

Hampstead Garden Suburb

Acquisition ownership and control of parcels of land was complex; the main parcels are shown thus:

- 1 The original suburb (243 acres)
- 2 First addition - access to Golders Green
- 3 Expansion into East Finchley (112 acres)
- 4 The largest expansion (300 acres)
- 5 The later expansions (1930s)



This quiet suburban walk is on pavement and ideal after heavy rains.

- Main route 8 km circular walk from East Finchley
- Other route 5.6 km circular walk from Golders Green
- Railway

- Buildings of interest
- Buildings listed I or II* (There are over 300 listed II)

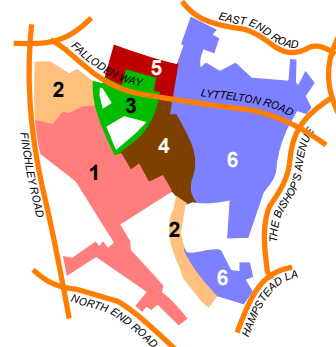
Ossulton Way 143 bus stop

10 connection with another walk
0.5 kilometre



- 1 Exit rear of station to causeway; turn right then left to reach Edmond's Walk
- 2 Turn right here for a shorter walk (4.6 km)

Planning sequence



- planned by
- 1909
 - 1911
 - 1912
 - 1913-20
 - 1920
 - 1930

Much of the information here has been gleaned from Mervyn Miller and A. Stuart Gray's book *Hampstead Garden Suburb* and from the following two excellent web sites:

Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust: <http://www.hgstrust.org/>

Hampstead Garden Suburb: <http://www.hgs.org.uk/history/index.html>

Visit them for a fuller and more nuanced picture.

The tranquil nature of the Suburb today belies a troubled past.

Origins

It was fear of developers on her doorstep with the extension of the Northern Line that precipitated Henrietta Barnett to form the Hampstead Heath Extension Council in **1903**. At that time the land in Hendon, the Wylde Estate, had belonged to Eton College, since 1481. The original plan to buy an 88 acre extension to the Heath did not attract sufficient funding, so it was reduced to 80 acres, leaving a strip of building land around the edge made more valuable by the amenity. The remaining 243 acres of the Wylde estate including the building strip was bought for Hampstead Garden Suburb, over which there are fine views. The suburb was to be a social as well as architectural experiment. The social experiment proved largely a failure, however, as most working class people could not afford the charges and were eventually squeezed out.

The first suburb

In **1906** the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Limited (the Old Trust) came into being for the purpose of buying 243 acres of land near the Hampstead Heath Extension from the Trustees of Eton College.

Building was to be the responsibility of Co-partnership societies; by **1909** there were three of them. They were formed under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act in order to take leases from the Trust for building development. These companies were Co-partnership Tenants Limited (founded in **1907** and not confined to Hampstead Garden Suburb alone), Hampstead Tenants Limited and Second Hampstead Tenants Limited founded in **1909**. Their object was to provide housing and social, recreational and educational institutions. They had close links with the Trust.

The Garden Suburb Development Co was set up in **1907** to collaborate with the Trust in advising lessees and employing many architects, including Bunney, Crickmer, Dawber, Curtis Green, Lucas, Lutyens, Makins, Parker, Unwin, Scott, Townsend, Wood and Welch. The company was very successful but quarreled with the Trust and was wound up during WWI.

An act of Parliament was sought and obtained in **1906** to release the suburb from some local planning regulations in order to allow a more

'rural' setting - narrower roads etc.

The Trust chose Raymond Unwin in **1906** as master planner of the new Suburb. Following design of a model village at New Earswick near York, Unwin with his partner Barry Parker, in **1904** won the competition to plan Letchworth, the first garden city. He continued this trend here, avoiding monotony and uniformity, making use of existing contours, curves and natural features, giving the feeling of living in a village by designing groups of dwellings together, carefully located. Prestigious community buildings would occupy the high ground, and the most expensive dwellings bordered the Heath Extension; an artisan quarter was to be built to the northwest for the less well off.

Unwin's first plan is dated February **1905**.

However he didn't have things all his own way and the plans changed several times, becoming more formal with time.

Edwin Lutyens was chosen for the important buildings around the high point. He had very different views from Henrietta Barnett and the result was a stormy compromise and Lutyens was squeezed out before he could complete his work, such that his vision was never completed. The tall tiled church roof of St Jude's of **1909**, stretching down to low eaves was one result.

The suburb expands

Almost before the ink was dry, moves were afoot to expand with a small extension to connect the suburb to the station at Golders Green. Then in **1911** a large parcel of land of 112 acres was acquired from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners across the boundary and down the hill into Finchley territory, which included Big and Little Woods, Part of this land was developed by the co-partnership societies under strict Trust control and the whole eventually released to them in **1919**.

The co-partnership societies took a further tranche of 300 acres from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, along the valley of the Mutton Brook and up the other side bringing a connection to the settlement of East Finchley. With the consent of the Old Trust, and Oakwood Tenants Limited and Hampstead Heath Extension Tenants Limited were constituted to undertake this development.

Small additions to the south east completed the suburb. The plots are indicated on the map.

Later Years

By **1935** Co-partnership Tenants Limited had

absorbed all the other Co-partnership Companies. The houses were being built for sale and not for letting. In **1939** Co-partnership Tenants was converted into a company under the Companies Act, and in **1954** it failed in a bid to acquire a majority holding in the HGS Trust. In **1957** Co-partnership Tenants changed its name to Suburb Leaseholds Limited.

The Church Commissioners sold their respective freeholds to the HGS Trust and to Suburb Leaseholds in **1959** and Finchley and Hendon were amalgamated into Barnet in **1965**.

Antipathy between the Trust and Suburb Leaseholds came to a head in the sixties amongst a fear that developers would move in and ruin the carefully defended principles of the suburb. A new arrangement was arrived at in **1968** between HGS Trust, Suburb Leaseholds, the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association and the Hampstead Garden Suburb Protection Society. involving two separate Trust Companies to avoid conflict of interest between the primary duty to preserve the character of the Suburb (the New HGS Trust) and the subsidiary duty to provide the maximum possible funds for charitable purposes (HGS Charitable Trust). The surplus income of the New Trust is passed on to the Charitable Trust.

Architecture

Hampstead Garden Suburb occupies an important place in the history of 20th Century architecture and town planning. Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, described it as "the most nearly perfect example of that English invention and speciality, the garden suburb".

Laid out by Raymond Unwin, with Edwin Lutyens, the houses and flats represent the best of English domestic architecture of the early twentieth century.

What is valuable is how the buildings were grouped together in relation to each other and their surroundings. Individual buildings were modified, windows and doors moved round, chimneys brought forward for maximum effect. Unwin's role was taken over on his death by JCS Soutar and around that time the original ideals of carefully coordinated and placed dwellings designed together for optimum impact was diluted in the expansion and it is noticeable the further from the central square you go it becomes just streets with houses.

The initial suburb dates from the end of the arts and crafts era and there is a range of architectural styles scattered through the area, from late arts & craft through deco and moderne to neo Georgian and Queen Anne, even Cape Dutch, not all of them pure.

Ⓐ Brim Hill was one of the last areas of the suburb to be developed. The narrow slopes of

the Mutton Brook were effectively cut off when the Barnet bypass was put through in 1928, and scope for layouts were limited. Miller mentions nos 36 and 38 by farmer, and 72 and 74 by Reekie to be of interest. Howard Walk and Hutchings Walk by Crickmer have Moderne fronts with pitched roofs.

Ⓔ The Holms were the first streets to be developed north of the brook, started by Sutcliffe and finished by Butler. Miller draws attention to the dwellings in Westholm set back from the others: 'four bay windows of the four corners are set diagonally across each corner so that the corner pier serves also as the brick centre mullion of the bay.'

Ⓒ We climb Denman Drive between listed cottages, 1910, by Herbert Welch, 6-14 and mirroring 5-13. Glazing and doors of original design. Miller points to the gables of 5 and 6 which step forward with three windows.

Ⓓ Turning left into Erskine Hill we enter the original Artisan's quarter, laid out by Unwin. Pretty Chatham Close by Wilson arrived in 1911. Ahead are the first buildings of the central area with Lutyens' buildings. Grey brick with red brick dressings, Queen Anne detailing. 2-8, 10-12, 14 were completed by Sutcliffe. Turning into North Square notice all the different ways he designed windows on the second floor.

Ⓔ The buildings on the corner of South Square are listed by EH as by Lutyens but the Trust lists them as by Butler in 1930.

Ⓕ Lytton Close, by Winbourne in 1935, in art deco style, is eye-catching for the glass staircase towers.

Ⓒ The intersection of Willifield Way and Temple Fortune Hill is known unofficially as Crickmer Circus. The layout by Crickmer adopts the principles used by Unwin to create a geometric but informal village feel.

Ⓖ These buildings by Parker and Unwin were influenced by Lutyens' Queen Anne style and are brought to life by the chequer boarding

Ⓓ This edge of the Heath Extension was built first. The buildings on Heath Close are considered amongst the suburb and Parker & Unwin's finest. At the far end, Waterlow Court was designed for business women by Baillie Scott and built by the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company. The imposing Heathcroft flats came in 1923, by Cowper. Note also 87 and 89 Hampstead Way by Dawson.

Ⓓ The original plan for a pond and open 'hexagonal' space was obliterated by the building of Queen's Court in the 1920's.

Ⓖ Linnel and Turner Close are among the grander detached buildings, overlooking a green and featuring work by several architects.