

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

SHIPTON COURT

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

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**SHIPTON COURT**

Name:	SHIPTON COURT
County:	Oxfordshire
District:	West Oxfordshire (District Authority)
Parish:	Shipton-under-Wychwood
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.855205 Longitude: -1.6004829 National Grid Reference: SP 27613 17477 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001276 Date first listed: 20-Sep-1993

## Details

A manor house with early C20 formal gardens.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Shipton Court was built c 1603 by the Lacey family, and was occupied by them until 1663 when it was purchased by Sir Compton Reade. It remained in this family until 1868 when, on the death of Sir John Reade, it was left to his footman Joseph Wakefield, on condition he took the name Reade. The estate was purchased from Joseph Reade by W F Pepper in 1900. Pepper carried out large-scale restorations and alterations including the addition of a billiard room and Winter Garden, using the architects Perkins and Bulmer. The main framework of the present gardens appears to have been in existence by 1900, but from the early photographs it is clear that there were several phases in the formalisation of the existing grounds.

The estate was sold in 1913 and sold on in 1919 to Mr Graeme Thomson who was responsible for some further work in the grounds in the early 1920s. Graeme sold on in 1934 and over the next thirteen years there were a variety of owners, the most notable being Captain Walter d'Arcy Hall. During the Second World War the house was occupied by the army, and in 1947 the estate was split and sold by auction. The Dower House in the south-east corner of the site formed one lot, and the field to the east of Trot's Brook another. The house and grounds were bought by Mrs Arathoon in 1948 and remained in the family until 1977 when the house was divided into apartments.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Shipton Court lies towards the centre of the Cotswold village of Shipton-under-Wychwood. The c 12ha site is bounded by the High Street to the west, Mawles Lane to the north, Plum Lane to the south, and the Trot's Brook to the east. The elaborately balustraded bridge over the Brook led into a field which, in the early C20, formed part of the site.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** A short straight drive leads east off the High Street through a pair of wrought-iron gates between stone piers (Perkins and Bulmer 1903(6, listed grade II) set in a stone wall, along an avenue of clipped yews, through gates flanked by stone piers in the low stone wall of the forecourt (c 1903, perhaps incorporating C18 material, listed grade II) to the west front of the Court.

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A second entrance further to the north leads off the corner of the High Street and Mawles Lane to a car parking area occupying the site of the former rose garden and orchard, and to a block of new garages by the boundary wall. These alterations date from the late C20, but the adjacent pedestrian entrance from the north formed part of the early C20 design.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Shipton Court (c 1603, remodelled 1633, C18, extensively restored by Bulmer and Perkins 1903(6, listed grade II\*) stands approximately at the centre of the site, surrounded by gardens to the north-east and south, and with the stables (C17, remodelled by Perkins and Bulmer c 1903-6, listed grade II; now converted to residential use) to the south-west, and to the north-west a row of estate cottages (listed grade II). The stable court is divided off from the garden by a high rubble wall (listed grade II) which links the east end of the north wing of the stables to the stone dovecote (listed grade II) to the south.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** Below the east front of the Court, a grass walk overlooks the water garden (Perkins and Bulmer c 1903-6, listed grade II). The focus of the gardens is a long canal, the lily pond, set in a stone surround, with a paved walk along the eastern edge, to the side of which is a dovecote. At the north end of the pond, at the head of the formal water garden, stands a stone summerhouse (early C20, listed grade II), extended in 1984 to form a dwelling.

The land between the Court and pool is terraced by means of a series of drystone retaining walls. The top level is supported by a buttressed wall (listed grade II) which leads south from the south-east corner of the Court to the southern boundary wall. Two flights of steps link through this, joining the lawn which lies below the south front to the terrace walk below its eastern edge. The broad, grassed upper terrace formed a games lawn and was used for croquet and tennis.

To the south of the lily pond, and at a higher level, is a second pond, the swimming pool, beyond which is a bank, planted with lime trees, which fronts the boundary wall. The land to the north of the Court and west of the water gardens is also terraced, with steps leading down from what was the dining room to a level lawn set with a fountain, once screened along its eastern edge by a yew hedge.

Opposite the entrance gates on the High Street is a lime avenue, the Avenue Walks, leading across the fields to the Wild Garden. The Avenue is marked on the county map of 1797, but the fields beyond had not at this date been landscaped. In 1900, the Avenue ended at a large cedar. The Wild Garden takes the form of a rectangular, wooded pleasure ground with two ponds formed by the damming of the stream, the Basin Pond at the south end of the site running into the Round Pond further to the north. From here the water runs down a series of waterfalls known as The Lifts. A shelter belt runs east from the south-east corner of the Wild Garden, screening Dog Kennel Lane, and back north to join with the east end of the Avenue. A path through it provides a circular walk around the two fields enclosed.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen gardens on the south side of Plum Lane, and outside the area here registered, were sold off in the 1960s, and Court Close, a small estate of houses, was developed on the site.

#### REFERENCES

J Skelton, Engraved illustrations of the principal antiquities of Oxfordshire (1823) J P Neale, Views of the seats of noblemen and gentlemen...1 (2nd series), (1824) Country Life, 7 (3 February 1900), pp 144-50 N Pevsner and J Sherwood, The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire (1974), pp 759-60

Maps R Davis, A New Map of the County of Oxford ..., 1797

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1881-2 2nd edition published 1900 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1921 edition

Description written: May 1999 Register Inspector: SR Edited: March 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.