

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

KENNINGTON PARK

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

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Name:	KENNINGTON PARK
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Lambeth (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.483032 Longitude: -0.10889027 National Grid Reference: TQ 31411 77704 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1000816 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

Details

A mid C19 public park laid out by James Pennethorne

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1852 an Act of Parliament was passed which enabled c 7ha, the greater part of Kennington Common, to be enclosed and this became known as Kennington Park. In 1854 the park was opened to the public and in 1887 it was transferred to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

In 1888 c 0.5ha was added to the north-east corner, and in 1921 a further 2ha from the site of houses on Kennington Terrace to the south-east. In the 1970s an additional 4ha further to the south-east was added. The park remains (1997) a public park owned and managed by the London Borough of Lambeth.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Kennington Park is situated in the London Borough of Lambeth, in an area of high density residential housing. Brixton is 1.5km to the south-west, Vauxhall Bridge 1km to the north-west, and The Oval cricket ground (home of Surrey County Cricket Club) is c 400m to the west. Kennington Park Road (part of the Roman Stane Street) provides the boundary to the west, Kennington Park Place to the north, St Agnes Place to the east, and Camberwell Road to the south. The entire 15ha site lies on level ground with shrubberies, trees, and tarmac paths along most of its boundaries. The northern part of the site is cut by the east/west night walk.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are numerous entrances around Kennington Park, all well used, but J J Sexby (1898) identifies the principal entrance as being that opposite the Horns Tavern in Kennington Park Road to the west, the gate to the north of the Prince Albert Lodges. This entrance leads to the east/west night walk across the park to St Agnes Place. The night walk is a public right of way and is kept open at night. Access to the park from the walk is through gates in the iron fence which are locked at night.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The Prince Albert Lodges (listed grade II) were designed by H Roberts for Prince Albert for the Great Exhibition of 1851 as an example of good working-class cottages. They were re-erected as lodges at the Kennington Park Road

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entrance in 1852. The two-storey buildings are built from stock bricks with red-brick bands and dressings including the window arches on the ground floor. To minimise fire risk, no wood was used in the main structure.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS To the north-east, south-west, and south-east of the Prince Albert Lodges are the sites of what were described in 1924 (LCC) as extensive sunken flower gardens. The ground to the north-east and south-west still retains the shape of these gardens but the areas are now (1997) mainly grass with cut beds for roses and annual planting. The area to the south-east of the Lodges, which is separated from them by the western perimeter path and bordered by the night walk to the north-east and a parallel path to the south-west, was originally decorated with flower beds and a sundial. The sundial was soon moved to the south-west sunken garden and replaced by the ornately decorated fountain provided by Sir Henry Dalton in 1869. The fountain was moved a few metres to the south-east when the bandstand was erected (post 1914). Today (1997) only the concrete standing for the bandstand remains, surrounded by grass and cut beds. The Dalton fountain was damaged during the Second World War; the sculptured family group which stood on a small platform on top of the column has been removed and only the column (listed grade II), which now stands on a footpath to the south-west of the south-west sunken garden, survives. To the south-east of the site of the bandstand and fountain was the Gymnasium (1857). This was replaced by tennis courts (mid C20) which have now been removed and the site grassed over.

Either side of the bandstand area are large grassed expanses, bordered by mature plane trees and tarmac paths. The north-west-facing war memorial, backed by a high yew hedge, stands in the north-west corner of the site. The western perimeter path divides around the war memorial, one path leading to an entrance in the north-west corner of the site, the other continuing around the lawn close to the north and east boundaries of the park. The latter passes the C20 lodge in the far north-east corner, the adjacent entrance from St Agnes Place, and the maintenance depot, once the parks nursery, before joining up with the night walk south-east of site of the bandstand and north of a c 1930s refreshment house. The path system continues south to the Old English Garden, two paved circular sunken areas linked by a brick and timber pergola and planted out with a mixture of shrubs and annual plants. This garden was laid out on ground formerly occupied by Kennington Terrace, which was added to the park in 1920. Outside the pergola there is an area of grass with cut beds, clipped hedges, and two evergreen trees. The children's playground to the south of the Old English Garden survives but the open-air swimming pool has been replaced by tennis courts. As an aid to security, many of the shrubberies with twisting walks described by Cecil in 1907 have been removed and replaced by grass. Some 10m to the west of the Old English Garden are the remains of the drinking fountain donated by Felix Slade in 1862. Mounted on four steps, only the polished red granite base survives; the upper part, cast in bronze, from which the water flowed out of four lotus flowers, has gone.

REFERENCES

Walford, *Old and New London* VI, (1877), p 338 J J Sexby, *Open Spaces of London* (1898), pp 141-57 E Cecil, *London Parks and Gardens* (1907), p 166 LCC, *London Parks and Open Spaces* (1924), pp 42-4 M P G Draper, *Lambeth's Open Spaces An Historical Account* (1979), pp 22-4 B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 2 South* (1983), p 362

Maps J Rocque, *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark*, published 1746

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1870 OS 60" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1870 2nd edition published 1900 1914 edition 1934 edition

Archival items LCC, *A Survey of Structures in Lambeth Parks*, 1973 [copy on EH file]

Description written: October 1997 Register Inspector: LCH Edited: July 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.