

Within the boundaries of Hampton Wick, Teddington, Hampton and Hampton Hill lie 2,000 acres of Royal Park. In the case of Hampton Wick, this area amounts to 95% of the total land of the village. This account begins by describing what exists in today's Bushy and Home Parks and then explains the history of how it all came to be.

The Royal Parks of Hampton Court

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£8.00

Ray Elmitt

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From hunting ground to pleasure ground

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Overview

Within the boundaries of Hampton Wick, Teddington, Hampton and Hampton Hill lie 2,000 acres of Royal Park. In the case of Hampton Wick, this area amounts to 95% of the total land of the village but the ten residential buildings actually within this area of the park provide accommodation for less than 100 people out of a total village population exceeding 10,000.

This account begins by describing what exists in today's Bushy and Home Parks and then explains the history of how it all came to be. It outlines the earliest history and continues from when William the Conqueror granted land to his companion Norman knights. Then follows the 200-year stewardship of the parks by the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. The year 1499 saw the beginnings of the use of the parks for royal hunting and sport. It was Queen Victoria's accession in 1837 which finally marked the end of this royal exclusivity, apart from the continued (and continuing) use of the horse paddocks by the Royal Stud and Stables. Bushy - and later Home - Parks were both thrown open to the public and became (and remain) popular attractions.

The vital role of the Parks in the two World Wars - when Bushy Park was home to 8,000 allied troops - is described along with the current use of the parks for sports (including cricket, tennis, football, hockey, golf, skate-boarding and model yacht sailing) along with its provisions for allotment gardening.

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Bushy Park walk 7.5 miles

Bushy Park today

When the 18 year old Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837 she decided she had no further use for Bushy Park and was agreeable to it being opened to the Public as a recreational area. At over 1,000 acres, it was the second-largest of her eight Royal Parks in London and its popularity grew rapidly - especially when the London and South West Railway Company opened a new terminus just across the river at East Molesey in 1849.

The best-known feature of the park is probably the Chestnut Avenue running for a mile and a half southward from Teddington Gate to Hampton Court Gate and including the elegant sweep around a water basin. Originally intended as a magnificent new processional route to the palace from the north, the scheme was rather compromised when the then King (William of Orange) changed his mind about extending the palace towards the new route. Work had already begun on creating the new avenue and so his successor (and sister-in-law) Queen Anne attempted to give the avenue some continuing sense of purpose by moving the magnificent statue of Diana (or more probably of Arethusa) from its position in the palace's Privy Garden to its current place in the centre of the water basin. She also built the Lion Gate on the south (i.e. palace) side of Hampton Court Road in an attempt to provide a suitable visual destination for the avenue at the palace end. She died before it was completed and, whereas her stone gate pillars are on a very grand scale, the gates themselves - installed by George I - are probably rather more back garden-gate sized than the palace-sized gates she would have had in mind.



- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Upper Lodge</i> | 17 | Millenium Wood |
| 2 | <i>Water Garden</i> | 18 | Hampton Wick Cricket Club |
| 3 | <i>Brewhouse</i> | 19 | Church Grove Passage and Gates |
| 4 | <i>Rotunda House</i> | 20 | Kingston Concrete Skatepark |
| 5 | <i>Gear Wheel</i> | 21 | Heron and Boating Ponds |
| 6 | <i>Canal Plantation</i> | 22 | <i>Hawthorn Lodge</i> |
| 7 | <i>Barton's Cottage</i> | 23 | Cobblers Walk |
| 8 | <i>Bushy House</i> | 24 | Chestnut Avenue |
| 9 | <i>Guns Lodge</i> | 25 | Pheasantry Cafe |
| 10 | Teddington Gate | 26 | Triss's Pond |
| 11 | USAAF Memorial | 27 | <i>The Waterhouse</i> |
| 12 | SHAEF Gate | 28 | <i>The White Lodge</i> |
| 13 | Eisenhower's Office | 29 | <i>Hampton Court House</i> |
| 14 | Sandy Lane Gate | 30 | Diana Fountain |
| 15 | Leg of Mutton Pond | 31 | Playground |
| 16 | Hampton Wick Gate | 32 | Hampton Court Gate |



The walk starts in the north-west of the park. There are two options for getting there:

- *By bus: Routes 285, R68 and R70. Alight at stop HC. Walk on 100 yards south to Hampton Hill gates. Enter the park and walk straight ahead, turning right before the mews. The pedestrian gate is on the left just before you get to the Longford River. It is a 5 minute walk from Hampton Hill High Street.*
- *By car: park in the Pheasantry Car Park. Walk along Cobblers Walk (aka as Upper Lodge Road) until you are level with the Canal Plantation and turn left. Follow the path round to the entrance (total distance 1 mile).*

Upper Lodge (1) is located in the north-west of the park. Built around 1850, it is at least the third building to occupy this site. Its predecessor was built in 1713 by Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax who also created the Water Gardens (2). However almost 300 years of neglect had meant that the gardens had effectively disappeared and it required a major effort, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Crown Estate, to restore them to their original design. *The Brewhouse* (3) a Grade II listed structure, was also built by Montagu and provided beer for the household in nearby *Upper Lodge* – alcohol being safer to drink than water at the time.

Just before leaving the Water Garden, glance over the north wall opposite the exit gate to see the Rotunda (4).

This modern house and garden complex exactly occupies the footprint of a torpedo test tank built at the height of the Cold War.

Retrace your steps to Upper Lodge Road and turn left. Within 50 yards take the diagonal path which will take you to ...

The central gearwheel from the torpedo test tank (5). A helpful information board provides much more information.

Return to the road and turn left. Don't follow as the road turns sharp left after 75 yards but keep almost straight on turning slightly to your right. Within 30 yards turn right along a rough path running between a few trees. After 400 yards, turn right onto the broad perimeter track. The Canal Plantation is 175 yards further on.

Part of the outflow from the Water Gardens passes through Canal Plantation (6) on its route to the Thames.



130 yards after the Canal Plantation take the path to the right just before the rugby pitches. After 200 yards you arrive at Barton's Cottage.

Barton's Cottage (7) was the centre of the farming operations of Bushy Park. It was named for Sir John Barton who was financial adviser to Prince William, Duke of Clarence who was Park Ranger 1797-1830. The rest of the farm buildings were demolished when the Duke ascended the throne as William III but the original duck pond remains.

Continue along the path until you arrive back at Upper Lodge Road. Turn left and walk for 500 yards until you are level with Bushy House.

Built in the 1660s and enlarged by Charles Montagu's nephew in the 1720s, Bushy House (8) was the home of the Ranger of Bushy Park until the death of the last Ranger, Queen Adelaide, in 1849. After making it available as a safe haven for the deposed French royal family, Queen Victoria agreed in 1902 that Bushy House could become the headquarters of the National Physics Laboratory in which role it has played a major part in the invention of radar, the atomic clock and the forerunner of the internet amongst many other scientific milestones.

Continue for 250 yards.

Guns Lodge (9) on your left stands at the original entrance drive to Bushy House. It was designed by Decimus Burton in 1827.

Turning left after a further 100 yards, follow the path running parallel to the Chestnut Avenue for 500 yards as it leads up to the Teddington Gate (10).

Cross Chestnut Avenue and continue along the track for 500 yards until you are level with SHAEF gate. Now, with your back to the gate, walk directly ahead for about 150 yards.

It is hard to imagine that the whole of the park east of Chestnut Avenue was "home" to almost 8,000 troops during WW2. Every trace was removed by the early 1960's so today the only reminders are the SHAEF gate (12) reinstated in 1994, the RAF memorial to their USAAF colleagues (11) also installed in 1994 and the nearby plaque on the site of Eisenhower's office (13).

Return to the SHAEF gate.



Follow the path parallel to the park wall for 600 yards as far as the Sandy Lane Gate (14).

The grass area on your right was the site of the first four US barrack blocks housing 2,000 troops.

With your back to the gate, start walking towards the trees of Warren Plantation but within 30 yards, bear left onto a diagonal path to the eastern end of the Leg of Mutton Pond crossing Cobblers Walk just before you get there (15).

This was one of the two ponds, fed from the Longford River, which were created by Oliver Cromwell when he took over the Parks from the recently executed King Charles I. The ponds allowed him to indulge his new passion for angling which was inspired by Isaak Walton's book *The Compleat Angler* published in 1653.

Retrace your steps to Cobblers Walk, turn right and follow it as far the Hampton Wick gate (16).

An information board just outside the gate recounts the fascinating origins of Cobblers Walk arising from the stand-off between Timothy Bennett, a cobbler from Hampton Wick, and the Earl of Halifax then Ranger of Bushy Park. Well worth a read!

Turning south, pass the Millennium Wood (17).

The wood was planted to mark the new millenium in 2000 on the site of a wartime RAF camp.

Follow the track as it skirts the Hampton Wick Cricket Club (18).

The club was established in 1863 when the Vicar, who was himself a keen cricketer and had played at first-class level for Cambridge University and Northampton, persuaded Queen Victoria to allow the village to create a cricket ground inside the park.



Continue to the Church Grove Passage and gates (19).

Church Grove Passage and gates were created in 1891 to provide easier access into the park for the residents of Kingston upon Thames.

Exit here to visit the King's Field and Kingston Concrete Skatepark (20). At the bottom of the passage (300 yards) turn right onto Church Grove and within 60 yards turn right into King's Field.

King's Field was one of the very first of the eventual 471 King George V Playing Fields set up by the National Playing Fields Association as a permanent memorial to the King.

The Kingston Concrete Skatepark was opened in April 2011 and had been designed to be one continuous loop integrating a large bowl and multi-level plaza style street section. This concrete park is split into three main sections with an incredibly smooth surface and some unusual and unique obstacles that reputedly are a lot of fun to skate.

Retrace your steps into the park and, on returning to the corner of the cricket ground, take the broad diagonal path heading north west towards the Heron and Model Boating ponds (21). After 750 yards cross the bridge over the overflow stream and follow the path that runs along beside the large pond.

Heron ('Harewarren') was the second of Cromwell's two fishing ponds. To the west is the triangular-shaped boating pond added after WW1 to provide extra local job opportunities.

Turn right into the car park then walk straight ahead for 150 yards and exit at the far end, crossing a bridge and turning right to join the wide grass verge on the east side of Chestnut Avenue (24).

Head back up towards Teddington Gate. After 500 yards, and just before you reach Cobblers Walk (23) you will see Hawthorn Lodge (22) on your right.

This was by far the most modest of the keeper's lodges and, once the three component parks had been merged in 1709, it provided accommodation for senior servants at Bushy Lodge.

Follow Cobblers Walk across Chestnut Avenue then, keeping to the trees on your left, walk round the corner until after 500 yards you reach the entrance to the Pheasantry Cafe and carpark (25).



The route continues just below the Pheasantry Cafe where a path leads into The Pheasantry Plantation.

The Pheasantry Plantation was created in the 1950s by Joseph Fisher, the superintendent of the park and includes Triss's Pond (26), named after his daughter. The pond has been significantly refurbished recently and the result is very attractive.

Beyond the pond is the start of the The Woodland Gardens which were created in the period from 1920s to the 1950s. They stretch over 600 yards westward.

Take any route you wish through the first part of The Woodland Gardens since you will always end up at exit gate. Cross the main track and enter the second part through the gate opposite. Follow the path directly for about 250 yards without turning off any side paths. When you come to a T-junction, turn left. After 50 yards you will see a Totem Pole in a clearing on your right.

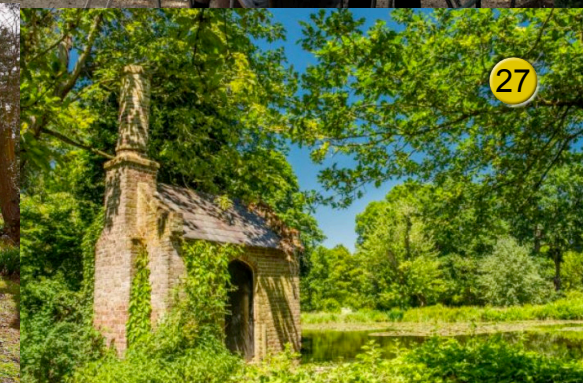
This Totem Pole was carved and erected in situ by a Native American chief in 1992 to mark the connection between Canada and Bushy Park, which housed a large Canadian camp during World War 1.

Continue along the track south until in 50 yards you reach the Waterhouse Plantation.

The Waterhouse Plantation was a job creation project following WW1 and incorporates the Waterhouse (27) which housed a pump to control the water flow in the Longford River.

Continue along the path which leads to an exit gate in around 100 yards.

Exit the plantation through this gate out onto Lime Avenue. The avenue was part of the original Chestnut Avenue scheme and *White Lodge* (28) was built to provide a visual focus as well as accommodation for the Head Keeper. The lodge was restored in 2001 and is now the park office.



With your back to the White Lodge head east along Lime Avenue until in 400 yards it is crossed by the path from the Brick Bridge to the Barrack Gate. Now take the diagonal path heading towards Hampton Court Gate and, after 400 yards you will reach Hampton Court House (29).

This was built in 1757 by George Montagu Dunk, the then Ranger of Bushy Park for his mistress, opera singer Anna Maria Faulkner. Dunk appropriated a total of five acres of land on Hampton Court Green as well as a semicircular area within the park itself as a private front garden. In 1883, Thomas Twining of the Twining family of tea and coffee merchants bought the house for his daughter and her husband Auguste de Wette. In 2001 it became *Hampton Court House* school with an enrolment of 240. The building is also used as a filming location and for hosting wedding receptions.

Walk north east around 400 towards the Diana Fountain. Cross the road and stand on the grass area immediately south of the basin.

The statue of Diana (or is it Arethusa?) now atop the fountain (30) first arrived at Hampton Court during the Commonwealth when Cromwell had it removed from *Somerset House* and placed in the palace's Privy Garden. Queen Anne had it reset in its current position. However in the 297 years since the statue was relocated, many of the waterspouts became clogged and only four were functioning before the renovations of 2009-10 restored the whole structure to its original condition.

Cross to the east side of Chestnut Avenue and walk towards the Lion Gate.

Against the walls behind which lie the horse paddocks stands the playground ground (31). An imposing two-storey wooden pavilion selling refreshments existed here from about 1890 but burnt down in the late 1950s.

The original gate lodge (32) by Hampton Court Gate has recently been sold as a private residence.

To continue your walk into Home Park, cross over the pedestrian crossing and turn left. Paddock Gate (33) is 300 yards along and 80 yards after you pass Ivy Cottage. Follow the fenced path round the edge of the old horse paddock and enter into Home Park after almost 300 yards.



Home Park walk 4.5 miles



- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| 33 | Paddock Gate | 45 | The Pavilion Terrace |
| 34 | Kingston Avenue | 46 | <i>The Pavilion(s)</i> |
| 35 | Longford River Bed | 47 | Ditton Gate |
| 36 | <i>Stud House</i> | 48 | Hampton Court Golf Club |
| 37 | The Long Water | 49 | Rick Pond |
| 38 | Jubilee Fountain | 50 | Surbiton Passage Gate |
| 39 | The Overflow | 51 | HC Model Sailing Clubhouse |
| 40 | The Medieval Oak | 52 | Dew Pond |
| 41 | Oak Pond | 53 | Royal Stables |
| 42 | Farm Cottages | 54 | <i>Ice House</i> |
| 43 | Golf Course Crossing Path | 55 | Hampton Wick Pond |
| 44 | Jubilee Gate | 56 | Kingston Gate |

Home Park today

Unlike its neighbour to the north of Hampton Court Road, Home Park was never a hunting ground. It is true that Henry VIII used the northern part of the park against the wall for deer coursing, a sport in which dogs were set free to chase an individual deer. The terrified animal usually managed to outrun its pursuers and bets were placed on which dog would get closest to the prey. The mound on which the Ice House now stands would have provided a natural grandstand for spectators and punters to watch the action and settle their wagers. Otherwise the land in Home Park was used for grazing, with cattle and horses replacing the sheep herds of the medieval period.

A major change occurred following restoration of Charles II to the English throne in 1660. He chose Hampton Court as his “country palace” and commissioned André Mollet to create the Long Water canal using the water from his father’s Longford River project to feed the new feature.

When the protestant William and Mary replaced her catholic father James II as joint rulers William, who suffered from chronic asthma, chose the pure air of Hampton Court in preference to the smoke-filled atmosphere surrounding the Palace of Whitehall. He originally commissioned Christopher Wren to design a completely new replacement palace but the royal budget would not stretch to this so the couple had to make do with an “extension” that nevertheless more than doubled the original footprint.

Mary’s sister Anne inherited the throne in 1705. She turned out to be the last royal inhabitant of the palace and made much use of the two parks in which she had a 20-mile network of chaise-drives constructed.

The Hanoverian dynasty made very little use of palace or park except as a location for horse breeding/training based on *Stud House*. When these operations transferred to Sandringham in the 1890s Home Park joined Bushy Park as a second playground of the people.

Paddock Gate (33) is the newest entrance/exit and was created when free entrance to the Palace Gardens was abolished in 2016. It leads through one of the three remaining horse paddocks (out of the original 16) in Home Park.

Turn to your left (i.e. with your back to the Palace) and keep walking until, in around 700 yards, you reach the hard stone track.

You are walking down Kingston Avenue (34) which is centred on the tower of the 12th century Parish Church and was laid out in the 1660s as part of Charles II's Long Water project.

Turn right at the track, walk around 140 yards towards the gates at the far end then turn right up the grass track back towards the Palace. Stop when the wooden fence on your left turns a corner.

The shallow depression (35) leading away from you towards the Palace is the original bed of the Longford River created by Charles I in 1638 to bring water from 15 miles away to feed the Palace water gardens. His son repurposed the final stages of this supply to fill The Long Water.

Keeping the brown fence on your immediate left, follow the path as it again turns left. After 120 yards you can see the southern façade of Stud House over the fence.

The original *Stud House* (36) was built by Charles II in the early 1680s and was the centre of the agricultural activities in Home Park. But in 1812, the future George IV (whilst still Prince Regent) established a racing stud there and the house was significantly remodelled into its present form. The stud operations ended in 1896 and *Stud House* became a grace-and-favour property. Since April 2007 it has been the home of Baron Lebedev of Hampton and Siberia, a Russian oligarch and a member of the UK House of Lords since 2020.

Walk back up to the last corner you passed then turn left onto the diagonal grass track leading to the Long Water.



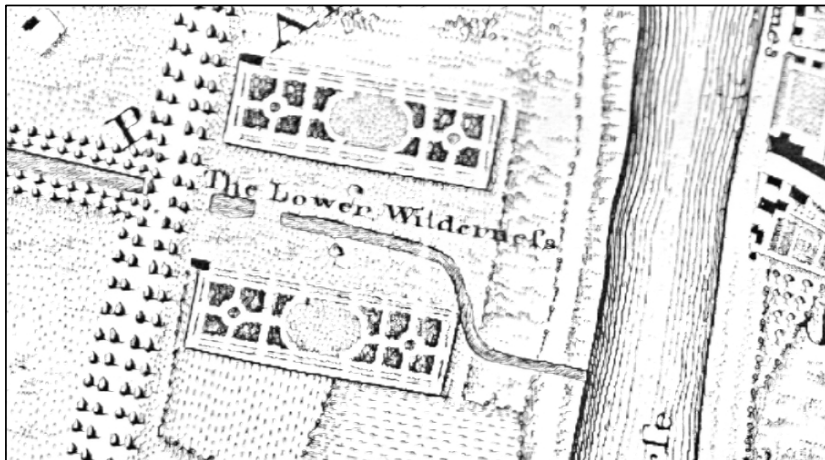
The 1,250 yard canal known as the Long Water (37) was built in 1661-2. The tree-lined canal (known as the Long Water) scheme was completed in time for Charles II to present the whole feature as a gift to his bride Catherine of Braganza during their honeymoon at Hampton Court in May 1662. Sadly, the planned romantic pageant of the bride being greeted at the palace by Charles II after approaching gently up the canal on a barge did not happen - a contemporary drawing reveals a much more public and boisterous arrival by coach at the western gatehouse

Walk down to the bottom of the Long Water.

In the 1990s, by which time most of the original lime trees had long disappeared, the east end of the Long Water was chosen as the site of a Jubilee Fountain (38) to celebrate Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee. The central spout throws water 30 metres (100 feet) into the air. The fountain together with the replanting of the lime avenues was gifted to Her Majesty by the late Sir Donald Gosling, co-founder of National Car Parks (NCP).

Cross the road to reach the Overflow ponds.

The two-stage Overflow ponds (39) are used to regulate the water level in the Long Water. When first built, the ponds were bordered by ornate flower beds and the area was known as The Lower Wilderness (below) but after the beds had been washed away in 1702 and again in 1705, the scheme was abandoned.



Cross back to the Long Water. Now, keeping it on your right, walk back up towards the palace. After around 500 yards look for a small path through the twin avenue of trees on your left. Crossing the road, take the broad grass track heading towards an old tree in a large fenced enclosure.

The medieval oak (40) is believed - at over 750 years - to be the oldest surviving tree in either of the parks. However, given the lack of any visible sign of live foliage, this belief may now beggar belief.

Return to the grass track and, after 50 yards, branch off to your right towards the Farm Cottages.

Oak Pond (41) is one of four ponds in Home Park.

The Farm Cottages (42) are a reminder of the flourishing agricultural activities in the Home Park in the 18th and 19th centuries. The current Deer Keeper lives in one of them whilst the lady who was keeper of The Great Vine in the Palace also lived here.

With the Farm Cottages behind you, walk along the broad grass track (43) which crosses Ditton Avenue and three golf fairways on its way to the Jubilee Gate 500 yards away.



The Jubilee Gate (44) was installed in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It was served by a ferry from the *Albany Hotel* on the opposite bank in Thames Ditton.

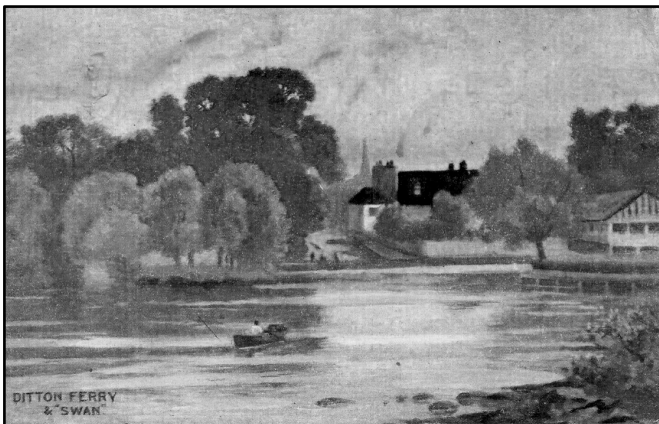
The 650 yards long Pavilion Terrace (45) was created in 1701/2 and served a dual purpose. It provided a site for the disposal of the huge amount of rubble from the demolished Watergate complex as well as acting as the base of the riverside terrace walk which terminated in a bowling green with its surrounding four pavilions.

Come back into the main park and walk east down the path running parallel to the Pavilion Terrace. At the end, walk round the boundary wall and stand facing two apparently identical buildings.

The two Pavilions (46) may look very similar but there is a difference of 300 years in their date of construction with the version on your left being the last remaining one of the original four built for William III in 1701 by William Talman under the direction of Christopher Wren. The other three had been demolished by mid-19th century. The one on the right is a very convincing replica of the original and was completed in 2019.

With your back to the Pavilions, walk down the track between the trees and then follow the diagonal path to the Ditton Gate.

Ditton Gate (47) was installed in 1893 when Home Park was first opened to the public. It provided an entrance for members of the public crossing the river on the Ditton Ferry from the Surbiton side (below).



From Ditton Gate continue on the grass path that runs beside the perimeter railings. It skirts round a former horse paddock until, around 650 yards from the gate you see the golf clubhouse on your left.

The Golf Club (48) was founded in 1895 initially as a 9-hole course but was later expanded to 18 holes although with no extra land made available. There had been three different clubhouses one of which was destroyed by fire in 1977.

A change of ownership in 2001 led to the building of the present clubhouse, with the remains of the previous structure being buried under the bank on the edge of the car park.

Continue on the track for about 200 yards, past the staff buildings and the back entrance to the maintenance yard. Immediately afterwards turn left onto the narrow grass path which runs along below the bank containing the old clubhouse. After around 100 yards take the grass path to your right heading towards a prominent tree around 150 yards near the end of Rick Pond.

The Rick Pond (49) has been used as a venue for model yacht sailing since 1893. Surbiton MYC was the first club to adopt the water and by the late 1920's there were three clubs using the lake. Two remained by the 1990s but a steep increase in the ground rent encouraged them to merge and become Hampton Court Model Yacht Club. The Club sail mainly radio controlled yachts but there is also a keen group sailing vane and vintage boats. Racing takes place up to 3 times per week on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year.

Follow the path with the Rick Pond on your left.

The Clubhouse (51) was completed in 1931 and consists of a lobby, kitchen, ladies and gents dressing rooms, a president's room and a function room.

Just before the clubhouse is another park exit/entrance gate.

Surbiton Passage and Gate (50) is 150 yards long and provides views of some of the paddocks which are still used by the Royal Stud. The gate was another that was installed in 1893 when Home Park was opened to the public and accommodated those coming over by one of the two ferries from the Kingston bank.



Continue on the track for 500 yards.

The Dew Pond (52) is both tranquil and surprisingly short of wildlife - possibly because of its obvious attraction to passing aquatically-minded dogs. The large flat area between the pond and the tarmacked road to the Golf Club once served as a pair of Rugby Pitches with the changing facilities located behind *The White Hart* pub opposite the end of Kingston Bridge. Since the Hampton Court Flower Show began in 1993, the area has been used as a holding location for vehicles servicing the exhibitors. The event itself has become the world's largest flower show.



Continue on the track for 300 yards.

The stables (53) are home to a team of *The Royal Parks* Shire Horses which are used to pull carriages for visitors in the Palace garden as well as for well-to-do wedding couples on their special day.



Continue on the track. After 250 yards take the left fork up to the Ice House.

The Ice House (54), originally built by James I in 1625/6, was used in combination with Hampton Wick Pond (55) which you can see if you look half-left 150 yards away. Sluices at the north-east end of the Pond were used to slow the flow of the water leaving the pond sufficiently for ice to form on the surface. The ice was then used in the Ice House to preserve food for up to two years. Ice cream was a special Royal favourite.

Exit the park through the pedestrian gate by the cattle grid.

The Lodge (56) stands by the only vehicular entrance to Home Park. Dating from late 18th or early 19th century it is attached to - and of the same age as - the attractive Home Park Terrace properties which stand just outside the gate.





Two maps of The Royal Parks: Jean Rocque 1730 (l) and Ordnance Survey 1868 (r). The use of theodolites to create the later map account for its greater spatial accuracy but the details correspond to a remarkable degree. Note the presence of the Royal horse paddocks in the later map.

Historical Context: The Manor of Hamntone

The communities of Hampton and Hampton Wick lie in the bend of a river (known in Saxon as a 'hamn') from which they derive their name. Half a million years ago this river was wider and wilder and, as it cut the valley in which it now flows, it laid down the gravel terraces that now form the Thames basin. The Hamptons sit on the first river terrace in a deep meander created at the end of the last glaciation (around 10,000 years ago). The land formed was free-draining, easy to clear and fertile and therefore ideal for agricultural purposes. Neolithic pottery has been found at Kingston. Bronze Age material has also been retrieved both from the river and from excavations of two local burial mounds, the latter indicating the prosperity of the inhabitants of the area. Following the Roman conquest, settlement and agriculture seem to have intensified judging by the extent of the remains reported as found by the 1530s - though their places of discovery were not recorded. Although no specific evidence of a settlement has so far been discovered, there may have been several prosperous agricultural estates, possibly centred on river fording points at Kingston and Hampton Court.

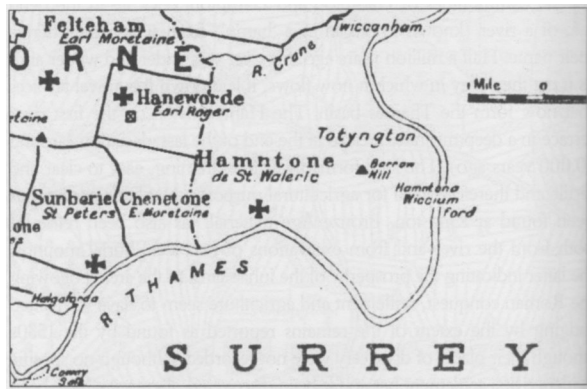
After the Romans left around 400 AD, the system by which they governed their agricultural estates remained - in the form of the manor - as the organising principle of the rural economy throughout the Middle Ages. Manorialism was characterised by the vesting of legal and economic power in a Lord of the Manor. He was supported economically from his own direct landholding in a manor, and from the obligatory contributions of the legally subject peasant population under the jurisdiction of his manorial court. It is likely that the Manor of Hamntone took over the land and governance from the Romans as a going concern. There are no records before 1000 AD, but it is likely that the manor increased in importance when nearby Kingston started to become a significant royal estate from the beginning of the ninth century.

The Domesday Book - that great Norman land record compiled in 1086 - reveals that, shortly before 1066 Aelfgar, Earl of Mercia and son of Leofric and the Lady Godiva, had held the manor. Until his death in 1062 he held many holdings around the country. These included the Hundred of Hounslow - comprising the Manors of Hamntone and Gistelesworde (Isleworth) along with the villages and fields of Twickenham and Teddington. This holding represented the largest lay estate in Middlesex.

The Normans and Plantagenets (1066–1399)

Following his victory at the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror forced through a political union with Normandy, driving out the old Saxon landowning nobility and subjecting England to the dominance of the Norman aristocracy. William granted almost half of England to Norman nobles and about a quarter to the Church, whilst retaining a fifth for himself.

The King parcelled up the former estates of Aelfgar and awarded them, as one, to a single Norman lord, Walter St Valery.



It was from St Valery's home town of Saint-Valery-sur-Somme that William and his fleet had sailed in 1066. The two men were not only close companions, but were also related - Walter's grandmother was William's aunt - and the Hundred of

Hounslow, granted immediately after the Conquest, must have seemed a valued prize.

The Domesday Book gives the first real glimpse of the manor of Hamntone. In area it comprised about 4,200 acres, 2,000 of which St Valery held for himself and the remainder of which he let. The Book also records that, on his 2,000 acres, there were only three ploughs as against 17 in the other part of the Manor. This suggests that most of St Valery's holding was unploughed sheep pasture. Walter was unlikely to have lived at Hamntone since he held lands in Suffolk, as well as his estates in Normandy.

In 1096 Walter de St Valery departed on the First Crusade to the Holy Land along with his son Bernard. The latter inherited all his father's estates and in turn passed them on to his son Reginald, also a crusader. The St Valery family crusading connections were to be a crucial factor in the later history of Hampton.

At first, knights returning from the Crusades and - wishing to support the military orders in the Holy Land - gave lands to the Knights Templar. However, after the Second Crusade (1147-9) gifts were more commonly given to the Knights Hospitallers. It seems likely that, following his return around 1160, it was Reginald who agreed to rent Hampton to the Hospitallers, and we will learn more about them shortly.

Reginald St Valery died in September 1166, leaving his Middlesex estates to his son Bernard. Following family tradition Bernard also fought in the Holy Land and was killed at the siege of Acre in 1190. Thomas, who then came into the estates, was the last of the line to hold the manor. He had no sons, but one daughter whose first husband held the Isleworth Manor in right of his wife. King John seems to have taken the other half of the Middlesex estates, Hampton, into his own hands, probably because of Thomas's involvement (or implication) in the rebellion against him after Magna Carta and the Battle of Lincoln in 1217.

But before it was confiscated Thomas seems to have given the manor to a rich and prominent city merchant, Henry of St Albans, who was allowed to retain the property by John's successor Henry III. Thus for the first time in three centuries the histories of the manors of Hampton and Isleworth were split. Soon afterwards the manor of Hampton was transferred from the Hundred of Hounslow to that of Spelthorne to the west. Later still, Teddington and Twickenham were established as separate manors and the boundaries of Hampton Manor itself corresponded with those of today's Hampton and Hampton Wick.

In 1237, Henry of St Albans sold Hampton Manor to its sitting tenants, the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem in England. The Hospitallers originally arose as a group of individuals associated with a hospital in Jerusalem, dedicated to St John the Baptist. Initially the group existed to provide care for poor, sick or injured pilgrims to the Holy Land. However, the Order soon extended its role to providing an armed escort to pilgrims and it grew into a substantial military force. The Knights of St John had primarily been battle-proven soldiers before they joined the Order, where they too were subject to the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. As a holy

army, the Hospitallers received significant gifts of money and land from benefactors around the Christian world. To underwrite their continued existence, they also established their own international fund-raising organisation. The English branch of this organisation, run from Clerkenwell Priory, received and passed on the profits from several smaller establishments scattered around the country of which Hampton Manor was one. Having started in 1160 when they first became tenants, the Order's direct association with Hampton was confirmed when they became Lords of the Manor in 1237, and this tenure continued for over 350 years. Their stewardship there was entirely focused on maximising the manor's ability to generate money with little or no interest in the status or power associated with the Lordship of the Manor. They ran Hampton with a small group of clerical and lay people housed in a modest property probably on the site of today's palace.

By the early fourteenth century, the headquarters of the Hospitallers was on the island of Rhodes. Jerusalem had long ago been lost, and with it the Hospital of St. John, but the Hospitallers continued to exist as a purely military order, owing allegiance only to the Pope.

In 1328, the Prior of Venice, Leonard de Tiberius, was sent to investigate the English branch. Some disturbing rumours about it had reached Rhodes. Leonard's report showed that they were well founded. The Priory was losing over £1,000 a year. Thomas L'Archer, the English Prior, was an old man verging on senility, and recent events had proved too much for him. Even worse, he had borrowed money from overseas banks at usurious rates of interest in order to keep up his payments to headquarters. Leonard deposed L'Archer and appointed himself Prior of England.

10 years later, Rhodes demanded a further report on the English branch which was far more encouraging and showed that, by 1338, the Priory was now making a profit of more than £2,000 a year. Exactly 500 years later the antiquarian Rev. Lambert B. Larking, on holiday in Malta, found a copy of that original 1338 report in Valetta Public Library (the Hospitallers had moved to Malta in 1530). The Camden Society published Larking's expanded transcription in 1857 and in 1973 local Hampton historian Peter Foster used this material to produce a remarkable reconstruction of the probable local land use at

Hampton in 1338. His map suggests that almost all of Bushy Park and some of Home Park was arable land. Mediaeval "ridge and furrow" ploughing leaves unmistakable traces on the ground which are extremely difficult to erase completely, even when the ground is later flat-ploughed. These traces are evident at several points in Bushy Park. The Home Park was not under the plough and was used as pasture to graze sheep and as meadowland to provide hay for winter feed.

The area of the manor in the north-east nearest the buildings of Hampton Wick consisted of two parcels of arable land sandwiching an expanse of Common Pasture. The latter corresponded to the land between today's High Street and the line of Church Grove-Sandy Lane. The parcel of arable land between Upper Teddington Road and the river was held on a freehold basis with the other parcel (now part of Bushy Park) being "at farm" which is to say short-term leasehold. This division and use of the land in the manor is unlikely to have changed markedly throughout the Hospitallers tenure with the notable exception of the "at farm" land at Hampton Wick. In the face of falling wool prices, the Hospitallers took over this section and enclosed it to run yet more sheep. This action proved to be a disastrous mistake. For over 1,000 years, barley had been cultivated as the main grain staple. Barley bread and ale played a major part in the diet of most people. The long history of single crop farming on the land had impoverished it and running too many sheep on depleted grassland encouraged the growth of bracken that made the pasture useless. The bracken exists there to this day.

Over the next century, the role of the manor house itself changed from being purely the administrative centre to also becoming a high-status guest house. Royal palaces had been created at Byfleet and Sheen. Hampton was an ideal staging-post between the two and was increasingly used as overflow accommodation. It is recorded that, during a visit by King Edward III and his household in March 1353, the house caught fire and was evidently severely damaged or even destroyed. The King appears to have accepted responsibility and arranged the rebuild at his own expense. It was another fire 150 years later that was to herald a complete change in the status of Hampton Manor.

The Tudors (1485–1603)

Sheen Palace had increasingly become the favourite royal out-of-town place of pleasure and recreation. Henry VII intended it to be his principal country residence, and he began major building works there in the early 1490s. At this time, one of Henry's closest confidants was Sir Giles Daubeney, one of the most powerful men in the kingdom but - unlike his colleagues and equals - currently without a seat in London. Daubeney must have been looking for a suitable property commensurate with his increasingly elevated status. With Henry's focus on Sheen, he would have been delighted to be able to sign, in July 1494, an 80-year lease on 'Hantoncourt' an easy seven-mile barge-ride away from his royal master. Determined to be in a position to entertain the King and his Court, Daubeney immediately set about transforming Hampton Court from a modest country manor to a major courtier house.

In 1499, Sir Giles Daubeney acquired and enclosed 300 acres (120 hectares) of Bushy Park (corresponding with what became known as Middle Park) and stocked it with deer. Such a venture would have required a royal licence but, since his main intent was to provide sport for Henry VII and his visiting courtiers, permission would probably have been readily forthcoming. Because of the cost and exclusivity, ownership of deer parks had become one of the status symbols which Daubeney coveted. The transition from common arable land to deer park, much of which has subsequently remained substantially unchanged, meant the massive field baulks defining the individual field strips have been preserved and are distinctive archaeological features in today's Bushy Park.

Henry VII had suffered a set-back at Sheen when the buildings of the nearly-completed palace caught fire and were destroyed in December 1497. However, he immediately started rebuilding, and the palace was finally completed in 1501. Before winning the throne at the Battle of Bosworth Field, Henry had been known as Earl of Richmond (Yorkshire). He used this as the name for the new palace and, at his command, the town of Sheen, which had grown up around the royal manor, also changed its name to "Richmond".

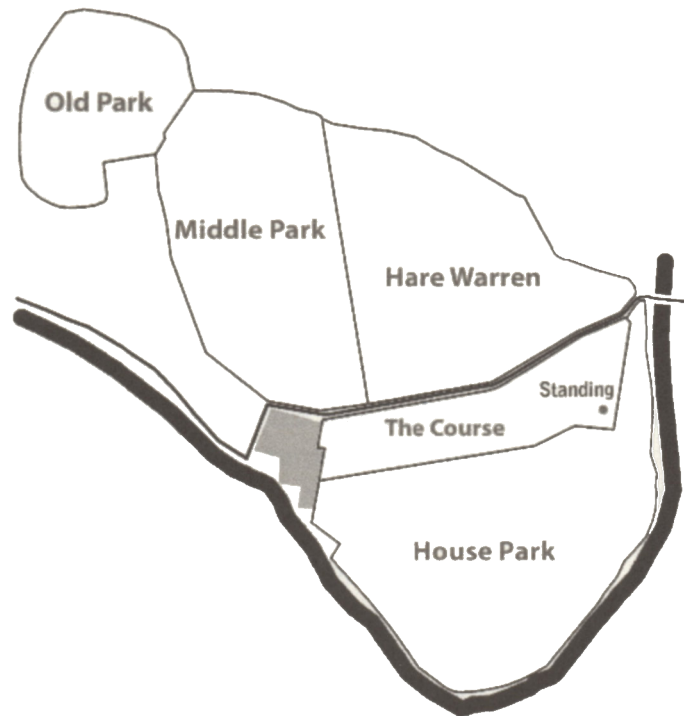
The King and his courtiers were frequent visitors to Hampton

Court over the next few years. Daubeney died in 1508, leaving his estates to his son Henry, who was still a minor. However, on obtaining his majority in 1514, one of the young Daubeney's first acts was to give up the lease on Hampton Court. It was almost immediately transferred to a new tenant - Thomas Wolsey - who would begin the transformation into today's much-loved edifice.

However, it is beyond the scope of this small book - with its focus on the Royal Parks - to also record the evolution of Daubeney's original creation through the Tudor, Stuart and Hanoverian dynasties with their demolitions, modifications and new additions that have together produced today's magnificent Hampton Court Palace.

Wolsey also continued the emparkment, acquiring Hare Warren, adding a further 425 acres (170 hectares) of land to the east of the hunting grounds and fencing it with oak paling. He was almost certainly responsible for enclosing the whole of Home Park with timber paling. However, it was Henry VIII who gave a substance and structure to the parks that largely remain to this day (see map overleaf). Most significantly, he built the walls that still run from Kingston Bridge to Hampton, thereby not only creating a firm division between the two parks, but also - and perhaps inadvertently - ensuring that much of the verge on either side of the walled road would subsequently become coveted as a building plot. Henry organised the park to the south of this road to provide his favourite sport of deer coursing. The area was divided into two by a wall, the northern part being the course and southern, riverside section, being the House Park, which was stocked with fallow deer from other royal game reserves. The course was essentially a racecourse, one mile long and tapering from half a mile wide in the west to around 200 yards in the east. The race itself was between two greyhounds, on which heavy bets would be laid. A deer would be released and allowed to run for a short distance before a slow-running dog was released to chase it. Once the deer, now at full speed, passed a post around 160 yards from the start, the greyhounds were released, and the first dog home would win. The proceedings could be watched from a great standing (or grand-stand) on a small hillock near the finish. This was possibly located near to today's *Ice House*.

To the north of Kingston Road, Henry built a wall between the Middle Park and Hare Warren. In the corner of the latter, he created a warren for black rabbits. In the late 1530s, he acquired the land for Old Park and was also able to extend the park northwards to its modern boundary on Sandy Lane by incorporating land from Teddington Manor, formally owned by Westminster Abbey, which he confiscated. All the parks were planted with oaks from which acorns were collected and further plantings made. The trees were destined for the successors to Henry VIII's mighty ships of the Royal Navy battle fleet but, as will be seen, these assets were to prove too tempting for the parks' later owners.



Notwithstanding the steady accretion of parkland that occurred under Wolsey and Henry VIII, none of these enclosures was suitable for the King's favourite sport of stag-hunting. Now that he was getting old and over-weight, he wished to enjoy this close at hand, without the fatigue of going to Windsor Forest. In order to form an extensive hunting-ground immediately

adjacent to the palace, and as part of his confiscation of all monastic property (which included the Hospitallers' tenure on Hampton Court itself), the King acquired or appropriated a whole group of manors near Hampton Court. These were on both sides of the River Thames from East Molesey to Shepperton and, by an Act of Parliament passed in 1539, were consolidated into a single Honour (domain) based on Hampton Court itself. The next stage was to enact that a great part of the extensive tract of countryside comprised within the boundaries of the Honour should be marked and enclosed within a wooden paling, to create the Hampton Court Chase from which the local inhabitants were excluded. Thus a selected stag could be released from an enclosure at Hampton Court, kept on the run by the pursuing pack of stag-hounds, and hunted by the King and his party, if necessary all the way to Windsor Castle. Unsurprisingly, the inhabitants local to the chase, whilst they suffered in silence during the remainder of Henry's reign, successfully petitioned for the chase to be dismantled immediately upon his death.

Queen Elizabeth I inherited from her father an ardent love of stag-hunting, often sharing the sport provided for the entertainment of her guests at Hampton Court and shooting deer with her own bow.

The Stuarts (1603–1649)

The first Stuart King James I continued the hunting traditions where his cousin left off. Under Elizabeth, it had taken on a more genteel aspect, but James revived it with gusto, undertaking hunting trips that would last several days. He restocked the deer in the parks at Hampton Court and Richmond to improve the coursing and the chase. The quality he achieved is demonstrated by the antlers from the period now hanging on display in the Great Hall. Almost all of them fulfil the Jacobean hunting requirement of a head of at least 10 tines (or projecting points) and several have many more. In 1620, James enclosed some of Hampton's glebe-land known as the Eastfield, which he added to Bushy Park, bringing it up to its modern boundaries. He and his son Charles also developed an interest in horse breeding at Hampton Court and established a stud in 1621 with new stables built on the former deer/hare course in Home Park.

In October 1638, Charles I commissioned the building of the Longford River from the Colne River to Hampton Court to supply new ornamental waterworks. The latter were never built due to the outbreak of the Civil War. The 15 mile canal - also known as The New River or The King's River - cost £3,000 (around £87m today) and was completed in July 1639, taking just nine months. It was 20 feet wide and 24 inches deep. The course of the river within Bushy Park was largely as it remains today and, to allow sufficient "head" for the piped off-take to drive fountains in the palace gardens, used the medieval field baulks which stand higher than the surrounding land. This accounts for the curious route and right angled elbows which the river follows through Bushy Park but also had the effect of ensuring the baulks themselves remained. When first constructed, the River Longford's outflow ran through Home Park down to the Thames and a 330 yard stretch of the original canal is still visible west of the *Stud House* enclosure.

The new Longford River was unpopular with some local people as it divided parishes, blocked roads and, because of its poor construction, flooded land nearby. This bad feeling culminated in the destruction of the bridge at Longford and the blocking of the river by local people immediately following the King's execution in 1649.

The Commonwealth Interregnum (1649–1660)

The mood in the country at the beginning of the Commonwealth Period was such that an Act that was passed, on 16th July, 1649, declaring:

all items belonging to the late King should be surveyed, valued, and sold for the benefit of the Commonwealth.

There was considerable vacillation over the sale of Hampton Court but finally, in November 1653, contracts were signed for the sale of Bushy Park, the meadows in Home Park and the Hampton Court Manorial Rights. No sooner was the ink dry than, on 16th December, Oliver Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth and Parliament agreed he should have Hampton Court Palace and its Parks 'for the maintenance of his state and dignity'. The buy-back was costly for the taxpayer but, by the middle of 1654, Cromwell was in possession of palace - parks, manor and all - and he continued to retain them until his death in September 1658. He was not a popular figure in the locality, however, for he re-opened the Longford River, which the mob of 1649 had blocked. He extended the nuisance by making two new fishing ponds in the Hare Warren that tended to flood the public ways there in the rainy season. Known today as the Heron [Harewarren] Pond and the Leg of Mutton Pond, these were originally fed by natural springs but were later connected to the Longford River. Finally, as if to compete with the late King for the title of "most unpopular local tyrant", Cromwell blocked off a popular short cut "for Horse and foote" from the Wick to a point in the road north of the palace buildings.

The Stuart Restoration (1660–1714)

The parks had fared badly during the Commonwealth with many trees felled for quick profits. A contemporary drawing shows Home Park as a barren landscape. After the Restoration the story of the parks is one of reconstruction, reinvention and new building. The improvements were begun by Charles II, who created a length of water flanked by a great avenue within Home Park. The upshot of this regal flourish was that Home Park became an extension of the palace pleasure ground while Bushy Park retained much of its extensive landscape character. The tree-lined canal (known as the Long Water) was contrived by André Mollet, a French garden designer. It was based on similar projects he had completed elsewhere. However, at over 1300 yards long and 50 yards wide, this version was on the grandest scale. Excavations began in the winter of 1661. The Longford River was refurbished and realigned to flow through the canal and over 544 lime trees were planted (below).



The scheme was completed in time for Charles to present the whole feature as a gift to his bride Catherine of Braganza during their honeymoon at Hampton Court in May 1662. Sadly, the planned romantic pageant of the bride being greeted at the palace by Charles after approaching gently up the canal on a barge did not happen - a contemporary drawing reveals a much more public and boisterous arrival by coach at the western gatehouse (bottom).

A view of the east front painted c1670 shows how, when the scheme was first implemented, the canal terminated rather abruptly, just short of the long, straggling and asymmetrical palace front.

When the east side of the palace was demolished and rebuilt some 30 years later, Mollet's grand gesture guided the planning of the new east-facing apartments and, indeed, the layouts of the Great Fountain Garden and the new Fountain Court. The excellent harmony between all these elements has led many to think the water feature was part of, rather than inspiration for, the new Royal apartments.

Charles II also restocked the parks with deer and the ponds and canal with fish. Recreational fishing - angling - was becoming increasingly popular since the 1653 publication of Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation*. The King also built two impressive new park lodges. *Stud House* together with what is now known as Stud Nursery lies concealed in a dense plantation in the centre of Home Park between the Long Water and Kingston Avenue. Charles and his brother James became increasingly interested in horse breeding and racing. They set up *Stud House* as both the residence of the Master of the Horse and the breeding establishment for the King's horses.



The major changes to the palace and its gardens implemented by William and Mary were accompanied by a great many improvements in the parks: new avenues were planted, basins dug, terraces thrown up, a new bowling green was laid out and the Stud was improved. Work began in 1689 with the planting of a pair of diagonal avenues across Home Park to form - with the Long Water - a patte d'oie (goose foot). This trio of radiating avenues at once transformed the park as the far-flung corners of the demesne were now drawn to the very heart of the stately mansion and its pleasure grounds. Thousands of trees were planted to form the stately alleys which proclaimed the new sovereign's mastery over a landscape that still bore the scars of the Civil War. The new avenues which radiated from the royal apartments framed views beyond the park's boundaries to the spire of Kingston Church to the north-east and the open fields of Thames Ditton to the south-east. In around 1701, the Cross Avenue was planted to link the three spokes of the patte d'oie to form a triangle.

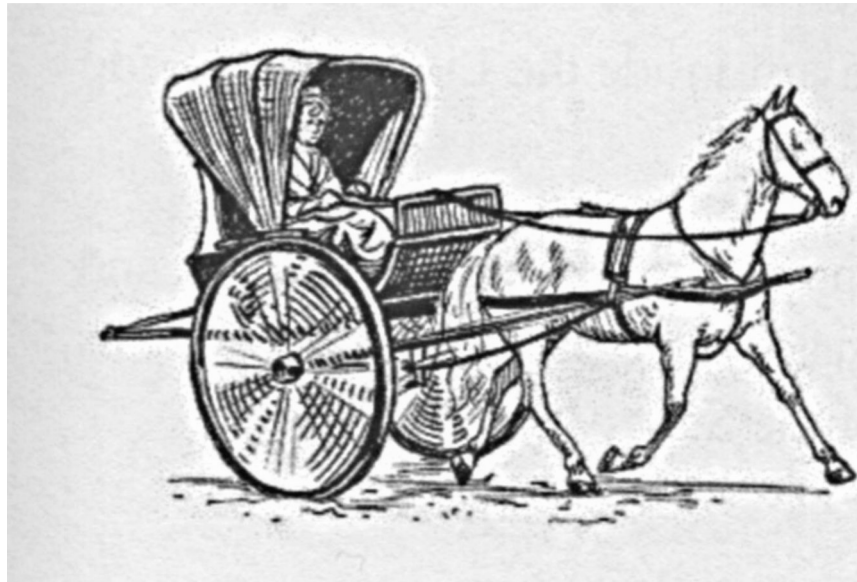
As the new avenues were being planted in Home Park, proposals were made to lay out a great avenue across Bushy Park, from the Teddington Gate in the north to Henry VIII's Great Hall in the south. The English nurseryman and garden designer George London had planted 1,050 lime trees to form two great avenues - the Great Avenue, the ring around the future round basin, and the Lime Avenue which intersected it at right angles - before work was suspended at the end of 1694 by the death of the joint-monarch Queen Mary through small pox. It was only resumed in 1699 when London's apprentice Henry Wise supervised the excavation of the basin and the planting of an additional 732 chestnuts and lime trees in the Great Avenue. Water was then drawn from the Longford River through a brick-lined channel to feed the basin. The whole northern course of the river was cleansed and made wider and deeper, and new drains were dug to obviate flooding.

Meanwhile, plans were afoot to raise a long, flat-topped dyke high above the Thames foreshore south-east of the palace to lead to a new bowling green and pavilions. The Great Terrace - now known as the Pavilion Terrace - was proposed to extend parallel to the river, from the south end of the Broad Walk to a new raised oval green. The terrace and the green would provide an attractive walk above the Thames and the pavilions would form a handsome terminus to the terrace. The extensive earthworks required to raise the 630 yard terrace and the large green would neatly absorb the rubbish generated by the palace demolitions and the spoil created by lowering the ground of the new Privy Garden. The scheme met with the King's approval and was completed within two years. In the event, the original design was modified by the creation of four pavilions at the corners of the bowling green.



Elsewhere in the parks the stud was elevated to the status of “royal”, paddocks were formed in Hare Warren and Middle Park and the early seventeenth-century Ice House by Kingston Gate was repaired. A number of water meadows which lay in the Thames floodplain, east of Home Park, were taken in and used by the Master of the Horse for grazing and hay crops. These were later fenced on the river side to form enclosures.

Queen Anne took a great interest in the Hampton Court estate and made significant contributions to the parks. Early in her reign she commissioned the making of 20 miles of new ‘chaise ridings’ through Home and Bushy Parks. The Queen was fond of hunting en chaise. Her expanded girth and increasing lameness prevented her from riding on horseback. So she ordered these graded trails to be created in the parks enabling her to follow the hunt by driving herself in a one-horse chaise. A plan and estimate of 1710 outlined the new 20-miles scheme: eight miles of walls were made within the avenues in Home Park; seven miles of ridings traced the bounds of the Home Park; two miles were to be cast across “the most pleasant parts” of Bushy Park and the remaining three miles were set out within the avenues in the same park. The scheme is the first

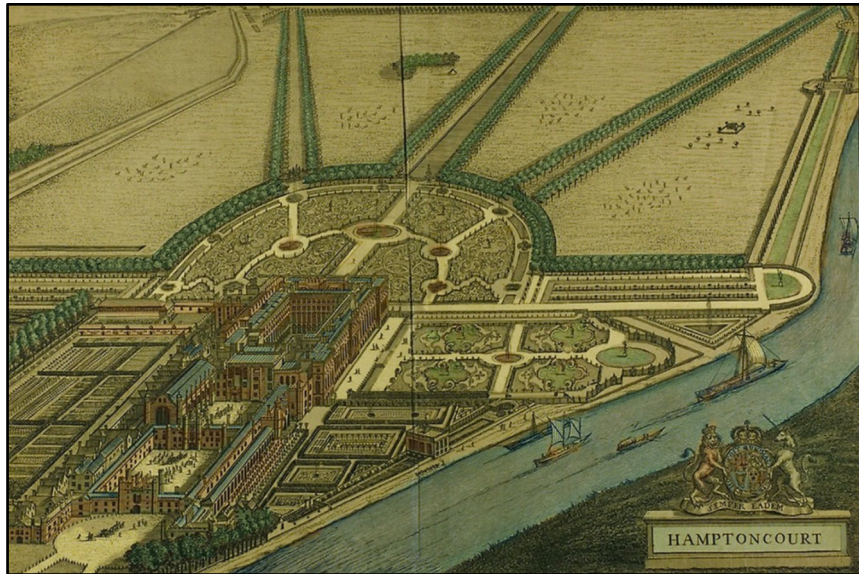


record of a formalised circuit around the parks and provides a fascinating insight into the way in which the sovereign galloped her way across the estate. These trails formed the basis of today’s tracks and paths throughout both parks.

Anne’s love of horses led to her expanding the stud operations which had begun under Charles II. She built new stables and a lodge for the stud manager, buildings that were later incorporated into the *Stud House*. It was also Anne who resolved the issue of the abandoned northern entrance to the palace and the resultant grand avenue that went nowhere. She did this by building the ceremonial Lion Gates to terminate the Chestnut Avenue. She conceived these on an appropriately large scale, but only the gateposts were completed in her lifetime and the gates that were eventually hung by George I were probably smaller than she intended.

The Queen also put the finishing touches to the Great Avenue in Bushy Park, erecting the Diana Fountain at the centre of the Great Basin in 1714. The crowning figure and her retinue of nymphs, putti and dolphins were perched high on an impressive pedestal. The recent restoration has returned the gilded figure to the state intended by Queen Anne. Her final act was the addition of the maze just inside the Lion Gates to add spice and amusement for her visitors.

A remarkable set of topographical images by Dutch draughtsman and painter Leonard Knyff captured the state of the palace together with its gardens and parks towards the end of the Stuart Dynasty's tenure.



The Hanoverian Parks (1714–1901)

By the early part of the eighteenth century, the elegance and formalism of the gardens and parks as captured in Knyff's pictures were rapidly falling out of fashion. Once George II ascended the throne in 1727, he lost interest in Hampton Court completely. In the resulting vacuum, little was changed or even maintained. In many ways it is surprising that the parks retained their rigid structure through to the present day - two of the royal gardeners were Charles Bridgeman and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, both of whom were leaders in the new fashion for the English landscape garden. Brown in particular is known to have swept away many a formal garden in the pursuit of the "natural" appearance he championed. However, when George III gave him the opportunity to sweep away William III's formal layout, Brown is said to have refused

out of respect to himself and his profession.

Instead, he seems to have adopted a "do nothing" policy which meant that the gardens took on a more naturalistic appearance by default. Arguably the only lasting mark left by Brown was his planting in 1769 of the Great Vine, which still produces an average of nearly 675lb of grapes annually.

The recent discovery of two albums of drawings of Hampton Court by John Spyers, who was an assistant to 'Capability' Brown, provides a remarkable topographical record of how the parks and gardens appeared during the reign of George III. One of the views depicts *Stud House* and what was then the Stud Farm (now part of Home Park) before it was rebuilt in the late eighteenth century. It shows groups of horses grazing alongside cattle, deer and sheep in large open paddocks.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century Home Park and Bushy Park began to drift apart. Most of Bushy Park was open to the public and became a popular tourist attraction. Home Park, on the other hand, remained the private playground of the Royal Household and a handful of retainers until the mid 1890s when it too threw open its gates and admitted the public.

In 1797 the third son of George III - William Duke of Clarence - became Ranger of Bushy Park and moved into Bushy House, whilst his elder brother, the future George IV, was busily



Two views of Home Park in the 1770s made possible by the removal of trees in the lime avenues. Above Looking north from the Long Water towards the original *Stud House*. Below Looking south to the four Pavilions.



engaged over the road in Home Park in reviving the breeding of royal bloodstock for the turf. Under the direction of his architect John Nash, he lavished over £24,000 (£80m today) on the creation of 40 brick-walled paddocks each with its own horse shelter. They covered a total of 131 acres in Home and Bushy Parks. His projects included the extension and refurbishment of *Stud House*, converting it from a working farmhouse into a pavilion set in its own pleasure grounds.

After George III's death in 1830, his successor William IV endeavoured to improve and keep up the stock, although he knew very little about horses. The story is told that when his trainer asked what horses were to go to Goodwood Races, the King said

Take the whole fleet; some of them will win, I suppose.

Three of his horses were entered in the 1830 Goodwood Cup and finished first, second, and third in the race out of nine. On the death of William IV in 1837, the entire stud was sold for 15,692 guineas, with the proceeds belatedly going to support his large and illegitimate FitzClarence family.

Initially, Queen Victoria had little interest in horse-breeding but encouraged by her son, the future Edward VII, the Home Park operation was very successfully restarted by her Crown Equerry, Sir George Ashley Maude. In the 1880s, Prince Edward transferred the Royal Stud to his Sandringham Estate (which his mother had bought for him as a wedding present). He retained use of the royal paddocks in the two Hampton Court parks together with the riverside meadows in Home Park. On the death of Maude in 1894, the Home Park paddocks were discontinued, and the way was finally clear for Home Park to join Bushy Park in being opened to the public.

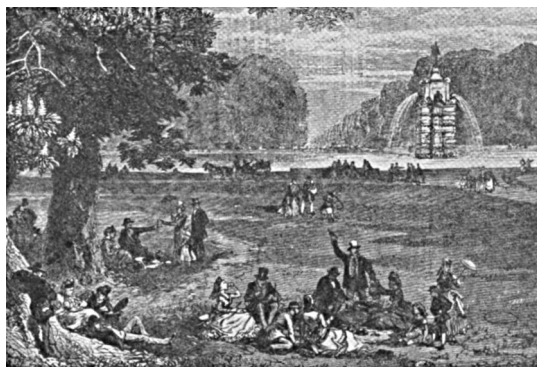
The Public Parks (starting from 1838)

In 1838, the young Queen Victoria (she was then just 19) had decreed that Hampton Court Palace and its gardens

should be thrown open to all her subjects without restriction.

The response was immediate with over 115,000 visitors arriving within the first year of opening. In 1851, the year of The Great Exhibition (after the 1847 opening of the railway service to Hampton Court Station), over 350,000 came. The palace's new role as a tourist attraction profoundly affected the livelihood of the local residents. There were five refreshment rooms, four restaurants, two hotels, a Post Office and a tobacconist in the 220 yard stretch of Hampton Court Road between the Lion Gates and The Green to cater for the visitors (bottom).

Although the parks had previously been reserved mainly for the pleasure of the monarch, it was not a rigid preserve. There existed an ancient right of 'lop and top' allowing people to collect discarded wood in the parks. There were also a number of footpaths used by the villagers to pass between the Hamptons - Town and Wick - and onward to Kingston market. Any stoppage of these routes caused disruption to the lives of the villagers. The most famous case involved Timothy Bennett, the Hampton Wick



Above The tradition of Chestnut Sunday, when school-children from the East End of London would flock to see the tree blossom, was revived by Colin and Mu Pain in 1967. Intended as a one-off event to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, it became an annual event until temporarily halted by the 2021/2 Covid pandemic.

Below The first bicycle meet took place in 1874 with comparatively few riders present but by the following year it had attracted 204. The event reached its peak in 1882 when 2,360 riders from 183 clubs participated but the 1883 event, which attracted five or six hundred fewer participants, was the last to be held.



cobbler, and the George Montagu Dunk, Earl of Halifax, who was Ranger of Bushy Park at the time. A memorial to the event stands at the park gate opposite the end of Vicarage Road, and an accompanying board relates the story:

Timothy Bennet was a Hampton man who had a shoemaker's shop in Hampton Wick. He noticed that the people no longer passed his shop on their way to Kingston Market from the west because they had to go the long way round by the road. The year was 1752. Lord Halifax, Ranger of Bushy Park had closed the path through the park. Timothy Bennet had a principle in life that he was 'unwilling to leave the world worse than he found it' and he resolved to do something about it.

The shoemaker said that he was willing to spend £700, a considerable sum in those days, on legal costs to establish a public right of way through the park. After consulting an attorney, he served notice of action on Lord Halifax, who was none too pleased with this impertinence and sent him packing. However, on mature reflection, the Earl began to see that there might be something in his claim. Fearing the ignominy of public defeat by a shoemaker, he withdrew his opposition and the pathway is enjoyed by the public to this day.

Timothy Bennet died two years later when he was 77 years old, mourned by everyone in his village. The nearby monument was erected to his memory in 1900.

The closure of the path is sometimes said to have been caused by the building of the present wall from Hampton around the northern and eastern borders of the park as far as Hampton Wick in the years 1734 to 1737. It is not clear why it took nearly 20 years for Bennett to start to take any action. A more likely explanation is that the stoppage happened later and was caused by the Great Avenue becoming fenced off from the rest of the Park to protect its status as a royal road. Whatever the truth, in 1752 the public were officially permitted to cross the Great Avenue road and it ceased to be a private royal route. When the footpath was re-opened, people started to linger and wander off the path as they walked through the park. It would seem that no attempts were made to stop access to the park, and it became fashionable to ride and picnic in the grasslands and woods.

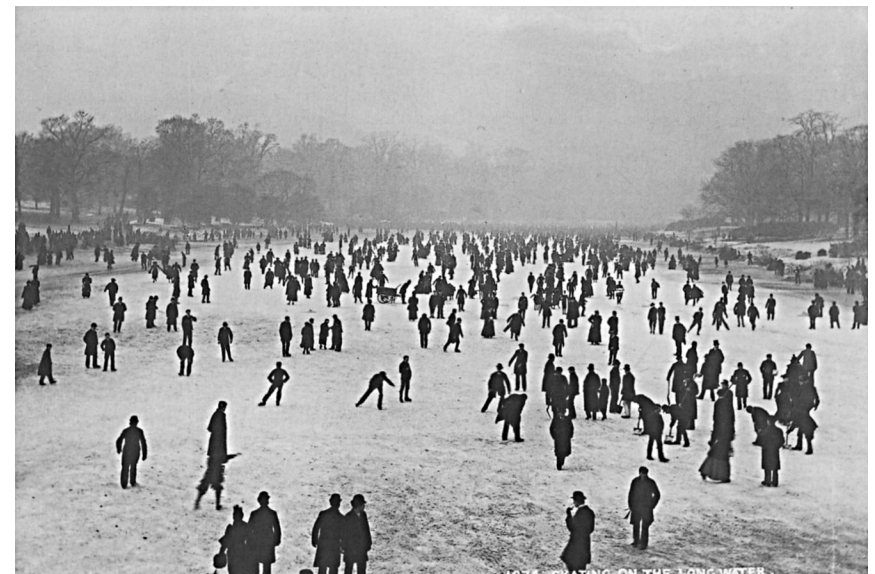
A trip to Bushy Park became a favourite outing for families from the East End of London. During the 1870s and 1880s Bushy Park

was the site of great cycle meets marking the heyday of the penny farthing. The habit grew of visiting the Great Avenue in the late spring during weeks when the chestnuts were in full bloom. Eventually, this was regularised with the help of the local and national press and a yearly event called "Chestnut Sunday" was born. It is claimed that a journalist on the Richmond and Twickenham Times would watch the chestnuts and inform the London newspapers when they were about to come into flower. Londoners would then turn up in their thousands the following Sunday to admire the spectacular display. By the end of the century, Great Avenue had become known as Chestnut Avenue.

Chestnut Sunday declined in popularity after the First World War but has recently been revived as a significant local event. This reflects the change in use of the park during the twentieth century. Its popularity as a destination for day trips from London declined and it settled into the role of a local park particularly valued by people living nearby for its tranquillity and rural atmosphere.

The potential local amenity value of Bushy Park had long been recognised. The Vicar of Hampton Wick had applied to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests for a portion

Below Skating on the Long Water in the winter of 1905/6



of Bushy Park to be used as a cricket ground. On 5th May 1863, he received a favourable response and a week later a club was formed with the Reverend as its President. A pitch was rapidly laid out, and the first match was played on 9th June 1863. In the same year, Teddington Cricket Club - who had lost their original grounds when the railway was opened - were granted a site to the west of Bushy Lodge. Hampton Hill and Teddington Town Cricket Clubs were also granted grounds in Bushy Park in the 1890s.

Even before Home Park officially opened to the public, it was found to be impossible to exclude them from skating when the Long Water and Ponds were frozen. It was reported that

they swarm over the fences in such numbers that it is found necessary to admit them.

In 1893, Queen Victoria agreed to open two-thirds of Home Park to the public from Whit Monday onwards. Only a small area was reserved for the stud, and the herbage (right to hay) was retained. The following year, Queen Victoria decided to close the stud and transfer all operations to Sandringham. She further decided that 120 acres were to be retained for public use and recreation. Six acres of meadow were to be set aside for allotments for the labourers of Hampton Wick (in an area between the Ice House and the Barge Walk). A golf club was to be formed on the south side of the Long Water. Initially, a nine-hole course was built and by 1898, the club already had about 400 members. Pressure was brought to bear to extend the course by another nine holes. This request was eventually agreed to in 1904 but without any extra land being granted.

Model yacht racing enthusiasts had been using the Rick Pond at the far eastern part of the park since it first became publicly accessible in 1893. Two years after the golf club was founded, these enthusiasts were given permission for the establishment of a model yacht club and to build a shed near the pond. In 1911, their boat-house was extended and painted green. It remains *in situ* today.

This increasing use of Home Park by the public led to a series of new access gates being introduced into the park. These were at Raven's Ait, opposite Thames Ditton and, in 1895, from the Barge Walk to the Pavilion Terrace. The departure of the Royal Stud left the 16 paddocks built by George IV unoccupied and all but three were eventually demolished.

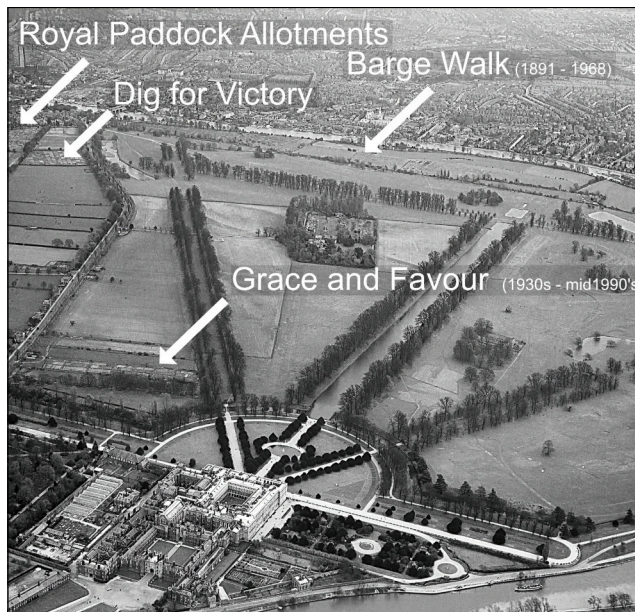
The Twentieth Century

From the turn of the last century, Home and Bushy Parks supplied an extensive space for public recreation and diversion. The once rural surroundings of the parks had been transformed into populous suburbs with particularly significant growth taking place at Hampton Hill to the west and Teddington to the north and east of Bushy Park. With this growth came the demand for amenities. There was a dwindling stock of free and available land outside the parks. Football, rugby and hockey pitches were established in both parks. The open air swimming pool at Hampton opened in 1920. In 1927 Hampton Wick benefited from the support of the then newly-formed National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) who persuaded King George V to dedicate two paddocks (opposite the church) to the youth of the village. A playground, recreation ground, pavilion and tennis courts were installed, and the complex that became known as the King's Field was opened by the Duke of York, later George VI (below). This project was part of the inspiration for the 471 King George V Playing Fields that were set up around the country by the NPFA as a memorial to the late King. "Our" King's Field is still a major recreational centre and home to a popular skateboard park with what the author is reliably informed are jump ramps, spine, pump bumps, kicker-to-kicker gaps and a bowled out corner.



The 1908 *Small Holdings and Allotments Act* placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. During the First World War temporary allotments were set up on the western and northern edges of Bushy Park for Hampton and South Teddington residents. The intent had been to return the allotments to parkland, but there was so much local agitation to preserve them that they were allowed to remain. Hampton Wick's own allotment ground on the Barge Walk, which was opened in 1896, was becoming insufficient for the demand. In 1921, Hampton Wick UDC successfully applied to the King for the use of four of the now-vacant horse paddocks by Church Grove - the three internal dividing walls were demolished and used as the foundation for the lanes between the blocks of plots. There are now around 200 plot-holders.

The triangular boating pool at the end of the Heron Pond was built around 1930 under a government scheme initiated after the end of the World War I to provide work for the unemployed in the Royal Parks. Both before and after the Second World War there were small rowboats and pedalos for hire and to be paraded solemnly around this tiny stretch of water until called in at the end of their hire period (bottom). The scheme was found to be uneconomic in the 1970s and removed. Now the pool is only used by model boat enthusiasts to show off their



constructions. The same scheme for the unemployed was used to create a "Paradise Garden" in the Waterhouse Wood and to install the playground near the Hampton Court gate.

The paddocks in Home Park became derelict and all but three were demolished between 1931 and 1935. One of the remaining paddocks was cultivated as allotments by the palace's grace-and-favour inhabitants until the mid-1990s and nowadays provides the entrance/exit route for the park at the Palace end. Another piece of parkland, to the west and adjacent to the Great Fountain Garden, was given over to the palace's garden apprentices in 1974. This wedge-shaped garden was also known as the Arboretum or the Twentieth-Century Garden. The two remaining paddocks lie to the east of these two. Meanwhile in Bushy Park, those paddocks not made over to use as allotments by George V in the 1920s were retained and are now back in use with the Royal Stud. The Crown Equerry also has a lease arrangement on the meadows in Home Park by the Barge Walk for several of the Queen's horses. Amongst others, the carriage horses from the Buckingham Palace Mews are brought to the park during their summer leave.

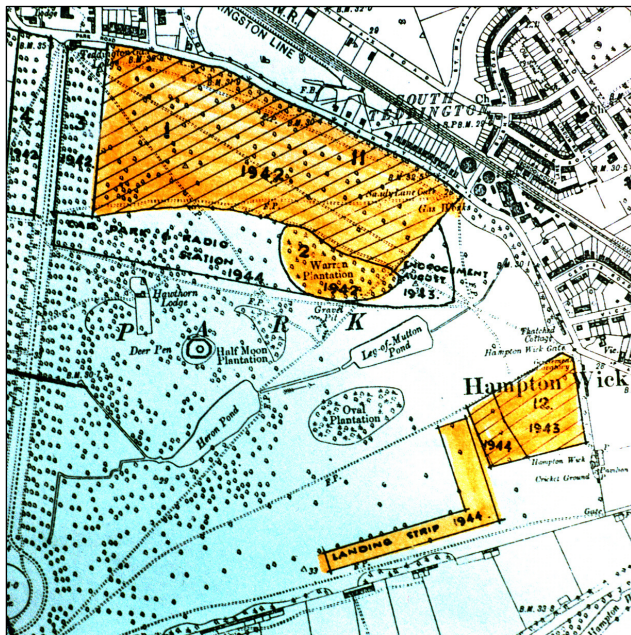
After the Second World War, a satellite of the palace nursery was established in the former kitchen garden of *Stud House*. The garden for many years provided flowers and shrubs for many of the royal palaces.



The Parks in the World Wars

Parts of Bushy Park had occasionally been used for the exercise of troops that were stationed there in the nineteenth century. Queen Victoria reviewed her troops in the park in 1871. Both Bushy and Home Parks were pressed into service during the two World Wars. During the First World War, grassland was put under the plough, and land was set aside for allotments and accommodation for troops. A Canadian regiment was stationed in Bushy Park, and temporary buildings were established in the gardens of *Upper Lodge*, which itself served as a hospital. After the Canadians had left, the King granted these premises to the London County Council, which established it as an 'open air' school for boys from East London suffering from respiratory diseases.

The parks were once again pressed into service during the Second World War. More land was given over to food production. During the invasion scare following Dunkirk, zig-zag trenches were dug in both Parks (traces of which can still be seen near Teddington Gate in Bushy Park).



Temporary buildings were put up in Bushy Park near Teddington to replace bombed-out London offices. After America entered the war in December 1941, these were taken over by the United States as the nucleus of the headquarters of their Eighth Army Air Force. The camp along with the ponds and the Diana Fountain were shrouded in camouflage netting. The RAF also built a camp in Bushy Park to the east of Camp Griffiss from the northeast. At its peak, nearly 8,000 troops were stationed in Bushy Park.

In 1944, General Eisenhower took over Camp Griffiss as the site of Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF). It was here that the initial plans for the Normandy invasion were hatched.

Following the end of the War some of the huts under the trees of Chestnut Avenue were occupied by squatters, and there was agitation to keep them for temporary accommodation during the acute housing shortage (below). This pressure was resisted, and the last of the camp's buildings was pulled down in 1963 and the whole area returned to grassland as agreed as a pre-condition for the use of the park. Very little trace remains - a ground plaque marks the site of Eisenhower's former office and there is a USAAF memorial installed by the RAF in memory of their US colleagues.



The Palace and the Parks: The Last 25 Years

The palace and most of its contents together with the parks are owned by The Queen 'in right of Crown'. This arrangement means that Her Majesty holds the palaces in Trust for the next monarch and by law cannot sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any interest in the palaces. Since 1989, the entities that formed the Manor of Hampton Court were split up and have gone their separate ways. The Palace and its Home Park is now managed by Historic Royal Palaces (HRP), an organisation established to manage the United Kingdom's royal palaces (including the Tower of London and Kensington Palace). Initially, HRP was a Government agency but, in 1998, it became an independent charity with its own Board of Trustees, receiving no funding from Government or the Crown.

Meanwhile Bushy Park joined The Royal Parks (TRP). This is an executive agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) responsible for managing London's Royal Parks. As well as Bushy Park, these comprise Greenwich Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Richmond Park, St James's Park, Green Park and Regent's Park.

Both HRP and TRP have the task of managing the royal assets in their charge. This involves balancing responsibility to conserve and enhance these unique environments with the need to use creative policies to encourage access and to increase opportunities for enjoyment, education and entertainment. They can both justifiably claim much recent success in meeting these responsibilities.

Conserving and Enhancing

Many major projects have been undertaken in the palace and its gardens in the last 25 years. Some of these were planned whilst others were precipitated by the disastrous fire which swept through the south front of the palace on Easter Monday 31 March 1986. The rebuild took five years. It provided an opportunity both to create a comprehensive archeological record of this important seventeenth-century building and to reinstate the State Apartments in a more imaginative manner. The intent was to produce not a slavish reproduction of the past but a set of historic interiors that could stand in their own right. A new route for visitors has been devised, finally abandoning the route set out by Edward Jesse when the palace was first opened to the public in 1838. The palace has been divided into six sections. Three are based on the historic use of its parts (the King's apartments, the Queen's apartments and the 'Georgian Rooms'), and three on date principles (Henry VIII's Apartments, the Tudor Kitchens and the Wolsey Rooms, and the Renaissance Picture Gallery). These changes were complemented by a reconstruction of the Privy Garden to the exact design of William III.

As with the palace, planned changes in the Royal Parks were overtaken by circumstances. The gales on the night of 15/16 October 1987 destroyed over 500 trees in Home Park - mainly in the Long Water avenue - and 1,329 were lost in Bushy Park. Major replanting programmes were immediately undertaken. In Home Park the cross avenues were restored to their Charles II original design between 1992 and 1996. This project necessitated demolishing the golf clubhouse and rebuilding it on a different site. Some 30 metres of the Rick Pond that had resulted from a 1930s extension of the original pond were also filled in. Following the success of this programme, replanting of the Long Water Avenue was undertaken in the winter of 2003-4. Having lost most of its original trees to storms and disease, the avenue had become very patchy. It had been been inter-planted in a piecemeal manner over the past 150 years. The old avenue was therefore completely felled and replaced with 544 lime trees of exactly the same variety as the original seventeenth-century trees. Sir Donald Gosling, a long-term Hampton Wick resident and co-founder of National Car Parks (NCP), funded both the cost of the avenue replanting and the installation of the Jubilee Fountain at the eastern end of the Long Water to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

The Heritage Lottery Fund part-funded two major restoration projects that were undertaken in Bushy Park as part of a £7m programme. In the mid-1990s, evidence had emerged of the existence of a Baroque-style garden of pools, cascades, basins and a canal that together had extended almost 1 km across the northern part of Bushy Park. It had originally been built around 1710 for Charles Montagu, 1st Earl of Halifax, who lived at *Upper Lodge* and was keeper of Bushy Park at the time. In the 1950s, the Admiralty built a vast tank alongside these Water Gardens to develop guided missiles and carry out submarine research. The site, including the ponds, played a significant role in the development of Cold War defence technology. It then fell into disuse and the cascade and pools all but disappeared beneath undergrowth and silt. Through the twentieth century their existence was largely forgotten. A campaign for restoration of the water gardens was launched by the Friends of Bushy and Home Parks. This was significantly helped by the discovery, in 1999, in a dusty palace stateroom, of an eighteenth century detailed painting of the original gardens. The restored gardens were opened to the public in autumn 2009.



The second project involved the restoration of the Diana Fountain in the centre of the great basin on Chestnut Avenue. The fountain includes a gilt bronze of Diana on a black marble and stone fountain, surrounded by bronzes of four putti, four water nymphs and four shells. It was originally commissioned by Charles I in the 1630s for his wife, Queen Henrietta Maria, and was located in her garden in Somerset House. It was moved to Hampton Court by Oliver Cromwell in 1656, remodelled by William III in 1690 and then in 1713, under Queen Anne, it was moved to its present location. The top part of the current base was part of the 1690 remodelling. The lower rusticated part was erected for the new site in Bushy Park. The central figure was gilded, apparently for the first time, for its re-erection. By 2009, only four spouts were working, and the bronzes were heavily stained by lime scale and guano having not been cleaned for some years. Evidence of gilding was found on all of the figures, and it was decided to gild Diana and to colour the remaining sculpture with a rich, dark brown patina.



Park Events

1. The Flower Show

The Hampton Court Flower Show (now known as Hampton Court Garden Festival) was established in 1990 and first sponsored by Network Southeast before the Royal Horticultural Society took over the running of the show in 1992. Held in July each year, it is now the world's largest annual flower show, with the showground at the west end of Home Park covering 34 acres on both sides of the Long Water. The show attracts over 125,000 visitors and the conceptual gardens at the show are considered to be some of the world's finest.

2. The Hampton Court Music Festival

The Hampton Court Music Festival is now an annual musical event held in June which was first run in 1993. The Festival is known for presenting artists across the music genres such as Sir Elton John and Eric Clapton to Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and José Carreras. The concerts are held in the open-air in the Palace's Base Court and, despite most of the audience being at the mercy of the weather, are regularly sold out. The existence of these major events raises the international profile and tourist awareness of the palace and parks.

3. Parkrun

When, on 2 October 2004, 13 runners took part in a 5K run in Bushy Park they little knew they were starting an activity which has now been adopted in almost 2,000 parks in 24 countries worldwide. To date over 6 million runners (and joggers and walkers) have participated. The operation is run by Parkrun Global Limited whose headquarters are located on Eel Pie Island, Twickenham. Not only did they successfully export the 5K run/jog/walk format but then, as their website proudly explains:

we ramped up the technology, and so the parkrun registration and barcode result system was born. Now many hundreds of thousands of parkrunners are processed, websites updated and millions of emails sent each week. The parkrun community is growing all the time – but it's all still based on the simple, basic principles formed from the start: "weekly, free, 5k, for everyone, forever."



1. The Flower Show 2. The Music Festival
3 The Parkrun 4. Hampton Court Half Marathon and 10K Events
5. Concours of Elegance



4. *Concours of Elegance*

The Concours of Elegance began at Windsor Castle in 2012, before moving to St James's Palace in 2013, Hampton Court Palace in 2014, Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh in 2015 before returning to Windsor Castle in 2016 and Hampton Court Palace in 2017 where it has remained. The event brings together a selection of 60 of the rarest cars from around the world – many of which will never have been seen before in the UK. Uniquely, the Concours of Elegance winner is not selected by a panel of judges but by the owners of the cars themselves. Each participant is asked to vote on the other models on display to decide which car is considered to be the 'Best of Show'.

5. *Hampton Court Half Marathon and 10K Events*

These two events take place in March and May each year and attract large numbers of entrants both experienced and novice. The 2021 events were each completed by around 2,000 entrants. The event starts and finishes within Home Park. The half marathon course exits the park and crosses Kingston Bridge. The competitors then follow the Portsmouth Road out to Littleworth Common before turning north and returning to the Palace by crossing Hampton Court Bridge. The course then follows the Barge Walk outside Home Park as far as Kingston Bridge and then turn into the park itself to return to the start. The 10K event starts in front of the Palace and also follows the Barge Walk before turning back into Home Park at Kingston Bridge.

Historic Buildings within the Royal Parks of Hampton Court

Upper Lodge

The building that now occupies the *Upper Lodge* site is at least the third - and quite possibly the fourth - to do so. According to the Twickenham Museum website:

Upper Lodge is surrounded by mediaeval ridge-and-furrow ploughing which is so well integrated and aligned with the lodge itself that the two must be either contemporary or, far more likely, the lodge was already there when the land around it was ploughed. There is a strong possibility that Upper Lodge started its existence as a small Roman marching fort, standing just where the land starts to fall away to the River Thames. Ancient field edges, fence lines and roads clearly form a rectangular pattern neither mediaeval nor modern.

The version of *Upper Lodge* that existed in 1703 was severely damaged in the catastrophic storm of 26 November in that year. So when in 1709 Charles Montagu, 1st Earl of Halifax, purchased the keeperships at Hampton Court - including the reversion of Middle Park and Harewarren in Bushy Park - he argued that *Upper Lodge* was in such a ruinous state that it was beyond repair. Since the cost of rebuilding it was a hefty £580, the Treasury agreed to its exemption from the Bushy Park keepership and instead to lease it to Halifax personally as his country residence.

Charles Montagu was a career politician and a canny operator. He created the Bank of England in 1694 and soon persuaded Isaac Newton to become the first Master of the Mint, a position the latter held for the next 30 years. The first task facing them was to solve the problem of coin clipping - the practice of cutting small pieces from the pure gold and silver coins in circulation which could then be melted into a bar and sold to a goldsmith or used to make counterfeit coins. Their solution was to gradually call in the old silver coinage and replace it with milled coins made of base rather than precious metal. To fund the huge cost of this replacement programme, Montagu



Above left *Upper Lodge* in 1775

Above right The Brewhouse now used as the Bushy Park Allotments Association Seed Store

Right Charles Montagu, 1st Earl of Halifax

Bottom The current edition of *Upper Lodge*, built around 1840.



devised the ingenious Window Tax system whereby an individual paid tax based simply on the number of windows in his property - a purely pragmatic method of assessment which remained in place for the next 150 years.

Halifax replaced the ruinous building in Bushy Park with an elegant house based on - though slightly smaller than - the Lower Lodge (*Bushy House*). He also created the original Water Gardens that have recently been so faithfully restored with support from the Lottery Fund. The total scheme including the Brewhouse (now used by the Bushy Park Allotment Association) had cost him £1,000.

When he died suddenly in 1715, he attempted via his will to leave *Upper Lodge* and the keepership of Bushy Park to Isaac Newton's niece Catharine Barton

as a small recompense for the Pleasure and Happiness I have had in her conversation.

However it was not his to give as it automatically passed to his nephew and heir George Montagu first Earl of Halifax of the second creation who preferred to live in the far grander *Bushy House*. Catherine meanwhile married John Conduitt who succeeded her uncle as Master of the Mint and the couple probably occupied the *Upper Lodge* occasionally until her death in 1739.

The present yellow-brick house had been built by 1840 and remained a Grace and Favour Residence until the start of the First World War when its new role was to provide accommodation for soldiers' wives and families.

Then, in 1915 King George V gave permission to the Canadian Red Cross for *Upper Lodge* to be used as a hospital for Canadian troops stationed in Bushy Park. It opened in December 1915 with 30 beds. At its peak it accommodated 450 patients between the six wards in Bushy Park and the further accommodation at its auxiliary location at *Clarence House*, Roehampton. During November 1916 the average number of patients in the Hospital and Clarence House was 436, of whom 75 were amputees.

Special clinics were established for patients with heart and kidney disease. By May 1918 the staff consisted of 10 officers, 6 nursing sisters, 90 other ranks and 5 civilians accommodated in



KING'S CANADIAN SCHOOL.—GAMES IN BUSHEY PARK.

The buildings vacated by the Canadian Hospital were used by the King's Canadian Residential Open Air School for the next 20 years to provide a total of 70,000 boys from the smoke-filled atmosphere of Central London with a month of health-giving fresh air and fun in Bushy Park. There was a programme of classroom education alongside sport and entertainment.



THE ROLL CALL, CANADIAN CAMP SCHOOL, BUSHEY PARK.

Upper Lodge itself as well as in the substantial stable mews to the south of the main house. The war ended on 11 November 1918 and, with the signing of the armistice, the patients and personnel were gradually evacuated. The Hospital was officially disbanded on 2nd September 1919.

Meanwhile the buildings and wards were being redecorated ready for handing over the site to the next occupants - the London County Council - following George V's agreement to their using it as an open-air school for children from the East End with TB and other respiratory disorders. 70 boys were admitted each week on a rolling basis and each intake stayed for four weeks. There was a programme of classroom education, sport and entertainment - including cinema shows and wireless (radio) concerts. Parents were allowed to visit on the third weekend of their boy's stay whilst those boys in their final week of residence would provide an entertainment for the others just before they left. By the time the King's Canadian Residential Open Air School closed on the outbreak of WW2 some 70,000 boys from the smoke-filled atmosphere of Central London had benefited from a month of health-giving fresh air and fun in Bushy Park.

Upper Lodge remained vacant until it was taken over by the Air Ministry following the entry of the US into WW2 in 1941. Bushy Park itself, under the name Camp Griffiss, served as the European Headquarters for the USAAF from July 1942 to December 1944 and also as the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) HQ from December 1943. This was the body responsible for planning the D-Day landings.

When the Air Ministry moved out at the end of the war they were replaced by the Admiralty Research Laboratory (ARL) who had been based in Teddington since 1921. The onset of the Cold War had increased ARL's scale of operations and *Upper Lodge* and its environs would provide the expansion capacity needed to meet this. A key component for ARL was the construction of the Rotating Beam Channel facility for large-scale underwater weapon testing. The original facility, finished in 1955, featured a large 160' diameter domed structure (larger than that of St Paul's) that covered a 15' deep, 120' diameter pool. Although the original building was demolished due to contamination, the footprint was retained and the replacement building known as *Rotunda House* gives an idea of the scale of the original.



Above and right

The Rotating Beam Channel facility had a dome that was larger than St Paul's Cathedral. The technician on the right gives a clue to the sheer scale as does the central gear wheel which is on display near *Upper Lodge*



Right

Rotunda House retains the same footprint and has some of the original machinery in its basement.



Below

This aerial view shows *Upper Lodge*, *Rotunda House* and the newly refurbished Water Gardens.



Barton's Cottage



When the Duke of Clarence became Ranger of Bushy Park in 1797, he used this cottage as the centre of his extensive farming operations. It was named after Sir John Barton who lived there. When it became clear that the Duke was likely to inherit the throne (as William IV) he charged Barton with managing the affairs of his mistress and the ten members of their joint but illegitimate FitzClarence family whilst he went off to Europe to find a bride to serve as his future queen. Barton served as deputy comptroller of the Royal Mint in the early part of the nineteenth century and later as Treasurer to William's wife Queen Adelaide.



King William IV
and
Queen Adelaide



Bushy House (1663)



"Build a Lodge for our Service in one of Our Parks att Hampton Court called North Parke."

This instruction was issued by Charles II to Edward Proger, a Groom of the King's Bedchamber, in 1663. The resulting lodge was magnificent by any standards. It cost four thousand pounds to build - four times more than the Earl of Halifax was to spend on *Upper Lodge* over forty years later. The King rewarded Proger's loyalty with

money, privileges and offices. The two were also close personal friends with Edward acting as go-between in the King's dalliances with his many mistresses, one of whom later became Proger's wife. Proger had become Keeper of Middle and Harewarren Parks in 1665 but by the time of the King's death in 1685 had still not been paid for building the Lodge. Eventually in 1711 the Treasury cannily agreed to pay him the money as an annual pension of £400 but, now aged 90, Proger collected only two instalments before he died.

Although he had purchased the reversion of Proger's keeperships, Charles Montagu Earl of Halifax did not move to *Bushy House* on the latter's death and himself died unexpectedly just two years later.

His nephew George Montagu was created Earl of Halifax and adopted *Bushy House* as his London seat. He set about enlarging Proger's original square block by adding four wings, one at each corner, connected to the main building by curved corridors. The new Earl had surrounded the House by formal gardens as well as enclosing extra land out of the park to add to the already extensive grounds. It was during his time that the present wall round the north of the park from Hampton to the Wick was built.



Above Bushy House in 1827

When George Montagu died, his son - also named George - inherited the title of Ranger. The new incumbent had married into an inheritance of £110,000 in 1718 by agreeing to change his surname to that adopted by his 15-year old bride (Dunk). The couple had three daughters but no male heir. Following her death in 1753, George Montagu Dunk indulged his power as Ranger to appropriate eight acres of Hampton Court Green to create *Hampton Court House* where he installed his mistress, a singer at Drury Lane.

Following his death in 1771, the Rangership reverted to being a Royal gift. It was George III's wish that it should go to Lord North, grandson of George Montagu and nephew of Montagu Dunk. However the law concerning conflicts of interest did not allow for this to happen so his wife Lady North was instead given the post. Lord North himself was mainly remembered for his lack of direction in the American War of Independence and was held responsible for the loss of America as a British Colony. He resigned from Parliament and moved his family to *Bushy House* in 1782 where he died 10 years later. Lady North continued to hold the position of Ranger until her own death in 1797, which allowed the opportunity of a royal successor in the person of William, Duke of Clarence, third son of George III.



Above A garden party in the grounds of Bushy House 1906

When he became the Ranger, William was a minor royal, a failed sea captain, chronically in debt and of doubtful reputation. He had long held ambitions as a gentleman farmer and Bushy Park would allow him to fulfil these away from the spotlight of London life. To allay his financial problems, he immediately dug up and sold the gravel on either side of Chestnut Avenue - which is why the carriageway nowadays is above the level of the land on each side. He also felled over 750 trees including the last of Henry VIII's Tudor oaks. Within a year there were almost no trees left and he had enclosed over half the park as his private farm.

For some years William had been living with the greatest comedy actress of the day Dora Jordan by whom he eventually had ten children. Dora's earnings from the stage conveniently provided some extra income to the strained household budgets. However, when it became clear that, with the death of the Prince Regent's only daughter in childbirth, William could quite possibly become next in line to the throne, he discarded Dora and went to Europe to find a princess who was prepared to marry him. He gave the responsibility for providing for Dora to his financial advisor who was however more concerned about his master's finances than that of his ex-mistress. Dora eventually fled to France to escape her creditors in 1815 and died in poverty just a year later.



NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY, TEDDINGTON.

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A comparison of these two aerial photos from the 1950s (above) and 2022 (below) shows how much NPL has changed over the last 70 years. Only three of the buildings from the 1950s campus still exist whilst the Admiralty Research buildings (above lower right) were demolished in the late 1990s to provide the site for today's 89-property Admiralty Way private housing development.



William was finally successful in his quest for a bride and in 1818 he and Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen were married. She was affectionate and motherly to her ready-made family and, on William's accession to the throne in 1830, she became the Ranger of Bushy Park until her own death in 1849. *The Adelaide* pub on Park Road Teddington is a lasting symbol of this popular lady's connections with Bushy Park.

In 1865 Queen Victoria offered *Bushy House* to the Duc de Nemours, second son of the exiled King of France. The Duc was later able to return home but retained *Bushy House* as a possible refuge in case of further trouble and as a storehouse for his considerable possessions. Nemours died in 1896 and *Bushy House* was returned to the Crown.

At about this time the Royal Society had been trying for some while to find a home for its proposed National Standard Laboratory

for standardising and verifying instruments, for testing materials, and for the determination of physical constants.

At the end of 1900 Queen Victoria granted them the use of *Bushy House* by her Grace and Favour. The site was enlarged by the acquisition of additional land out to the Hampton Road boundary and the complex was formally opened on 19 March 1902 by HRH The Prince of Wales. Laboratories were established in the basement and on the ground floor of the main house whilst the upper storeys provided the Director's private residence.

Amongst the important research undertaken here throughout the twentieth century were the development of the quartz clock (1923); the earliest experiments in radar (carried out by Robert Watson-Watt on the sports field in 1933); Barnes Wallis's tests for the development of the bouncing bomb in the ship tanks; determination of the speed of light (1950); and the first accurate atomic clock (1955).

After a near-20 year period of private sector management, NPL returned to direct government control in 2015 and is now managed by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. It currently employs around 1,000 staff.

Guns Lodge

Designed by Decimus Burton in 1827, this pair of lodges and gates to the south-east of *Bushy House* serve as the southern entrance to the site, giving access onto Glazebrook Drive.

These two small early C19 one-storey square buildings, yellow brick stucco with slate roofs each one window wide, were occupied by one tenant.

Burton is understandably better known for some of his other more significant projects, such as the Palm House and Temperate House in Kew Gardens.



Hawthorn Lodge



Up until 1709, each of the three parts of Bushy Park, together with Home Park, had its own park keeper who was provided with a lodge. *Hawthorn Lodge* was originally built for the keeper of Harewarren Park in the late seventeenth century. It was a very modest structure compared with its equivalents in the other parks. It became redundant as a keeper's lodge when the three keeperships in Bushy Park were amalgamated in 1709 and *Upper Lodge* - and later *Bushy House* - became the new keeper's sole accommodation.

Little is known of the former keeper's lodge for a century (when it appears to have been occupied by under-keepers). In the early 1800s it was extended and divided into two residences for staff of the Duke of Clarence (later William IV), who was then Ranger of the park and living just up the road in *Bushy House*. The scheme of division was unusual in being made across the length of the building. The front south-facing part (including its extensive garden) formed one property with the rear forming the second. The earliest recorded residents were, from 1815, Samuel Jemmett (the Duke's head page) in the front part (known as *Hawthorn Lodge*) and, from 1825, Edward Blake (one of the Duchess's pages) in *Hawthorn Cottage* at the rear.

As related elsewhere, the Duke of Clarence had set himself up as a gentleman farmer, enclosing several areas of the park for agricultural use. On his accession in 1830, the Ministry of Works immediately instituted a policy of reclaiming the farms for parkland use. Several farm buildings were demolished, and the Treasury proposed the same fate for the two parts of *Hawthorn Lodge* as soon as they became vacant. Samuel Jemmett died in 1855, and the Treasury duly sent a letter to the Lord Chamberlain asking Queen Victoria's concurrence with the proposed demolition. The response was swift: just three days later, the Queen's secretary wrote back to report that HM

does not recollect sanctioning demolition of the house ... and wishes, therefore, that it may be ascertained when such sanction was obtained.

No further reference to the matter appears, and the houses remained in grace-and-favour occupation until the 1930s. Around this time repairs were carried out to deepen the well and improve the drainage - described as

in such a condition as to be prejudicial to the health of the occupier of the Lodge and of the adjoining Cottage.

Evidently the facilities in both properties were very basic. Alfred Wakeford, who was the Queen's page, requested the provision of a bathroom in 1919 and again in 1923. On both occasions, the Ministry of Works and Privy Purse Office agreed that the works could not be justified given the age and condition of the structure. Wakeford arranged for the installation of a gas supply at his own expense. In 1931, his neighbour in the lodge died and, at the wish of the Queen, this portion was added to Wakeford's grant, and he finally got his bathroom.

When Alfred Wakeford died in 1936, the property was extensively refurbished along with the installation of electricity. The house was allocated to the Chief Accountant of the Privy Purse Office, but now on official lease terms rather than as a grace-and-favour. Today *Hawthorn Lodge* is privately owned.

White Lodge



This 2-storey house dates from early C18 and was probably part of the original Great Avenue scheme designed by Sir Christopher Wren and George London. The building is set sideways to the road and was built to close the vista from the Diana Fountain down the long Lime Avenue which meets the Chestnut Avenue there.



It is located in the eastern section of the area known as The Stockyard which also houses the park's administrative centre along with other facilities including a Field Studies Council Education Centre and the Companion Cycling organisation which provides partnered cycling for people with special needs.

Hampton Court House



This house was built in 1757 by George Montague Dunk, the second Earl of Halifax for his mistress Mrs Anna Maria Donaldson. As Ranger of Bushy Park, Halifax was based in *Bushy House* at the other end of Chestnut Avenue so the couple were conveniently adjacent but decorously separated.

The building itself is outside the park since it stands on Hampton Court Green but a section of park on the north side had been enclosed as a semicircular private garden, finally reverting back to Bushy Park in 1945 when the property was bought by Middlesex Council Council. It was then used as a home for elderly ladies until 1982 when it became a Save the Children's home occupied, amongst others, by 'boat people' - unaccompanied refugee children from Vietnam (right). It changed hands again in 1996 and opened as *Hampton Court House School* in 2001. It now has 240 pupils covering pre-nursery to 18.



The Ice House



James I of England commissioned the construction of the first modern ice house in Greenwich Park in 1619 followed by this one at Hampton Court in 1625-6. It is known to have originally been a brick-lined round well, 30 feet (9.1 metres) deep and 16 feet (4.8 metres) wide and covered with a thatched timber building. At some stage, the superstructure was rebuilt in brick, and the thatch replaced by today's tiled, pitched roof.

An ice house is a subterranean structure, built and used for the storage of ice and in turn for the preservation of food. When ice is packed together, its relatively small surface area slows down the thawing process. The ice was packed between layers of straw, keeping it frozen for as long as two years. In severe winters, ice for the Home Park Ice House would have come from the river itself. Otherwise, ice could be made from nearby Wick Pond. Early maps show two square-shaped overflows from the pond with sluices between themselves and the main pond. The water level in the overflows could be adjusted and maintained long enough to produce the ice required.

Stud House



Stud House has had a much-varied existence. It was built late in his reign by Charles II (who died in 1685) as the residence and centre of operations for the Master of the Horse who was keeper of his royal stud. Plans by Henry Wise, the King's gardener, from the early 1700s clearly show the house and nursery. During the rest of the century, the stud operations grew and expanded into more general farming with the establishment of a range of farm buildings and workers cottages.

The stud was maintained by the first three Georges, but George IV was the real founder of the afterwards famous Hampton Court Stud. In 1812 (whilst still Prince Regent), George established a stud

for riding horses of good strain,

intending that they should all be greys. He began breeding his own racehorses and spent considerable sums of money. He had 33 brood mares and many famous stallions. At the time, *Stud House* was occupied by the Prince Regent's secretary. George himself was a very frequent visitor to Home Park.

However, there was concern over

the privacy and safety of the Stud Establishment.

In 1814, John Nash was requisitioned to

make an estimate to enclose Stud House and Garden in Hampton Court by a Plantation, and to fence the same, and remove the Sheds to the fence.

The house itself was remodelled and enlarged, the most substantial alterations being made between 1817 and 1821, all ostensibly to make it

suitable for occupation by the Prince Regent during his visits to the stud.

But in 1820, when he came to the throne, George turned his back on the stud, the horses were all sold, and he transferred his attention to converting *Buckingham House* into his new palace, again with the help of John Nash.

Following George IV's death *Stud House* reverted to the Master of the Horse, initially Lord Albemarle, who resided there until 1841. The last person to occupy *Stud House* in that capacity was Colonel Sir George Ashley Maude. As Crown Equerry for 35 years, he has been credited with re-establishing the international reputation of the royal stud. On his death in 1894, the stud operations were transferred to Sandringham and the house reverted to grace-and-favour usage. The last grace-and-favour resident was Lady Mittie Rossmore, who lived there from 1911 until her death in 1953.

The house was by now in a poor state and the Queen turned it over to The Crown Estate who were hopeful of finding someone prepared to take a long lease and bear the cost of putting the premises to right.

It took six years but, on 14 April 1960, a lease for the property was finally signed by Mrs Nora Reynolds-Veitch for a term to run for 28 years. She was undoubtedly the right candidate. Not only was she wealthy, she also had a long track record of living in ex-royal lodges, so she knew what she was taking on.

From the 1990s Tony Giorgardis a Greek shipping magnate held the lease which he then sold in April 2007 to Alexander Lebedev, the father of the current owner Evgeny Lebedev, for £12,250,000. Evgeny Lebedev (below) - his official name is Baron Lebedev of Hampton and Siberia - is an energetic socialite, art collector and wealthy businessman. He is the owner of both the *Evening Standard* and *The Independent*.

However, unlike most of his fellow Russian oligarchs who base themselves in London, Evgeny Lebedev has actually spent most of his life in Britain. He was eight when his father, Alexander, took a job at the Soviet embassy. Unbeknownst to most people - including his son - he wasn't a diplomat but a KGB spy. Following the collapse of Soviet Communism in 1992, the family returned to Moscow, where Alexander later bought the National Reserve Bank, nabbed 30 percent of Aeroflot and made other investments that earned him billions. He has since been dubbed "the spy who came in for the gold".



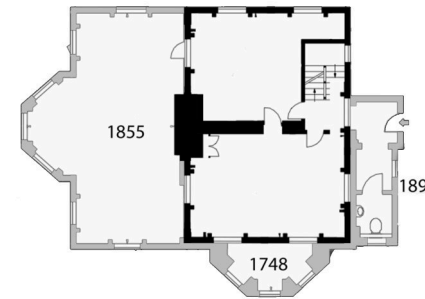
Pavilion



Today's *Pavilion*, which is the last survivor of a set of four originals, has recently been joined by a very convincing replica.

The originals were set around a bowling green and designed to provide a visual end-point for the raised terrace that William III created along Home Park's southern boundary with the river. The layout of the pavilions was simple - they were doubtless fitted out as withdrawing rooms, where tea and coffee could be served, card games played and conversation enjoyed. Anthony Highmore's charming 1744 illustration (above left) imagines the original scene with the bowling green and its four pavilions in full swing though in reality, even from the outset, they were very little used.

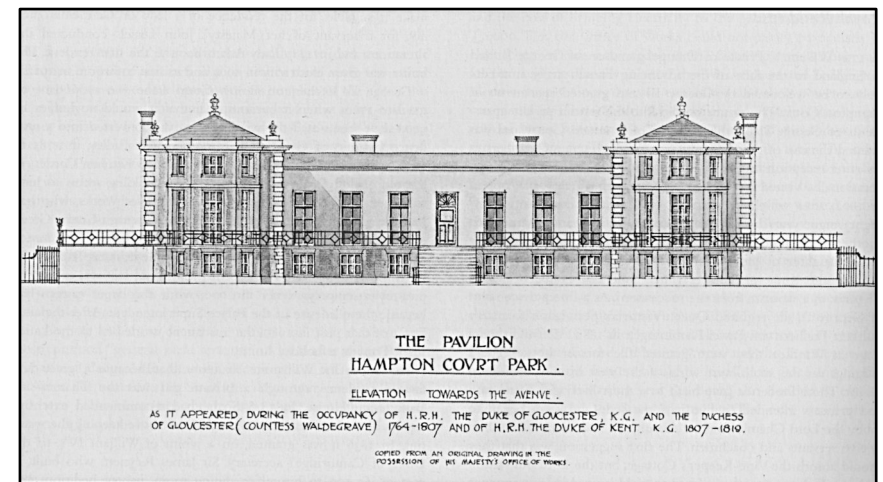
At first sight, there is such a difference between Highmore's representation of the pavilions and today's remaining original (top left) that one doubts they are actually the same buildings. The clue is in the position of the chimney stack which, as Highmore shows, used to be external but now protrudes from towards the centre of the roof. Everything on each side and in front of that has been added to the original, changing its character from a pleasure pavilion to a fine, if inauthentic, residence.



In 1748, Princess Amelia, the second daughter of George II, asked to be allowed to move into the two easternmost pavilions and demanded the insertion of bay windows. There were only four rooms in each pavilion, apart from those in the basements. Of these eight rooms, six were furnished as

bedrooms; there was a dining room and a second dining room which also served as a withdrawing room. The kitchen, other domestic offices, and the servants' rooms were in the basements. Amelia greatly enjoyed riding and hunting and, in addition to the two parks available to her at Hampton Court, was also able to use Richmond Park in her capacity as Park Ranger there. In 1760, King George II bought Gunnersbury Park for his favourite daughter and she left the pavilions soon after.

She was followed in 1764 by her nephew Prince William Henry, the newly created Duke of Gloucester and one of King George III's younger brothers. The Duke made regular use of all four pavilions until his death in 1805. He demanded several changes be made including the construction of a building 13 feet high to connect the two easternmost pavilions. It was a lath and plaster structure and gave him two extra rooms and an entrance porch.



The next occupant of the pavilions was Edward, Duke of Kent, the fourth son of King George III. He had made an unsavoury name for himself as a martinet and achieved the reputation of being the most hated man in the British Army. He was sent home to England and given a few appointments where he could not cause trouble. One of these was Ranger and Keeper of Home Park. He soon announced that he claimed the possession of all the buildings in the Home Park including the pavilions and *Stud House*. He demanded a survey be made of them with estimates of the cost of all the essential repairs and alterations.

The survey on the pavilions included the fact that

the basement storey ... is very damp and much decayed in parts from being frequently overflowed, the water having been at particular times from 3 to 4 feet high above the floor

and went on to say

It is proposed to raise the floors of the basement storey above the level of the highest floods, which will cause the other floors of the pavilions also to be raised; (and) to connect the pavilions with a Brick building instead of the present Lath and Plaster building.

The total cost of the projects was enormous, and the programme proposed by the Duke of Kent was not followed although, in 1811, the connecting building was rebuilt in brick. The Duke then lost interest in the pavilions and passed them to his Equerry General James Moore. In any case, the Duke had become much involved in the race to ensure the succession to the throne of the United Kingdom after the sudden death of the only heir-apparent in 1817. He returned to England with his new royal bride for the birth of their daughter, the future Queen Victoria in 1819. He died the following year.

The dilapidation of the two western pavilions was such that they were demolished sometime around 1820. The same fate apparently awaited the eastern pavilions and the linking building when General Moore's widow died in 1852. It had been intended to then pull them down. But prompted, no doubt, by her purse keeper, the Queen asserted

She was justified in expecting that the number of Houses or Apartments in Her Gift shall not be diminished.

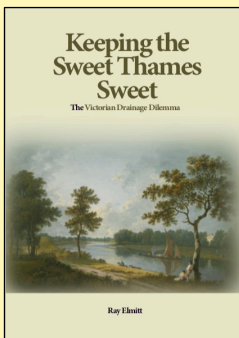
It seems that, in the face of this royal challenge, a compromise was reached. The central building and one of the pavilions was pulled down and in 1855 the remaining pavilion significantly enlarged on the south-west (river) side resulting, as previously noted, in the new position of the chimney-stack within the roofline. It resumed its role as a grace-and-favour apartment.

Ernest Law, born in 1854, had spent his boyhood at the Palace, where his mother had been granted an apartment. He carried out extensive research into the history of the Palace and this led to the publication of his *History of Hampton Court Palace* in three volumes between 1885 and 1891. In April 1894 he wrote a long letter to the Lord Chamberlain proposing that he should be appointed Curator or Surveyor of the Palace and Pictures, coupling this with the observation that the holding of such an appointment would necessitate his having a residence in the Palace.

Soon after he took possession of the *Pavilion* in 1896, he was given permission to extend it by building a library and bedrooms over the kitchen. Ernest Law was not exactly a popular man. His esteem in the locality dropped still further when he enclosed part of the Barge Walk to extend his garden and much more so when he then obtained permission, rather surprisingly, to enclose upwards of three acres of the Home Park for his own use. Following his death in 1930, the *Pavilion* had two further grace-and-favour residents until it was surrendered to the Crown Estate Commissioners in 1963 and its lease put up for auction.

In 2012, a brochure was produced in conjunction with the proposed sale of the *Pavilion* on a 120-year Crown Lease. It illustrated an approved scheme for the construction of a second pavilion to the original design and a(n) underground building linking it to the existing pavilion. It seemed that once again, the basement of the pavilions were to be full of water, but this time intentionally ... in the form of a swimming pool. The scheme - including what became a much enlarged replica pavilion - was completed in 2019.

New and Recent Publications from Hampton Wick History



Keeping the Sweet Thames Sweet The Victorian Drainage Dilemma

Arguably the most down-to-earth yet intractable problem facing communities and their local government institutions in the second half of the nineteenth century was simply this:

how to deal with the human waste generated by an ever-growing population?

It was a topic that occupied huge numbers of column inches in newspapers and fuelled lively and sometimes bitter debate.

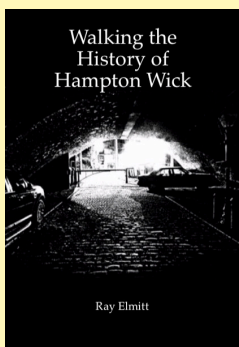
- How did such an unprepossessing issue come to force itself centre-stage on the attention of so many worthy and capable politicians - from both central and local government?

- Why did it leave them struggling to find solutions for so long?

- How was it eventually resolved?

This account seeks to answer these three questions both for Central London with its Metropolitan Board of Works and for the 27 communities in the lower reaches of the Thames from West Molesey to Mortlake.

152 pages 85 maps and illustrations Price £8.50



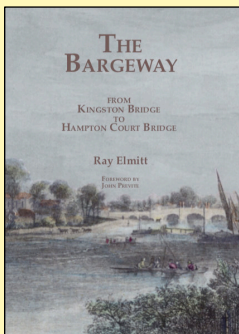
Walking the History of Hampton Wick

How to explore 300 years in 90 minutes

The idea for this book came from a guided tour I devised for the pupils of Year 2 at Hampton Wick Infants and Nursery School some years ago. To fit the school timetable it was designed to require just 90 minutes to complete and took in nine places of interest to a curious seven-year-old's mind. An adult version of the walk – on which this current volume is based – followed in 2012.

However this book has been produced in an era of Covid-19 where social distancing and government restrictions on inter-mingling preclude the use of tour guides. So the purpose of this book-version of the walk is to allow would-be explorers to self-guide themselves around the route. The original commentary script of the nine stops on the guided walk is reproduced here and it should still take 90 minutes to walk, look and read – just! But this content is now augmented with instructions on the route, information on additional items of interest to be seen along the way and details of the 14 English Heritage Listed Buildings passed en route.

66 pages 68 maps and illustrations Price £6.50



The Bargeway

from Kingston Bridge to Hampton Court Bridge

This book is about the tow path and track between Kingston and Hampton Court Bridges on the Middlesex bank of The River Thames, originally known as The Bargeway and now known as Barge Walk. It runs for nearly three miles and occupies the land between the river's edge and the boundary of the Home Park of Hampton Court Palace. Its purpose was to provide a route for horses engaged in towing barges along the river and the close of land - which covers 18 acres - was known as the Bargeway. The route had been maintained and operated since the end of the twelfth century by the Corporation of the City of London.

The arrival of railways brought about a steady decline in barge traffic whilst the invention of the steam- and later diesel-powered tugboats finally obviated the need for horses. Thus the Bargeway lost its purpose and eventually it also lost its name. Kelly's Directory referred to it as Riverbank, or Barge Walk from 1892 but in 1923 this became just Barge Walk.

The obvious way to organise a book about a route is to start at one end and travel to the other. This account makes the journey twice: firstly to acquaint the reader with what exists today and then to explain how it all came to be.

110 pages 84 maps and illustrations Price £7.50

On sale at **Priyas Local**

85 High Street, Hampton Wick (opposite the station)

Or from www.hamptonwickhistory.org.uk