

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE

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

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**SANDRINGHAM HOUSE**

Name:	SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
County:	Norfolk
District:	King's Lynn and West Norfolk (District Authority)
Parish:	Sandringham
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.821735 Longitude: 0.50866972 National Grid Reference: TF 69138 27860 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1001017 Date first listed: 18-Sep-1987

## Details

A mid to late C19 garden with lakes and rockwork designed by William Broderick Thomas and James Pulham in the 1870s, continuously developed throughout the C20 to include a garden area designed in 1947 by Geoffrey Jellicoe, set in a park of C18 origins and extensive woodlands greatly enlarged during the late C19.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Sandringham was owned by the Cobbes family from 1517 to 1686, when it was acquired by the Hostes, from whom the Henley family inherited it sometime before 1794, together with the new house which had been erected in 1771 and a landscaped park. The old entrance gates to this house (today known as the Old Norwich Gates) are still extant but have been repositioned. The Henley family sold Sandringham to John Motteaux of Beechamwell in 1836, who in turn sold to the Hon Charles Spencer Cowper. He commissioned the architect S S Teulon to carry out a series of alterations to the house, including the construction of a conservatory. Bryant's map of the county published in 1826 shows formal gardens around the house whilst the landscape beyond to the south extended into open parkland and to the north into dense woodland cut through with rides. In 1862 Sandringham was bought by Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) as a country retreat situated close to both Newmarket and London. The old house was demolished, apart from the conservatory which was converted into a billiard room, and a new house was erected by A J Humbert in the Jacobean style in 1870. The Prince of Wales extended the park slightly on all sides and began the development of the gardens, including the addition of lakes and a Pulhamite rock garden designed by William Broderick Thomas in the 1870s, as well as an extensive walled garden. The house was enlarged in 1881-4 by R W Edis, who further enlarged and restored it following a fire in 1891. The gardens continued to develop through the late C19 and throughout the C20. In 1947 the ornate bedding schemes were removed and Geoffrey Jellicoe (1900-96) was commissioned to create a simple formal garden north of the house. In 1968 much of the park was designated the Sandringham Country Park. The site remains (1999) in the ownership of Her Majesty The Queen.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Sandringham House lies midway between Hunstanton and King's Lynn, 1km east of the A149 and c 3km from the coastline of the Wash. It stands in a densely wooded coastal landscape, to

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
*SANDRINGHAM HOUSE*

the north-west of the estate village of West Newton, surrounded to north, east, and south by extensive plantation woodlands. The land to the south-east beyond West Newton village, and away from the sea, is a more open farmed landscape. A high carstone wall surrounds the park, running from the gate beside the church in the north, around the east boundary as far as the kennels south of York Cottage. For much of the remainder the boundary is marked by a low carstone wall topped with iron railings. Together these enclose a site of c 125ha, of which c 20ha is garden. The grounds both in the gardens and the park are gently undulating with a fall from north-west to south-east and to the south, reflecting the topography of the surrounding land. Views into and out of the gardens are restricted by dense shrubberies planted along the eastern and northern boundaries. From the west terrace of the House, a gap in the planting opens onto a vista through the surrounding woodlands towards the coast, and another looked south-west into the park (now restricted by a hedge). The main panoramic view into the park from the gardens is seen from the west bank of Lower Lake. From Sandringham church is a fine view south over the park to West Newton church beyond the boundary, and another south-east towards an ornamented water tower on high ground c 500m outside the park boundary.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Sandringham has a number of lodged entrances, all of mid to late C19 origin and built of carstone blocks with cream brick dressings under tile roofs. Double Lodge lies on the western boundary, its drive running north-east through the plantation woodlands and the open park to meet the Old Norwich Gates between the Upper and Lower Lakes, 100m to the south of the House. South Lodge and the Thatch Lodge lie just north of West Newton village with drives that enter the south end of the gardens and pass York Cottage before running north to the east front of Sandringham House. The drive at the Jubilee Gates and Lodge, 300m east-south-east of House joins the South Lodge/Thatch Lodge drive beside the Museum, 180m to the east of the House.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Sandringham House is a large country mansion built of red brick with stone dressings under a tile roof, with pointed gables over the attic wings and nine clusters of chimney stacks. The rectangular plan is laid out in the Jacobean style, having a central three-storey core of five bays on the east front with a central porch and domed clock tower on the south return. The west or garden front has seven bays, flanked by three further bays to north and south and at the south end by an additional two-storey range built of carstone decorated with brick diamond patterns and Dutch gables. The west front incorporates all that remains of the earlier house, in the form of a conservatory which was converted into a billiard room when the house was rebuilt for Edward, Prince of Wales in 1870, by A J Humbert. Humbert's house replaced an earlier building on the same site, erected in 1771 for Henry Hoste, and was itself enlarged in 1881-4 by R W Edis.

To the east, c 180m from the House, stands the courtyard stables and garages (now the Museum) also built of carstone under tiled roofs by Humbert at the same time as the House, while shrubberies on the south-east corner of the House hide a large octagonal game larder of the same era.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens and pleasure grounds at Sandringham cover c 20ha and lie all around the House, with the main garden terraces to north and west and the pleasure ground to the south. The main entrance on the east front has a forecourt and lawns planted with commemorative oaks, flanked by clipped yew hedges to the north and south. To the north of the House lies a formal rectangular garden laid out in 1947 by Geoffrey Jellicoe, flanked by pleached limes and with a central path leading north to geometrical enclosures of box-edged beds filled with herbaceous plants. Beyond this, around the north and north-west boundary wall are mixed woodland shrubberies including rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias. The west front terrace, originally facing a complex formal parterre of bedding, now (1999) looks onto a lawn, bounded 300m to the west by woodland which leads south to the Church Walk, lined with conifers. South of the west lawn lies the Upper Lake, on the east shore of which stands the C19 Pulhamite rock garden and boathouse, adorned on its east side by a summerhouse known as The Nest, erected in 1913. The Nest faces west, towards the end of the lake where The Dell walk leads west and north up through the woodland to join the Church Walk. South of the House the ornamental Upper Lake links into the larger Lower Lake with its central tree-covered island, bordered to the east by rolling lawns planted with a variety of trees and shrubs. On the south-east bank of Lower Lake, c 400m to the south-south-east of the House, stands York Cottage (formerly Bachelor's Cottage), with its own set of stables and kennel buildings midway along the eastern boundary wall. A small watercourse running from the north-east, edged with rocks and recently planted with bog plants (1990s), feeds into the eastern end of Lower Lake. The gardens date from the 1860s onwards, after the estate was purchased by the Prince of Wales, although some mature trees both in the gardens

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**SANDRINGHAM HOUSE**

and the park are older and the Upper Lake, excavated by Thomas in the 1870s, replaced a smaller, earlier one. The gardens and pleasure grounds have undergone continual change and development since the late C19 and throughout the C20.

PARK Sandringham Park lies mainly to the south of the House, with densely wooded areas to the north having been established as a country park in 1968 (outside the area here registered). The south park is open to the east where the gently rolling landscape is scattered with mature trees of oak, sweet chestnut, beech, and lime (some of C18 origin). To the west the park becomes densely wooded with a mix of commercial conifer forestry planting, ornamental areas, and tracts of oak woodland. Park Pool and Deershed Pool are surrounded by trees and each have small islands, linked by footbridges. Park Pool is connected by a small watercourse to the lakes in the gardens. The church of St Mary Magdalen, on the high ground c 400m to the south-west of the House, forms a visual element in the landscape scheme of both park and garden. The park at Sandringham has existed in generally this form certainly since 1797 when it was depicted on Faden's map of the county as having an open park to the south and wooded areas to the north. The map also records The Avenue which survives today, running through the north woods from the Norwich Gate which stands on the north boundary c 250m north-north-west of the House, for c 1km through Dersingham Wood. Edward, Prince of Wales extended the boundaries slightly to south, east, and west at the end of the C19 and developed the northern woodlands for shooting, increasing the areas of planting, all cut through with a series of rides and paths.

KITCHEN GARDEN The walled kitchen garden lies c 300m east-north-east of the House, beyond the West Newton road. The curved entrance gates and piers at the west end lead directly onto a rose pergola built of brick piers and oak cross beams (now lost) which divides the compartment into two, both laid to lawn cut with beds and recently restored (1998). Along the north boundary facing this garden stands the Garden House. Within the main compartment the area is laid to grass divided into quarters by gravel paths converging on a central circular fountain pool, all in the process of being restored (1999). A further walled compartment to the south is laid to lawn, with old pear trees trained on the south wall. Beyond the north wall, the Bothy Walk is lined along the garden side by a series of gardeners' workshops and accommodation buildings and on the north side by a range of modern (late C20) glasshouses. Beyond the eastern boundary of the walled garden lies the Royal Stud, formerly Model Home Farm and Dairy, the topiary garden which once stood outside having been grassed over. The walled garden was built at the same time as the House but was greatly enlarged and developed in the early years of the C20 when the gates, piers, pergola, and Dairy were all added and the paths enlarged to allow carriages to take guests around the highly ornamental kitchen garden.

#### REFERENCES

Gardeners' Chronicle, i (1891), pp 759-60; ii (1892), pp 26-8; i (1902), pp 402-11; ii (1902), pp 113, 115, 118, 355, 358; ii (1905), p 440; i (1906), pp 104, 184; i (1910), pp 319, 321 Country Life, 11 (7 June 1902), pp 722-35; (21 June 1902), pp 806-18; 73 (3 June 1933), pp 582-6; 75 (3 February 1934), pp 116-24; 167 (19 June 1980), pp 1382-4 Lady Rockley, Historic gardens of England (1938), pp 208-9 G Plumtre, Royal Gardens (1981), pp 10-33 B Elliott, Victorian Gardens (1986), pp 146, 167, 176 Sandringham, guidebook, (1996)

Maps W Faden, A new topographical map of the county of Norfolk, 1797 (Norfolk Record Office) A Bryant, Map of the county of Norfolk, 1826 (Norfolk Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1883 2nd edition published 1906 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1905

Archival items Original documents relating to the Sandringham estate are held in a private collection; some items are on display in the Sandringham museum.

Description written: May 1999 Amended: September 2002 Register Inspector: EMP Edited: March 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.