

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

HAMPTON COURT HOUSE

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Name:	HAMPTON COURT HOUSE
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Richmond upon Thames (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.408539 Longitude: -0.34373916 National Grid Reference: TQ 15292 69025 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000175 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

## Details

A mid C18 garden designed by Thomas Wright.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Hampton Court House was built in 1757 by George Montague Dunk, the second Earl of Halifax for his mistress Mrs Anna Maria Donaldson. The second Earl was the Ranger of Bushy Park (qv) and Chief Steward of the Honour and Manor of Hampton Court Palace. He chose to build the house on what was then part of Hampton Court Green which extended from Bushy Park on the north to the River Thames on the south. By 1762 his friend Thomas Wright, 'the Wizard of Durham' (1711-86) was making the garden which included the Shell Grotto (CL 1982). Halifax died in 1771 and the property continued to be occupied by Mrs Donaldson (later Mrs Lumm) and subsequently her daughter, Mrs Archdall.

The garden was enlarged in 1810 when new owners added 2 acres (c 0.8ha) to the west. Between 1810 and 1895 the ownership of the property passed through many hands and considerable amounts of money were spent on the villa including making a picture gallery c 1871. When Auguste de Wette became the owner in 1895 he made many alterations to the interior of the villa and converted the picture gallery to a concert hall. Mr de Wette left the house in 1903 and it remained empty until 1915 when it was purchased by Hubert Gore-Lloyd. His son Edmund was interested in the theatre and the local Operatic and Dramatic Society used the concert hall for many performances.

The property was sold in 1945 to Middlesex County Council and a semicircular garden on the north side of the House reverted back to Bushy Park. The County Council converted Hampton Court House as a home for elderly ladies and this use continued when the ownership passed to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in 1965. The Local Authority leased the 2 acre (0.8ha) kitchen garden to a landscape gardener in 1968 and in 1969 the Teddington Theatre Club was encouraged to repair and renovate the theatre which they reopened in 1971. The home for elderly ladies was closed in 1982 and the House became a children's home run by the Save the Children Fund; this closed in 1992. Attempts to sell the property in 1985 and again in 1992 were unsuccessful. By 1994 the Theatre Club had been relocated and the landscape gardener had moved from the kitchen garden. In 1998 the property was sold into private ownership.

### DESCRIPTION

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**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** The 3ha level site is situated c 500m to the north-west of Hampton Court Palace (qv) and is bordered by Bushy Park to the east, north, and west, and by Hampton Court Green to the south. It is separated from Bushy Park by a brick wall and from Hampton Court Green by a ha-ha and a brick wall now (1997) reinforced by a security fence.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Hampton Court House is approached from the east up Campbell Road which leads off the A308, Hampton Court Road. The entrance drive is guarded by brick gate piers hung with wooden security gates. The lodge shown on the OS map of 1864 has gone. The drive continues past the coach house and stables to a turning circle in front of the House, the turning circle being grassed over with a centre bed and another bed edged with stone and rubble against the south side.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Hampton Court House (listed grade II) was built in 1757 by the second Earl of Halifax for his mistress Anna Maria Donaldson. The brick-built C18 garden front (to the south) is eleven bays wide with a five-bay projecting centre and a pair of single-storey pavilions with arched windows attached. It has two storeys plus basement and attic. The architect is considered to be Thomas Wright (CL 1982)

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The lawn to the south of the turning circle has a design of triangular beds set around a small central tree. To the north-west of the lawn the paths leading from the turning circle divide, one continuing north/north-west, the second turning to the south-west. Some 10m along this curving path a short flight of stone steps leads down onto the main lawn. The path curves to the north-west past, on the north, an octagonal gothic hut built on a slightly raised mound and concealed within a small clump of trees and shrubs. An ice pit is concealed under the floor of the building. The path continues north-west between the dry pond to the north and the Shell Grotto to the south. Originally heart-shaped, the pond is the focal point of this part of the garden. The puddled clay bottom of the pond was damaged in 1915 by a falling Scots Pine and as the water table dropped the pond gradually dried out. The fragmentary remains of a ruined gothic rockwork arch survive on the north-east bank opposite the grotto. Thomas Wright's Shell Grotto (listed grade II\*) was restored in 1985-6. The grotto, built on an artificial mound, is set against the south boundary overlooking the pond. The exterior is comparable to the one illustrated on the title page of Wright's *Designs for Grottos* (CL 1982); the interior is decorated with shells and minerals, Venus arising from the 'sea' under the central arch and the ceiling representing a starry sky complete with crescent moon.

The path continues north-west for c 10m then divides, one path continuing north-west along the boundary to the kitchen garden and the second leading north to the remains of the overgrown (1997) C19 crescent rose walk. This is backed by a yew hedge and is focused on a C19 cast-iron arbour and a centrally placed statue of a 'Golden Lady' (ibid). The arbour and rose walk are set on a grassed terrace to the west of the lawn. The lawn in which the heart-shaped pond is set continues up to the terrace with steps providing access between the two.

The path which runs north from the turning circle leads to the site of the conservatory erected in the 1870s by J Weeks and Co and shown as a winter garden on a sale map of 1903. The glass conservatory has been removed but the Pulhamite rockwork decorated with artificial stalactites survives against the north boundary wall and coloured floor tiles mark the extent of this feature.

From the site of the Winter Garden the path leads north-west between the level grass of the former Bowling Green and the main lawn. The Bowling Green, set on a terrace above the main lawn, terminated at the west end with a rustic tiered exedra or alcove (CL 1982), which by 1896 had replaced the glasshouse recorded in 1865 (OS).

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen garden, marked as such on the 1903 sale map, lies at the north-west limit of the site and was added to the grounds in 1810. Shown on the OS 1st edition (1865) as only slightly wider than the Bowling Green and with an avenue of trees running along its length, it had by 1894 (OS) developed a collection of glasshouses in north corner. By 1903 more glasshouses had been built and the kitchen garden had almost doubled its width by taking in some of a paddock. The kitchen garden, along with the site of the C19 paddock, was used between c 1968 and c 1994 by a landscape contractor and many of the derelict buildings are thought to survive from this enterprise. The whole area is now (1997) very overgrown.

**OTHER LAND** To the south of the kitchen garden is an area which, along with the kitchen garden, was added to the estate in 1810. Between 1863 and 1894 this area was shown as a paddock enclosed on two sides by the brick boundary wall. The Old Gate is marked in the south-west corner. By 1894 part of the ground appears to have been taken into the kitchen garden and the

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remainder planted out, probably as an orchard, with steps leading down from the west side of the rose arbour. The 1903 sale map shows more detail of this area with the steps leading to a rose walk which terminated a few metres short of the north-west boundary wall. By 1934 (OS) the area was planted with trees at regular intervals along the line of the rose walk. Cordon fruit trees now (1997) grow either side of a strip of grass running east/west in this area while the remaining ground is overgrown.

REFERENCES

Country Life, 172 (5 August 1982), pp 392-4; 180 (18 December 1986), pp 1956-9  
Blest Retreats, A history of private gardens in Richmond upon Thames (Richmond upon Thames Library and Information Services 1984), pp 12-14  
B Cherry and N Pevsner, The Buildings of England: London 2 South (1983), p 501  
Mireille Galinou (ed), London's Pride (1990), p 176  
For Sale and Destruction, (paper prepared for the local government committee of Richmond and Barnes constituency Labour Party, 1994) [copy on EH file]

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  
Chancellor and Sons, Sale map, 1903 (Twickenham Local Studies Collection)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1863 2nd edition published 1896 1934 edition

Description written: October 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.