

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

GREEN PARK

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

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Name:	GREEN PARK
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	City of Westminster (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.504019 Longitude: -0.14428931 National Grid Reference: TQ 28894 79975 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1000806 Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987 Date of most recent amendment: 02-Aug-2011 Location Description: Royal Park lying to the south-east of Hyde Park and east Duke of Wellington Place, south-east of Piccadilly, west of St James Street, north-west of St James Park and north of Buckingham Palace Gardens. Statutory Address 1: Green Park, City of Westminster

## Historique de la conservation

Until the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the ground later known as Green Park was open waste or meadowland. It was enclosed with a high brick wall to form a deer park in 1668 by Charles II, when it became known as Upper St James Park. 'Snow wells' or ice houses were constructed in the park in the 1660s. A natural pool was supplied by the Tyburn brook which flowed through a shallow valley which crosses the centre of the park from north to south. The road, later known as Constitution Hill, was planted up by Charles II but land to the south-west was lost when George III purchased Buckingham House (now Buckingham Palace) and extended the gardens, taking a slice of Green Park for the purpose.

Royal Gardener, Henry Wise (1653–1738), was responsible for early C18 improvements to the park, which by that time extended to over 81 acres (c 32 ha). In 1703 a deer house was built (demolished in the 1740s) and a reservoir, later known as the Queen's Basin, was laid out lying east-west at the northern extremity of the park. It was enlarged in 1729 by Chelsea Water Works as the demand for water increased. An engraving of 1797 depicts it with earth banks, contained behind a post and rail fence and with a fountain over a cylindrical brick culvert at the western end. By 1851, illustrations suggest that it had been formalised, apparently with masonry linings, and was enclosed behind a balustrade. It was infilled in 1855.

Caroline of Ansbach, wife of George II, took an interest in The Upper (St James's) Park as it was known, and in 1730 the Board of Works was ordered to prepare a private walk, to lead from St James's Palace to a summer pavilion known as the Queen's Library. A plan for the park suggests that Charles Bridgeman (d 1738) was responsible for the scheme - he had already drawn up plans for Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park and was involved in schemes for the royal household in St James Park. The Queen's Library was built in 1737 for the Queen by William Kent (1685-1748), it is thought on ground to the east of Queen's walk and outside the current park. The library was all but destroyed by fire in 1749, by which time it was

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apparently derelict, and was completely demolished in 1825. By the mid-C18 the parkland to the east of the Queen's Walk had been reduced piecemeal with the construction of new grand houses.

The park was first recorded as The Green Park on Rocque's map of 1746. The Queen's Basin and the canalised Tyburn Pool are indicated, along with Constitution Hill, which led to a lodge on the northern boundary at Hyde Park Corner, the Queen's Walk and paths leading from a southern entrance towards Tyburn Pool and Queen's Walk. A closely planted wilderness lay between Tyburn Pool and Piccadilly. Scattered trees are indicated at the south east corner of the park, in contrast with the formal avenues approaching Buckingham House, on the site of the Mall. The Old Lodge, built in 1710, was replaced in 1769 by Robert Adam's Deputy Ranger's Lodge which in turn was demolished in 1842.

During the C18 and early C19 the park was used for military parades and to mark commemorations, the latter a function which still pertains today in the many memorials within the park. Increasingly it was open to the public; the walk round the Queen's Basin was particularly fashionable. To mark the end of the War of Austrian Succession in 1749, the Temple of Peace was constructed in the form of a flamboyant Baroque portico flanked by arcades terminating in smaller Kientian pavilions; it was short lived. The celebratory firework display, accompanied by an overture by Handel, all but destroyed it and the Queen's Library. In 1814 the Temple of Concord was constructed as a temporary monument celebrating a centenary of Hanoverian rule. It included an elevated walkway which linked the monument to the Guard Room at Buckingham House, and was apparently similarly burned down. The event caused severe erosion to the ground around the memorial.

Green Park was reduced to approximately its current size in 1767 when the grounds of Buckingham House were extended northwards. Building had already steadily encroached on the eastern boundary of the park, a process dating from 1682 when Arlington Street was laid out, and continuing with the construction of Spencer House, Bridgewater House and Stafford House (now Lancaster House) and their gardens from the later C18.

A report into the state of the park was commissioned in 1823 in response to complaints about its disgraceful condition. It had become badly eroded, while the structures in it were outmoded and in disrepair. The park wall had already been broken through and had been largely superseded as the park was reduced in size, but in 1826, along with other royal parks, the park was opened to the general public. This marked a profound change in how the park was used and managed, as the number of people using it increased. The previous undulating landscape, where 'The lawn consists of the beautiful convexity of two gently rising hills' (Critical Review, 1783), dotted with scattered structures, had developed piecemeal. From the mid-C19 Green Park was the subject of a comprehensive scheme better suited to a park which was open to the public. To a large extent the current landscape echoes the planting schemes and paths laid out from the mid- and later C19 and early C20.

In the late 1820s improvements were made to straighten Constitution Hill to formalise the approach to Hyde Park Corner which was intended as a triumphal entrance to London. Decimus Burton's Wellington Arch, built in 1826-9 (outside Green Park PAG and listed Grade I), was realigned in 1883 on Constitution Hill. The Tyburn Pool to the south and the Queen's Basin to the north, were in filled in 1837 and 1855 and the Deputy Ranger's Lodge on Piccadilly, which had subsequently become a private residence, was demolished in 1842. The area to the north of Constitution Hill was improved in the 1830s when many of the existing trees were planted. Trees and shrubs were planted along the Piccadilly boundary, where, in the later C19 there were also flower beds. In 1889 Constitution Hill became a public highway and by 1894 the west end of the park had been severed. Recently, the western tip of the park overlooking Duke of Wellington Place has been remodelled and replanted.

The Canada Gate, which screens the park to the south-east was built as part of Aston Webb's design of 1903 for the rond point at the west end of the Mall, encircling the Queen Victoria Memorial. From the south it creates a monumental entrance to the Broad Walk which was laid out as a gravel path flanked on each side by a double avenue of planes, while from the north it closes the vista. The Broad Walk was improved again in 1921 when the Devonshire Gates were installed forming the north entrance to the park. The gates originated from Lord Heathfield's house at Turnham Green. They were purchased by the Duke of Devonshire for Chiswick House in 1837, then in 1897 removed to Devonshire House, Piccadilly. They were erected in Green Park in 1921 after Devonshire House was demolished. Early C20 (George V) and mid-C20 lamp standards line the principal paths though the park.

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Monuments have been added and removed in the mid- and late C20. A bandstand which was erected to the west of Queen's Walk in 1906 was removed in 1980. Its position is marked by the ring of plane trees which encircled it. The Clack Fountain, a memorial fountain by Estcourt J Clack was added in 1954, and recently removed for refurbishment, to be re-sited at the new entrance to Green Park Station. The Canada Memorial by Pierre Granches was given to the park in 1995. The Memorial Gateway, to honour Empire Forces from World War II, by Liam O'Connor, was erected at the head of Constitution Hill in 2001-2 at the time of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Incursions into the park include rubble from war-damaged buildings which was deposited along the Broad Walk and disturbance from the construction of Green Park Station, which is also currently (2011) under reconstruction.

Green Park remains (2011) a well-used public open space.

## Details

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM AND SETTING** Green Park is located in central London. Hyde Park (List Entry 1000814 Grade I) lies c 500m to the north-west. It adjoins St James's Park (List Entry 1000483 Grade I) c 100m to the south-east, and Buckingham Palace Gardens (List Entry 1000795 Grade II\*) c 100m to the south. The site is bounded to the north-west and north by Piccadilly, and to the north-east and east by the rear gardens of buildings in Arlington St and St James St which back onto Queen's Walk. It is bounded to the south-east by the Mall and rond point at Queen Victoria Memorial, to the south by Buckingham Palace Gardens and by Duke of Wellington Place to the west. The park is a roughly triangular site, of 20.6 hectares with the apex at the north between Green Park underground station and the Ritz Hotel. It lies on undulating ground, sloping generally from north-west to south-east. The valley of the former Tyburn Brook cuts through the park midway along the northern perimeter, running towards Canada Gate.

To the north and north-west the park is bounded by a later C20 steel fence and holly hedge, planted in 1968. The eastern boundary is marked by railings and timber fences forming the western boundary of private gardens. The south-eastern boundary is defined by Canada Gate and screen (listed Grade I) and a shallow kerb overlooking the Mall. The southern boundary is defined by the northern brick garden wall enclosing Buckingham Palace gardens (listed Grade II).

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Green Park has a number of entrances. Although normally closed, the main entrance from the south is through Canada Gate (listed Grade I), a monumental entrance leading from the north side of the Victoria Memorial, to the Broad Walk. Public access is via the open, western end of the screen at the southern end of Constitution Hill. The Broad Walk, a wide, tree-lined grass walk running north to south between Piccadilly and the Queen Victoria Memorial, was laid out to focus on the memorial. Pedestrian paths run parallel to the grass walk, either side of the avenues of plane trees. The Devonshire Gates (listed Grade II\*), which were re-erected in 1921 from the recently-demolished Devonshire House, form the Piccadilly entrance to the Broad Walk. These gates are also closed but are flanked by a small C20 pedestrian entrance gate on each side. There are similar small entrances from Piccadilly to the west, opposite Brick Street and at the western end of Green Park station. The Ritz Gate at the northern apex of the site leads to the Queen's Walk, which runs north-south parallel to the eastern boundary, and to the diagonal path leading to the Canada Gate. To the south, Queen's Walk opens onto the Mall. A gate in the fence at the western point of the park leads to the recently refurbished raised beds, planting and paving bounding Duke of Wellington Place, which are included within the registered landscape. The western end of the park between Constitution Hill and the steel fence is open to Duke of Wellington Place. The southern entrance to Constitution Hill is framed by the western pier of Canada Gate screen and the outer pier forming the boundary of Buckingham Palace and at the north passes through the Jubilee Memorial Gateway, erected 2001-2. The road is separated from the lawns and pedestrian path by a horse ride to the north and is flanked by a pavement against Buckingham Palace garden wall to the south.

**VIEWS** The size, undulating nature of the park and planting are such that apart from the vistas created by the Broad Walk and Constitution Hill the park feels contained and enclosed.

Within the park, the sloping bank against the north-western boundary, the boundary fences and hedges and trees planted along the perimeter filter the view of buildings and the noise of traffic to the north and east.

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To the north, but with the exception of Green Park Station, the low boundary fence and hedge afford open unbroken views into the park at street level. A continuous canopy of trees is seen from the upper storeys of buildings fronting Piccadilly and from buildings to the west of St James Street. From the entrances there are views into the park while from either end of the Broad Walk are vistas across the park, terminating at the Canada Gate to the south and Devonshire Gate to the north both of which are permanently closed thus blocking the view to and from the Queen Victoria Monument and approach to Buckingham Palace to the south. To either side of Canada Gate, where Green Park and St James Park merge, the view is open.

Travelling uphill from the southern end of Constitution Hill, Wellington Arch comes into view, seen through the Jubilee Memorial Gateway. The Jubilee Memorial Gateway frames the view south from the upper end of Constitution Hill defining the otherwise open entry from the roundabout at Duke of Wellington Place. Conversely the setting of the Queen Victoria Memorial and the approach to Buckingham Palace comes into view travelling south.

The aspect from Constitution Hill into the park is open, and defined by changes in surfaces rather than boundary fences. This contrasts with the high brick wall to the south which defines Buckingham Palace Gardens and is clearly visible in winter, and the trees and shrubs above it.

The western extremity is relatively open exposing the park to the noise of traffic but the recently planted raised beds reduce the intrusion while allowing views out to the monuments that form Duke of Wellington Place and vice versa.

PARK A network of tree-lined, asphalted paths follow the perimeter and cross the park diagonally while a path aligned roughly east-west runs from north of the Duke of Wellington Place gate to meet Queen's Walk at the north-west corner of Lancaster House. The principal, formal feature in the park, the Broad Walk, is a wide turfed walk flanked by avenues of plane trees which line an asphalt path to each side, enclosing the vista to and from Canada Gate and the Victoria Memorial to the south and the Devonshire Gates to the north. To the west of Canada Gate a path follows the plane tree-lined route of Constitution Hill. A horse ride at road level and footpath at the higher lawn level run c 500m parallel to Constitution Hill to Hyde Park Corner and the Wellington Arch, and to the north of the Memorial Gateway. A low metal post and rail fence divides the two. The undulating area to the north of Constitution Hill was improved c 1830 when many of the now (2011) mature planes were planted and where this western area is planted informally, and predominantly with planes and hawthorn, recently infilled with new planting.

The west end of Green Park was lost in the mid-C20 when the traffic system at Hyde Park Corner was improved. Recently, a raised bed planted with evergreen shrubs and a paved path have divided the park from Duke of Wellington Place.

Within the fenced, grassed area the footpath divides, one branch leading north-east from Constitution Hill, passing, after c 250m, a George V lamp standard and attached dog bowl and passing between two pronounced mounds, that to the north-west being man made. Both are planted with plane trees. There is no visible evidence of the former ice house, deer house, or lodges which stood in the vicinity. After a further c 250m the path joins the Broad Walk south of Devonshire Gates. The perimeter path continues north from Constitution Hill, alongside Duke of Wellington Place, past, after c 30m, a small iron pedestrian gate in the railings that divide the park from Duke of Wellington Place. It continues for c 10m where it turns north-east and becomes the northern perimeter path which runs parallel with Piccadilly. The ground inside the park railings and the holly hedge is lower than the street level of Piccadilly and the undulating ground, defined by the valley of the former Tyburn Brook, slopes towards the east. There is no visible evidence of the former Tyburn Pool nor of Smirke's fountain (1860). The perimeter fence is lined with a row of plane trees. Parallel with the path and to the south of it is an avenue of plane trees, which is depleted to the east. After c 80m the path divides: the perimeter path continues north-east parallel with Piccadilly towards C20 Ritz Gate, crossing the Broad Walk at the Devonshire Gates.

The C20 Ritz Gate at the northern apex of the park and named after the adjacent Ritz Hotel (listed grade II\*), which overlooks the park, stands near the eastern end of the former Queen's Basin which extended to the eastern avenue of the Broad Walk, south of the entrance to Green Park Underground station. There is no visible evidence of the basin.

From the Ritz Gate the path divides, one branch running south to the Canada Gate, and the eastern branch, the Queen's Walk, following the north-east boundary of the park to The Mall. It approximately follows the route of the C18 walk which was laid out c 1730 for Caroline of Ansbach to lead from St James Palace to the Queen's Library (site outside the current park). It is flanked by a row of plane trees while a low metal post and rail fence divides the asphalt and gravel Queen's Walk from the

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grass. A bandstand erected c 1920 on the grass midway along the Queen's Walk was removed in 1980; the level site is identified by a ring of plane trees.

From the western end of the perimeter path a second path runs east in the direction of Queen's Walk and The Mall. After c 80m this path crosses the north-easterly path which originates from the west end of Constitution Hill. Midway, to the west of the Broad Walk is an informal intersection of paths, marked by a George V lamp standard. The path crosses the Broad Walk and path to the east of it before meeting Queen's Walk.

**STRUCTURES** Canada Gate (listed Grade I) designed as part of Aston Webb's scheme for the rond pont comprises a screen of Portland stone gate piers and elaborate iron gates beneath an overthrow, in the Beaux Arts manner, enriched with emblems of empire. The low curved balustrade to the east defines the rond pont and separates Green Park from St James Park.

Devonshire Gates, (listed Grade II\*) an early to mid- C18 gateway, built for Lord Heathfield's house at Turnham Green, comprises a screen of two pairs of rusticated and moulded stone gate piers framing a central pair of wrought iron gates beneath an ornate overthrow and flanked by fixed wrought iron panels. They were purchased by the Duke of Devonshire for Chiswick House in 1837, and removed to Devonshire House, Piccadilly in 1897. They were erected in Green Park in 1921 after Devonshire House was demolished.

Three groups of lamp standards, (listed Grade II as being of early C19, mid-C19 and early C20 date), line the major routes including Constitution Hill, the outer paths of the Broad Walk, Queen's Walk and the northern perimeter walk adjacent to the Broad Walk. Some of those lining the Broad Walk are stamped GviR (George VI) Others are replicas. All have octagonal shafts some with larger with octagonal bases. Most have crested, Windsor lanterns, some with curved brackets while some have crown finials. Four large, single, lamps standards (listed as a group, Grade II), stamped GvR (George V) stand at the intersection of the east-west path and northern paths, at the eastern end of that path, to the west of the former bandstand and west of the former Tyburn Pool. These have deeply moulded shafts and large crested lanterns. Attached to the westernmost lamp standard is a stone bowl for drinking water for dogs.

The Canada Memorial to the north of Canada Gate and west of the Broad Walk was given to the park in 1995 as part of the VE Day 50th anniversary commemorations. Designed by Pierre Granches, it comprises a commemorative stone plaque set in the ground to the east of steps which descend to a rectangular paved area enclosing two raised, polished granite, triangular prisms inset with maple leaves and down which a thin stream of water runs. These are separated by a narrow passage aligned on Halifax, Nova Scotia, the point of departure of the troops.

The Jubilee Memorial Gateway at the head of Constitution Hill, 2001-2 by Liam O'Connor, comprises four Portland stone stele surmounted by shallow bronze urns and inscribed with the names of countries of the Empire who contributed to the Allied Forces in World War II. Adjacent to them is a Moghul inspired pavilion inscribed with the names of recipients of the Victoria Cross and George Cross.

Description written: September 1998 Amended: October 2001 Register Inspector: LCH Edited: January 2002, May 2011

## Summary

Royal park, enclosed as a deer park in 1668; also a public open space since 1826.

## 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.

## Reasons for Designation

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Green Park is designated in the Register of Parks and Gardens at Grade II\* for the following principal reasons: \* Historic interest: historic royal park, enclosed as a deer park in 1668, laid out in the early C18 by Charles Bridgeman for Caroline of Ansbach, with structures designed by William Kent, remodelled as a public park in 1826 and incorporated in Aston Webb's design for the approach to Buckingham Palace of 1903; \* Setting: contributes to the important series of historic royal parks, now also public parks, which date from the C16 and C17 and form a distinctive and continuous chain of historic designed landscapes, in an urban setting, which extend from Kensington Gardens to the west to Horse Guards Parade to the east. \* Planting and landscape: informal undulating landscape, largely of mid-C19 and later date, planted with mature trees and lawns, criss-crossed by pedestrian paths, and having a sense of secluded enclosure within the surrounding urban development; \* Vistas and external views: the Broad Walk is laid out as a formal walk framing vistas to north and south; views over boundary fences and hedges into and from the park to the north, to the west to the monuments at Duke of Wellington Place and from the private gardens to the east; views from Constitution Hill, the historic route through the park, to the Queen Victoria Memorial to the south and, although depleted, to Wellington Arch to the north; \* Group Value: relationship to the historic buildings and landscapes of Clarence House and Buckingham Palace, to the formal approach to the Palace through St James Park to the south, and to the intended monumental approach to London via Wellington Arch to the west.

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