

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

**SEDGWICK PARK**

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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Name:	SEDGWICK PARK
County:	West Sussex
District:	Horsham (District Authority)
Parish:	Nuthurst
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.028442 Longitude: -0.31402786 National Grid Reference: TQ 18328 26805 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001279 Date first listed: 20-Sep-1993

## Details

Formal gardens designed in 1886 by Harold Peto and Ernest George to complement their remodeling of the house in the Arts and Crafts style. Surrounded by the remains of earlier C17/C18 pleasure grounds, laid out to include medieval castle earthworks developed as a separate pleasure ground, the house and gardens are situated within the site of a medieval deer park, a portion of which survives as parkland to the north of the house.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

During the C13, an area of some 162ha in St Leonard's Forest was enclosed to form Sedgwick Park. In 1249 the manor was acquired by John Mansel, Treasurer of York, Prior of Beverley and a favourite of Henry III, who was granted licences to fortify the house. In 1272 the estate then passed to the de Braose family who used the park for hunting, the manor remaining attached to the Bramber lordship until the death of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk in 1572.

By 1602, when Sir John Carlyll leased the property from the Crown, it was in a bad state of repair. As a result Carlyll demolished it and built a new residence, Sedgwick Lodge, on a new site. When Carlyll's lease expired in 1662 the property was let and finally, in 1705, it was sold to Sir John Bennett. He extended Sedgwick Lodge, selling it soon after to Charles, Duke of Richmond. He in turn sold it, in 1750, to Joseph Tudor, from whom it was inherited by the Nelthorpe family.

From 1797 to 1879 the Sedgwick estate was renamed Nuthurst Lodge. In 1862 James Tudor Nelthorpe sold the estate to Mr Henderson who reverted to the name Sedgwick Park. The formal gardens were laid out c 1886 by Harold Peto (1854-1933) and Ernest George (1839-1922) to complement their remodelling of the house for Mrs Emma Henderson. The gardens were the subject of much admiration through the first half of the C20, and were illustrated and described in a number of books and articles. In 1931 the executors of Mrs Henderson sold the estate to William Henry Abbey, and he in turn sold it in 1947 to Lord Rotherwick. It has changed hands again since, and remains (2000) in private ownership, although divided between a number of different owners.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Sedgwick Park is set within St Leonard's Forest, some four miles south-east of Horsham. The 100ha site occupies a low spur, with the house set on the highest point of the south-facing

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hillside. It commands extensive views south over wooded countryside to the distant sea and also, although now partly obscured, eastwards out over countryside.

The medieval hunting park at Sedgwick originally extended well to the north of the house and as far as the River Arun some 3km away. The post-medieval parkland was smaller in extent and is reflected in the current site boundary (Tithe map, 1848). This extends from Sedgwick Lane and the North Lodge at its northernmost point to include copses planted along Rushett's Gill which form the north-western park boundary. The remains of Sedgwick Castle, (scheduled ancient monument) lies on the western boundary of the site, abutting Broadwater Lane. The southern boundary comprises The Wilderness, a large area of woodland, while directly to the south of the house a small area of parkland lies adjacent to a pattern of enclosure fields. The eastern boundary comprises Home Wood (referred to also as 'Stonepit Copse' on the OS 1st edition published 1879).

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance is from the north off Sedgwick Lane, and the approach forms a continuation of the line of Sedgwick Lane, which itself takes a right-angled turn to the west. The drive enters the north-east corner of the estate at the cottage-style North Lodge, and then leads south between Home Wood to the east and fields to the west. At the southern end of Home Wood the approach dog-legs to the east then continues south before a branch leads off and curves round to the turning circle at the north front of the house. The drive continues south through the park, providing the access to the village of Nuthurst lying to the south-east of the site. A second drive leads in due east from Castle Lodge (c 1830, listed grade II) on Broadwater Lane, which forms the western boundary of the site. The drive crosses the park to meet the north drive in front of the house.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Sedgwick Park (listed grade II), the present mansion, dates from the early C17 but was remodelled in the C18. In 1886 it was largely rebuilt to the design of Ernest George and Harold Peto, working in partnership. A tower was added in 1904. From the exterior, the appearance of the house is predominantly late C19 Arts and Crafts in style, despite parts of earlier construction.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The formal gardens lie immediately to the south and east of the house, with the pleasure grounds extending to the north-west in Castle Wood and along Rushett's Gill to The Wilderness situated to the south-west of the house. Together the formal gardens and pleasure grounds extend to about 34ha.

The formal gardens on the south front of the house extend from a broad upper terrace paved with rippled Horsham stone. A broad flight of steps leads down to a semicircular terrace of Horsham stone, delimited by curved yew hedges which frame the view down a central axis formed by a straight paved walk of about 60m, also flanked by yew hedges and aligned with the garden door of the house. This walk cuts across the main lawn to focus on a bastion, to either side of which flights of steps lead down to the water garden and frame an arched recess set with a seat overlooking the water garden. Yew is again used, but here it is planted to form a series of buttresses to either side of the long, rectangular main pond. The pond narrows at its southern end into a channel with the view beyond framed by succeeding parallel blocks of clipped yew. This terminates the sequence of formal gardens.

To the east of the house the upper paved terrace extends as a raised walk, originally shaded by a pergola of iron arches leading along the foot of the brick wall which forms the northern boundary of the formal gardens. The wall continues down the east side of the gardens as a buttressed retaining wall, carrying the gardens above the level of the track beyond. Below the top walk is the croquet lawn, with steps leading off it at its western end to the rose garden. The rose garden (early C20), now grassed over, is enclosed by yew hedges with a drystone retaining wall forming the change in ground level. South of the rose garden and to the east of the formal water garden is a series of informal pools running through an area of rocky outcrops, a feature continued on the west side of the central formal garden.

The lawns planted with specimen trees extend to the south of the formal gardens and are enclosed from the parkland to the south by estate fencing. To the south-west of the formal gardens an avenue of evergreen oaks, once trimmed as standards and surrounded by rose beds, leads from the gardens across the lawns to a gate in the estate fencing. This leads into The Wilderness, a wooded area of the pleasure grounds cut with rides and planted with exotics.

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Castle Wood, situated some 400m north-west of the house, is an area of pleasure grounds focusing on the remains of Sedgwick Castle. A brick and ironwork entrance, dated 1882, stands a little to the north of Castle Lodge and leads into the castle site. To the west are a series of fishponds formed by damming Rushett's Gill. The whole area is ornamented with specimen trees and walks. PARK Although the hunting park extended to 253ha in 1608, by the mid C20 the parkland was reduced to an area of 52ha, the majority lying to the north of the house and planted with specimen trees. To the north of the house, lying west from the central axis of the house, is a canal, some 130m in length, which probably survives from an earlier landscape scheme. As part of the late C19/early C20 layout, a wooden bridge led over the water to an elm avenue in the west park which linked the house to Sedgwick Castle. Neither the bridge nor the avenue survive.

#### REFERENCES

D Ottewill, *The Edwardian Garden* (1989), pp 2, 203 no.10, 223 G Jekyll, *Garden ornament* (1918), p 160 C Holme, *The Gardens of England in Southern and Western Counties* (1907), pls 114-15 *Country Life*, 62 (1 October 1927), pp 459-62; 91 (5 June 1942), pp 1086-9; (12 June 1942), pp 1134-7 *Gardeners' Chronicle*, ii (1924), pp 422-3; i (1925), p 329; i (1956), pp 524-5  
Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1875-6 2nd edition published 1899 3rd edition published 1912  
Tithe map for Nuthurst parish, 1841 (West Sussex Record Office) Tithe map for Little Broadwater, 1848 (West Sussex Record Office) Sale Plan, 1959 (West Sussex Record Office) Sale Plan, 1966 (West Sussex Record Office)  
Description written: June 2000 Register Inspector: KC Edited: September 2000

## Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.