

# The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Newsletter



Aylesbury Vale Park

Town Council

## Buckinghamshire's Public Parks

In these extraordinary times we have been encouraged to take daily exercise, walking and cycling being the main options. This is wonderful for those fortunate to be living in rural Buckinghamshire, and I now know all the public footpaths within 5 kms of my village Oakley and view the fields as one big beautiful park. The countryside has really been at its best this spring, blue skies, abundant blossom, and birds singing their hearts out, including our local cuckoo that returned from warmer climes at the end of April. However, for those living in our towns with little or no garden the public park has come into its own during the pandemic.

For so long our public open spaces have been neglected and under-valued and often the first facility to face local authority financial cutbacks. They have also been low on the list of sites researched by our volunteers, this all changed in 2018 when research and recording volunteers, Gill Grocott and Jill Stansfield researched the parks of Milton Keynes. They have now written reports on the three parks that make up the linear park system which are a feature of the planned cityscape: Ouzel Valley Park, Campbell Park, & Willen Lakes. [www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk)

As Buckinghamshire is predominantly a rural county with only a small number of medium sized towns, there are no large public parks on the scale of those created in UK cities during the nineteenth century, such as Birkenhead Park, Sefton Park (Liverpool), Derby Arboretum, Victoria Park and Battersea in London. There are however, 27,000 public parks across the country and we have a wide variety in Buckinghamshire. Our initial list has

grown in response to requests for articles for the extra June Newsletter and what started out as one newsletter will now probably fill two! The plan now is to make a record of these parks and produce a 'Guide to Buckinghamshire Public Parks', this will include a description, a history of the park and an update on the condition of the park in 2020.

The Gardens Trust, have launched a new lottery funded project for 2020-22 '**Unforgettable Gardens; save our heritage**' and 'Guide to Buckinghamshire Public Parks' will be our contribution to this national initiative. This is a most appropriate project given the considerable support the National Lottery has given to public parks since its inception in 1993 bringing many back from the brink with its generous grants. Our aim will be to ensure that 'the green lungs' that are our local public parks will be 'unforgettable' in the future, and continue to provide the much needed relaxation and recreation areas to urban dwellers.

Most of our volunteers are now able to travel to the parks as restrictions have been lifted but the archives are currently closed so research is rather limited. However, with help from Julia Wise at Bucks.CC and on-line research we have so far written introductions to the following parks: Vale Park Aylesbury, The Rye High Wycombe, Lowndes Park Chesham, King George V P. Risborough, Tomkins Park Winslow, Linear Park Buckingham, Wolverton and Higginson Marlow.



Scottowe's Pond, Lowndes Park Chesham Chesham Town Council

Please contact us; if you would like to contribute an article, tell us of a great idea to promote parks, or provide photographs or information. [enquiries@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk).

Over the coming weeks support your local park and get out and enjoy these wonderful places!

Claire de Carle

Vice Chair

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**Planning Co-ordinator Report**

The global pandemic has stopped many of us in our tracks but has had little impact on the number of planning applications being made. April 2020 also saw the abolition of the five Bucks county and district councils and the emergence of the unitary authority which means that we now consult one site - Buckinghamshire County Council for all planning applications. In reality, once on the site, we are still referred to the five separate planning authorities as they originally existed although we expect we will see more change to come as the BCC refines its processes.

Some of our most significant landscapes which fall under the former Aylesbury Vale District Council have been subject to a large number of planning applications. In the previous newsletter, I mentioned an application near Stowe Landscape Gardens and we are delighted to report that the owners have now commissioned an historic landscape consultant to help them better understand the significance of their site.

Since then, we have been consulted on a further 6 applications which potentially impact on Stowe. Of particular concern is the proposal for 130 new dwellings just beyond the Stowe boundary but, unfortunately, the lockdown situation has prevented us from making a formal visit to assess the impact. Further applications at Stowe include proposals for a new Engineering Building at Stowe School which will sit at the heart of the designed landscape and an application for works including new buildings relating to the relocation of the Stowe School Golf Course. The BGT were very disappointed to note one planning application for the felling of 20 trees which we had not been consulted about. We felt so strongly about this that we have complained to the planning authority directly.

We have also been consulted on applications impacting upon both Claydon House and Wotton Underwood and again, as we cannot currently visit the sites, we can only really make a really thorough desk-based assessment. We are always robust in our assessments but when you cannot see the application

site with your own eyes, it means that you have to ensure your questions and comments are all the more specific and detailed.

Elsewhere, Wycombe DC consulted us regarding their own application for a new café at The Rye in High Wycombe and also South Bucks consulted us regarding an application for a replacement property within the grounds at Dropmore. Finally, we were also consulted on an application for a new car park at Ashridge which crosses county boundaries. As you can see, the size, scale and requirements of these applications can vary hugely and the BGT approach every request with a considered approach.

Throughout this challenging time, we have received huge support from our umbrella body, The Gardens Trust, who have rightly seized this opportunity to send us lots of resources to refer to as we endeavour to fill all of our responsibilities including planning and therefore one small benefit of lockdown has been to allow us the time to refresh our understanding and training. *Joanne Mirzoeff and Dr Sarah Rutherford*

.....  
*✍ Parks through the Letterbox*  
*Postcard 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Bukhara, Uzbekistan*



*Dear BGT,*  
*Early morning in the shady gardens of Samani Park, just outside the 16th century city walls of Bukhara. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> century Ismail Samani Mausoleum, built in 905 as the tomb of the founder of the great Samanid dynasty of Persia and Central Asia. The building is a masterpiece of decorative brickwork and one of the earliest Islamic brick structures. The park also contains the Chashma Ayub built in 1380 over the Spring of Job (the Old Testament prophet), and the city's modern university. Heading off further east across the Kyzylkum desert to Samarkand tomorrow. Regards, Julia.*  
 .....



## Vale Park, Aylesbury



Mawson Plan for Vale Ground Aylesbury BA

Many of the UK's public parks were created during the reign of Queen Victoria at this time there was huge investment in infrastructure and the social fabric of our towns and cities. Probably due to the more rural nature of the town and its small population, Aylesbury had to wait until the twentieth century before it had an official public park. The Vale site had long been used for sporting activities; however, the horticultural displays were a later addition. The park is linked to one of the most well-known Park design companies of the twentieth century, Thomas Mawson and Son, Landscape Architects. The designs were drawn by Edward Prentice Mawson in 1930 and executed by the Borough Engineer. The layout provided a logical structure of paths leading through the site creating focal points and separating the quiet garden area from the active sports areas.



Vale Park 1950's

BA

Vale Park is 4.5 hectares and is situated in the centre of the town, approximately 0.5 kms from the Market Square. The park first opened in 1937, the structures and sports facilities have been updated but remain in their positions, the tennis courts and bowling greens were laid out as a mirror image to Mawson's plan. The main pavilion was refurbished for the Park opening but has since been removed and the surrounds of the Park have seen extensive redevelopment including the relocation of the

Railway Station and the construction of the Aqua Vale swimming pool.

The extent to which the overall layout remains today is due to the simplicity of the design formulated by E.P. Mawson and still provides an effective division of the site. Several elements of Mawson's layout could be reinstated into the site including meandering walks along the Bear Brook and seasonal horticultural displays. There are opportunities along the vistas to recreate focal points but with a more contemporary feel, whilst restoring and recreating those which have been lost or altered.



Vale Park Bandstand 1954

BA

The plans for the park design are held by the Buckinghamshire Archives, they were printed in *The Buckinghamshire Advertiser* on 2 January 1932 with the following description:

*'...the main entrance will be in the High Street nearer the L.M.S. than the present entrance. A rose garden is planned on what was formerly the osier bed, with the children's playground running parallel with the High street end of Lover's Walk.*

*Putting greens will divide this portion of the ground from the central lawn, where it is proposed to erect a bandstand, and a pavilion at each end. This, it is proposed, will be flanked on what may be termed the northern side of the tennis courts and on the southern by two bowling greens.*

*The other half of the ground it is proposed to lay-out as two football pitches, with a centre portion turfed for a cricket pitch. A small lake, paths and shrubberies complete the plan'.*

Unfortunately, many of these features do not survive, and the planting is much more basic than it would have been in the mid twentieth century. The bandstand and pavilions are sadly gone, although the bandstand was of a quite simple design, with no roof and not on the scale of those erected in the grand Victorian parks (see above).

Reference: *The Vale Park- Aylesbury Historical Report*, Pamela Smith June 2005

Claire de Carle

### Tomkins Park and Arboretum, Winslow.

Tomkins Park and Arboretum was officially opened on Saturday 19 November 2016 by Julian Tomkins, son of Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins, former owners of Winslow Hall. This area of five and a half acres used to form a part of the garden of Winslow Hall, a Grade I listed building constructed c.1698-1702. According to the late Dr Giles Worsley, 'Winslow is regarded as the only surviving country house that can confidently be connected to Wren', (*Country Life* 27 February 2003).



William Lowndes, whose family had owned property in the area since the late 1500s, began planting the garden in 1695, five years before starting on the building of the Hall, c.1698-1702. (Eland., *Records of Bucks*, 11 1927). Lowndes was Secretary to the Treasury from 1695 until his death in 1724; he also served as chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, becoming known throughout the country as 'Ways and Means' Lowndes. His accounts for the house building contain no actual payment to Wren, but Wren scrutinised the accounts and reduced several of the bills, implying a degree of supervision. (Eland.).

The Royal gardeners London and Wise supplied fruit trees for Winslow Hall, and Wise was paid to plant 'the largest Garden, the Kitchen Garden and the Platts before the House' (Eland.). The framework of the London and Wise design survives although the detail is no longer possible to trace.

Winslow Hall was saved from demolition by Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins who, in 1959 purchased it, carefully restoring the house and improving the garden to the rear by planting specimen trees and shrubs, many of which are now mature and dress the Arboretum.

As presently owned a lawn extends to a brick ha-ha 170 metres north of the House. Beyond the ha-ha the grounds extend a further c.200 metres – formerly a part of the pleasure garden – and this area now comprises Tomkins Park and Arboretum.

Sir Edward was a man of great charm; a career diplomat having served in the Middle East, Moscow, Washington and as Ambassador to the Netherland and latterly France. During WWII he was taken prisoner-of-war in Italy - escaped, walking several hundred miles to re-join the Allied Forces.



The Park

Although Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins had purchased Winslow Hall in 1959, it was not until Sir Edward's retirement in 1975 that they settled in Winslow. From that time onwards Winslow Hall became the focus of Winslow's social life. Sir Edward established the Anglo/French twinning with the Red Cross, Guides and Lions Club centred on Winslow Hall - all were welcome. In 2002 Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins were made Freemen of Winslow, having so endeared themselves to the community.

Just four months before his death, in 2010, Sir Edward offered Winslow Hall for sale, Lady Tomkins having died in 2003. And so it was, that in 2013, the Town Council successfully negotiated the purchase of the area of the former pleasure garden, now known as Tomkins Park and Arboretum. A grant from Aylesbury Vale District Council's New Homes Bonus fund facilitated the purchase.



An entry to the Park in Spring

An arboretum it truly is, boasting a Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), a Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) a Laurel Leafed Oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), a Japanese Pagoda Tree (*Styphnolobium japonicum*), a London Plane (*Platanus x hispanica*), a Blue Atlas



Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica glauca*), a Hungarian Oak (*Quercus frainetto*), a Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*), a Brewers Weeping Spruce (*Picea breweriana*), a Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) and a Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*).

Trees are such an important part of our landscape and many of the species found in the Tomkins Arboretum were introduced into this country by the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century's intrepid plant hunters ... and the trees are carefully marked, including the Champion ...



Laurel Leafed Oak (*Quercus laurifolia*) ... said to be the only mature specimen in Buckinghamshire.

At this moment in the history of parks, of Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins Park and Arboretum provides a perfect oasis of refreshment.



Leaving Winslow Park

For further information on the gardens of Winslow Hall, please see: [www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk)  
Research and Recording report compiled by Clare Butler and the late Adrian Jackson.

Rosemary Jury

### An interesting connection William Lowndes (1652-1724).



Portrait of William Lowndes (1652-1724) by Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723).

William Lowndes was the builder of Winslow Hall c.1698-1702, an area of the garden now forms **Tomkins Park and Arboretum**. He was also the builder of The Bury in Chesham, (1712-1716) adjacent to **Lowndes Park**, the land being acquired by the family in the C17th and C18th (Bucks Archives).

Born in Winslow, William Lowndes was educated at the Free School in Buckingham, rising to prominence as a Whig politician and holding the post of Secretary to the Treasury under William III and Queen Anne. As a result he became wealthy, building Winslow Hall and shortly after The Bury in Chesham replacing the Bury Hill House.

Later, in 1723, he also bought the freehold reversions of leasehold property he owned in St James's and Knightsbridge, in areas now known as Lowndes Square and Lowndes Street.

The Lowndes family history is complicated, for example there were at least five William Lowndes over four centuries. In 1953 the Lowndes family gifted the leased land to Chesham Council for the town's use.

The maxim, 'Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves', is also attributed to William Lowndes (1646-1723) Bartlett, J., *Familiar Quotations*, 1919.

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/a3b61ad5-e066-43de-a014-11fda1ed0be0>

Rosemary Jury



1750 Picture of Chesham & Berry Hill with Skottowe Pond and sailing boat in the foreground. It hangs in Chesham Town Hall.

### Lowndes Park

A park in Chesham is first referenced in 1264 when Hugh de Vere held his court in the park (1) and Records of Bucks states that in 1295 the Earl of Oxford had a 'little park', and a parker was appointed in 1321.

Richard Sifrewast is mentioned in early C12 giving a mill to Missenden Abbey, (2) and the manor remained in the family until the last male heir died and in 1416 his twice widowed daughter Amice passed Chesham to Richard Lynde. The manor originally called Chesham Higham was subsequently named Chesham Bury. By 1579 it had passed to Thomas Ashfield and his heirs. (3) The Rectory House of Chesham Leicester, called the Upper Parsonage, probably erected in c1500 (4) stood in the park near the church and was a residence of the Ashfields, Whichcotes and Skottowe (5), after whom the pond in the Lower Park is named.

Skottowe Pond is fed by springs that also feed the Chess; it has been remodelled and the margins concreted. There was a fine avenue of Dutch Elms running from Blucher Street parallel to the pond to the church. In 1845 this was replaced by a single row of elms and these were felled in 1950.

An interesting feature of St Mary's church (1133) is that there was an advowson that allowed two vicars. Initially the [advowson](#) {the right to appoint the vicar} was held jointly by a pair of prominent local families, the de Bolbec {or de Bolebec} and Sifrewast families; but after the wars of C12 this right transferred to Woburn Abbey, the Lower Parsonage, and Leicester Abbey, the Upper Parsonage.

The rectorial manor of *Chesham Leicester* is mentioned as such for the first time in 1719, then in the possession of Sir Paul Whichcote. His family had made the old rectory-house or 'upper parsonage' of

Chesham Leicester, near the church, one of their residences.

John Skottowe sold the Upper Parsonage, to the Lowndes family in 1802 and the house was demolished and added to the land bought by the William Lowndes (1652-1724) in 1687, on which he built The Bury (1712-1716). The Lower Parsonage has also been demolished and has been rebuilt as the Rectory.

In C19 the parkland was used for grazing but oral history reported by Chesham Town Council states that the park was open to the public.

In the 1920s the Lower Park was let to Chesham Urban District Council by the Lowndes family for recreation for a rent of one shilling a year while retaining the right to drive cattle and other animals along the Avenue.

In 1953 the Lowndes family left Chesham and made a gift of the leased land to the Council. Other parcels of land have been bought since and a plot to the North West was given for the construction of what is now Chiltern Hills Academy. Since 1953 there has been a programme of development throughout the park to make it a recreational focus for the town. The park is now called Lowndes Park.

1. Chancery Inquisitions Post Mortem Henry III
2. Harl . MS.3688, fol.65<sup>1</sup>
3. Garrett-Pegge, JW: Transcript of 1st Volume of Parish Register of Chesham (1904), p.xiv
4. Recs. of Bucks 3 pp61-62
5. A History of the County of Bucks Vol 3

*Liza Wormell & Joanne Kidd*



Gate Piers & Park Fencing Lowndes Park

Town Council



Barrow in Lowndes Park

geography.org.uk



### National Playing Fields Association – Fields in Trust

During the First World War, the lack of fitness of the average British Tommy had caused great concern and the aftermath of the War saw the return of many injured, blind and disabled ex-servicemen. Urban areas had seen massive population expansion, unemployment levels reached over a million and there was only one children's playground for every 11,263 of the population (1.) Consequently, the government were urged to establish and fund open spaces where "every man, woman and child in Great Britain should have the opportunity of participating in outdoor recreational activity within a reasonable distance of home during leisure hours".



Marketing image created by the then National Playing Fields Association in the 1920's. Taken from Wikipedia

So, in 1925, the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) was launched by Brigadier-General Reginald Kentish with the Duke of York as its first President. In 1927, they launched a national appeal, in conjunction with local authorities, to raise £1 million to secure the necessary land and a Committee was established to consider applications for grants.

Kentish had recommended an 'Open Spaces Standard' to ensure that a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000(2) people of which no more than 1 acre could be used for ornamental gardens or seating areas. The other 4 acres being dedicated to sport and physical recreation and should include facilities for team games such as football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens and children's playgrounds.

Councils and Corporations around Britain embraced the idea and many hired large numbers of the unemployed and former servicemen to create these parks, sometimes even training them in horticulture to ensure park maintenance.

The charity was granted a Royal Charter in 1932 and subsequently became known as 'Fields in Trust'. A further boost came in 1936 with the establishment of the King George's Fields Foundation (see separate article). More recently, the Centenary Fields programme was launched in 2014 to honour the memory of the millions who lost their lives in World War I. Through this landowners could dedicate war memorial playing fields and recreation grounds, memorial gardens, parks or recreation grounds that contain a war memorial and other valued green spaces that have some significance to WW I as Centenary Fields.

Fields of Trust now protects over 2,852 parks and green spaces across the UK covering around 30,000 acres. They can protect any type of outdoor recreational space providing it has public access, including playing fields, recreation grounds, playgrounds and play areas, parks and nature reserves. The land is protected in perpetuity either through ownership, Deeds of Covenant or through the use of their own unique legal instrument called a Deed of Dedication (in Scotland, a Minute of Agreement).

With over 30 Fields in Trust in Bucks, why not see if any are near you?

<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/fields/Buckinghamshire>

1. 'Play-time' Daily Herald - Wednesday 01 June 1927

2. Since revised to 6 acres per 1,000 people

*Joanne Mirzoeff*

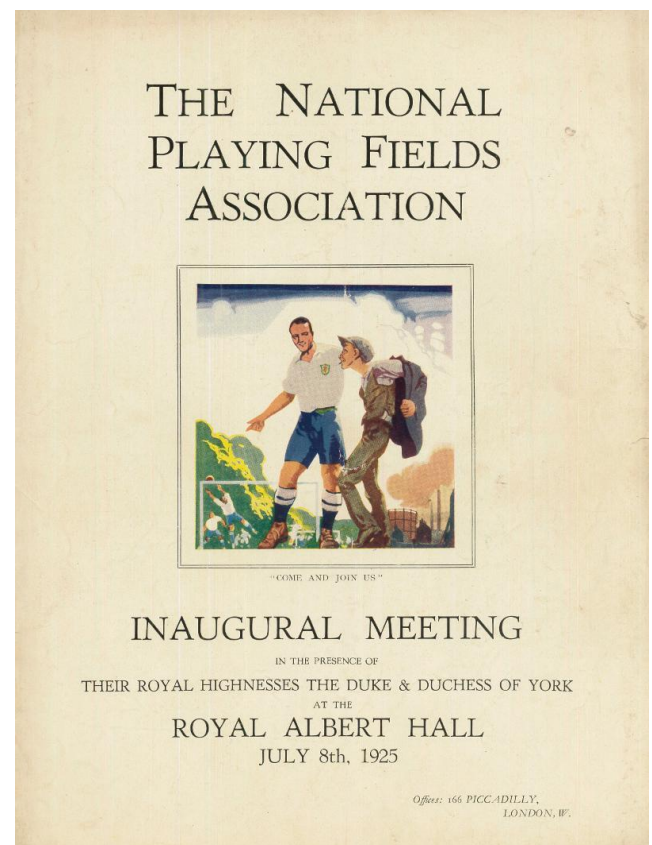
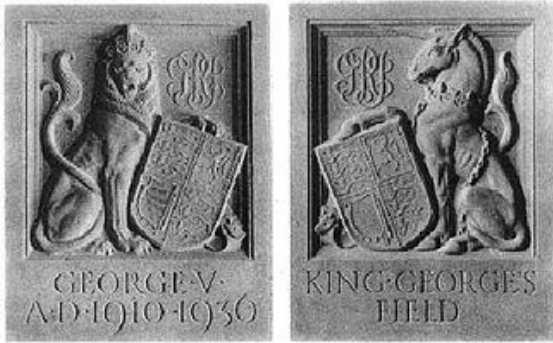


Image from [www.FieldsInTrust](http://www.FieldsInTrust)

## King George's Fields



*For England, Wales and Northern Ireland*



*For Scotland*

Heraldic Plaques - Wikipedia

Following the death of King George V in January 1936, a committee was established by Sir Percy Vincent (Lord Mayor of London) to decide on a national memorial to the late king. There was, of course, the obligatory statue but they wanted to create something more lasting that would benefit the entire country and settled on the King George's Fields Foundation which would promote playing fields for 'the use and enjoyment of the people' throughout the UK.

Clement Attlee MP, when Chairman of the Foundation stated "Every child in this country should have the opportunity of getting to a place where it can play games in safety. It is indeed a terrible commentary on our modern civilization that in the richest country in Europe there should be thousands of children who have no opportunity of playing except in the streets" (1)

The Foundation itself made funds available, a national appeal was launched in June 1936 and £557,436 was raised by 1939(2). It was decided that "the maximum results might best be achieved by distributing the funds by way of grants-in-aid towards the capital costs of as many fields as possible, the balance of the capital required for each scheme being raised by the local authority or other body undertaking the construction of the field and accepting responsibility for its maintenance as a 'King George's Field' (3)

Although initially separate bodies, it was decided that the National Playing Fields Association would

consider all applications in order to avoid duplication of their endeavors. Only 19 of the completed number of sites that exist today did not receive grant aid.

Once selected, each playing field would feature "a standard gateway of suitably-imposing design, and they will thus be recognized at a glance." (4) It was widely believed that more prosperous areas would rise to the challenge of supporting those areas less well-equipped and, for parks where no grant aid was required, they would still qualify to be in the scheme and would receive the heraldic panels which were specially designed to mark a 'King George's Playing Field'. One panel portrays the Royal Lion and was inscribed 'George V 1910-1936', the other panel featured a Unicorn and the inscription 'King George's Field'.

By the start of the Second World War, 462 schemes had been approved although work stopped during the war and some schemes were abandoned. Land was still being acquired up to the early 1960s and, by the time the Foundation was dissolved in 1965, there were 471 King George Playing Fields across the UK, all managed locally and legally protected by Fields in Trust. (5)

In Bucks, we have King George V Playing Fields and they are in Amersham, Bovington, four in Bradwell, Fulmer, Hughenden Valley and Princes Risborough. Are there any more?

1. Right Hon, Clement Attlee MP quoted in the Daily Mail on Thursday January 14<sup>th</sup> 1937
2. Wikipedia
3. Final Report of the Foundation, 1965
4. 'King George's Fields' Coventry Evening Telegraph - Wednesday 03 June 1936
5. [www.fieldsintrust.org/News/protect-80-years-on-from-the-first-king-georges-field](http://www.fieldsintrust.org/News/protect-80-years-on-from-the-first-king-georges-field)



Wrought Iron Gates to King George V Fields at Princes Risborough

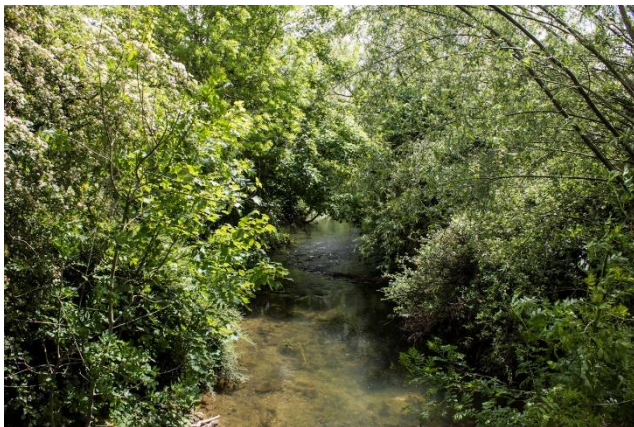
Gwen Miles

*Joanne Mirzoeff*



## Heartlands, Buckingham

Buckingham's parks, which follow the course of the River Great Ouse through the length of the town, are a recent creation. At the west end of town, Chandos Park (the name reflecting former land ownership) served as a recreation area for employees of the late C19th Milk Factory, its buildings now incorporated into the University of Buckingham. It remained in private ownership until 1936 but it is unclear when it became a public asset (information from Ed Grimsdale). It is still primarily an area for sports activities. The point where the river flows under London Bridge, on the primary route into the town from the south, marks the start of Heartlands, owned and managed by Buckinghamshire Council. This area of c.10.5 ha has the river on the northern edge and follows its course for about 1.2km until it flows out of the town at Bourton Mill on the eastern edge of Buckingham. At this end is a small recreation area, Bourton Park, owned by the Town Council. Paths and greenways connect Heartlands to other open areas in the town and it forms part of Buckingham's 'circular walk'. A number of civic, social, environmental and voluntary organisations as well as residents have been identified as stakeholders in the park. It was awarded a Green Flag in 2018.



A secluded section of the River Great Ouse John O'Dwyer

Although the first part of the open space was acquired in 1981, Heartlands as a whole was laid out by the then Aylesbury Vale District Council in the early 1990s, as part of a planning requirement when a new housing estate was built on the southern side. The area was previously farmland but also incorporated a sewage works and a knacker's yard. It is divided into a number of 'character areas' addressing various needs and uses.

Along the river, an unmanaged 'buffer zone' acts as a wildlife corridor for the length of the park, which is home to some vulnerable species such as kingfishers and barn owls. Next to the London Road bridge is a play area and skatepark on the site of a post-war swimming pool. East of that is an area of formal

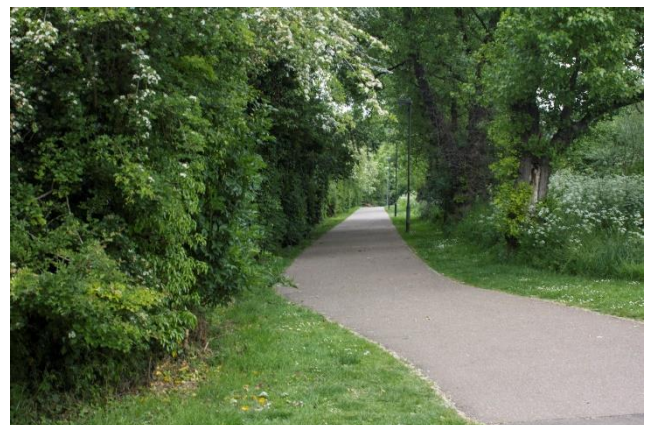


New tree planting in the formal parkland John O'Dwyer

parkland traversed by hard paths, with a small copse and recent planting of both native and exotic trees. Ridge and furrow can be seen. Then comes a wildflower meadow (Coronation Meadow) which, as an area intended to be a formal Local Wildlife Site, has its own management plan within the Buckinghamshire's Council's management plan for the whole park. It incorporates old hedgerows, and the ridge and furrow of the old agricultural land is again evident. With the support of Plantlife and the local Wildlife Trust the ecology and history of this area will continue to be managed and maintained as it has been in the past.

Next is an area containing a variety of nature conservation habitats managed for birds and invertebrates. There is a plan to establish Black Poplar trees here, a species found in several places in Aylesbury Vale but very rare elsewhere in the country. An adjacent amphitheatre is used as an informal sports pitch but with the potential to be used as an area for events and performances; it was designed to be a Sustainable Urban Drainage Basin – the east and west ends of the park are prone to flooding – but was actually built at too high a level to fulfil this function.

Finally comes a large area of orchard and 'edible woodland' – an educational garden run by a voluntary group and incorporating a pond, small



Old hedge and copse incorporated into the park John O'Dwyer

copses, mounded landforms and seating areas. About halfway through the park another small attractive play area has been constructed on the north side of the river

Information boards at each end explain the main features of habitat and heritage conservation within the park. Heartlands is a huge asset to Buckingham and it is to be hoped that Buckinghamshire Council in association with voluntary groups will be able to maintain the current high standards of maintenance and balance between the needs of users for recreation, informal activities, community events and the biodiversity.

Source: Aylesbury Vale Environment Team, *Heartlands Management Plan 2020/21*. Thanks to Ed Grimsdale for supplying it. The 2018/19 version of the plan can be viewed at <https://www.aylesburyvalencdc.gov.uk/heartlands-buckingham>

Clare Butler

### Parks through the Letterbox

Postcard 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Shakhrisabz Uzbekistan



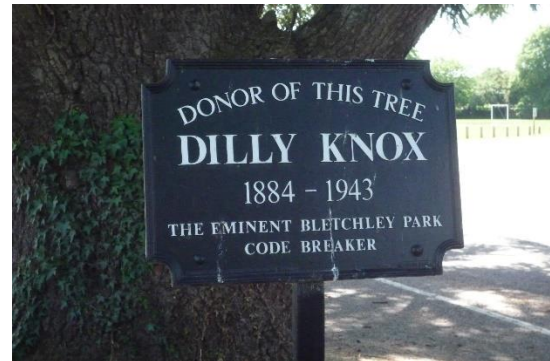
Dear BGT,

From Samarkand drove south across the 1,788m high mountain pass to Shakhrisabz, near the border with Afghanistan. The town is close to the birthplace of Timur (Tamerlane the Great) and he built the gigantic Ak-Serai summer palace and it's water gardens, the Dorut Tilyovat burial complex and his intended mausoleum in the town between 1374-1392. This is the huge central park recently constructed by President Karimov to connect the remains of Timur's buildings and his grandson Ulugbeg's Kok Gumbaz mosque, built in 1436. The centre-piece of the modern park is a huge gold statue of Timur; construction of the park involved the demolition of much of the historic town centre. Returning across the Takhtakaracha Pass to Samarkand before catching a late train back to Tashkent this evening. Regards, Julia.

### Mystery Park in Buckinghamshire

For June we have two mystery park sites we would like members to identify. You can enter for site 1 or 2 or both.

The winning names will be put into a draw at the end of June. There will be a winners bottle of wine for each site. Bucks GT Council will not be eligible.



1.If you know the name of the park where this plaque can be found and a brief history email [enquiries@bucksgardentrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bucksgardentrust.org.uk)



2. If you know the name of this park building, where it is and a brief history email [enquiries@bucksgardentrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bucksgardentrust.org.uk)

### Spring 2020 - Mystery Building



Only one entry for the Spring newsletter Mystery Building who gave the correct answer. Their prize, a Gift Voucher to purchase wine of their choice.

**The answer:** The mystery building is the Stables building at Chalfont Park by Richard Bentley, a friend of Horace Walpole. A number of members may recall seeing it in May 2018 when Claire de Carle took a group on a walk through Chalfont Park.



### News Snippets

**Notes from the Chair:** We thank Gwen (Miles) who has compiled and edited this our first e-newsletter, which we do hope that you have enjoyed.

Also to say we are hoping to make our visit to Warden Abbey Vineyard in September and possibly reschedule our evening visit to Stowe later in the year...but we will keep you advised of future plans. And thank you for your continued support of the Bucks Gardens Trust during these difficult times.

*Rosemary Jury (Chair)*

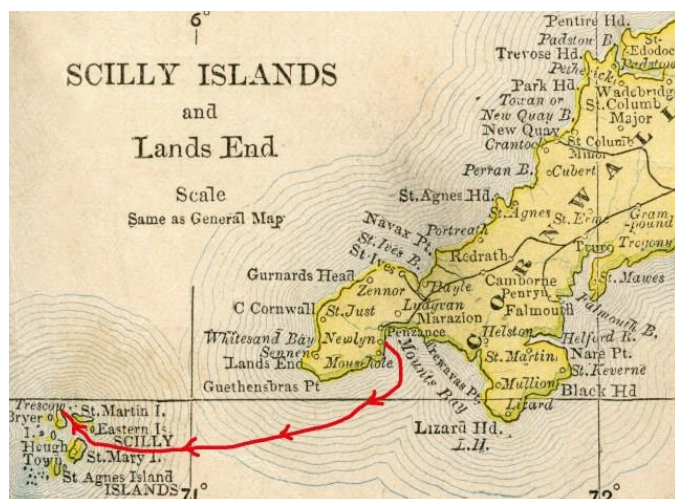
**Buckinghamshire in 100 Objects:** Lallie Davies in Buckinghamshire Culture has set up a wonderful Lock Down initiative: Bucks in 100 Objects. <https://buckinghamshireculture.wordpress.com/bucks-in-100-objects/> It is open to anyone or organisation.

**Important Name Change:** The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) is changing its name to Buckinghamshire Archives (BA) from the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**Sponsored swim to Save the Garden Museum:** <https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/a-sponsored-swim-to-save-the-garden-museum/>

*Garden Museum Director, Christopher Woodward:* I am writing to ask for your support to save the Garden Museum from the impact of the coronavirus: this year we need to raise an additional £270,000 to make up for lost income, to re-open, and to get our programme of exhibitions, events and education work started again.

To help raise the first £100,000 towards that total I am going to swim fifty miles from Newlyn in Cornwall to Tresco, on the Isles of Scilly. It retraces a journey made by the painter-gardener Cedric Morris, one of our Museum's 'patron saints', in 1950, seventy years ago. Cedric went by boat; no one has swum the route before. Donations via museum website.



Swim route

**Website Notes:** Visit the new Website launched in April 2020 [www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk). Features include photographs of member's gardens in the News and Publications, *Gardens Begin at Home*.

**Membership Notes:** 86% of our members have paid their subscriptions for 2020-2021 with two new members via the website. We are always pleased to receive subscription renewals or new memberships. [membership@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:membership@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk)

**Editor's Note:** If you have found this Newsletter interesting **please do forward it to your friends**. We plan a July Newsletter and would be delighted to receive articles and photographs on Public Parks.

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*The Newsletter* is edited by *Gwen Miles*.



## Gardens Begin at Home

We hope that you will enjoy these photographs taken by members of the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Council and the media and website teams. The photographs show how hard these members have been working on their gardens during the time the country has been closed down to combat Covid 19. Gardens, whatever their size, begin at home and the last three months has provided an opportunity for us to catch up with all those jobs and projects we had planned for the garden.

We all value historic parks and gardens and everyone is a stakeholder in this shared national heritage. At Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust many of our members are active in a wide range of projects throughout the county and the neighbouring counties, the majority of which are on hold at the moment.

However, we are still, through desk-based work, helping to protect historic parks and gardens continuing the research and record programme and commenting on planning applications plus planning autumn and winter talks and events.

From 2020-2022 the Gardens Trust will be working on the theme of “Unforgettable Gardens: save our heritage”. These photographs are to remind us that all gardens begin at home whether a few square feet, a window box or hundreds of acres. Please note the ownership of photographs in the gallery remains with the owner so please contact Bucks GT if you would like to use any of these images.

If you would like to add to the collection please send photographs of your garden to [websiteadmin@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:websiteadmin@bucksgardenstrust.org.uk)

