

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

CHANTRY PARK

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

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**CHANTRY PARK**

Name:	CHANTRY PARK
County:	Suffolk
District:	Ipswich (District Authority)
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.052901 Longitude: 1.1170592 National Grid Reference: TM 13813 43976 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000271 Date first listed: 21-Jul-1988

## Details

A public park since 1928, derived from a gentleman's seat with a house built in the C17 and modified in both the C18 and C19 sitting in an C18 park with two bodies of water and adorned on the south front by a parterre designed by a Mr Nesfield and modified in the early C20 by the owner and Mr Notcutt of Woodbridge.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Ipswich Chantry was founded in 1509 by Edmund Daundy, a prominent and respected Ipswich merchant. After the Ipswich priories were suppressed in 1536, the Cutler family were said to be in occupation of a house at the Chantry and by 1668 the land was in the ownership of Sir Peyton Ventris. Sir Peyton was succeeded in 1691 by his son Edmund who built a house c 1700 which is believed to be the foundation of the present house (Pevsner and Radcliffe 1975). Edmund died in 1740 and the estate was sold to Sir John Barker who made substantial improvements to the house. The Chantry changed hands again in 1772, being purchased by Metcalf Russell who added a further storey and passed the land on to his elected heir Michael Collinson. From 1795 onwards Michael's son Charles enlarged the estate to 500 acres (c 208ha) and it is he who was responsible for developing the character of much of the registered park which survives today (1998). He planted the South Avenue (1807) and made further modifications resulting in it being described as having woodland groves, a lake covering several acres and studded with little islands (dated 1828), and gardens of rare and exotic plants laid out with meticulous care (Kelly 1844).

In 1836 the estate was purchased by Charles Lillingston who married the daughter of the Rev Fonnereau of Christchurch Mansion and on the occasion of their daughter's fifteenth birthday the local paper carried a lengthy description of the park where the celebrations were held. Lillingston was attributed by White's Directory of 1844 as having made many improvements to the house and grounds. His son and heir however was killed in action, resulting in another sale in 1852 when Sir Fitzroy Kelly, a distinguished barrister and MP for Ipswich, became the new owner. Kelly is also said to have applied great energy to his new property, making many alterations to the house in the Italian style (White 1844). He commissioned the new gates and lodge at the north entrance and called in Mr Nesfield (assumed to be W A Nesfield (1793-1881)) to provide a scheme for the flower gardens on the south front (Inspector's report). His stay was also short though, and he sold the site to Charles Binney Skinner in 1867. By 1897 the house and park had been sold again to Sir Henry Cecil Domville. The Domvilles lived lavishly in the Edwardian style but Sir Cecil died suddenly in 1902 and his widow went to live abroad. When the Jump family arrived in 1906 the grounds had become very neglected but Mrs Jump was a keen gardener and with the help of Mr Nottcutt of Woodbridge

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improved the gardens and added new features. In 1927 when the Chantry again came up for sale it was purchased by George Gooday with the intention of developing a housing estate. Sir Arthur Churchman, a JP and member of the Council intervened however, purchasing the house and park and presenting them to the borough as a public amenity which was opened by Princess Mary in 1928. Since that time the house has been leased as a nursing home and the walled kitchen gardens are currently (1998) used as a nursery by the Borough Parks Department

**DESCRIPTION**

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Chantry Park lies c 3km west of the centre of Ipswich on the south side of the Gipping valley, on the outer edge of the town suburbs. It covers c 50ha and is bounded on the north by Hadleigh Road and on the south by the A1214 (historically known as Crane Hill). To the east new housing development runs right up to the park boundary and the boundary to the west is bordered by farmland. The house sits in gently undulating parkland which falls to the north, west and east from the high point of Crane Hill. This topography allows views from the west park over the Gipping valley to the north and over countryside to the west. There are also filtered views east over the park from the South Avenue towards Ipswich.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance to the site is off Hadleigh Road. Here a small white-brick and stone lodge (listed grade II) was erected by Sir Fitzroy Kelly sometime between 1852 and 1885 in the style of a small classical temple. He is also attributed with the new gilded wrought-iron gates, known locally as the 'Golden Gates' and said to be one of the sights at the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in 1851 (Ball and Cross 1973). The South Lodge, situated in the southernmost corner of the park off Crane Hill, has been demolished and the drive which once led past Laundry Cottages (also demolished) by the east end of the lake is now only used to reach the late C20 cricket pavilion situated in this corner of the park. Further east along Crane Hill lies Avenue Lodge, a mid C20 building at the beginning of the lime avenue drive to the house.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The Chantry (listed grade II) is thought to have at its core the remains of the house built by Edmund Ventris at the end of the C17. The character of the present house however is mainly C18, resulting from the late C18 work of the Russell/Collinson family, with substantial C19 additions by Sir Fitzroy Kelly from 1852 onwards. In addition, a large conservatory (demolished in the 1930s) was added to the east front by the Collinsons at the end of C18 and during the same period the stable block and courtyard were added to the west wing.

The north front is C18 in origin with three storeys of five bays topped by a balustraded parapet. In the mid C19 a Tuscan porch with Ionic columns was added to this front by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, together with two-storey additions to west and east ends and a large two-storey bow on the south front, all in the Free Renaissance or Italian style. All the windows were given double-hung sashes and the whole building was faced with imitation Portland stone. The house remained a private residence until the park was given to the town in 1928. Until 1939 the house was used as an International Friendship Centre and after the Second World War a convalescent home was established by the Red Cross. The house is currently run as a convalescent facility by the Sue Ryder Foundation.

To the west of the house lies the service areas comprising late C18 stables, a courtyard and walled kitchen gardens.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The house and pleasure grounds of the Chantry lie in the centre of the registered park, towards the north boundary. The lawns which adorn the main drive on the north front are dotted with specimen trees, some of which (most notably beech) are of a great age, predating the present layout of the mid C19. The north front contains a walled carriage court with central raised lawn surrounding a fountain pond, attributed to Mrs Jump and Mr Notcutt and not shown on OS maps prior to the 1927 edition. On the east front lawns run down towards a body of ornamental water which is now (1998) surrounded by mixed shrubberies including many rhododendrons planted by Mr Notcutt at the beginning of the C20. These now obscure the surface of the water. A straight walk runs from the site of the old conservatory on the east front down to the water's edge, terminating in a small landing stage adorned with stone steps and balustrading. The earliest available map evidence for this site comes in the form of the Tithe map of 1838 and this shows the eastern pond in its present position; its shape suggests that it may be of much earlier origin although its surrounding ornamentation is Edwardian (OS 25" 2nd edition). On the south front lies the formal garden, laid out as a small box parterre surrounded by a semicircular grass terrace on which sits a series of stone columns. The main axis of this garden extends along a raised walk to a stone seat by the grass bank which

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separates the garden from the park. This layout has been attributed to William Andrews Nesfield (Sale particulars 1867) and is shown clearly on the 1st edition OS map published in 1888. To the east of the parterre informal shrubbery planting leads to the pond and to the west is a bowling green. Beyond the bowling green to the south lies a small yew-hedged compartment divided into quarters by flagstone paths, known as the English Garden, which was laid out by Mrs Jump in the early C20. To the west of this is a woodland shrubbery which leads north towards the kitchen garden through a late C20 rose garden. The pleasure grounds contain some fine mature cedar of Lebanon.

**PARK** Chantry Park is thought to have been laid out in its present form when the house was modified in 1772, retaining the same boundary to the present day (1998) (Debois Landscape Survey Group 1988). Its gently rolling grass is dotted with scattered trees, noticeably fewer than the number shown on the OS 2nd edition map of 1904, while perimeter planting encloses the north and west boundaries and the remains of a shelterbelt partially screens the housing development to the north-east. The majority of standing parkland trees are now concentrated in the park east of the house and in the lower west corner. A few scattered ancient trees remain, including beech beside the north drive. Due south of the house the main South Drive is lined with a lime avenue dating from 1807 and along the south boundary sports pitches and a modern cricket pavilion have been added. There are currently (1999) four grass tennis courts on the west side of the South Drive. At the lowest point in the west corner of the park lies Beech Water, a lake created in the natural style in 1828, with numerous islands and dense perimeter plantings of mixed species including beech, particularly on the east bank.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The walled kitchen garden lies 70m west of the house and consists of two walled enclosures. That furthest from the house dates from the C18 and covers an area 80m by 60m. In the centre of the southern wall is a small gothic-arched gateway into the park and a second matching gate on the western wall has been bricked up. Along the northern wall is a range of early C20 stepped glasshouses, whilst the remainder is filled with late C20 glasshouse ranges. The second enclosure also has an elaborate gated entrance on the southern boundary, topped with a date mark of 1908. A smaller second walled enclosure is shown in this position on the 1838 Tithe map, suggesting that the enclosure was enlarged and improved in 1908. It contains box-edged beds and a small Pear Walk together with some early C20 glasshouses. In the north-west corner lies an early to mid C19 gardener's cottage supporting a very mature fan-trained pear on its west wall. Both areas of kitchen garden are now used as a nursery ground by the Borough Council.

#### REFERENCES

T K Cromwell, *Excursions in the county of Suffolk* (1819), p 179 William White, *Directory of Suffolk* (1844), p 258; (1855), p 228; (1892), p 644 Kelly, *Directory of Suffolk* (1844) *The Victoria History of the County of Suffolk* (1907, reprinted 1975) G Ball and R Cross, *The Chantry 1509(1972 (1973) N Pevsner and E Radcliffe, *The Buildings of England: Suffolk* (1975), p 308 Inspector's Report, (Debois Landscape Survey Group 1988)*

Maps J Hodkinson, *The County of Suffolk, 1783 Tithe map for Sproughton, 1838* (East Suffolk Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1880, published 1888 2nd edition revised 1902, published 1905 3rd edition revised 1924, published 1927 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1904

Archival items Sale particulars, 1867 (BL Maps 31 c.31), (British Library)

Description written: August 1998 Amended: June 1999 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: December 1999

## 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.