

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

**KING EDWARD VII HOSPITAL**

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

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Name:	KING EDWARD VII HOSPITAL
County:	West Sussex
District:	Chichester (District Authority)
Parish:	Easebourne
National park:	SOUTH DOWNS
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.016376 Longitude: -0.74678772 National Grid Reference: SU 88004 24858 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001454 Date first listed: 17-Feb-2000

## Details

The grounds of an early C20 tuberculosis sanatorium. The formal gardens were laid out by the hospital architect, Percy Adams, with extensive planting plans by Gertrude Jekyll, c 1903(8).

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Upon the accession of King Edward VII in 1901, his financial adviser, Sir Ernest Cassell, put £200,000 at the King's disposal for charitable or utilitarian purposes. The King, having been greatly impressed by the tuberculosis sanatorium at Falkenstein in Germany, decided to found a similar sanatorium for the poorer middle classes in England. He formed a committee of leading medical practitioners to examine ways of executing his ideas. A competition was held to obtain design ideas, and Percy Adams (who had not entered the competition) was appointed architect. A hillside site at Lord's Common, north of Midhurst, was selected, and after some protracted negotiation with the owner, Lord Egmont's estate, it was bought for the sanatorium.

In November 1903 the King laid the foundation stone, and the building was opened by him in June 1906. The construction work was carried out by Longleys of Crawley. The sanatorium was laid out with extensive ornamental gardens, and was set in pine woodland on a well-drained, south-facing hillside, c 200m above sea level. Current medical theories for tuberculosis patients advocated 'Open Air' treatment in clear, unpolluted air. A carefully regulated regime aimed at treating early stage consumptive patients was prescribed, composed of measured quantities of rest and varied exercise combined with a good diet. The exercise element was to consist largely of gardening and walking in the grounds (Large 1986).

The structure of the formal gardens around the new building, having been laid out by Percy Adams, was clothed with plants by Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), who produced a series of about forty planting plans c 1905(8 (CL 1909; NMR). A series of letters from her to Mr Atkinson, Longleys' Clerk of Works (dated November 1905 to March 1906, private collection) details her instructions for planting. A network of 'measured walks' was also laid out through the surrounding undulating pine woods for patients to take further, regulated exercise. By 1908 seventy-five percent of patients were given some form of work in the

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garden (Large 1986), and in 1912 a four-hole golf course (later extended to nine holes) was laid out on former woodland. Other outdoor recreation was encouraged, including croquet, clock golf and garden games.

The Hospital continued as a tuberculosis sanatorium until 1964, when, with the large-scale demise of tuberculosis, it expanded its work to treat other thoracic diseases, and became known as the King Edward VII Hospital. Various additional buildings were constructed close to the main hospital building during the C20, some covering part of the gardens, but leaving the majority of them intact. The site remains (2000) in use as a hospital, although parts of the grounds have been sold into divided ownership.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** The King Edward VII Hospital lies c 4km north of Midhurst, situated on Lord's Common, which was formerly a sandy heath. The isolated c 17ha site is bounded by a green lane to the south, and on the other sides by woodland and heath. The ground slopes generally down from north to south, with to the west a dry valley, in which lies the remains of a small, dammed pond (outside the area here registered). The setting is rural, with panoramic views from the Hospital and gardens to the south and south-west, across the broad Rother valley towards the distant South Downs.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main approach leaves the A286 Haslemere to Midhurst road 2km east of the Hospital, running west along a lane to enter the site 250m north-east of the Hospital at the two-storey lodge (c 1905; formerly known as the Engineer's Lodge, Large 1986). From the lodge the drive extends south-west, sunk between banks planted with rhododendrons and other shrubs, to arrive at the rectangular forecourt on the north front of the Hospital. The central main entrance gives direct access to the northern, administration block. The drive extends west from the forecourt to give access to the chapel, the former laundry and boiler houses, and staff accommodation (this last outside the area here registered) standing north-west of the Hospital, together with a late C20 car park at the west end of the Hospital (occupying the former site of part of the garden). The drive was laid out when the Hospital was built, and Miss Jekyll provided planting plans (NMR) for both the drive and the forecourt perimeter.

North of the forecourt two flights of stone steps flanking a stone-walled bank give access to a broad, informal lawn flanked by trees and shrubs. Although not laid out with the initial works, this lawn, flanked by shrubs, subsequently replaced an area of pine woodland. It marked the south end of two of the major measured walks which extended north and north-west into the woodland (aerial photograph 1938, in Large 1986; Map of Grounds).

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The King Edward VII Hospital (P Adams 1903-6, listed grade II) stands towards the centre of the site, set into the Lord's Common hillside which slopes away to the west and south. The long, brick building, in free Tudor style, consists of two main elements standing parallel to each other: the administration block to the north and the patients' ward block to the south. These blocks were initially connected only by a central corridor, linking the main entrance to the north with the garden entrance to the south, and separated by a narrow neck of formal gardens. Through the century however further buildings have been erected on the site of most of the neck of formal gardens, these buildings now (2000) providing further connections between the two main blocks. The south block consists of a central south-facing wing, flanked by two further wings angled to the south-west and south-east.

Some 20m north-west of the Hospital stands the south-facing chapel (P Adams 1903-6, listed grade II), also in free Tudor style, built with two naves in 'V' form to segregate male and female patients. Loggias on the south-facing sides of the naves lead out onto a raised lawn edged by a stone wall with steps down to the drive. This is the remnant of a formal scheme which Miss Jekyll designed to link the Hospital and chapel (NMR).

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie adjacent to the south front of the Hospital and are overlooked by the wards in the south block. They are laid out in formal terraces leading down to an informal lawn and playing field beyond, the whole enclosed by woodland. Panoramic views extend from the upper levels to the south and south-west towards the South Downs.

The recessed garden door in the centre of the south block leads from the main cross corridor, which links the north and south blocks, down stone steps to a gravel terrace extending west and east along the central wing of the south block. Two stone alcoves with seats flank either side of the doorway, with a further pair of alcoves in similar style placed close to the outer edges

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of the central wing. From the doorway an axial path leads south, flanked by two panels of lawn set on a terrace, planted with a formal pattern of flower beds (the beds late C20). Steps at the south end of the path lead down to a second terrace across which the path leads, also flanked by lawns on which stand two large magnolias (early C20, part of the Jekyll scheme). Further stone steps carry the path down to a third terrace, below which lies an informal lawn. From the lawn a further flight of steps, aligned with the garden door, gives access via a grass bank to the playing field below to the south.

The central flight of terraces is flanked by further terraces, connected by stone steps and overlooked by the three-storey, angled, flanking ward wings. The terraces are all supported by drystone walls and are laid largely to lawn with perimeter gravel paths and borders planted with herbaceous and shrubby material. The lowest storey of each of the flanking wings contains an open arcade accessible from the garden, above which balconies extending along the length of each further storey overlook the gardens.

Between the north and south blocks of the Hospital lie two enclosed courts flanking the central connecting corridor. These are laid to lawn with large magnolia specimen shrubs dating from the early C20 planting. The courts are the remnants of the strip of formal gardens which lay between the north and south blocks (OS 1912; CL 1909).

The former Medical Superintendent's house stands 50m east of the Hospital (outside the area here registered), set in its own grounds to the east of the playing field, from which it is separated by a strip of pines and other trees. The two-storey building (c 1903(6) stands on a terrace (wall rebuilt late C20) overlooking informal lawns to the south which are flanked by woodland. It was formerly reached via a drive south from the lodge, which has been subsumed (late C20) within the main hospital car park lying east of the main drive (OS 1912). Miss Jekyll provided a garden layout for this area (NMR).

South of the gardens lies the playing field, formerly the site of a small golf course (begun in 1912, Large 1986), enclosed to the west, south and east by woodland. A wooden shelter stands at the northern edge. This area was opened up from pine woodland after the initial works (OS 1912). In the wooded grounds surrounding the Hospital lie the remains of the 'Measured Walks', created specifically for patients' exercise as part of the therapeutic regime. These paths, some with the remains of stone edging, ranged in length from half a mile to three miles, and the majority of them lie outside the area here registered.

When the sanatorium was constructed, 1903-6, the surrounding pines were left as being 'wholesome and fragrant, as well as of sheltering comfort' (CL 1909), although many have since been lost. 'Hundreds of tons of pure yellow sand came out of the excavations for the basement ... which was deposited in such levels and terraces as would best dispose of its bulk and also form well-proportioned spaces in relation to the building for the lawn and other garden levels on the southern side' (ibid). Gertrude Jekyll's around forty garden plans (NMR) detail the planting for the formal gardens on the south front and the axial sequence separating the north and south blocks. They also cover the area linking the Hospital and the chapel, the Medical Superintendent's garden and other areas. Because the soil was light and of poor quality, Miss Jekyll used many Mediterranean plants, and 'in the case of the Sanatorium walls, the planting was carefully considered for colour effect ( masses of plants of related or harmonious colouring being kept near together' (CL 1909). Much of the planting work, and possibly the 1200 feet of drystone walling, seems to have been done by the pupils of the Glynde College for Lady Gardeners (Ottewill 1989). Both the college and Miss Jekyll also provided many of the plants. The maintenance was continued by the patients as part of their therapy.

#### REFERENCES

Country Life, 26 (20 November 1909), pp 701-5 S E Large, King Edward VII Hospital Midhurst 1901-1986 The King's Sanatorium (1986) D Ottewill, The Edwardian Garden (1989), pp 128-9, n 106 J Brown, Eminent Gardeners (1990), pp 37-9, pls 1, 2, 27

Maps King Edward VII Sanatorium Map of Grounds showing Measured Walks (nd), (King Edward VII Hospital)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1898 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1912

Archival items Copies of Jekyll's planting plans (file 111, folder 74) are held on microfilm at the National Monuments Record (originals held at Reef Point, USA). Collection of letters from Gertrude Jekyll to Mr Atkinson, Clerk of the Works for Longleys of Crawley, November 1905 ( March 1906 (private collection)

Description written: January 2000 Register Inspector: SR Edited: March 2001

## 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.