

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

LEAZES PARK

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

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**LEAZES PARK**

Name:	LEAZES PARK
District:	Newcastle upon Tyne (Metropolitan Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 54.978293 Longitude: -1.6226073 National Grid Reference: NZ 24253 64919 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000550 Date first listed: 05-Oct-1992

## Details

The first purpose-built public park in Newcastle upon Tyne, laid out to designs by John Laing and opened to the public in 1873.  
**HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

Leazes Park was conceived as part of a vast scheme put forward by Councillor Charles Frederick Hamond in 1861 for the improvement of the whole Town Moor. The package went before Parliament in 1862, and in 1863 the architect/cartographer Thomas Oliver was employed to draw up plans for the area which extended across Castle Leazes, over Claremont Road, across the south-west of the Moor, to Brandling village.

In 1871, the naturalist and landscape designer John Hancock was commissioned to provide a scheme and he produced a plan along the lines of an C18 landscape park which thus differed radically from a previous design, done in 1868 (designer unknown), which showed a formal layout. Hancock's scheme however made no provision for sport or games, and the councillors had in mind a Public or People's Park geared to exercise and recreation.

The Committee next called in John Laing, recently retired as Steward to Lord Armstrong, who prepared a more modest design which covered Castle Leazes only, and which provided for skating, bowls and croquet. Laing's plan consisted of a lake with an island, surrounded by a perimeter walk through a ring of woodland planting, with a lawn and pavilion on the north bank, the whole being enclosed by a fence. It was accepted by the Committee in the early 1870s, laying out commenced and the park opened to the public on 23 December 1873, making it the first purpose-built public park in Newcastle upon Tyne.

The entrance gates and turnstiles were removed during the Second World War, and the pavilion was recently (early 1990s) burnt down, but otherwise the present park (2000) is much as Laing intended and remains in public ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Leazes Park covers c 14ha and occupies level ground on the northern edge of Newcastle upon Tyne. The site is bounded by Barrack Road to the south and Richardson Road to the north-east, while to the west the park is separated by a fence from the Castle Leazes, part of the Old Moor. Car parking, city housing and St James Park Football Ground, home to Newcastle United football club, bound the site to the south-east.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** There are two main entrances into the site marked by the West Lodge at the southern end of the site and the Richardson Road lodge to the north. West Lodge is a two-storey, red-brick, Victorian cottage-style building,

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with a decorative fish-scale tiled roof. The lodge on Richardson Road, to the north of the boating lake, has a similar style roof but is a single-storey building, renovated with the addition of late C20 windows.

PLEASURE GROUNDS The path from West Lodge leads to the raised, balustraded stone terrace, built in 1879, across which there are views north-east over the park, much of which is lightly wooded. At the centre of the terrace stands a bust of Sir Charles F Hamond JP DL (listed grade II) which was erected in 1905 to commemorate his service in obtaining the park. A little to the south-west is the site of the bandstand, erected in 1875, only the base of which now (2000) survives. A central flight of steps leads down from the terrace past long flower borders to a series of radiating paths, the central one running north-east towards the boating lake. The digging of the lake commenced in 1872 and forms the centrepiece of the design. It is roughly circular with a central island, the supporting dam being along the east side.

The northern tip of the park is laid out with bowling greens, and there are further greens and tennis courts to the south-east of the lake between the public road and Leazes Terrace, a great rectangle of four terraced rows of large houses (listed grade I) built by Thomas Oliver between 1829 and 1834. The development projects into the south-east side of the park, its north, east and part of the west facade all taking advantage of the garden setting of the park when it was created. This south-east area of the park is an intake of the 1890s although it had been planted round with a belt in advance of this, in the early 1880s.

The land to the south-west, between the West Lodge and Barrack Road, is also an addition, the park having been extended slightly southwards at the beginning of the C20. Originally a cricket pitch, the area now (2000) has a 5-a-side pitch and an adventure playground.

#### REFERENCES

D Potter, Notes extracted from MSS minutes of Newcastle Council committees, (nd, c 1991) [copy on EH file]

Maps T Oliver Plan of the Town Moor, Castle Leazes and Nuns Moor, 1830 John Laing, Plan of the park, 1871 Plan of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1892

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1921 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1870s 2nd edition published 1900

Description written: March 2000 Register Inspector: EMP 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.