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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BARNSLEY HOUSE

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

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BARNSELEY HOUSE

Name: BARNSELEY HOUSE

County: Gloucestershire

District: Cotswold (District Authority)

Parish: Barnsley

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.742841
Longitude: -1.8901261
National Grid Reference: SP 07683 04910
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1001646
Date first listed: 27-Sep-2002

Details

A mid C20 garden laid out with formal and informal elements by the plantswoman and garden designer Rosemary Verey, together with her husband David, and further developed by Mrs Verey during the late C20. It incorporates late C18 and C19 elements.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Brereton Bouchier built a house at the south end of Barnsley village in the late 1690s, its datestone bearing the date 1697. It occupied the site of the Lower Manor of Barnsley, and faced east, overlooking the village street on the east side of the site. In 1753 the village street, which formed part of the Cirencester to Oxford road, was re-routed to the west of the house (VCH 1981). From 1762 until c 1930 Barnsley House was the parish rectory, the parish church lying a short distance to the north. The first rector, from the 1760s, was Charles Coxwell who is thought to have constructed a stone garden wall on the east side of the garden, a gothic summerhouse, a ha-ha to the south, and a stone-piered gateway on the west side of the site adjacent to the new road (Sale particulars, 2002). James Musgrave, the second rector, extended the House in the 1820s. Canon Howman, the third rector, is thought to have planted various trees to the west and south-west of the House, including a Turkey oak, London planes, and limes in the 1850s (ibid).

In 1939 Barnsley House was bought by Cecil and Linda Verey, and in 1952 it passed to their son David, an architectural historian, and his wife, Rosemary. Together David and Rosemary Verey created a garden in the 1950s and 1960s, incorporating the elements of previous occupants, the work continuing into the early 1970s. The principal features which they laid out were to the east and south of the House, and the garden continued to develop within this framework during the late C20. Mrs Verey became a notable plantswoman, writer, broadcaster, and garden designer and the garden became internationally famous, being influential on popular garden design of the period. Mr Verey died in 1984 and Mrs Verey died in May 2001. The House remains (2002) in private ownership.

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Barnsley House stands towards the south end of the Cotswold village of Barnsley, 7km north-east of Cirencester, on the east side of the main village street. The approximately rectangular, c 1ha site is bounded to the west by the village street, to the south-west and north by village houses and farmsteads, and to

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the south and east by pasture. The west, north, and east boundaries are largely marked by stone walls dating from the late C18 and later, with a section of the south boundary marked by a stone ha-ha (late C18). The site occupies land which is largely level, sloping gently down to the village street to the west. The setting is rural, at the southern end of the Cotswolds, formerly with views extending south over adjacent pasture, these now (2002) obscured by mid to late C20 hedges planted along part of the south boundary above the ha-ha.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main approach enters the site 50m west of the House, off the south end of the village street. The entrance is set back off the road, flanked by stone gate piers supporting iron gates and topped by ball finials (C18). From here a view extends up to the gothic summerhouse at the south-east corner of the garden. From the entrance the drive curves east, bounded by mature trees to the north, including several large plane trees, and the open Lower Lawn to the south. North-west of the House the drive curves south-east, breasting a short slope, to arrive at an informal forecourt adjacent to the west, entrance front of the House, which overlooks the Lower Lawn below and the gateway beyond.

A spur off the drive continues east, turning north on the north side of the House to enter a paddock used as a car park (outside the area here registered).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Barnsley House (late C17, extended c 1820-30, listed grade II*) stands towards the north boundary of the site. It was built by Brereton Bourchier in the 1690s (datestone 1697), before becoming a rectory in the late C18. It was extended significantly to the north in similar style by the Musgrave family in the 1820s. The three-storey house is built of local ashlar and faces east, overlooking the formal garden beyond. At the north-east corner of the house stands the Conservatory, built in 1988 by Rosemary Verey to a design by Charles Morris, which contains a grotto designed by Simon Verity.

Until 1753 the village road ran along the east side of the garden, now (2002) a farm track, overlooked by the east front which was originally the main entrance front. When the road was moved west to its present position the main entrance to Barnsley House was moved to the west front. The east, garden front overlooks a paddock (outside the area here registered) beyond the lane and Potager.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS The gardens and pleasure grounds are divided into two main sections: a series of formal compartments adjacent to the east front of the House, and informal lawns and wooded pleasure grounds to the south and west.

The garden door of the House, at the centre of the east front, leads down a short flight of stone steps to a stone terrace which extends around the south front. From the centre of the east terrace a stone-flagged path extends across the Parterre Lawns on an axis with the garden door, terminating at a gateway inserted into the late C18, east garden wall. The path is flanked by a series of clipped yews interplanted with rock roses, these in turn flanked by lawns surrounded by L-shaped borders centred on the four corners of the Parterre.

East of the Parterre Lawns the path bisects three long walks which extend north to south parallel to the east garden wall. Each is bounded to the south by the garden wall which turns west at the south end of the eastern length.

The westernmost of these three walks is the Long Vista, laid to lawn and flanked by borders, terminated at the south end by the Frog Fountain and at the north end by the classical Temple which stands at the north side of the Pond Garden. The Frog Fountain was designed and made for the Vereys in 1971 by Simon Verity, and the frogs were carved by his wife, Judith. The Pond Garden is bounded by the stone garden wall to the north and east with a further stone wall dividing it from the service yards to the west, and is largely laid with stone flags. It is entered at the south side from the Long Vista via iron gates which immediately give onto an octagonal pool, to the north of which stands the classical Temple (c 1770, probably by William Eames (LB description), listed grade II). The Temple was brought from Fairford Park in 1962-3 by David Verey and its facade reflects in the pool. The Pond Garden is planted with mature specimen shrubs and laid out with borders around the pool and perimeter of the compartment. A further stone-flagged path leads west from the south-west corner of the Pond Garden, between the Parterre Lawns to the south and the stone garden wall to the north. It leads to a stone-flagged court in front of the Conservatory at the north-east corner of the House. A gateway in the stone wall half way along the path gives access to service yards to the north, enclosed by a further stone wall to the north and bounded by outbuildings to the west and east.

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The central of the three walks to the east of the Parterre Lawns is the Lime Walk, laid variously to stone flags and cobbles, and flanked by various species of trees. At its south end it is flanked by laburnum and underplanted by bulbs including Alliums; north of this the path is flanked by pleached limes set in lawns extending to the Parterre Lawns path; to the north of this, beyond four columnar junipers, the path is flanked by standard Euonymous specimens. At the point where the Lime Walk crosses the east/west Parterre Lawns path stand two mature weeping cherries.

The eastern of the three walks to the east of the Parterre Lawns, the Winter Walk, is terminated by a small pedestal (Simon Verity) at the south end. It is laid to flags at the south end, leading into lawn as it leads north to cross the east/west Parterre Lawns path, north of which it remains lawn.

South of the Parterre Lawns lies the rectangular Broad Border, bounded on its east side by the grass path of the Long Vista. The south side of the Broad Border is bounded by a path running parallel with the south garden wall linking the south ends of all three walks (the Long Vista, the Lime Walk and the Winter Walk) with the informal Croquet Lawn to the west, which is overlooked by the south front of the House. The stone terrace on the south front is divided from the Croquet Lawn by the Knot Garden, a rectangular feature planted in geometric patterns with low, clipped box hedges. The Croquet Lawn is bounded to the east by a narrow border beyond which lies the Broad Border, and to the south by the Wilderness, laid out informally with specimen trees and shrubs set in grass. At the south-east corner of the Lawn stands the Gothick Summerhouse (c 1770, listed grade II*), set so that it overlooks the Lawn and House obliquely and aligned on the entrance from the village street below. Its central doorway, reached up three stone steps, has a large moulded ogee arch which is flanked by open trefoil arches, all set in Perpendicular trefoil panelling. The parapet has a raised central panelled section with end pinnacles surmounting stepped diagonal buttresses. It stands at the south end of a vista leading north along the west side of the Broad Border, across the Parterre Lawns to the gateway in the north garden wall leading into the service yard.

The west side of the Croquet Lawn leads down a gentle slope into a shrubbery planted with C19 trees, including a large Turkey oak and a blue cedar. At the north-west corner of the Croquet Lawn a grass slope leads west down to the Lower Lawn, bounded to the north by the drive. This is divided from the forecourt on the west front of the House by a formal terrace. A short flight of stone steps leads east up from the Lower Lawn through a stone retaining wall to the terrace, which is laid to lawn and backed by a further, higher, retaining wall supporting the forecourt above.

KITCHEN GARDEN The almost square kitchen garden, the Potager, lies 50m east of the House, at the north-east corner of the site. It is reached via the gateway in the east garden wall leading from the garden door in the east front of the House, the gateway being flanked by a pair of stone gardeners by Simon Verity (1982-3). From this gateway a flagged path crosses the farm track which in the C18 was the main village street, to reach a path on the east side leading into an informal lawn set with specimen trees overlooking a paddock beyond (outside the area here registered). The path divides, the southern arm leading to a hard tennis court. The northern arm leads directly to the entrance at the centre of the south side of the Potager, which is laid out with a geometric pattern of brick paths dividing formal vegetable beds laid out with an ornamental design. The Potager was laid out by Mrs Verey in the early 1970s.

REFERENCES Country Life, 156 (26 September 1974), pp 840-42 The Garden 102, no 7 (July 1977), pp 281-88 Victoria History of the County of Gloucestershire 7, (1981), pp 13-14 D Verey, The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire, The Cotswolds (2nd edn 1979), p 100 R Verey, Rosemary Verey's Making of a Garden (1995)

Maps C Verey, Barnsley House Garden Plan (nd) (in Sale particulars, 2002)

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1884 3rd edition published 1924

Archival items Sale particulars, Knight Frank, April 2002 [copy on EH file]

Description written: September 2002 Amended: October 2002 Register Inspector: SR Edited: November 2002

Legal

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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.