

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

NORWOOD GROVE

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Name:	NORWOOD GROVE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Croydon (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Lambeth (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.419232 Longitude: -0.11463143 National Grid Reference: TQ 31195 70599 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000823 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

## Details

An early C20 public park formed from a C19 estate which was purchased by an Acquisition Committee when threatened with development and formally opened by the Prince of Wales in 1926. **HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT** Originally part of the 'Great North Wood', which once covered the whole of the north of Surrey, the area was referred to as Limes Common in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and in c 1635, when it was enclosed to form a shooting estate around the shooting box presented to the first Earl of Portland by Charles II. The site has since been known variously as Copgate, 1746; Norwood Grove, 1864; and Streatham Grove, 1894, reverting to Norwood Grove in the 1920s. During the C19 the site was occupied by numerous families including Arthur Anderson who co-founded the shipping line that eventually became P&O. Anderson entertained Garibaldi to lunch in 1864, when the latter was on a visit to the nearby Crystal Palace. The Nettleford family occupied the mansion from 1878 until 1936 when it was sold to Croydon Corporation. By 1924 the site was threatened with development and an Acquisition Committee was formed by Mr Stenton Covington, a prominent local resident who, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as patron and the Mayor of Croydon as president, first raised £1215 for the purchase of an orchard and meadow land that linked the site with The Rookery (qv) to the north-west. Then, with the help of grants from London County Council and the boroughs of Lambeth, Wandsworth, and Croydon a further £18,200 was raised and 32 acres (c 13ha) of the 'higher and wooded portion of the park' was purchased (Mojon 1980). Norwood Grove was officially opened to the public on 16 November 1926 by the Prince of Wales. It remains (1997) a public park in the care of the London Borough of Croydon. **DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Norwood Grove lies to the north of the London Borough of Croydon, on the border with the London Borough of Lambeth. The lodge to the west of the house and the area of open space to the south-west of the lodge is within the London Borough of Lambeth. The 14ha site is bounded on three sides by intensive early to

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mid C20 development:Covington Way to the south and south west; Gibson's Hill to the east and south-east;and Ryecroft Road to the north.The north-west boundary borders The Rookery,a public open space owned by the London Borough of Lambeth.Trees grow along the boundaries and the site is enclosed with iron railings.ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES What was the main thoroughfare from Beaulah to Streatham now provides the main entrance to the site at the eastern corner.The drive runs west then north-west through the northern part of the site from Gibson's Hill,up to and past the mansion to the C19 lodge where it ceases to be metalled but continues past The Rookery to Streatham Common.Additional access is provided by gates in the iron railings which enclose the site.PRINCIPAL BUILDING The mansion (listed grade II),or White House as it is known locally,is a C19 stuccoed building with a bow in the middle of the entrance facade.It is set in rising ground to the north of the site with views over suburban London and the Wandle valley.An engraving by John Hassell of 1804 shows a house similar in size to the one that survives today (1997),but a later map(OS 1868)shows a larger house with two bays and a glass conservatory attached to the west wing and the orangery on the east side.During the Second World War the west wing and the conservatory were destroyed by enemy action.The first floor has been converted into flats(late C20)and the ground-floor rooms are now(1997)used for various local activities.GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The ground adjacent to the south-west front of the mansion slopes gently to the south and south-west.The central area is laid to lawn and the cupressus planted by the Prince of Wales when he opened the site in 1926 has been replaced by a blue cedar.Access to the lawn from the orangery is by way of a flight of steps,the piers of which have been rebuilt and no longer support the sphinx and lion shown on a photograph of the 1870s.The steps lead south-east to a tree-lined path which meanders through shrubberies and a grove of trees,some of which are recorded on the OS first edition map of 1868,to make a circuit of the lower,steep slopes of the grounds as far as the south boundary,then north alongside Gibson's Hill,eventually meeting up with the main entrance.Ornamental gardens to the south-west and west of the central lawn focus on a C19 fountain 60m to the south of the house.The fountain,which is set within three circular flower beds,has figures below the rim depicting the four seasons,and the rim is inscribed with appropriate months above them.Originally there was an ornamental head above the basin,but this has not been replaced since it was damaged in the Second World War.This part of the garden is screened to the south-west by ornamental shrubberies.Some 20m to the north-west of the fountain is a stone bird bath dedicated to Stenton Covington,and a further 5m to the north-west is an iron rose arbour with a central rose bed and seats.To the north of the rose arbour,enclosed by brick walls on two sides,are flower beds and borders with a rockery which are planted out with herbaceous plants and Ericas.The high wall to the north of this area was once part of the extensive glasshouses recorded on the OS map of 1868.Beyond the ornamental gardens to the south and west the grassed slopes fall more steeply down to the boundary fences;some mature trees survive especially to the north near the lodge.Some 60m to the south-west of the fountain the site of a bowling green has been made into a sunken shrubbery.KITCHEN GARDEN The kitchen garden was situated to the north-west of the house;all of the C19 glasshouses which existed until c1940 have been removed.OTHER LAND Across the main drive,to the north of the mansion,is an area of ground divided by a footpath leading to Ryecroft Road.To the east is a grassed area which slopes down to the north-east,while immediately to the west of the footpath is a mid C20 public bowling green.To the north-west lies another area of grass,the entrance to which is opposite the lodge.REFERENCES D E Holmes,Norwood Grove,guide leaflet,(London Borough of Croydon 1979)D Mojon,Norwood Grove,(Streatham Society 1980)B Cherry and N Pevsner,*The Buildings of England:London 2 South*(1983),p 234 M A Winterman,*Croydon Parks,an Illustrated History*(nd),pp 63-6 Maps J Rocque,*Twenty Miles around London,1745 OS 6" to 1 mile*:3rd edition published 1913 1933 edition OS 25" to 1 mile:1st edition surveyed 1864,published 1868 2nd edition published 1894 Illustrations J Hassell,*The seat of ... Stockwell Esq,1804*(Croydon Local Studies Centre)Description written:1997 Register Inspector:LCH Edited:November 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.