

Addington Park history

This ground was acquired in 1930 following negotiations with the owners of the Addington Palace Estate. The Park and Lodge formed the southern part of the historic park of Addington Park which surrounds Addington Palace, where the Archbishops of Canterbury made their summer home in the early 19th century.

The park is an ancient hunting site belonging to the Manor of Addington. The original manor house of the Leigh family stood behind the church and is recorded on old maps as a hunting seat of King Henry VIII.

The nearby church of St. Mary's, dates back to the 11th century, the chancel and nave were built about 1080 and the original flint tower followed in the 12th century.

Addington Palace was built by Alderman Trecothick of London in 1768 to replace the old manor house and was originally known as Addington Park. The surrounding parkland was laid out in 1782 by the famous 18th century landscape designer 'Capability' Brown a year before he died. Brown had landscaped many of the great houses and stately homes of England, often sweeping away formal gardens and sometimes whole villages.

Brown's style was to create a sweeping natural landscape with clumps and singular specimen parkland trees, with a dense tree belt planted around the perimeter. Much of the landscape that survives today is the remains of his design.

The Archbishops made a number of alterations and additions to the mansion and extended the park northwards. The historic park has been laid out as a golf course is not open to the public. The mansion was for many years home to The Royal School of Church Music, but is now used as a Country Club and for conferences.

At the south-west corner of the Park is South Lodge which dates from the time of Archbishop Howley early 19th century.

The park is Grade II listed on English Heritage's register of parks and gardens of historic interest and one of only two sites in the borough to be included.