

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

**BROADMOOR HOSPITAL**

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

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**BROADMOOR HOSPITAL**

Name: BROADMOOR HOSPITAL

District: Bracknell Forest (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Crowthorne

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.362845

Longitude: -0.78354991

National Grid Reference: SU 84788 63344, SU 85009 63371

[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.localisation: [51.3661515639696,-0.783193630501034], [51.3659501959051,-0.783291619404597],  
[51.365999798163,-0.783552491044841], [51.3660766989732,-0.783946706990269],  
[51.3658933696048,-0.783998879566955], [51.3656102952195,-0.784071419014826],  
[51.3656177504337,-0.784195418455985], [51.3656462705903,-0.784565271776828],  
[51.3656791528125,-0.784879821036825], [51.3657411610231,-0.785505069917733],  
[51.3657731970207,-0.785857091676667], [51.3657934129438,-0.786022153558499],  
[51.365769915607,-0.786016856532243], [51.3657358721477,-0.786185320694936],  
[51.365698145096,-0.78635584999498], [51.3656703656816,-0.786413755611459],  
[51.3655832533199,-0.786581653552086], [51.3655291574582,-0.786600823375809],  
[51.3655005449557,-0.786340373153753], [51.3654303576511,-0.785640431354455],  
[51.3653630994507,-0.784985763093568], [51.3653521355385,-0.784880588488686],  
[51.3653273967678,-0.784636801280597], [51.3653101990009,-0.784406604613024],  
[51.365295748132,-0.783965420621889], [51.3652951887526,-0.78379195464811],  
[51.36529480003,-0.783754502146498], [51.3653029801184,-0.783710918909125],  
[51.3653327190191,-0.78360368966532], [51.3653265191234,-0.783363347898424],  
[51.3652960977978,-0.783285306863348], [51.3652794668005,-0.78322857660621],  
[51.3652715681577,-0.78318146908418], [51.3652622867046,-0.783000348170017],  
[51.3652561298663,-0.782645678257991], [51.3652447436601,-0.782025015150146],  
[51.3656148560505,-0.782015198090209], [51.3656364790432,-0.782314271545716],  
[51.365651518701,-0.782455795706972], [51.3656520890181,-0.782629262739937],  
[51.365886538005,-0.782508718095582], [51.3660130535706,-0.782452127691665],  
[51.3661515639696,-0.783193630501034]

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1001401

Date first listed: 21-Aug-1998

## Details

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**BROADMOOR HOSPITAL**

Mid C19 asylum, built for the criminally insane to designs by Joshua Jebb and opened in 1863. The extensive contemporary grounds include large, formal terraces leading down to a vast former kitchen garden, surrounded by high walls, beyond which lies ornamented farmland.

#### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1807 a House of Commons Select Committee recommended that a special hospital for the criminally insane be built near London, but this was not begun until the late 1850s (Partridge 1953). Sir Joshua Jebb designed the first State Criminal Asylum, sited high on the edge of Crowthorne Wood, incorporating the recommendations of the Commissioners in Lunacy (Suggestions and Instructions, 1856). Jebb was a military engineer and the first Surveyor General of Prisons, having designed Pentonville model prison twenty years earlier. His design for Broadmoor however was much closer to that of contemporary county lunatic asylums, reflecting a medical, rather than penal attitude towards the 500 male and female patients. The extensive grounds were laid out largely to the south of the main buildings, in order to give the patients the benefit of long views over the countryside beyond. The two main buildings, the larger to house men and the smaller to house women, were sited along the summit of a ridge, each range with its own enclosed grounds, the two ranges separated by the Medical Superintendent's house and associated paddock and garden. Each enclosure embraced part of the summit of the ridge and a stretch of land descending steeply to the valley below, in which lay the very large kitchen garden. The male patients worked in the gardens and on the surrounding farm, whilst all patients used the enclosed, terraced grounds for recreation.

The hospital was opened in 1863, although the convicts who had been used to build the hospital still occupied one block for another two years while they finished constructing roads and erecting farm buildings. By the early C20 the kitchen garden contained a cricket pitch (OS 1911). In the late C20 new accommodation and administration offices were built, the original entrance was replaced by a new gatehouse, and part of the west wing of the men's building was demolished. The site remains (1998) in use as a secure psychiatric hospital.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Broadmoor Hospital lies in Bracknell Forest, at the eastern edge of the village of Crowthorne, 5km south of Bracknell. The c 130ha site is bounded largely by sandy woodland, including Crowthorne Wood to the north and Edgebarrow Woods to the south-west, with the A3095 (late C20) running along parts of the east boundary. The north-west corner of the site, on which the buildings stand, occupies the summit of a steep, south-east-facing ridge, descending in large terraces and levelling out at the bottom of them to encompass the kitchen garden and surrounding farmland which occupy the majority of the site to the south. The setting is wooded and suburban, with associated former staff housing and the village of Crowthorne close by to the west, the settlements of Owlsmoor and College Town to the south, and the contemporary Wellington College and its grounds lying close by to the south-west. Long views extend from the ridge out into the Surrey countryside to the south and south-west.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main west drive approaches from the west off Crowthorne High Street, 1km south-west of the gatehouse at the centre of the main north front of the hospital. From the High Street the west drives extends east along Lower Broadmoor Road, flanked by a lime avenue. The drive turns north-east 700m south-west of the gatehouse, continuing up Chaplain's Hill, flanked to the west by woodland and to the east by playing fields and housing (with views extending beyond), to the north-west corner of the high-walled secure area. The drive, as Kentigern Drive, curves east around the north side of the main hospital buildings, between the C19 cemetery to the south and the C20 extension to the north, to arrive at a modern entrance block (late C20) sited at the east end of the north front of the men's building. The C19 cemetery, laid out in the shape of a quarter circle, is laid to lawn and planted with specimen conifers, having lost its bisecting paths and headstones (OS 1876; Partridge 1953).

From the top of Chaplain's Hill, a spur, The Terrace, runs east along the outer side of the north perimeter wall of the secure area, past a row of former staff cottages to the north, and between the remains of a Scots pine avenue to the gatehouse, the former main entrance to the secure area. This brick gateway, set into the north perimeter wall, is flanked by three-storey twin towers supporting a tall, central archway, leading to a cloistered courtyard. West of the gateway The Terrace is crossed by a security fence (late C20) which now (1998) encloses the gateway within the secure area. The Terrace continues east within

the secure area from the gateway, curving south-east to the north, entrance side of the women's range. A spur south between the two ranges leads to a turning circle enclosing a grass panel within a walled enclosure giving access to the former Medical Superintendent's house.

A further drive, Upper Broadmoor Road, enters from the north-west, curving south-east up the hillside, flanked by woodland, past a two-storey brick building set back to the north. This is Kentigern House (J Jebb c 1860-3), standing 200m west of the gatehouse in its own grounds, possibly built as a reading room or accommodation for one of the hospital officers. Beyond the short spur north to Kentigern House the drive joins the main drive from Chaplain's Hill at the west end of The Terrace.

A service drive extends south from the east end of Kentigern Drive, past a car park set into woodland to the north, through the estate farmland, encircling the secure area to the east, south and west. It returns to the west end of Kentigern Drive.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The main, men's range (J Jebb c 1860-3), largely built of red brick in 'Prison Romanesque' style (Partridge 1953), stands at the north-west corner of the site, sited on level ground close to the edge of the south-east-facing slope. The former administration and service block surrounds the cloistered courtyard at the centre of the range, from the southern corners of which extend two long, south-facing wings. Further detached buildings flank the central block and wings, enclosing former airing courts, now largely developed or laid to tarmac. Part of the westernmost buildings were demolished in the late C20. The women's range (J Jebb c 1860-3) is smaller and stands to the east at the top of the scarp. It is separated from the men's range by the approach to the Superintendent's house, a long, two-storey brick building in similar style to the hospital ranges, overlooking its own grounds to the south.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie adjacent to the south front of the main buildings. A series of level lawns, formerly used for croquet or bowls (Illustrated London News 1867), extends along the south front of the men's range. These lawns are divided by paths, and projections from the south front including a wooden conservatory to the east. The panels of lawn are linked along the south side by a broad path at the edge of this top terrace, from which several spurs extend south down a gentle grass slope to a further broad path running parallel below, both paths being terminated at the east end by the south-eastern men's block, and formerly by a mirroring block to the west. Several mature trees, including two large Lebanon cedars, are set in the lawns along the length of these two terraces. Two former airing courts remain on the east side of the men's range, the southern one now (1998) laid out as a tarmac sports pitch, the northern one laid to lawn with mature trees.

South of the lower terrace a series of steeper terraces, supported by low brick retaining walls, and with west and east ends marked by high brick walls, leads sharply down the hillside, separated from the upper terraces by ornamental iron railings. Terraced grass banks separate broad, level paths running west to east, the terraces being linked north to south by a central flight of steps. Cross paths connect some levels, traversing the grass slopes. The terraces are divided by brick walls and fences into four sections, the central two of which communicate with each other, each section with further flights of steps connecting the different levels. Several low buildings (mid-late C20) have been erected on the terraces. The central flight of steps leads down to the kitchen garden to the south, separated by a high brick wall and entered through a central doorway. Views extend from the south front of the main building and terraces below, across the walled garden and farmland to the countryside beyond.

This 7ha terraced area remains much as laid out in the 1860s (OS 1876), except that two ornamented circular shelters on the upper terraces (Illustrated London News 1867) had gone by the early C20 (OS 1911) and four rectangular shelters on the lower levels have since been lost.

East of the main terraces lies the 1ha Superintendent's Paddock, largely laid out informally, with mature ornamental specimen trees set in lawn, and a formal terrace adjacent to the south front, overlooked by the former Superintendent's house (now a social centre) and the women's block.

The women's enclosed gardens are less extensive than the men's, amounting to 0.5ha divided into two sections bounded by high, red-brick walls, linked by a path running along the south front of the women's block. The western section contains a rectangular terrace adjacent to the path, largely laid to lawn with a central octagonal wooden shelter (C20, but on the site of an earlier structure), below which a sharp bank drops down to the south to a lower level, with a curved south boundary, also laid to lawn. The eastern section contains a terrace adjacent to the path, with an open octagonal wooden shelter (possibly modelled on a C19 original) standing next to a large beech tree, leading down a grass slope to a rectangular lawn beyond. These gardens

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*  
*Inventory of Great Britain*  
**BROADMOOR HOSPITAL**

overlook the park to the south and east, but views to the south-west are somewhat masked by the walls and mature trees in the Superintendent's Paddock.

**PARK** The undulating park surrounds the secure area to the west, south and east. The lower areas to the south and east seemingly cover the former Broadmoor Bog (Map of Sandhurst, 1799), with the western area running north up Lodge Hill. The open farmland to the south and east is largely laid to pasture and enclosed by belts of trees, and contains large spinneys of both deciduous and coniferous trees standing on raised knolls, and several small blocks of woodland. Broadmoor Farm lies 700m south-west of the main hospital building, consisting of a farmhouse and related yard and buildings (1860-3). Also within the park lies the former water and sewage works and several ponds and reservoirs, set within the woodland. To the west, set within woodland on Lodge Hill, stand various groups of associated staff housing (C19 and C20), together with playing fields and linking roads.

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The 6ha kitchen garden lies at the bottom of the main terraces, on largely level ground, and is surrounded by a high, red-brick wall (C19, rebuilt C20), with a path bisecting the area centrally north to south. The southern section is largely used for sports pitches, with part of the northern section under cultivation. A low range of offices and buildings runs along the centre of the north wall on the south side, flanking the central entrance from the terraces above to the north.

During the 1870s (OS) this enormous area was entirely devoted to produce. It was laid out in ten quarters separated by paths, surrounded by a further perimeter path and planted with fruit trees flanking the two main paths laid out in cruciform pattern. 'The amount of rhubarb consumed by the patients was nearly 50lb a year each and might well be thought to be excessive until one remembers that purgatives were a stock remedy in treating mental disease [in the 1860s]' (Partridge 1953). The area outside the wall to the west appears to have been given over to orchard trees. To the east, adjacent to the south side of the Superintendent's Paddock, lay a further 1ha productive area.

#### REFERENCES

Commissioners in Lunacy, Suggestions and Instructions ... (1856) *The Builder*, (1859), p 723; (15 July 1865) p 496 *Illustrated London News*, (24 August 1867), pp 208-9; (7 September 1867), p 273 H C Burdett, *Hospitals and Asylums of the World I & II (asylums)*, (1891) R Partridge, *Broadmoor, A History of Criminal Lunacy and its Problems* (1953) J Taylor, *Hospital and Asylum Architecture in England, 1840-1914* (1991), pp 160, 203, 256 (footnote) Property Services Agency, *Historic Buildings Register 3*, (1984), pp 16-17, illus

Maps Map of Sandhurst including Crowthorne, 1799 (Berkshire Record Office)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1876 2nd edition revised 1913 3rd edition published 1930 OS 25" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1911

Description written: July 1998 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.