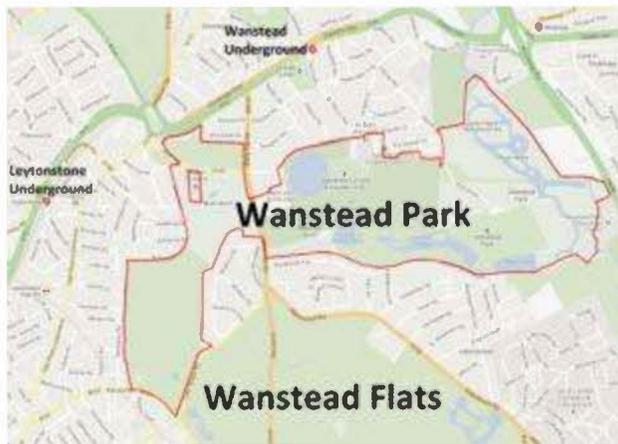


Friends of Wanstead Parklands



Map data © Google 2012

Join our campaign to give Wanstead Park - our unique Grade II* listed landscape and waterscape - a sustainable future.

Gain a voice to question the City of London and other land owners.

Help us press for a park that is better managed and safer for everyone to enjoy. A restored park will help the regeneration of our local area!

A PLEA FOR WANSTEAD PARK



For over three hundred years, from the time of the Tudors to that of the Duke of Wellington, Wanstead House was witness to the ebbs and flows of English political history.

Bought by Henry VII in 1499, seized by Henry VIII from the family of Sir Thomas More's executed son-in-law; scene of a great meeting between Mary Tudor and Elizabeth in the turbulent days after the death of their brother Edward VI, sold to Elizabeth's favourite, Sir Robert Dudley, who married there against her wishes; bolthole for his son the Earl of Essex after his conspiracy against the old queen had failed; gifted again by her heir James I to his favourite, George Villiers, who was later assassinated; seized by Charles II from its owner who had been a judge at the trial of his father Charles I and given to his brother James (later James II), who sold it on once more.



After these tumultuous years, the estate and house became the object of over a century of beautification and improvements under the Child (later Tylney) family, the wonder and delight of the great and the good. When the house was rebuilt in 1715 in Portland Stone, 260 feet wide by 70 deep, it was without parallel in Europe, and judged by some superior to Blenheim.



Its great landscaped gardens of ponds and grottos and waterworks were over a century in the making, showing the hands of George London, Adam Holt, and Humphrey Repton, who followed in the footsteps of the great Lancelot "Capability" Brown. Noted by men of letters such as Daniel Defoe and John Evelyn, the scene of experiments by James Bradley associate of Sir Isaac Newton, royal visitors came here for parties, fireworks and in the case of the exiled French Bourbon family, as a refuge.

It took ten years for this legacy to be raised from the earth after the marriage of the last heiress Catherine Tylney Long to the nephew of the Duke of Wellington, the Hon William Pole Wellesley. Despite her huge fortune and income, he squandered the lot and the magnificent house was demolished in 1823 to pay for his debts, to the lament of the nation.

Fortunately, the age of Victorian public spirited reform was at hand. After some decades in decay, the

Corporation of London bought the Park and opened it for the use of the people of London in 1882.



For many years, the gardens and ponds were the scene of regattas and galas, music and bird watching, later even archaeology, as Roman remains were discovered in the 1960s. There was also a century of challenges as the ponds became damaged and needed extensive repairs, the trees were felled by Dutch Elm disease and wind and slowly the great landscapes were allowed to be encroached by forest.

The great Park now stands at a turning point. The Corporation has been allowing it to retreat, believing that it should be returned to a "natural" state, a condition in which it has not existed for nearly a thousand years. How much more true to its history it would be to halt this decline, even to restore or relandscape some of its acres but at the very least, to actively manage these great gardens for the entertainment, good health and economic vitality of the people of Waltham Forest and Redbridge. The East End has its Victoria Park, the West its Hampstead Heath, the South its Richmond and Kew. Let not Wanstead Park fall into decay because it lacks the fashionable location and well connected advocates of these other beautiful spaces. Wanstead Park lies at the heart of English history and its fate was to be given to its people; we would be squandering its legacy to remove it from them for the sake of a little bit of money and a lack of will.

Miriam Silverman February 2012

Your chance to join - members enjoy many benefits

Get invitations to free walks and other activities.

- Get reduced-price tickets to events.
- Receive a free introductory DVD.
- Find out about our range of publications.
- Receive regular (at least quarterly) newsletters.
- Be hands on! If you wish, there are opportunities to help with archaeology, practical tasks, litter picks and events. Have social fun with like minded people in a good cause.

Membership cost options

- £2.00 per year per individual
- £5.00 per year household
- £20.00 life membership per person
- £35.00 joint life membership
- Donation

How to pay.

We accept the following forms of payment -

- Cheque made to; Friends of Wanstead Park send to; Carlton House, Aylmer Road, Leytonstone, E11 3AD
- Bank transfer. HSBC. Friends of Wanstead Park Account no. 81516337 Sort code 40-06-23 (Please make sure you email your full details - title, given name, surname, address including postcode and contact number to info@wansteadpark.org.uk Reference in subject line: Membership)
- Via Paypal through our website (from June 2012)

Alternatively, we can arrange for your remittance to be collected by a representative of the Friends.

My Details

Title.....Name

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Postcode.....

Contact number.....

Email address.....

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Find out more at; www.wansteadpark.org.uk