

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

TOWNELEY HALL

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

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**TOWNELEY HALL**

Name: TOWNELEY HALL

County: Lancashire

District: Burnley (District Authority)

Parish: Cliviger

County: Lancashire

District: Burnley (District Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

label.localisation: Latitude: 53.775475  
Longitude: -2.2198900  
National Grid Reference: SD 85606 31038  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1000954  
Date first listed: 01-Apr-1986

## Details

### SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Gardens and pleasure grounds which were formed largely in the mid to late C18 incorporating some C17 and early C18 features. The park incorporates an avenue of late C17 origin within landscaped grounds of the later C18 and early C19 laid out by Charles Towneley.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Towneley family has owned land in the area since at least c 1200 and it is thought that the family settled on the site in the time of Richard de Towneley in 1295 (Bourne 1984). Charles Towneley (1737-1805), a noted connoisseur and collector, whose collection of classical sculpture was bought for the nation after his death, inherited the estate in 1758 and undertook alterations to the Hall and grounds. Ownership passed to the female line in 1885 and the Hall and park were bought from Lady O'Hagan by Burnley Corporation in 1902.

**DESCRIPTION LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Towneley Hall is situated on land which slopes down gently northwards to the banks of the River Calder. The c 85ha site is situated on the south-east edge of Burnley, immediately south of the Fullede area. Apart from some housing on the Todmorden Road to the west, the park is set in open land. There is farmland to the south and east and the land to the north is used for a variety of recreational uses and includes a c 100ha area to the north and north-east which was part of a deer park shown on Yates' county map of 1786.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The principal entrance to the site enters 1.4km north-west of the Hall off Todmorden Road. The entrance is marked by a lodge and gateway called Hanbrig Castle or Handbridge House (1797-8 and 1857, listed grade II) from which a drive runs south-east to the Hall, as shown on an estate map of 1807. A separate vehicular entrance was

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formed c 40m south of the lodge in the C20. The other main entrance is from Brunshaw Road. On the 2nd edition OS map published 1912, Deer Park Road ran south-west towards the Hall from the road through the former deer park, but the northern part of it has been diverted northwards through a late C20 housing estate. This approach appears to have originated as an avenue leading to a lodge in the deer park which was aligned with the front of the Hall and situated c 1.3km to the north-east of it. The lodge and avenue are shown on the 1786 county map, and the lodge is shown, with a drive in place of the avenue, on the 1st edition OS map surveyed 1844. Deer Park Road extends south-west to a bridge over the Calder situated 500m north-east of the Hall and the route continues southwards from this point as a double avenue (called The Avenue) which is aligned with the north-east front of the Hall. An avenue in approximately this position is shown on an estate map of 1661 map when it curved slightly to the north. It is shown running straight and aligned with Deer Park Road on subsequent maps from c 1735.

A secondary entrance on Todmorden Road lies c 700m north-west of the Hall, c 900m south of the Hanbrig Lodge. This entrance was referred to as Causeway End on an 1834 estate map and leads to a drive called the Causeway which runs south-eastwards to the Hall. There is a suggestion of a drive in this general position on both the 1661 estate map and a map of c 1735. As implied by its name, this drive has the appearance of a causeway and the land drops immediately to the north of it. There is another entrance 1km south-east of the Hall, at the north end of Park Road in Cliviger, to the east. This is gated and was the site of a lodge called Low Lodge on the 1844 OS map. A path leads north-west from it across a field called Broad Ing, continuing north-west where it joins The Avenue entrance drive 400m north-east of the Hall. All the entrances and drives, with the exception of the Brunshaw Road entrance, are shown on Greenwood's county map of 1818.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Towneley Hall (listed grade I) dates from the C15 and by c 1500 it was a courtyard house. Successive alterations were made over the years which followed, including the demolition of the north-east courtyard range c 1700. A phase of restructuring took place in the 1720s and a further major phase of work was undertaken during the years 1812-19 when Jeffrey Wyatt remodelled the exterior and parts of the interior.

Some 50m north of the Hall is part of a stable building of late C18 date (listed grade II) which has been converted to a cafe. Some 20m to the north-west of the Hall is a C18 brewhouse (listed grade II) used as a museum.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** There are formal gardens on the north and east sides of the Hall and wooded pleasure grounds on the south, south-west and south-east sides. On the north-eastern, principal front of the Hall there is a circular raised bed immediately in front of the main entrance. Gravel paths lead to the entrance from Hanbrig Drive and continue around the Hall, branching through the gardens in various directions. Aligned with the front of the Hall, c 70m to the north-east, there is a lawn with a rectangular pond with apsidal ends. This feature appears in this form on a map of c 1735 (copy held at Towneley Hall) and it is shown on the 1807 map. On the eastern side of the garden mature trees screen a triangular area edged with clipped hedges, with a war memorial sculpture of 1926 by Walter Gilbert which is situated c 70m east of the Hall.

On the south-eastern side of the Hall is the Italian Garden which was probably laid out in the early C20. It consists of a parterre with curved and circular beds surrounded by a low clipped hedge. On the east side of this, immediately beyond a border, there is a lime walk running parallel to the Hall, which is shown on the 1834 estate map. On the south-west side of the Hall there is an open lawn crossed by gravel walks and fringed by woodland. This area is shown as an enclosed garden on the 1661 estate map. The general layout of the gardens and paths around the Hall accords with what is shown on the 1834 estate map. An estate document dated March 1741/2 mentions 'the little green before the hall door...gravel walks' and 'hedges and greens', suggesting a formal garden around the Hall (Towneley Papers). In 1798 a letter from the gardener James Veitch to Charles Towneley mentions newly planted shrubberies round the Hall.

A ha-ha runs from a point where there is a gated entrance from the main Hanbrig drive, c 100m north-east of the Hall, in front of the Hall and pond. This is shown in a painting of 1799 by J M W Turner (guidebook). The ha-ha continues south-eastwards along the edge of woodland called Thanet Lee Wood. This section was described as a 'proposed new sunk fence' in a letter from Charles Towneley dated May 1800 (Towneley Papers). The letter is accompanied by a plan of the proposed line which accords approximately with the present position of the ha-ha.

On the north-west side of the Hall, along the line of Causeway Drive, the land drops away sharply along the edge of the pleasure grounds. The drive leads through woodland called Causeway End Wood which is shown on the estate map of 1834. On the

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north side of the drive, c 120m north-west of the Hall, there is a brick icehouse (listed grade II) in a mound of earth. South of Causeway End Wood, c 200m west of the Hall, there is a grassed flat-topped hillock which is used as a miniature golf course. The 1834 estate map shows this as a larger area of open land fringed by woodland. Some 40m from the south-west side of the Hall a ride is cut through the woodland. It runs south-west and terminates with Foldys Cross (listed grade II), a medieval cross which was moved to this position in 1911. This vista is shown on a painting of c 1777 by George Barret Snr but not on the c 1735 map. The woodland on either side of the ride is called the Wilderness on the 1844 OS map, and is shown as a wooded area on the 1661 estate map.

On the east side of the pleasure grounds, in Thanet Lee Wood, the ruinous remains of a decorative well head are situated c 500m south-east of the Hall. The woods are threaded with paths and there are bridges over streams which cross the site. There are a number of features which were introduced in the years following the acquisition of the park by Burnley Corporation. These include the remains of an amphitheatre and bandstand on the southern edge of the miniature golf course, c 200m west of the Hall, simple stone shelters, and a range of bowling greens and tennis courts immediately south of the Causeway End entrance. The woodland of the pleasure grounds includes mature specimens of ornamental trees and underplanting of ornamental shrubs. It is known that Charles Towneley planted large numbers of trees and shrubs in the pleasure grounds and park in the period 1798-1803 (Towneley Papers) and it seems likely that he was responsible for augmenting and replanting the core of woodland shown south of the Hall on the 1661 estate map over a period of many years.

**PARK** An area of parkland extends on the north, north-west and north-east sides of the Hall. The double avenue aligned with the north-east front of the Hall is the one formal element within a landscape which consists of open grassland with scattered trees. The parkland on the east side of The Avenue is used as playing fields and there is a sports pavilion in this area, c 400m north-east of the Hall. Some 400m south-east of The Avenue a fence divides the sports fields from a field called Broad Ing which is used for grazing. On the west side of Hanbrig Drive the parkland is part of a golf course. There are tree belts along the southern part of Hanbrig Drive and along the River Calder on the north side of the site. A tree belt with rhododendron underplanting on the north side of the Calder, on the north-east border, is called West Marl Wood, and along the eastern border there is another belt with rhododendron underplanting which is called Oak Plantation on the 1844 OS map. This landscape accords generally in character with what is shown in the 1777 painting.

Charles Towneley planted large numbers of trees in the late C18. A letter from his gardener James Veitch dated 1799 (Towneley Papers) details the acquisition and planting of almost 4000 trees of five to six feet in height. In correspondence of 1800 with his steward, Thomas Forshaw, Charles Towneley specifies that 'handsome' individual trees and clumps should be retained when fences were being levelled, and orders that individual scattered trees in the park should not be felled (Towneley Papers).

Planting continued after Charles Towneley's death; estate papers record the creation of new plantations and replanting of existing ones. More than 8000 trees were planted in the period 1812-13 (Towneley Papers).

**KITCHEN GARDEN** The kitchen garden is situated c 100m south-east of the Hall and is reached by a path running between the Italian Garden and the war memorial. The sub-rectangular garden is walled with red bricks and contains a bowling green with an early C20 pavilion in the southern corner and late C20 buildings housing a nature interpretation centre on the site of glasshouses which are shown on the 1960 OS map. The garden is shown on the 1834 estate map when it was smaller, occupying just over half the present area. It was extended to the south and is shown in its present form on the 2nd edition OS map published 1912. It is partially on the site of a larger enclosed orchard shown on the 1661 estate map. A kitchen garden and a 'green walk' within it is mentioned in an estate document of 1741-2 (Towneley Papers). Another estate document dated 1749 orders the construction of 'a good plane brick wall for fruit? to run ?from ye garden shed to ye fence of the Chappell Lee', and the north wall of the garden may be formed from this since the area called Chapel Lee is situated immediately to the east of the garden.

**REFERENCES** The Victoria History of the County of Lancashire 6, (1911), pp 461-3 N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: North Lancashire* (1969), pp 82-4 S Bourne, *Introduction to the Architecture of Towneley Hall*, guidebook (Burnley Borough Council 1979) S Bourne, *Towneley Hall Burnley*, guidebook (Burnley Borough Council 1984)

Maps W Yates, *The County Palatine of Lancaster*, 1786 C Greenwood, *The County Palatine of Lancaster*, 1818

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Copies of the following estate maps are held at Towneley Hall: James Hamilton, 1661 Map showing part of the estate, c 1735  
A Rough Plan of the Meadow Lands at Towneley, 1807 Estate map, 1834

OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1844 2nd edition published 1912-13 OS 1:2500: 1960 edition

Archival items Copies of selected estate papers (Towneley Papers) from the Lancashire Record Office (DDTo) are held at Towneley Hall including:

8 March 1741/2 Agreement between Cecilia Towneley and Ralph Raynels 1 March 1749/50 Letter from C. Towneley to Mr Craven. 23 April 1798 Letter from James Veitch to Charles Towneley 29 March 1799 Letter from James Veitch to Charles Towneley

4 March 1800 Letter to Thomas Forshaw from Charles Towneley 15 May 1800 Letter to Thomas Forshaw from Charles Towneley 23 March 1803 account of trees and shrubs valued at 16.15.8d brought from Manchester

Description written: August 1997 Register Inspector: CEH Edited: March 1999

## 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.