

# THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GARDENS TRUST RESEARCH AND RECORDING PROJECT 2019–20

SARAH RUTHERFORD

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

BGT's Research and Recording Project pilot phase in 2014–15 was introduced in *Records* 56 (2016) and our progress into succeeding phases, 2016–9, was published in *Records* 57–60 (2017–20). Our volunteers continue researching and recording parks and gardens in historic Bucks that are generally not included on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest* (denoting national significance). To add to the 65 sites summarised in the previous five volumes of *Records*, we here add summaries for 17 sites throughout the county covering a wide range of sites, which are the fruits of our work in 2019–20. This work has been funded with generous assistance from several donors, including Bucks County Council (BCC, from April 2020 part of the new unitary authority Buckinghamshire Council, BC), the Finnis Scott Foundation, the Roland Callingham Foundation, members of BGT, and invaluable help in kind from Bucks Council HER.

In addition to the main site work two other themed projects were pursued. The Artists' Gardens project continued work begun in 2017, and a new project on Public Parks was initiated. The circumstances of the Covid pandemic during 2020 slowed down the work of our volunteers, but they are to be congratulated for continuing as far as possible and achieving a considerable output, given the access restrictions to archives and making site visits.

## ARTISTS' GARDENS *by Claire de Carle*

A summary of this project was included in *Records* 60 (2019) and work on artists' gardens continues to run alongside the main research project. It was hoped that we would secure funding to publish our findings, but with grants now scarce due to the Covid pandemic it is more important that any

finance we obtain funds the research work rather than a book.

Therefore, we shall be adding the reports to our excellent new website under the 'Artists' Gardens' heading: <https://bucksgardenstrust.org.uk/category/artists-gardens-project/> Of course, this has the advantage that we can easily add to the body of work and amend where necessary.

## PUBLIC PARKS *by Claire de Carle*

The Covid pandemic led to the closure of archives and the need to social distance meant that most site visits were not possible, therefore the BGT volunteers would be yearning for an exciting new project to occupy their time during lockdown. Public Parks provided the perfect subjects. Everyone was talking about the importance of urban green spaces and essentially, they remained open. As most parks in Bucks were created during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was ample material available online. Initially, volunteers were asked to write short reports to be included in extra 'lockdown' issues of our online newsletter. The volunteers produced excellent articles which were published over the summer and autumn of 2020. The project was boosted in August when Campbell Park in Milton Keynes was awarded Grade II on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens. In addition, an excellent report by Neil Higson (Chief Landscape Architect of Milton Keynes Development Corporation from 1977) was published in our autumn 2020 newsletter, recounting his experience in setting up the MK parks development and design. The intention is to review these previously overlooked public parks when the restrictions ease to allow archival research, and produce fuller reports for inclusion on the website: <https://bucksgardenstrust.org.uk/category/newsletter/>



FIGURE 1 The garden front of the old cottage in Potter End near Great Missenden, before re-building 1857. Watercolour by William Callow. (*Buckinghamshire County Museum – AYBCM: 1945.223.9*)



FIGURE 2 The Tithe Barn Garden, Chesham Bois. Pencil drawing by Car Richardson, c.1920s. With thanks to Tony Voss, <http://paintings.antipole.co.uk/>

The following summaries set out the historic interest of these varied types of designed landscapes, and are taken from the individual site dossiers. Rather than address nationally important sites which are generally relatively well understood, we mainly target the 400 locally significant sites identified by BCC in 1996 in their County Register Review, prioritising those which are at risk of change. These sites, which are of at least local interest, are especially vulnerable to inappropriate management and developmental change due to a lack of available information about their historical significance and the extent of their survival.

## DESIGNED LANDSCAPE SITE DOSSIERS, 2019–20

The overviews below are arranged by broad site type (although not all fit neatly into categories and some overlap several) and their key historic and surviving interest is described. A pattern of historic interest and current significance is beginning to emerge in the types of sites in Bucks. We hope to draw more informed conclusions over the coming years as the body of information swells, and we will publish these in *Records* in due course. Over 70 of our dossiers are available on the BGT website: <http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk/locally-important-sites/>

Links to these dossiers have been added to historic features included within the sites that are Listed by Historic England as part of the Enriching the List scheme.

## OVERVIEWS

### Tudor and Jacobean Gardens

***Ascott Old House*** (BC HER 0110102000)  
*by Sarah Rutherford*

The nationally significant earthwork remains of the extensive gardens and park of a lost mid-16<sup>th</sup>-century manor house. These include large-scale terraces, water features, pond, extensive and possibly unique broderie pattern beds, and an adjacent warren, now within pasture. These are set within former parkland, now ploughland which retains a large clump, Wingpark Clump. The site

was abandoned following the destruction of the house in the 1640s with little disturbance since. The designed landscape is comparable locally with Quarrendon House near Aylesbury, and further afield with other great 16<sup>th</sup>- and early 17<sup>th</sup>-century gardens including Theobalds, Hertfordshire and Holdenby, Northants.

***Quarrendon House*** (BC HER 0055601002)  
*by Sarah Rutherford*

The nationally significant earthwork remains of the extensive gardens and park of a lost 16<sup>th</sup>-century country house. These include a large-scale late 16<sup>th</sup>-century water garden with terraces and canals, and a park warren, all now within pasture. The site was abandoned in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the house gradually demolished by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, with little disturbance since. The designed landscape is comparable in scale locally with Ascott Old House, Wing, and further afield with other great 16<sup>th</sup>- and early 17<sup>th</sup>-century gardens including Theobalds, Hertfordshire and Holdenby, Northants, but the great water garden is unique.

### Country Houses

***Greenlands*** (BC HER 0181605000)  
*by Sarah Rutherford*

The grounds of a substantial 19<sup>th</sup>-century Thames-side country villa, developed in 3 main phases alongside those of the villa. The informal pleasure grounds of c.1810 around the new villa were supplemented in the early 1850s by the park and old kitchen garden, and in the early 1870s by a new kitchen garden and lodges; a final, minor, later 19<sup>th</sup>-century phase saw the pleasure grounds extended east. This layout, including much planting, survives largely intact although with some losses around the villa and in the kitchen gardens resulting from the use as a management college since 1946 and construction of new buildings and car parking. It is part of an important group of Thames-side villas along this stretch including Taplow Court, Cliveden, Harleyford, Danesfield, Wittington, Fawley Court (all Bucks), Culham Court and Park Place (both Berkshire).



FIGURE 3 Greenlands: c.1869, part of the pleasure grounds laid out c.1810 for the Thames-side villa. (Sylvia Stanley. This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greenlands,\\_Henley-upon-Thames,\\_about\\_1869.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greenlands,_Henley-upon-Thames,_about_1869.JPG))

**Hampden House** (BC HER 0457804000)  
by Gwen Miles, June Timms, Sarah Rutherford

A 16<sup>th</sup>-century Chiltern country house with medieval origins, extended and remodelled in the 1740s in an early example of Gothick style, considerably predating Horace Walpole's extensive and influential use of it at Strawberry Hill from 1749. Hampden House also predates the use of Gothick elsewhere in Bucks including at West Wycombe (1750s–70s), Medmenham (1750s) and Nether Winchendon (c.1800). The 18<sup>th</sup>-century formal and informal gardens and park overlie a medieval park and woodland and incorporate 16<sup>th</sup>-century and later avenue rides and vistas embracing the extensive rolling setting, including the impressive 1.5km long Glade, a ride initiated it is believed for the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1563. The designed landscape is one of the more important of its type in Bucks, carried out

in successive phases for a family of ancient connection here, and is likely of national significance. The 18<sup>th</sup>-century layout survives with minor changes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The grounds of this major Chiltern country estate reflect the fashionable tastes of the owners, expressed intermittently, when their wealth permitted. The layout is based on a major phase in the 1740s when the house was remodelled for the last John Hampden, incorporating earlier formal features, particularly rides and avenues, which was continued by his successor Robert Trevor, and the park was landscaped in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century. Mature trees survive throughout including lime, sweet chestnut, plane, oak, an impressive Lebanon Cedar in the forecourt which may be part of the 1740s planting supplied by nurseryman Favin of Thame, and beech, which are particularly fine in Coach Hedgerow. The most important early feature



FIGURE 4 Hampden House: The 18th-century formal and informal gardens and park complement the early Gothic house. They overlie a medieval park and woodland and incorporate The Glade, a ride reputedly laid out for Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1563 (*S Rutherford*)

is The Glade, originating in 1563 for the visit of Queen Elizabeth, and extended in the 1740s when it was embellished with the Pepper Pot Lodges.

**Liscombe Park** (BC HER 0107606000)  
*Mary Buckle and Sheila Meekums*

Liscombe Park is the setting for a country house. The park, gardens and pleasure grounds were laid out in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, altered in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and again in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century framework is largely intact, particularly the boundaries, entrances and drives, but the gardens have in part been lost to recent development. Much of the layout remains, still focussed on the house, and the design is evident in outline. Much parkland planting has

gone but some mature trees survive including the avenue along the western drive.

**Oving House** (BC HER 0189702000)  
*by Gill Grocott, Jill Stansfield*

The largely 20<sup>th</sup>-century pleasure grounds and gardens of a 17<sup>th</sup>-century and later manor house and associated buildings, standing in an elevated position, facing south over a terraced garden created at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An arboretum to the east was planted in the 1950s and an ornamented paddock containing an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century swimming pool lies to the south. Changes in the 1950s included the building of a swimming pool pavilion and gateway using a portico of columns which had formerly formed part of the library window.

To the north the walled kitchen garden possibly dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Recently, partly in response to recent developments encroaching on the impressive views across the Vale of Aylesbury to the Chiltern Hills, considerable changes have been made to the garden.

### ***Wavendon Park***

*by Gill Grocott, Jill Stansfield*

A late 18<sup>th</sup>-century country villa pleasure ground and possibly drives by Richard Woods, typical of his style, which survives largely intact, with late 18<sup>th</sup> /early 19<sup>th</sup>-century additions for the Hoares of Stourhead, and extensive later 19<sup>th</sup>-century park additions that complemented Woods' work. It has been little altered since the 1880s although localised modern development has damaged parts of the site.

The designed landscape shows three major

phases of development. Initially the Richard Woods design, 1768–72; then for Henry Hoare from 1798 into the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the aspect of the house appears to have been changed from north to south-facing; and the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century expansion of the park. Much of this layout survives intact. Woods' original design survives largely intact within the pleasure grounds, together with the relationship with the house, and other important landscape features.

The detail of Woods' scheme remains unclear but analysis of the surviving fabric of the pleasure ground and drives suggests it remains largely intact, with later developments incorporating it at the heart of the landscape design. Two drives, with the lakes and park can still be traced, despite part of the design being somewhat blurred by the golf course to the south, it retains the historic boundary, some historic trees and parkland.



FIGURE 5 Wavendon House: This late 18<sup>th</sup>-century country villa pleasure ground is by Richard Woods, a contemporary of 'Capability' Brown

The Hoare family's later 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup>-century alterations to the house developed and extended the ornamental design considerably, including the park, with additional interest in the context of their outstanding 18<sup>th</sup>-century estate at Stourhead. The exact nature and extent of their landscape work remains unclear, but it was apparently in Picturesque style, with 19<sup>th</sup>-century planting belts framing the southern lake which survive, including a large laurel hedge. Some later 19<sup>th</sup>-century walks, shrubberies and beds near the house have been replaced by, or have reverted to lawns.

The core pleasure ground was added to the Historic England *Register* in 2019 with information and guidance supplied by BGT, but omitting the later park setting which is included here as an essential part of the designed landscape.

### Town and Village Gardens

**Ceeley House, Bucks County Museum, Aylesbury**  
(BC HER 0404403000)  
*by Claire de Carle*

A very early town garden within the Saxon core of the county town, at its civic heart and with a close relationship with the medieval church nearby. The site has been a town house garden since the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century and possibly was gardened before that, since it was attached to a religious institution building of the 1470s, itself on the site of an early medieval burial ground and Iron Age hillfort. The garden survives largely intact, and represents a simple provincial town house garden. It is important to Aylesbury as one of the larger surviving garden spaces within the county town since much of the rest of the town's historic core was lost in the 1960s. The garden had a similar layout in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the origin of this is unclear, along with that of any previous layouts.

**Bradwell House, Milton Keynes**  
*by Ann Birch, Pamela Lambourne*

The garden for a village house developed from a 17<sup>th</sup>-century farmhouse into a 'polite' residence in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and extended in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The garden combines formal and informal features of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, focussed on the detached house at the edge of the village. The extent and survival of such

gardens is not well recorded and this is a good example at this scale, with an ensemble of typical features including lawns, boundary wall, two formal ponds, and a walled kitchen garden, which survives largely intact. Much of the rural setting has changed with the development of Milton Keynes around and within the village and only a fragment of the former stable block survives across the road.

**Nineteenth-Century Cemeteries**  
*by Sarah Rutherford*

**St Mary's Cemetery, Amersham** (BC HER 0649800000)

A simple Burial Board Anglican cemetery (1858–59) for a Chiltern market town. It was designed by WF Poulton of the Reading-based architectural firm of Poulton and Woodman as the consecrated one of two burial grounds he laid out in the town, the other for non-conformists, The Platt, being near the chapels off Whielden Street. The 0.55ha grid-pattern layout by Poulton, enclosed by a fine and unusual ornamental brick boundary wall with flint roundel panels, makes good use of the Chiltern materials, site and setting. It was extended to the present 1.2ha in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Poulton and Woodman were prolific cemetery designers in the 1850s–70s, their cemetery work including Windsor, St Helier, Jersey, and Guernsey (all 1856) and Aylesbury (1857–58). This is a modest example both of its type and of their work, without the usual chapels or lodges, which were dispensed with as it lay close to the parish church.

**Buckingham Cemetery** (BC HER 0638900000)

A Burial Board cemetery for a rural market town (1855–56), which survives largely intact. It is one of the more significant cemeteries in historic Bucks, particularly given the number of buildings that were erected as part of the ensemble and the Picturesque layout. The 1.2ha cemetery was designed by Samuel Fripp of Bristol, a notable Bristol-based architect, and extended in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to the present 2.7ha. Fripp focussed on two chapels, each at the centre of its respective consecrated and unconsecrated burial areas, which form part of a largely intact group of contemporary buildings and modest



FIGURE 6 Amersham Cemetery. The iron railings and flint-patterned brick walls are especially attractive (*S Rutherford*)

19<sup>th</sup>-/20<sup>th</sup>-century memorials. The Picturesque layout based on a circuit drive around the original area is largely intact, and is ornamented with many mature trees, particularly conifers. It is unusual for its scale as it does not reflect a strict functional grid pattern of paths and drives as is the case with other larger cemeteries in Bucks at Aylesbury, Chesham and High Wycombe.

#### ***Chesham Cemetery*** (BC HER 0651700000)

A Burial Board cemetery for a Chiltern market town (1857–58), which is one of the more significant cemeteries in historic Bucks, particularly given the number of buildings that were erected as part of the ensemble. The 2.4ha cemetery was designed by local architect W Andrews of Chesham and extended to 3.4ha in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Andrews focussed on two chapels, each at the centre of its respective consecrated and unconsecrated burial areas, which form part of a largely intact group of contemporary buildings and modest 19<sup>th</sup>- /20<sup>th</sup>-century memorials set in a grid pattern layout that makes good use of the Chiltern hillside

location and setting. The layout has been modified on the site of the demolished non-conformist chapel with a garden of remembrance and there are some mature trees, although probably not of the original planting.

#### ***Eton Cemetery (St John)***

An Anglican cemetery for Eton College, one of the oldest and most prestigious schools, which was also used for the town community. The cemetery is one of the most important in historic Bucks and of significance more widely as it is an early garden cemetery which is also a very early example reflecting the principles of the influential cemetery designer John Claudius Loudon. It is also an early and rare school cemetery. It predates the Burial Acts (1847–57) which regulated cemetery provision and resulted in a flood of municipal cemeteries.

Eton Cemetery was designed c.1844 by London architect James Deason just before he began work on restoration of the 15<sup>th</sup>-century school chapel and occupied an acre (0.4ha, extended to 0.6ha in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century). This was only a



FIGURE 7 Eton Cemetery (*S Rutherford*)

year after the author and designer John Claudius Loudon (d.1843) published his influential guidance on cemetery design and Eton may have been influenced by this, particularly his ‘Design for a Cemetery of Moderate Extent, on Level Ground’ at Cambridge. Loudon was the most influential person on mid-late 19<sup>th</sup>-century cemetery design. Eton cemetery embodies some of Loudon’s most important ideas on cemetery design as expressed at Cambridge, and is an early example of the geometric approach adopted for many later cemeteries. His Cambridge Cemetery (1843) was well-known in the 1840s and influential and it is possible that it influenced Eton, particularly given the strong connection between the College and Cambridge via King’s College. The date suggests that this could be the earliest identified example of the adoption of Loudon’s recommendations as a model by other designers.

#### ***Newport Pagnell Cemetery***

A Burial Board cemetery (1861) for a rural market town, which survives intact. It is one of the more

significant cemeteries in historic Bucks, particularly given the quality of historic monuments and structures forming part of the ensemble and the Picturesque riverside layout. The 1.2ha cemetery was designed by Richard Sheppard, a local architect based in the town, and Northern District County Surveyor. The complex Picturesque layout survives intact. It is based on a central drive on a terrace, and a circuit drive enclosing a low mound (possibly the remains of a motte or Civil War emplacement overlooking the river). A combined chapel and lodge building, set back from the entrance, is built of local Chicheley red brick and sandstone dressings, in Gothic/Tudor style. The cemetery is ornamented with many mature trees, particularly conifers, probably from the 1860s planting which frame views over the river around two sides, over distant meadows. A largely intact collection of memorials includes the important Taylor family Bath stone-faced exedra, with Art Nouveau foliate carving and bronze plaques, and a notable group of freestanding monuments including spires, pyramids and obelisks. Many are clustered on the mound. The original historic town



FIGURE 8 Newport Pagnell Cemetery: the Taylor memorial. The Picturesque layout and plentiful Victorian trees make it one of the most attractive cemeteries in Bucks (*K Edwards*)

and bucolic riverside setting survives. The cemetery is unusual for its date as it does not reflect a strict functional grid pattern of paths and drives as is the case with other of the more significant cemeteries in Bucks such as at Aylesbury, Chesham and High Wycombe. It is one of the most attractive in historic Bucks. The Burial Board Minutes give a detailed picture of the creation of this cemetery, adding to its historic interest.

### ***Stony Stratford Cemetery***

A simple Burial Board cemetery (1856–7) for a north Bucks market town. The one-acre site was designed with a typical ensemble of structures by Northampton architect Edmund Law including two separate chapels and a stone boundary wall with a lych gate. Although the chapels have gone the lych gate, boundary walls, ornamental railings and main paths to the chapel sites survive as designed by Law, and the planting evokes the 19<sup>th</sup>-century character. The survival of key documents relating to its creation and original

form add to the significance: the 1857 site plan, the 1856 contract documents including contract drawings and plan, Burial Board minutes and churchwardens' account Book.

### **Late Twentieth-Century Landscapes** *by Jill Stansfield, Gill Grocott*

The sites below are part of a group covering the landscape of the New Town of Milton Keynes. Others addressed to date by BGT include Central Milton Keynes, Campbell Park, the Willen Lakes, the Tree Cathedral at Newlands and the Ouzel Valley Park (see below). The excellent work by Jill Stansfield and Gill Grocott has led to Campbell Park being added to the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in 2020, acknowledging its national significance.

### ***Caldecotte Lake, Milton Keynes***

This public park towards the southern end of the Ouzel Valley Park is part of the informal linear

park system, which was a feature of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation's (MKDC) planned cityscape of the 1970s onwards. MKDC used the gently rolling countryside as the basis for a new landscape character to contain new city developments. Three linear parks follow the valleys of rivers in the area: the Ouzel to the east, Loughton Brook to the west and the Ouse to the north. These form the recreational and environmental lungs of the city, and are an essential component of managing flooding.

Caldecotte Lake and surrounds are laid out in a latter-day naturalistic English landscape style; providing a setting for new urban development and enhancing the attraction of existing small villages. The views are carefully manipulated both within and beyond the park to take advantage of the gently rolling topography, and the

focal windmill and surrounding buildings (a pub and hotel completed in 1992) on a promontory at the water's edge, and including the backdrop of the Brickhill Woods. Landscape development in Milton Keynes was designed round a framework of "strings, beads and settings". The strings are linear footpaths, cycleways, greenways and riding trails. Beads are activity centres and "places", such as the Pub and Boathouse on Caldecotte Lake. The setting is the visually or physically public landscape which makes up the body of the park.

### ***Ouzel Valley Park, Milton Keynes***

Ouzel Valley Park is one of the three large naturalistic linear parks which were key parts of MKDC's planned cityscape of the 1970s onwards, enhancing



FIGURE 9 Ouzel Valley Park: Walton Lake is part of the large linear park in the Milton Keynes network. A 1977 planting plan for the surrounds of the lake is held in Buckinghamshire Archives (*Jill Stansfield*).

the original landscape of rolling countryside to provide a new landscape character to contain new city developments and create significant areas of useable countryside within the city boundary. The Park features large open spaces for public access, but also envelopes area of private ownership in new developments and existing villages. Work started in the early 1970s and took about 20 years to complete,

starting in the south and west, and ending with the area on the north-east bank of the Ouzel. The detail of the materials, types of horticultural features and planting all work with the natural and artificial topography to produce an outstanding unified design. It survives intact and continues to be developed in similar character following the original vision for it as a people's park.