

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

THE BOLTONS

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

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Name:	THE BOLTONS
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Kensington and Chelsea (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.489114 Longitude: -0.18417534 National Grid Reference: TQ 26167 78248 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000793 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

Details

Mid C19 private gardens made as an integral part of a mid C19 residential development.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Boltons was, up to the mid C19, a farm with the grounds used as market gardens. The land was redeveloped between 1850 and 1860 for Robert Gunter (a wealthy Breconshire landowner), by surveyors George Godwin jnr (editor of *The Builder*) and his brother Henry. The double crescents of The Boltons became the showpiece site of the Gunter estate and early on in its development (c 1850), Gunter donated an oval piece of land in the middle of the site for the church of St Mary, The Boltons. Stanford's map of 1862 shows the garden at the centre of the development laid out as two matching areas to the north-west and south-east of the church. Central paths ran towards the church from either end of the gardens dividing them into four quarters, each one being bordered with shrubs which enclosed an open lawn. By 1867 (OS 1st edition) the design of the garden, while retaining its earlier symmetry, had become more elaborate, the central path having been diverted inside the perimeter shrub bed. The path continued along this line until it neared the church where it once again diverted, this time around triangular shrub beds. The ground within the new path system, the former lawn, was decorated with a central shrub bed encircled by a path which led from either end of the grounds. The remaining elongated serpentine lawns were decorated with conifer trees, six to the north and four to the south. The church appears to have been railed off from the gardens, the rails being screened on the garden side with a hedge. The 2nd edition OS plan of 1897 recorded a similar design in the southern garden but the configuration of the lawns in the northern garden had changed, the area to the north of the central bed becoming one piece while to the south two secondary paths linked the central bed with the perimeter path. The triangular beds survived. The large-scale (60" to 1 mile) plan shows the garden planted with shrubs along the borders and within the beds, the smaller scale (25" to 1 mile) showing only deciduous trees on the lawns.

During the Second World War the church was damaged by enemy action and the iron railings around the gardens and church were removed as part of the war effort; these were replaced in the 1970s. The gardens continue (2000) to be maintained for the private use of residents.

DESCRIPTION

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LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING The Boltons are situated to the south-west of the City of London, c 1.5km south of Kensington Gardens (qv). The c 1ha level site, which takes the form of an elongated oval orientated north-west/south-east, is enclosed by the road of the same name. The gardens are divided by the church of St Mary, The Boltons and each part is enclosed within mid C20 iron railings. The houses of The Boltons (listed grade II), mostly semi-detached in pairs, are those laid out by Godwin from c 1850 onwards.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The Boltons are approached from Bolton Place (formerly Gunter Road) to the north-west, Tregunter Road (Tregunter being the name of Robert Gunter's Breconshire home) to the south-west, and Gilston Road to the south-east. Iron gates allow pedestrian entrance to the gardens, the northern garden having two entrances, one at the north-east end and a second on the west side, alongside the church, opposite No 9, The Boltons. The southern garden has one gate, also next to the church, this being opposite No 7, The Boltons. Gates to the west and north which are shown on late C19 plans no longer exist.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The church of St Mary, The Boltons is set within its own oval space at the centre of the site. Enclosed within iron railings, the church is approached from the west but has a lesser entrance with private parking space on the east side. The gravel forecourt to the west is decorated with small plant beds and a paved path leads to the porch. There is no access to the gardens from the land around the church.

The church (listed grade II) is made of Kentish ragstone capped with Bath stone externally and Hassock stone internally. Since its construction in 1850, as part of Robert Gunter's development, the church has seen a number of changes. The spire was erected on top of the crossing tower in 1854 and in 1902 the oak pews and flooring were installed. The church was repaired after being damaged in the Second World War and at this time some of the internal arrangements were altered. More recently a parish office has been created in the south porch and floodlighting installed, funded by the residents of The Boltons.

GARDENS Both the north and south gardens are enclosed within tall mixed shrubberies. A perimeter path encircles the site within the line of the shrubberies which screen the gardens from the road. Both gardens have a central lawn with a central mounded shrubbery. A mature chestnut tree dominates the central shrubbery in the southern garden. A depression in the matching bed to the north is thought to have been made by a tree, possibly lost in the 1987 storms. Mature plane trees survive in both gardens. Adjacent to the church the perimeter paths divide around triangular shrub beds in the fashion recorded in the late C19. From the gate at the north-west end of the northern garden a straight gravel path, on the line of the C19 path, leads south-east, between level lawns, to the central shrubbery. This path is lined with wooden seats.

REFERENCES

B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 3 North-West* (1991), p 549 H R Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture in Britain I*, (nd), p 441

Maps J Rocque, *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark and the country near ten miles around*, surveyed 1741-5, published 1746 Stanford, *Library Map of London and its Suburbs*, 1862

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1867 2nd edition published 1894 3rd edition published 1916 OS 60" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1867 2nd edition published 1894

Description written: April 2000 Amended: May 2001 Register Inspector: LCH Edited: January 2002

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.