOKS  
MEMORIAL REST GARDEN

**Location:** Close by entrance, Brooks Memorial Rest Garden, Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 5HA

**NGR:** TQ562049 178362

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** The memorial contains pebbles on which the names of various extermination camps have been written. Additional pebbles have been added marking attendance by the Mayor (or deputy Mayor) of Thurrock at a Holocaust Memorial event. An interpretation / description panel was added in front of the memorial in 2014.

**Size:** The memorial is about eight feet wide and four feet across.

**Orientation:** Roughly N-S

**Current State:** Well kept

**Current Use:** Continues to be used as a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust during World War II.<sup>1</sup>

**Existing Designations:** None known

**Brief History:** The memorial was established in 2012. A ceremony is held here each year on 27<sup>th</sup> January. A number of pebbles have been added to the memorial on which is written the date of the ceremony and the name of the Mayor. The gardens are sometimes referred to as the 'Palmer's Memorial Gardens' or the 'High View Memorial Gardens'.



**Evidential:** The addition of pebbles at each annual ceremony provides documentary evidence of the continuing importance of the events of the Holocaust period. Any future discontinuity could be evidence of changing attitudes.

**Historic:** The memorial is an important reminder to later generations of the events that took place in Europe between 1933 and 1945.

**Aesthetic:** The interpretation panel is well built and attractive. The memorial pebbles are attractive but could potentially attract vandalism.

**Communal:** The memorial is locally important as it acts as a focus for an annual Holocaust memorial.

#### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The memorial is locally unique and important as it acts as a focus for an annual Holocaust memorial.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Vandalism

#### **Key References:**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ingrays.com/gallery/herbert-e-brooks-memorial-rest-gardens-103>

**Researcher:** John Matthews 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 47): REJECT BRICK WALLS, HERBERT E BROOKS  
MEMORIAL REST GARDENS

**Location:** The walls are on the north and south boundary of the Brooks Memorial Rest Garden at the junction of Palmers Avenue and High View Avenue.

**NGR:** TQ562047 178354

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** The walls are made of brick but arranged in a 'crazy paving' fashion rather than in courses. Some bricks show stamped letters. They are made from reject bricks, many of which are fused together. The bricks may have come from the brickfield that became Grays Park.

**Size:** Roughly three feet/0.9144m high and encompassing the whole of the northern and southern perimeter of the garden – roughly 300 feet/91.44m in total.

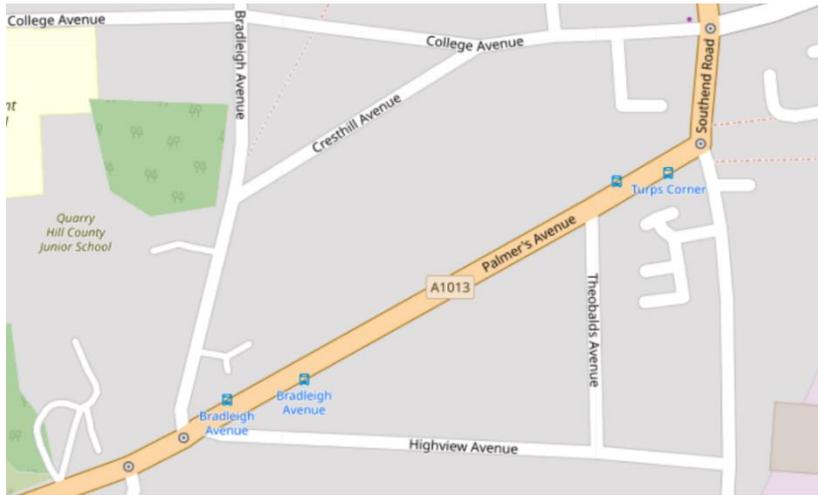
**Orientation:** E–W

**Current State:** Apparently in good condition.

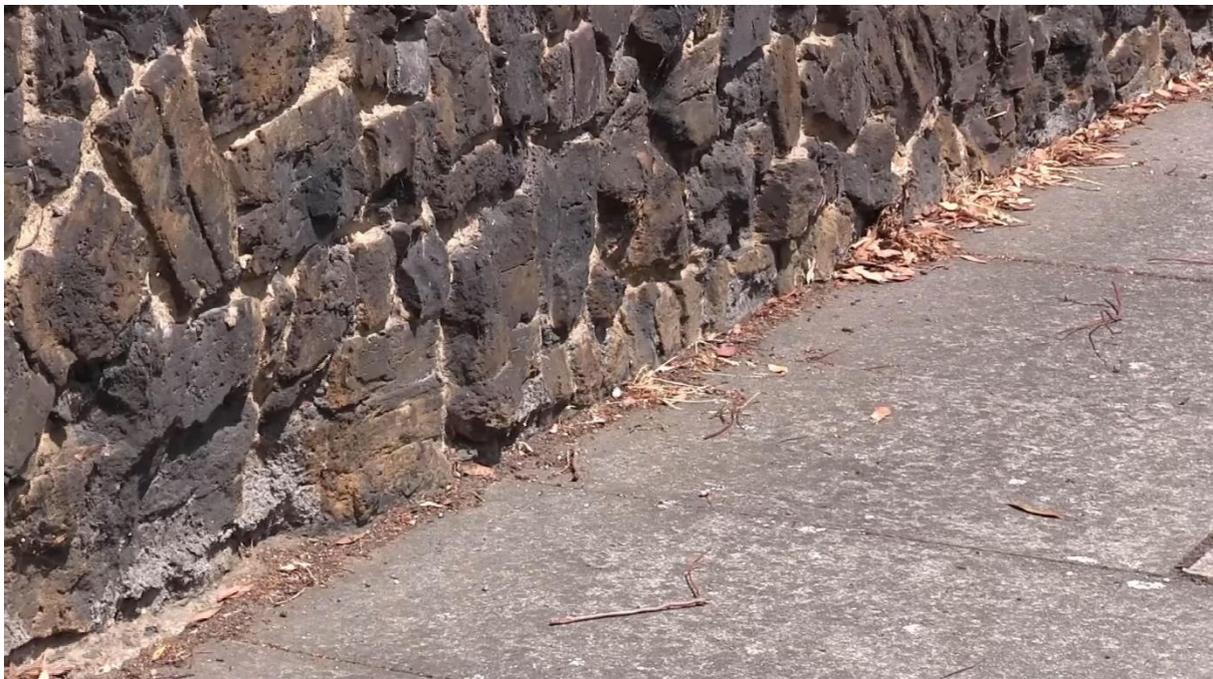
**Current Use:** These walls form two of the three boundary walls.

**Existing Designations:** None

**Brief History:** In the 1900's, the idea of a public park on the unfenced triangular section of land between Palmer's Avenue and High View Avenue was being discussed.<sup>1</sup> On the 26th November, 1932, the council approved the plans for the Herbert E Brooks memorial garden at the top of Orsett Road<sup>2</sup> which was opened in 1933.<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Catton (Thurrock Heritage and Museum Officer) notes the widespread use of 'seconds' or rejected bricks for curtain walls in Thurrock and they can also be found in much of North Kent and also Surrey.



*Location of Herbert E. Brooks Memorial Rest Garden by courtesy of OpenStreetMaps and their contributors*



*"Reject Brick" Wall – Herbert E. Brooks Memorial Rest Garden*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** More detailed examination might identify the brickworks that manufactured the bricks.

**Historic:** The bricks illustrate the history of brick making in the Thurrock area and the local usage of "seconds". Although features of this sort are still reasonably common in Thurrock, they are rarely replaced and consequently the number of examples is declining.

**Aesthetic:** The lack of regularity is attractive in itself and contrasts with some of the more formal Art Deco features of the garden.

**Communal:** The feature is well known to local residents.

**Statement of Significance Summary**

The construction technique used in the wall is becoming less common in Thurrock and illustrates the history of brick making in the Thurrock area and the local usage of “seconds” for minor construction work.

**Key References:**

1Grays & Tilbury Gazette, and Southend Telegraph; 9th June 1906

2<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock-historical-figures/herbert-e-brooks-memorial-garden-grays>

3Chelmsford Chronicle; 5th May 1933

[www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)

Researcher: John Matthews 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 41): MILLARD'S GARDEN

**Location:** South side of Stifford Road (B1335), South Ockendon, RM15 6BD Essex

**NGR:** TQ558442 180589

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of Feature:** Millard's Garden forms part of the Mardyke Woods which is incorporated into the Thames Chase Community Forest. Although the name suggests a garden, the significance of Millard's Garden lies chiefly in its status as an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland consisting of Oak, Ash, Hazel and Sweet Chestnut trees which are of cultural, historical and nature conservation value. It extends from Stifford Road, South Ockendon, down the river valley slope towards the Mardyke in a roughly rectangular shape. The area provides an interesting mix of ancient and modern. Twenty-four-hour access to the site is predominantly from the north, via an informal pathway leading south from Stifford Road where an area (approx. 400m<sup>2</sup>) has been cleared to provide a fenced, generously equipped children's playground and further on a fenced basketball court. To the east, a brick-built boundary wall (length approx. 458feet/140m) separates Millard's Garden from the housing estate. A gateway (wrought iron gate missing) allows access to the site from the housing. The informal pathway continues south-east, crossing a boundary ditch, by way of a wooden bridge, to an open, sparsely wooded area then onto the more densely wooded slope of the Mardyke river valley where it meets a formal gravel path bordering the site -The Mardyke Way riverside walk. Fungi and woodland flowers such as bluebells, lesser celandine, primroses, stitchwort and wood anemone can be found among the many walkways. Signage, maps and way markers show visitors the routes they can walk, horse ride and cycle.

**Size:** Approximately 30 acres

**Orientation:** N-S

**Current State:** The woodland is successfully maintained by the Forestry Commission using management practices to restore the woods quality. Signage is in generally good order. Play areas are in reasonable order, with surrounding grass cut regularly. Since the 2012 improvements, the woodland pathways are in good order however there is the threat of litter, vandalism and fire in both the wood and the play area. Graffiti and some vandalism on the brick wall on the eastern boundary. Regular volunteer litter picking takes place.

**Current Use:** A well-used wooded area for walks, cycling and riding linking South Ockendon with the Mardyke Valley and Davy Down. The basketball court and grassed children's play area is used by the local community. Community events take place and local schools visit.

**Existing Designations:** Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (Green Belt)

**Brief History:** Millard's Garden is part of the Mardyke Woods, an ancient woodland recorded in 1397 and formerly part of the Nortones/Belhus historic estate. The area was already

established during Roman occupation in 54BC. Mardyke Woods were originally known as three separate woodlands:-

- **Millard's Garden** was previously known as Manywares Gardyn 1397, Maynard's Garden in 1619, Mallerds Wood in 1777, and Millards Garden as shown on the 1869 - 73 Ordnance Survey map.
- **Brannetts Wood** was previously known as Brendewode in 1339 and Branewoods in 1619
- **Low Well Wood** was previously known as Hanging Wood in 1619.

They are amongst the oldest surviving woodlands in Essex. Millard's Garden is recorded as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland due to its historic use for coppicing and providing wood products. Medieval wood banks (earth mounds with trees planted along the top), which would have divided these three woods can still be seen today. The trees are mainly of oak, ash, hazel and sweet chestnut. Today, the 30 acres of Millards Garden includes woods and open space with two children's play areas.

Millard's Garden was mentioned by its original name of "Manywaresgardyn" in 1397 (named as such when the land was owned by John Maniware) in the division of the Nortones Estate in Aveley. At that time, it was included in the lands of the Richard de Nortone which on his death passed to John Baret and his wife Alice. By 1619 Maynard's Garden was part of the Belhus Estate owned by Sir Edward Barret. Its size is recorded in the 1619 survey of the Belhus Estate as 30 acres 2 Roods 2 Daywork. Trees were cut or coppiced to supply wood products and wood for building and there is map evidence that trees were felled in the 1500's. The wood, falling into neglect by 1880, remained as part of the estate until it was bought by Essex County Council in 1937 to include in the metropolitan Green Belt. After the second world war, 1220 acres in Aveley and South Ockendon were purchased by the London County Council to provide much needed housing for Londoners. They built the Aveley Council Estate during the 1950's with flats adjacent to the wood. Subsequently, the land was transferred to the Greater London Council and later to Thurrock Borough Council for care and maintenance. A brick boundary wall was built separating Millard's Garden from the housing area, mid to late-twentieth century and a small area of Millard's Garden was cleared for use as a play area leaving the remaining area as the existing Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland.

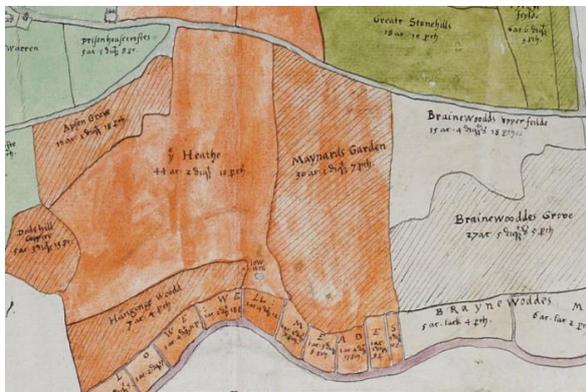
Today, the wooded area of the Mardyke Woods are maintained by the Forestry Commission. The play areas are managed by Thurrock Council. In 2012 a three-year woodland improvement project was funded equally by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Veolia North Thames Trust and the Forestry Commission intending to work closely with the local community to reintroduce management practices to restore the woods' quality. The area is now used for community engagement, access, biodiversity and heritage.



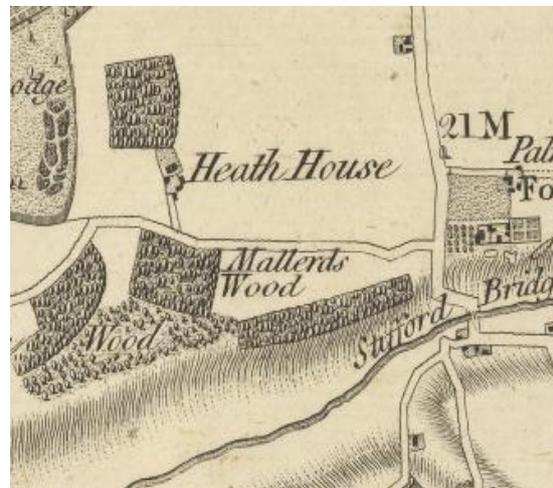
*View looking North - Millard's Garden*



*Children's Playground Area*



*1586 Survey (part) 'Bellhouse Manor: Map/1254 Reproduced by courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office' showing 'Maynard's Garden'*



*Chapman & André Map 1777 showing Mallerds Wood*

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** In its current form Millard's Garden incorporates substantial evidential material relating to its previous significant usages as a medieval woodland, part of a wooded parkland and also as a twentieth century playground associated with the increasing density of housing development within the area. The earthen wood banks and veteran trees provide evidential material for this past and could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insights into the long heritage of the site for current users. These could be enhanced by reference on the boards to the documentary evidences.

**Historic:** Millard's Garden has three major periods of significance for the history of the area:

- As part of the medieval system of woodland economy and labour (as evidenced both on site and in historical records)

- As part of the Belhus Estate, landscaped parkland, owned by the Barrett and Lennard Family from the fifteenth century until 1937(as evidenced in historical records)
- As part of Green Belt land since the twentieth century managed by The Forestry Commission and Thurrock Council for the benefit of the local community (as evidenced both on site and by historic records).

**Aesthetic:** Situated adjacent to the busy Stifford Road, Millard’s Garden is a green oasis of peace and tranquillity providing a sense of place and well-being. Somewhere to picnic, ‘to stand and stare’, to be quiet and still, to be at one with nature. The local community, particularly those living in the flats overlooking the site, enjoy views of the woodland throughout the changing seasons. Squirrels, foxes, rabbits and a wide variety of birds and insects are to be seen and the dawn chorus heard.

**Communal:** The veteran trees are of cultural, historical and nature conservation value, and are of great significance to community wellbeing. The site makes a positive contribution to the local community providing a location for community events, children’s playground areas, ball court and ancient woodland, supplying ‘a green lung’ in an increasingly urban environment close to the pollution of the M25 and other major roads. It is valued by the community as a peaceful area to spend their leisure time to just sit, walk, ride, exercise the dog or cycle. With no garden of their own this becomes the garden for the local community providing both mental and physical well-being. The Forestry Commission seek to work closely with the local community to improve the woods with a focus on community engagement, access, biodiversity, and heritage.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

Although the name suggests a garden, the significance of Millard’s Garden lies chiefly in its status as an Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland consisting of oak, ash, hazel and sweet chestnut trees which are of cultural, historical and nature conservation value. Twenty-four-hour access to the site is predominantly from the north, via an informal pathway leading south from Stifford Road where an area has been cleared to provide a fenced, generously equipped children’s playground (approx. 400m<sup>2</sup>) and further on a fenced basketball court. To the east, a brick-built boundary wall (length approx.458feet/140m) separates Millard’s Garden from the housing estate. A gateway (wrought iron gate missing) allows access to the site from the housing. The informal pathway continues south east, crossing a boundary ditch, by way of a wooden bridge, to an open, sparsely wooded area then onto the more densely wooded slope of the Mardyke river valley where it meets a formal gravel path bordering the wood -The Mardyke Way Riverside Walk. Signage, maps and way-markers show visitors the routes they can walk, ride and cycle.

Millard’s Garden significantly provides the local community and landscape with a long history that has adapted and changed to reflect the events and society of the area which was already established during Roman occupation in 54BC. First recorded as “Manywaresgardyn” in 1397

(it had possibly been named after the previous owner John Manyware) it became part of the Nortones, later Belhus Historic Estate. By 1619, included in the survey of Belhus, the seat of the Edward Barrett, it is recorded as Maynard’s Garden which continued to be used as a

woodland for coppicing and providing wood products amidst a rural environment managed by a tenant. This practice continued until the nineteenth century, known then as Millard's Garden, when it fell into disuse for wood products and building purposes as building practices altered. In the twentieth century, when the Belhus Estate (famously landscaped by Capability Brown in the eighteenth century) was broken up, Essex County Council purchased 600 acres as part of the metropolitan Green Belt of which Millard's Garden is included to the present day. By the 1940's London County Council had bought much of the remaining land with plans to build the Aveley council housing estate, adjacent to Millard's Garden, changing this previously rural, agricultural environment into a mixed housing and industrial area. Although officially known as South Ockendon, the estate is commonly known as Belhus in proud association of the area's former history. The Forestry Commission took over management of the Mardyke Woods, which includes Millard's Garden, in 2012 to improve the quality of the woodland and its ecosystem.

Situated adjacent to the busy Stifford Road, Millard's Garden is a valued, green oasis of peace and tranquillity providing a sense of place and well-being. The local community, particularly those living in the flats overlooking the site, enjoy views of the woodland throughout the changing seasons. Millard's Garden makes a positive contribution to the local community providing both recreational areas and ancient woodland. It is well-used and valued by the community as a peaceful area to spend their leisure time. The Forestry Commission seek to work closely with the local community to improve the woods with a focus on community engagement, access, biodiversity, and heritage. It is a significant landmark which greatly enhances the local environment.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Litter and vandalism

### **Key references**

ERO: D/DL T1/31 1302 and ERO D/DL T1/254(1397)  
ERO D/DL M14/2 ERO D/DL M14/3 and T2496 1619 Survey of Manor of Belhus alias Nortons  
1586 Survey (part) 'Bellhouse Manor: Map/1254 Reproduced by courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office'  
Map/Map Chapman and André, 1777  
Thurrock Local History Journal No.4 Autumn 1959  
Forestry commission England information booklet "Mardyke Woods" Aug2013  
[www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/mardyke-woods](http://www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/mardyke-woods)  
[http://www.lostheritage.org.uk/houses/lh\\_essex\\_belhus.html](http://www.lostheritage.org.uk/houses/lh_essex_belhus.html)  
[www.thurrockgroundmap.com](http://www.thurrockgroundmap.com)  
[www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/mardyke-woods](http://www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/mardyke-woods)  
Aerial photographs-  
[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EP026357](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EP026357) (1929)  
[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052918](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052918) (1953)  
[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052915](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052915) (1953)  
[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052916](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052916) (1953)  
[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052917](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052917) (1953)  
Current photographs 2020 – Heather Hunter

**Researchers:** Sonia Dewell and Heather Hunter 2020

## [A HISTORY OF DILKES PARK, SOUTH OCKENDON](#)

**Note: Several features from Dilkes Park, South Ockendon have been included (following) and this overall history is provided as a context for these:**

Dilkes Park was originally part of the historic Belhus Estate, in an area formerly known as The Great Dilkes Wood. When the estate was sold in the early-twentieth century a large part was purchased by the London County Council, who began to build 'The Aveley Estate' to provide much needed council housing during the 1950's. Thurrock Council took on the responsibility of the park and construction commenced on 10th June 1958. Great Dilkes Wood was partially cleared to make a family friendly park, which included a paddling pool, rose beds, a shelter, tennis courts, play equipment, an ornamental pond, and public toilets, with benches positioned all around the park. In the south-west corner, where Fairham Avenue meets Foyle Drive, there was a putting green. The park was enclosed within a fence, with an ornate, triple gated entrance (a double set and two single gates), in Foyle Drive, as well as other entrances in Darenth Lane and Fairham Avenue. The park was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1960. A park keeper was on duty during the open hours and he would ring a handbell fifteen minutes before closing time to warn park users of imminent closure as the park was locked overnight.

A few months after the park was opened to the public, the shelter was removed as vandals had taken the lead from the roof, leaving the structure unsafe. At some point it was decided by the Council to close the public toilets and demolish the building. The outer fence was also removed. In 1989, as a result of a report, on unsafe play equipment, by Esther Ranzen on BBC's 'That's Life' programme, Thurrock Council assessed all of the play equipment in the borough, and made many changes. The paddling pool was filled in, and a new shallower pool in an enclosure, built, opposite the old pool. The tennis court was changed into a basketball court, with three shelters around it, and a lot of new equipment was introduced to replace the old that was taken out, and around the same time, the putting green was removed.

During the late 1990's the rose beds were removed, and grassed over. In 2001 the pond was converted by 'The Grass Roof Company' to a dipping pond for local school children. The Dipping Pond was dredged by Thames Chase in 2008 due to silting and fly tipping. Thurrock Play Network had a container installed in the park in 2007, and were regularly soon entertaining children after school. An outdoor gymnasium was installed in 2010 and hand carved 'Welcome' signs were put up by four of the entrance gates in 2012. New play equipment, sponsored by local businesses, was installed to replace worn out items during the winter of 2013/14, but within a year, an act of vandalism saw most of this burnt down. The shelters around the basketball court were removed during 2018 due to their misuse. Finally, in 2019 the perimeter fence was reinstated due to the problem of travellers parking caravans in the park. In addition, solar lighting was installed at the major junctions of the paths in the park for safety.

### **Key References**

ERO - D/DL P1A

Thurrock History Journal no.4 August 1959 (Grays Library Archives)

[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/history](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/history) of the bbc/that's life/ playground accidents

Further information received as oral statements from ex council employees and local residents.

**Researcher:** Sonia Dewell 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 37): DILKES PARK BRICK PILLARS AND ENTRANCE GATES

**Location:** Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, RM15 5LT

**NGR:** TQ558095 181080

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Three pairs of brick gate piers, laid in running bond, with cement capping, connected by a curved brick wall of single brick thickness, laid in header bond with header brick capping and protruding header decorative brickwork in a diamond shape c.1960, supporting two single and one double ornamental and wrought iron gate providing the main entrance to Dilkes Park, South Ockendon, a former London County Council housing estate.

**Material:** London Brick (22cms x 6.5cm), cement capping and wrought iron.

**Size:** 2 x Taller square brick piers - approx. h 2.6m, w 0.57m, d 0.57m  
4 x shorter square brick piers - approx. h2.08m, w 0.45m, d 0.45m  
2 x curved brick wall - approx. h 1.86m sloping up to 2.3m. Thickness of wall 0.22m  
2 x Single wrought iron gate: h 1.86m, w 0.92m  
1 x double wrought iron gate: each side h 2.42m, w 1.50m

**Orientation:** W-E

**Current state:** Brickwork in good order

**Current Use:** Main vehicle and pedestrian gates into park

**Designation:** A Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust

**Brief History:** Construction of the main entrance gates of the modern park commenced on the site of Great Dilkes Wood, part of the historic Belhus Park Estate owned by the Barrett-Lennard Family. The gates are original from when the park was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1960. Thurrock Urban District Council Housing Dept. carried out the main gate construction.



*Dilkes Park Gates open to the park c1960*



*Dilkes Park Gates 2020*



*Original wrought iron gates, Dilkes Park 2020*



*Ivy growing over left wall*



*Graffiti on rear wall*



*Decorative diamond-shaped brickwork*

## **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The London County Council planning map (1952) and these original park gates provide significant evidence of a typical mid-twentieth century family park planned following government guidelines to provide innovative council housing estates with good leisure facilities.

**Historic:** The gates and the brick pillars are a significant and typical example of mid-twentieth century park design and construction.

**Aesthetic:** The visual attractiveness of the red textured brick, the curved line of the walls, the additional diamond shaped brick decoration, the solid gate piers and the ornamental wrought iron work provide a positive sense of place and stature in this urban parkland. Two veteran oak trees, standing on either side of the gates add to their distinction.

**Communal:** The gates, having stood for 60 years, are a positive contribution to local character and sense of place, providing a grand, main entrance to playground areas, ball court, outdoor gym, wildlife pond, mature oaks, a small section of ancient woodland and wide-open spaces. There is an active forum in the area and the 'Friends of Dilkes Park' are responsible for fundraising and running events in the park.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The significance of the main gates of Dilkes Park lie chiefly in the beautifully designed brick and wrought iron work. The visual attractiveness of the red textured brick, the curved line of the walls, the additional diamond shaped brick decoration, the solid gate piers and the original, restored, ornamental, wrought iron work provide a positive sense of place, identity and stature in this popular, urban parkland. Two veteran oak trees flank either side of the gates adding further distinction. The naming of the park provides evidence relating to the long heritage of the site as a medieval woodland (Great Dilkes Wood) and part of the historic Belhus Park Estate. Dilkes Park, shown on a L.C.C. planning map (1952). Aerial photographs from 1929 and 1953, featuring Great Dilkes Wood, illustrate how the area had begun to change from a previously rural area into a large housing estate.

The park is in the centre of a former London County Council housing estate built after World War II following government guidelines. The gates, are a significant example of mid-twentieth century park design.

The gates welcome you into the park providing a grand, main entrance onto the many leisure activities, secluded wooded areas and open space. The park is widely used by the community of all ages, both individually and for community events providing the setting for memorable life events. Residents value the park and the main gates are a significant, local landmark which enhances the neighbourhood.

**Issues and vulnerabilities:** Red spray graffiti on back of left-hand curved brick wall. Ivy growing on front of left-hand curved brick wall.

**Key References:**

<https://gosmartbrtcks.com/10-most-popular-types-of-brick-bonds>

<https://www.google.com/maps>

[www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/dilkes-park](http://www.thameschase.org.uk/visitor-centres/ockendon/dilkes-park)

[www.facebook.com/DilkesParkConsultation2017/photos](https://www.facebook.com/DilkesParkConsultation2017/photos)

(Photo album of Mr. Jeff Anthony, one of the original constructors of the park)

<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk>

[www.fieldsintrust.org/FieldSite/DilkesPark](http://www.fieldsintrust.org/FieldSite/DilkesPark)

<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EPW026357> (1929)

<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EAW052930> (1953)

LCC Map of Aveley Estate 1946 – Thurrock Reference Library, Grays

Belhus Park, 1619 Survey Map. ERO Document D/DL P1A

Friends of Dilkes Park, c/o South Ockendon Community Hub

Current photographs – Heather Hunter

Historic photograph Dilkes Park 1960 by courtesy of Sonia Dewell

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 35): DILKES PARK DIPPING POND

**Location:** Dilkes Park, Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5LT

**NGR:** TQ558190 181126

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description:** This is a natural pond that is fed from the water table and therefore does not have a constant height. It is enclosed within a circular cast iron fence. There are three platforms of different heights (for access at different times of the year), making it a dipping pond. Overgrowth of bushes at the back have caused the retaining wall to collapse, and the wood of the platforms is rotten and broken. A narrow granite half circle, level with the ground around the front of the pond, is almost overgrown by grass, along with a stepping stone path from the gate to the pond. Due to its dangerous condition the Council have chained the gate closed to stop access.

**Material:** The outer fence is cast iron. The retaining wall is of wood, with granite blocks forming a path and half circle in front of the pond. The remaining area is grassed over, with wood and metal benches.

**Size:** The perimeter fence is approximately 61m in circumference.

**Orientation:** The pond is situated to the east of the main N-S path through the park, in the northern half of the park.

**Current use:** Pond available to view only from outside of the enclosure.

**Current State:** Chained off from public access, due to dangerous condition.

**Existing Designation:** A Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust. (Managed by Thurrock Council)

**Brief History:** Dilkes Park was created from the Great Dilkes Wood, originally part of the Belhus historic estate. The pond was originally a natural pond fed from the water table. When Dilkes Park was created in the late 1950's this was cleaned, cleared and flower beds planted, surrounded by a fence. In 2001 the flower beds were removed, and the pond was transformed into a dipping pond for local children. This was designed and built by The Grass Roof Company. In 2008 Thames Chase were asked to assist in dredging the pond, due to silting and fly-tipping, and it is still set up as a dipping pond.



*Original Pond, Dilkes Park 1959*



*Dipping Pond, Dilkes Park 2001*



*Dipping Pond, Dilkes Park 2020*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** This natural pond is fed from the water table and is evidential of the local geology. In summer it is almost empty, and it is not at its fullest until late winter. The black and white photo images illustrate how the pond was once rather more planted, evidencing the changes in park management, labour practices and also the changes in use by the public. This change of use over the years evidences society's different attitudes towards parks, the environment, education and play. The platforms of different heights show its intention for use by children as a dipping pond.

**Historic:** There are three stages in its history. Firstly, as a natural pond within a wood, Secondly as an ornamental pond in an urban park. Thirdly as a dipping pond. Very little has been written about it, but there are photographs to show the different stages.

**Aesthetic:** This has always been a place of nature, where wildlife can drink, ducks can be seen swimming and birds can wash their feathers. A calm and pretty place where people can sit quietly and watch the wildlife.

**Communal:** This is somewhere schools could bring children to learn about nature and its different stages throughout the year, a place of learning, and the same with families, a place to sit and admire their surroundings.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The pond in Dilkes Park is not just a standard pond, but a place of learning, somewhere to sit, relax and enjoy the wildlife, something that was thought important when it was first created as well as today, and an important link back to its original woodland state.

### **Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

Fly tipping is a problem, along with decay of the facilities and damage by overgrowth of shrubs to the structure.

### **Key references:**

1959 Thurrock Local History Journal (no 4) Grays Library Archives.  
1959 Photographs (In possession of S. Dewell)  
Current Photograph taken by Sonia Dewell 2020  
[www.fieldsintrust.org.uk](http://www.fieldsintrust.org.uk)

**Researcher:** Sonia Dewell 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 38): DILKES PARK JUMPING BLOCKS POSITIONED ON FORMER CIRCULAR ROSE BEDS

**Location:** Dilkes Park, Foyle Drive, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5LT

**NGR:** TQ558237 181090

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of Feature:** Situated in the centre of Dilkes Park, the existing feature is an arrangement of 27 wooden jumping blocks of different heights, forming a coil shape. The Jumping Blocks are positioned on a circular, grass bed which was formerly a traditional rose bed when the park was first opened in 1960. The former rose beds comprised of an inner circular rose bed, with four outer rose beds, arranged in a ring around the centre circle. Benches were positioned outside each of the outer beds, facing towards the centre bed. The rose beds were grassed over and left as such, for some time, before the Jumping Blocks were added as a central feature.

**Material:** Blocks of oak, acquired from Ashwell Timber and Reclamation Yard, that originally formed part of a pier or wharf, possibly in Grays, Essex. All but 4 have their original cast iron bands around them. The circular bed is grassed over.

**Size:** Jumping Blocks: The circular bed is 7.9m diameter. Each oak block is 0.33m<sup>2</sup> and differ in height, above ground, from approximately 0.2m to 0.4m. The surrounding cast iron bands are 0.009m thick and 0.05m in height.

Former Rose Beds: Diameter of the complete feature is 38.4m from the outer edge of the outer ring. The circumference of the outer edge of the outer beds is 126.8m. Pathways are 2.4m wide. The outer beds are 12.8m wide, the diameter of the centre circle is 7.9m.

**Orientation:** The circular bed is in the centre of Dilkes Park, where the N-S and E-W paths cross.

**Current State:** The condition of the blocks is fair, except in winter when wet, when they display a slippery surface which would come from wood that has been in water for many years. Twenty-three out of the twenty-seven blocks still have their original bands in situ. The grass is cut regularly and is in fair condition but the edges have been allowed to grow over the paths. The surrounding paths are uneven and the beds are uneven.

**Current Use:** The Jumping Blocks are a decorative feature, to highlight the centre of the park where the original rose beds were located. They provide a play area for children to sit on and climb over or somewhere to sit. This central area is very popular as somewhere to meet, rest and admire the surroundings, walk dogs or exercise.

**Existing Designation:** A Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust. (Managed by Thurrock Council)

**Brief History:** The centre circle was originally a rose bed when Dilkes Park was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1960. The park was constructed on the site of Great Dilkes Wood, once part of the historic Belhus Estate. The wood was partially cleared in the late 1950's to create a family friendly park for the surrounding, London County Council, 'Aveley Estate'. The rose beds were cleared in the late 1990's and grassed over. The Jumping Blocks were set into the circle during 2015. Oral testimony from the Thurrock Council Park Engineers, installing them at the time, suggested that the wooden blocks were reclaimed from the Grays Wharf, which had recently been dismantled.



*Central feature Rose Beds 1959*



*Central Feature grassed over 2009*



*Jumping Blocks 2019*

## Statement of Significance

### **Evidential:**

The change in the feature evidences societies different attitude towards parks and play. The rose beds, although now grassed over, are still in their original position, placed as a central feature where both main paths cross, and in sight of the main gate but currently supplemented by the jumping blocks. The size, shape and type of timber used in the blocks, are examples of the type used for piers and wharfs and supports the oral testimony given by the Thurrock Council Engineers that they were reclaimed from Grays Wharf. This is reinforced, especially in winter, when the blocks take on the feel of wood that has been in water for a long time. Photographs show that jumping blocks, made of segments of felled trees, were used as one of the play features in the original park design.

**Historic:** The history of this central feature of Dilkes Park is documented through maps and photographs showing how adaptations were made to accommodate changes and needs in society. Photographs were taken of the arrangement of the rose beds, when the park was first created and a selection can be seen on the Francis Frith website, showing the roses in bloom. When Great Dilkes Wood was partially cleared for the creation of a park for the residents of the L.C.C. Aveley Estate in the late 1950's, the rose beds were planned as a significant, central feature. By the 1990's the former glory of the park had diminished and the Rose Beds were cleared and grassed over remaining this way until 2015 when the Jumping Blocks were installed to re-establish a central feature. The blocks of oak wood were acquired from a reclamation yard that specialised in dismantling piers and wharfs, and oral testimony suggests that they had originally been sourced from the recent dismantling of Grays Wharf.

**Aesthetic:** Parks are vital for providing an antidote to the stresses of urban living and can contribute to a sense of well-being and improved mental health. Although there are no longer any roses in this area of the park, the jumping blocks feature still stands out as the centre of the park, where the paths meet, and it is a delightful place to sit and enjoy the views of the park and the wildlife. The blocks make a pleasing feature, highlighting the fact that the centre circle was intended as an important feature when it was first designed. It also shows recycling in an exceptional way - something that is part of the local history being used in an historical place but used in a totally modern way.

**Communal:** The central arrangement is a place where many visitors to the park meet, either while walking their dogs, exercising, letting their children have fun playing on the blocks in the centre circle, or just relaxing on the benches to read or admire the all-round views of the park. It is widely used and valued by the local community. There is an active "Friends of Dilkes Park" community group.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

This central feature of Dilkes Park is documented through maps and photographs showing how adaptations were made to accommodate changes and needs in society over the last seventy years. Since the late 1950's the site has transformed from an ancient woodland, Great Dilkes Wood, part of the historic Belhus estate, to a modern, urban park, in the centre

of a housing estate, retaining the historic name Dilkes. During that time features in the park have changed according to the needs of each generation. The Rose Beds were planned as a significant, original, central feature. By the 1990's the former glory of the park had diminished and the rose beds were cleared and grassed over, remaining this way until 2015 when the Jumping Blocks were installed to re-establish a central feature. Although the original rose beds are no longer there, the remaining layout highlights the replacement jumping blocks as there being a significant, central feature intended in the original design.

Parks are vital for providing an antidote to the stresses of urban living and can contribute to a sense of well-being and improved mental health. Such pleasant views and open space are essential for the residents of the flats that overlook the park and the local community. Although there are no longer any roses in this area of the park, the jumping blocks feature still stands out as the centre of the park, where the paths meet, and it is a delightful place to sit and enjoy the views of the park and the wildlife. The significant use of recycled wood from a local historic site, Grays Wharf, in this central feature reflects the need to recycle and reuse in present times.

The central feature of the jumping blocks is a place where many visitors to the park meet, either while walking their dogs, exercising, watching their children have fun playing on the Jumping Blocks or just to relax on the benches. It is widely used and valued by the local community. There is an active "Friends of Dilkes Park" community group.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Degradation of the paths, by weather and lack of maintenance, overgrowth of grass onto the paths creating a lack of definition of the beds. Vandalism, litter and graffiti can be a problem due to open access to site.

#### **Key references:**

Oral testimony: Thurrock Council Park Engineers (2015)  
Oral testimony: Sonia Dewell – Friends of Dilkes Park member (Community Group)  
Personal Photographs (Sonia Dewell). 2009 and 2019  
LCC Map of Aveley Estate 1946 – Thurrock Reference Library, Grays  
Photo album of one of the original gardeners of the park (Owned by Sonia Dewell)  
[www.facebook.com/DilkesParkConsultation2017/photos](http://www.facebook.com/DilkesParkConsultation2017/photos)  
<https://osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk>  
[www.fieldsintrust.org/FieldSite/DilkesPark](http://www.fieldsintrust.org/FieldSite/DilkesPark)  
[www.francisfrith.com](http://www.francisfrith.com)

**Researchers:** Sonia Dewell, Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 39): DILKES PARK, OLD PADDLING POOL

**Location:** South Side of Dilkes Park, South Ockendon, Essex RM15 5LT

**NGR:** TQ558193 181023

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description of feature:** Situated on the east side of the main north/south path through Dilkes Park, most of the original outer pathway around the paddling pool can still be seen, along with the bridge that divided the pool into two sections. The pool has been filled in with earth, level with the path and grassed over. With two benches (modern) facing it.

**Material:** The path around the paddling pool is concrete. The bridge is a concrete walkway, with stone facings. Natural, large stones are just visible at one end, and used as a feature.

**Size:** The paddling pool was originally 41metres in length, but it's full size can no longer be seen, as the path on the far side is no longer visible. The area was said to be 476.310m<sup>2</sup>.

**Orientation:** The paddling pool lies in an E-W direction.

**Current State:** It is overgrown with grass and weeds, but the structure of the bridge, and the paths are in good condition.

**Current Use:** Attempts to make it into flower beds have been made, however, the plants have been stolen on two occasions. It is now left as a grassed over area, with seats that are used for by residents as a place to meet and talk and admire the park.

**Existing Designations:** Registered as Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust

**Brief History:** The paddling pool was built in the late 1950's, when Great Dilkes Wood was partially cleared, to make a family friendly park, with the pool being one of its many features. The pool was deemed unfit for use in the 1990's by Thurrock Council, and filled in with earth. During the 2010's, benches were installed on two sides and an unsuccessful attempt was made to make the area into flower beds.



*Paddling Pool facing west c1959*



*Paddling Pool including bridge, facing east c1959*



*Paddling Pool planted up facing east 2010*



*Paddling Pool planted up facing west 2010*



*Current condition of former Paddling Pool showing remaining bridge and steps 2019*

### **Statement of Significance:**

**Evidential:** Elements of the pools original structure survive. The paddling pool was built on a slope, and on the northern side of the bridge, the highest point, there are steps going down to platforms, which the children would use to get in and out of the pool. Although only some of the path can be seen, during the summer more is visible, showing the pools unusual shape.

**Historic:** Dilkes Park was created when the Aveley Housing Estate was built, to be used as a place for families to enjoy. The paddling pool was a popular place for children and is one of the parks original features.

**Aesthetic:** The shape of the pool demonstrates a new idea in design for the time. Rather than a standard rectangle or oval, it was more like an extended kidney bean shape. It is positioned just to the side of a main path, but with trees around, it did not affect the overall view of the park for people who wanted to sit and take in a pleasant view.

**Communal:** The pool was somewhere that the children loved to go and play. With grass surrounding it, they could play games with their friends or families. It was a place where the children did not have to be accompanied as there was a park keeper in attendance.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The paddling pool is one of the original features of the park, created at the same time as the housing estate was being built. It shows the recognition that children needed fun ways to be entertained. The unusual shape of it, shows how new ideas were being used in design.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** Bushes and trees have started to grow on the earth banks at the sides of the pool where it was filled in. The ornate rocks at one end are only partially visible, and these are at risk of damage from the industrial lawnmowers used by the local council.

**Key References:**

Oral statements received from ex council workers.

Personal photographs 1959, 2010 and 2019 – Sonia Dewell

**Researcher:** Sonia Dewell 2020

FEATURE NAME (ID: 34): GROUP OF MATURE TREES- HUMBER AVENUE  
AMENITY GREEN

**Location:** By Gatehope Drive/Garron Lane/Humber Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 5JQ

**NGR:** TQ 557737 181108

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of feature:** Mature Trees, horse chestnut, sweet Chestnut and scots pine, standing on an amenity green, formerly part of the Deer Park of the Belhus historic estate, bordered by housing and a parade of shops.

Circumference Measurements of Mature Trees:-

348cm Horse chestnut

326cm Horse chestnut

321cm Horse chestnut

292cm Sweet chestnut

270cm Horse chestnut

169cm Scots pine

190cm Scots pine (Lost bark on the lower approx.15 feet otherwise healthy)

143cm Scots pine

**Size:** Sited on Amenity Green - 0.78 Hectares / 1.93 Acres

**Orientation:** W-E

**Current State:** Good

**Current Use:** Mature trees on a recreational amenity green

**Existing Designations:** None - Maintained under Local Authority Ownership (No TPO's)

**Brief History:** The Green, on which the trees stand, was once part of the Belhus historic estate belonging to the Barrett-Lennard family. A survey map (1619) shows that the present-day, amenity green was once part of the Deer Park. Thomas Barrett-Lennard, later Lord Dacre, commissioned Lancelot 'Capability' Brown to remodel and landscape the grounds between 1753 and 1763. By 1895 the Ordnance Survey map shows the present green as a wooded area. The Belhus estate was bought by Essex County Council in 1937 to add to the Green Belt around London. After the second world war the land was purchased by the London County Council to provide much needed housing for Londoners. A London County Council map of 1952, detailing development of the Aveley estate, as it had become known, shows the green area between Humber Avenue, Gatehope Drive and Garron Lane as wooded and shows the intention of leaving the area in its original wooded condition. In 2020, Thurrock Council put forward a proposal to build 26 new council houses on the green but dropped the proposal after much opposition from the local community.



*Humber Avenue Amenity Green, Spring 2020*



*Sweet Chestnut Tree, Summer 2020*



*Belhus Park Survey map 1619 (part) 'Document D/DL P1A. Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office'. The map shows the deer park covering the area between the House and Great Dilkes Wood including the area of the Amenity Green*

### **Statement of Significance**

**Evidential:** The mature trees provide evidential material for the link between this rural past and the urban present. and could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insights into the long heritage of the site for current users. The Survey of the Manor of Belhus, 1619 clearly shows previous usage of the area as the deer park and wooded parkland of the historic Belhus estate and in the twentieth century, the London County Council planning map shows the intention to keep the area as a wooded, recreation amenity green, as it currently exists, for the council housing of the Aveley Estate.

**Historic:** The green, on which the trees stand, was part of the deer park of the Belhus historic estate, owned by Sir Edward Barrett during the seventeenth century and by Lord Dacre, Thomas Barrett-Lennard in the eighteenth century. Both individuals were interested in developing the gardens and parkland of the estate. These mature trees are significant

because of their age and links to the historic parkland landscape, remodelled by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown between 1753 and 1763. This area was initially part of the deer park during the seventeenth century and then in the eighteenth century as a wooded area, and continued to be kept as such during the development of the L.C.C. Aveley council housing estate built during the twentieth century. The houses surrounding the green are mainly private since the "Right to buy" scheme of the 1980's. Some veteran trees have been lost to the Green

**Aesthetic:** For 70 years, since the creation of the LCC Aveley Estate, this grassed open space with scattered mature trees, at the centre of the community, has created a significant, oasis of tranquillity in an urban setting, providing a sense of place and well-being. Somewhere to 'sit and stare', to be quiet and still to enjoy nature. Squirrels and a wide variety of birds are to be seen. In the spring swathes of daffodils provide much needed colour following the dull winter months. The trees provide shade for picnics in the summer, conkers for children's play in the Autumn and a 'green lung' to an area in close proximity to the M25. Younger trees have been planted alongside the mature trees adding to the ambience of the area. The trees provide a significant, pleasurable view, throughout all seasons, for the occupants of the homes surrounding the Green and visitors to the nearby Belhus Park. These significant trees can provide a valuable connection to the people and events of the past.

**Communal:** These majestic trees provide a picturesque, recreational space for children and adults, important for all but especially so for the community living in flats above the shops of Garron Lane. This is their garden. Dog walkers exercise dogs here. The local school use the quiet roads around the Green for Cycling Proficiency lessons. The area is much loved and valued by the local community. A recent proposal to build 26 new council houses on the green was vehemently opposed by an Action Group of local residents and as a result the proposal was dropped by Thurrock Council.

### **Statement of Significance Summary**

These mature trees have a heritage value of great significance to the local residents and the wider community as the green, on which they stand, was once part of the Deer Park of the Belhus Historic Estate belonging to the Barrett-Lennard family, famously landscaped by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown between 1753 and 1763. These aged, majestic trees provide evidential material for the link between a rural past and the urban present and could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insights into the long heritage of the site for current users.

The mature sweet chestnut, horse chestnut and scots pine trees have survived despite the urbanisation which surrounds them. The 1895 Ordnance Survey map, aerial photos from 1929 and 1953 are evidence that the area remained wooded as it had been since the seventeenth century. Following the Second World War, London County Council bought the land, formerly the historic Belhus estate, to provide much needed housing. The 1952 L.C.C. Aveley estate map shows the green between Humber Avenue, Gatehope Drive and Garron Lane as wooded and illustrates the intention and vision of the planners to leave the area in its original state for the well-being and recreation of local residents.

This grassed open space, enhanced by the beauty of the trees and at the centre of the community, has created an oasis of tranquillity in an urban setting, providing a sense of place and well-being. Somewhere to 'sit and stare', to be quiet and still to enjoy nature.

Significantly the trees support habitats for wildlife, fungi and other plants in addition to providing food for a variety of birds and small animals. Squirrels are often to be seen. A visual delight as well as a 'green lung'. The Belhus estate is now on the borders of the Dartford Crossing, the M25, the A13 and the proposed new Thames Crossing and as a consequence, Thurrock has high levels of pollution. The trees play an important, vital role in improving air quality.

The Green provides recreational space for children and adults, important for all but especially so for the community living in flats above the shops of Garron Lane, overlooking the area. This is their garden. Dog walkers exercise dogs on the Green. The local school uses the roads around the green for cycling proficiency lessons. The area is much loved and valued by the local community. Their recent collaborative actions, opposing a plan to build 26 new homes by Thurrock Council resulted in success with the proposal dropped.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:**

Any future proposals for house building. The travelling community has camped on the green before but since low barriers have been erected there have been no more incidents. Litter.

**Key References:**

Thurrock Council TPO Map

Belhus Park. 1619 Survey (part) 'Document D/DL P1A Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office ERO D/DL M14/2 ERO D/DL M14/3 and T2496 Survey of Manor of Belhus 1619

OS. Essex (1st ED.Rev.1862-96 LXXXIII.3, revised:1895 Published 1897) [www.maps.nls.uk](http://www.maps.nls.uk)

1952 County of Essex Development Plan Aveley, Grays and Tilbury - CR2874 (L.C.C.) -Grays Library Archives

Britain from Above - Aerial photo EAW052926 ENGLAND (1953)/ Aerial photo EPW026345 ENGLAND (1929).

**Researcher:** Heather Hunter 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 28): BONNYGATE WOOD

**Location:** At junction of Daiglen Drive and Annalee Road, South Ockendon. RM15 5DJ

**NGR:** TQ558648 181767

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Authority

**Description of Feature:** Bonnygate Wood is an area which has been wooded for at least 400 years as formerly part of the historic Belhus parkland and estate, which now form a playground. It is a rectangular park, with a path that runs through it diagonally, from the junction of Arisdale Avenue and Annifer Way, to Daiglen Drive and Annalee Road, from the north east in a south westerly direction. Three quarters of the park has tree cover, made up mostly of mature and veteran Oaks, with some Sweet Chestnuts. There is a small oval area approx. 12 metres long, with a scatter of Hawthorn bushes, which is left uncut as a wildlife area. It has an enclosed play area of approx. 17 m<sup>2</sup> for young children, containing a tyre swing, toddlers swings, climbing frame with slide, helter-skelter slide and a rolling log. There is also an assault course for older children consisting of ten different items. As well as sheltered seating, there are bench seats and two wrap-around seats, positioned around two oak trees. There is solar lighting, flower planters and low, barrier type fencing around the whole park. Recently, brickwork from an old well was found in what was the corner of a field incorporated into Bonnygate Wood to make it into the rectangular shape that it is today. The NGR reference of the well is TQ 58656 81801.

**Materials:** The park is grassed over, with safety matting inside the children's play area. Barrier fencing, benches and play equipment are of metal, and the assault course is of wood and man-made materials.

**Size:** 3.28 hectares.

**Orientation:** North to South.

**Current State:** Good condition.

**Current Use:** Well used as a short cut to the local train station, and a primary school. Dog walkers and local families regularly use the park. The 'Friends Of' group arrange fun days and events in the park, along with litter pick days, an outdoor exercise group and they are also responsible for the care of the flower planters.

**Existing Designations:** None

**Brief History:** Bonnygate Wood was part of the Belhus Park historic estate. It is shown on the 1619 Belhus Park estate survey map, as a heavily wooded area in a 'Leg of lamb' shape. Its size then was 6 acres, 3 rood & 2 perch. To the south east of the wood was an arable field known as North Heath, also part of the Belhus Park historic estate, and to the north east, a field belonging to another estate. The 1814 Tithe map of South Ockendon shows the wood as still part of the Belhus estate, but named Bonnycroft Shaw (shaw being an old English name for a wood), and the two fields on the east are shown as one. During the early part of the twentieth century, the Belhus historic estate was sold - Essex County Council being the main purchaser. During the 1940's the Greater London Council purchased part of the land, to build what was referred to as 'The Aveley Estate', now known as South Ockendon. Whilst the estate was being built, Bonnygate Wood was increased in size, to form the present rectangular shape by including part of the field from the east of it. It was about this time, according to a local resident, that a well was filled in, as it had dried up. The care of the housing estate was handed over into the care of the Greater London Council in the 1950's and later to Thurrock Council, when Bonnygate Wood was made into a family friendly park. Over the years, the play equipment and benches have been upgraded, and in 2019 the central path was re-laid and made wider, for the use of pedestrians and cyclists. In 2020, solar lighting was installed, along with the flower planters.



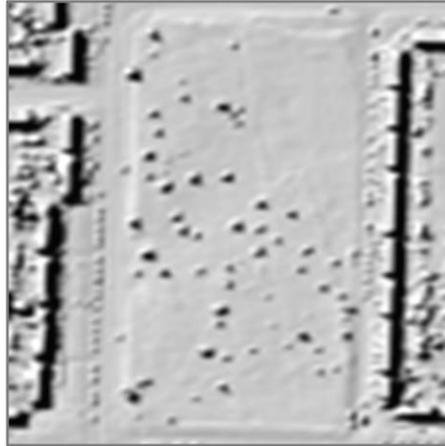
*Original boundary line of medieval wood between brickwork and tree*



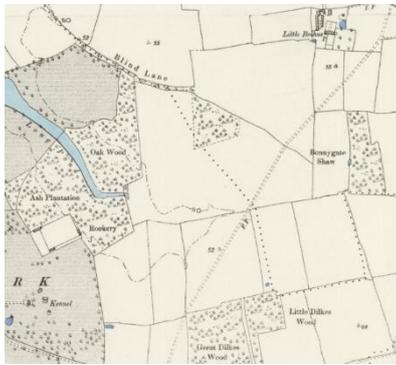
*Circular seating around oak*



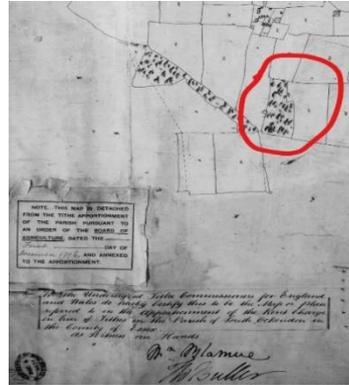
**Play equipment in Bonnygate Wood**



**LIDAR showing original boundary and well**



**OS 25inch 1864 showing original boundary line**



**South Ockendon Tithe Map 1840**



**Belhus Park 1619 Survey (part) 'Document D/DL P1A Reproduced by courtesy of Essex Record Office' showing Bonnygate Wood**



**1586 Survey (part) 'Belhouse Manor': Map 1254 Reproduced courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office**

## Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** Evidence for former wood boundaries and a well, as well as shifting boundaries and size, as earthworks etc on site also on aerial photographs and lidar. The original boundary line of the woods shows up as a slight indentation across the corner of the park, which to the untrained eye looks like a footpath worn into the grass. The remaining half circle of bricks evidences where the well once stood.

**Historic:** Bonnygate Wood is recorded on the estate maps and survey of the Historic Belhus Estate in 1586 and in 1619, and the sale of the land has been detailed in the local History Society Journals. Copies of the planning maps for the new housing estate, show the extension of the wood to its present-day size and the vision and intention of the planners to provide green open space for the local community. Further research is needed in relation to the well as no further information has been found.

**Aesthetic:** The general look and appearance of the park has a pleasing feel. Surrounded on its four sides by housing and busy roads it is a necessary open space, especially for the local residents who live in flats and house overlooking the site. Somewhere to sit and relax, or a place to join in with arranged entertainment, or just somewhere for the children to play. The many trees provide an area of peace and tranquillity providing a sense of place and well-being. Somewhere to picnic, to be at one with nature. The local community enjoy views of the woodland throughout the changing seasons. Squirrels, foxes, and a wide variety of birds and insects are to be seen.

**Communal:** Although Bonnygate Wood is used as a convenient short cut, it is well used by local residents. Somewhere to walk the dog, or for their children to play. A place where people gather regularly to exercise in organised groups (the outdoor aerobics club), and somewhere that regular fun activities are held. It is also somewhere that people can just sit quietly, listen to the birds and admire their surroundings. There is an active “Friends of Bonnygate” group.

## Statement of Significance Summary

Bonnygate Wood is significant for its long history being in existence for at least 400 years and for its importance to the local community. It is remarkable that the boundary line of the original wood, dating back to at least the map of 1586, still exists. The recent discovery of a well on the site deserves further research. Great thought was put into the planning of the housing estate before it was built in the 1950’s and even then the importance of open spaces was realised, when the decision was made to, not just keep the wood that was already there, but to enlarge it, and open it up to make it more accessible for the local residents. During the intervening years many trees have been lost to the site through disease and age but the remaining veteran and mature oaks and sweet chestnut trees provide an oasis of tranquillity as well as an area where children can play and local residents can enjoy the open space. Its continual care and upgrading have kept it as a well-used, and appreciated place, something much needed in today’s busy society.

The wood provides a link between the medieval system of rural woodland economy and labour and as a green open space in the twenty-first century managed by Thurrock Council for the benefit of the local, urban community. Bonnygate Wood could be the subject of interpretation boards to act as insights into the long heritage of the site for current users. These could be enhanced by reference on the boards to the documentary evidences.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** As with all regularly used places, there is always the problem of litter. Broken bottles are sometime seen, along with graffiti on the play equipment, and also some vandalism. Thurrock Council grounds maintenance teams visit regularly as well as the 'Friends of' group helping too, but unfortunately it is an ongoing problem. The remains of the well are occasionally damaged by the council's lawn mower, due to it being at ground level.

**Key References:**

1619 Belhus Estate Map (part) E.R.O T2496 D/DL M 14/1-5 Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office  
1586 Survey (part) 'Bellhouse Manor: Map 1254 Reproduced by courtesy of the Northamptonshire Record Office'

E.R.O. T/P 815/14/2 Tithe Map

Thurrock Local History Journal number 4, Autumn 1959.

County of Essex Development Plan, Aveley. CR2874 (Grays Reference Library)

GLC Planning Map 1932 (Grays Reference Library)

South Ockendon Tithe Map 1840

Ordnance Survey 1:25inch 1864

Oral Statements from Local Residents

<https://maps.nls.uk/os/>

<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>

<https://www.lidarfinder.com/>

**Researcher:** Sonia Dewell 2020

## FEATURE NAME (ID: 26): BISHOP BONNER'S PALACE

(Our research found no evidence that this is a site associated with historic landscape design)

**Location:** Old Hall Farm, Orsett, Essex. ¼m N.W. of the church.

**NGR:** TQ564102 182263

**Local Authority:** Thurrock Unitary Council

**Description:** Remains of a ring (or motte) and bailey earthwork, comprising of a circular enclosure surrounded by a ditch. To the north is the oblong bailey enclosed by a well- defined ditch. In a wood approx.183m to the west is a large oblong fishpond.

**Materials:** A raised earthwork, with a fragment of rubble foundation on the N.W. side.

**Size:** Circular enclosure approx. 61m internal diameter, surrounding ditch approx. 15m wide

**Orientation:** Northeast to Southwest.

**Existing Designations:** Historic England scheduled monument, List number 1002196. Monument number 414134. Legacy scheduled monument-TK36. Historic County Environment Record 1855.

**Current State:** Fair.

**Current Use:** None. On private land, access by owner's permission only.

**Brief History:** The motte, and bailey is a fortification with a wooden or stone keep situated on a raised area of ground called a motte, accompanied by a walled courtyard, or bailey, surrounded by a protective ditch and a palisade. Introduced into England by the Normans following their invasion in 1066 but largely superseded by alternative designs of fortifications by the end of the thirteenth century. This earthwork is said to be the site of a palace of the Bishops of London. It is recorded in the 'The Domesday Book' that the Bishop of London 'holds Orsett' and 'receives from it £14'. In addition, a previous Bishop of London, William, held Orsett before the conquest in 1066 as a manor and 13 hides. Edmund Bonner held the position of Bishop of London for two terms, 1539-1549 and from 1553-1559 when, under the rule of Queen Elizabeth I, he was deprived of his position and imprisoned. He became notorious as 'Bloody Bonner' for his role in the persecution of heretics under the Catholic government of Queen Mary I. By September 1560, diocesan administration records show that Orsett was no longer included in the lands of the Bishops of London. (*G. Alexander, 1960*) In addition the records show that Bishop Bonner was receiving payments from his bailiff and farms in Orsett during his terms as the Bishop of London. A local historian, Rector W. Palin, wrote in 1871 'the last act of Bishop Bonner, as owner of the manor, was his letting the mill, with a little croft, and cottage adjoining, May 10<sup>th</sup> 1558, at a yearly rent of 4 marks (£2 13s. 4d) to Thomas Johnson'. No evidence has been found during this research that Bishop Bonner actually lived in Orsett as he spent much time in at Fulham Palace, the official residence of the Bishops of London



**OS 25inch (1892-1914) Map showing Bishop Bonner's Palace**

### Statement of Significance

**Evidential:** The style and design of this significant earthwork makes it easily recognisable as a ring or motte and bailey site which is recorded as an Ancient Monument. Ordnance Survey maps record the site as Bishop Bonner’s Palace. The Domesday Survey and the account books of the Receiver General of the Bishops of London held in the Guildhall Library and the account rolls in the National Archive provide evidence of the ownership of Orsett by the Bishops of London from before the Norman Conquest (1066) until 1559. However, no written evidence has been found that, despite its name, Bishop Edmund Bonner ever lived at this site or that there has been historic landscape design carried out in this area.

**Historic:** Nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps record this feature as Bishop Bonner’s Palace. The Motte and Bailey is recorded as an ancient monument known as Bishop Bonner’s Palace and therefore links Norman construction methods with Tudor and Elizabethan politics and ecclesial matters. It seems that Bishop Bonner was the last Bishop of London to lay claim to this land.

**Aesthetic:** The size and shape of the feature shows a recognised style of defence, that would give whoever lived there, a good view of the surrounding area. When accessible the local population would perhaps recognise and admire the technical building skills of the Normans.

**Communal:** Unfortunately, it does not have a communal use as it is inaccessible to the public unless permission is received from the owners being located on private land.

### **Statement of Significance Summary:**

The significance of this site is that it is an ancient scheduled monument. It is known locally and historically as Bishop Bonner's Palace despite there being no evidence of a substantial residence on the site belonging to Bishop Bonner. The name perhaps derives from the fact that Bishop Bonner was the last Bishop of London to own the land. His notoriety gained for the persecution of Protestant heretics caused him to be called 'Bloody Bonner' which has made him even more memorable.

The feature is important as it gives insight into Norman construction methods as well as Tudor and Elizabethan politics and ecclesial matters. The Motte and Bailey is a style of building used to indicate status and for the safety of the people who lived there. Something that is recognised by the present owners, who keep it in good order, in respect of the site's history.

**Issues and Vulnerabilities:** As this site is on private land, there are few issues, and access can be granted, if necessary, by the land owners.

### **Key References**

[www.maps.nls.uk](http://www.maps.nls.uk)

[www.castlesofbritain.com/ring-work-castles](http://www.castlesofbritain.com/ring-work-castles)

<https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02675a.htm>

[www.bishopbonnerscottage/dereham.com](http://www.bishopbonnerscottage/dereham.com)

[www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/essex/vol4/pp102-107](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/essex/vol4/pp102-107)

[www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk) Chronological list of Bishops of London

<https://historicensland.org.uk/sitesearch?search=Bishop+Bonner%27s+Palace>

"The Domesday Book", Publisher Penguin 1992 p975

"The Life and Career of Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London, until his deprivation in 1549", Gina Alexander Thesis PHD 1960 – ISNI0000 0004 2700 3156, Queen Mary University of London

"Stifford and its Neighbourhood", WM. Palin, 1871

OS Map 25inch 1892-1914

Additional Note for further research: Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum of Local History, Dereham, Norfolk where he lived during his time as Rector of the local church.

**Researchers:** Sonia Dewell and Heather Hunter 2020