

Local Green Space: **Communal Gardens of Wells House and Gertrude Jekyll's Garden**

Description of Site: The communal gardens of Wells House and Gertrude Jekyll gardens, Well Walk are part of the estate owned by Camden. Many of the flats have been bought under the Right to Buy scheme. The grounds are mainly laid to lawn with geometric bedding and planters around the lawns, and some trees.



Local Significance: (Historical and Beauty)

The flats and grounds are built on the site of the second Long Room and Ballroom of the Spa revival in the 1730s. These Spas buildings were converted to residencies, but bombed in WW2 and the current housing built in 1948. The Gertrude Jekyll gardens in front of Burgh House were originally part of Burgh House gardens. Jekyll was one half of one of the most influential and historical partnerships of the Arts and Crafts movement, thanks to her association with the English architect, Edwin Lutyens, for whose projects she created numerous landscapes.

Jekyll is remembered for her outstanding designs and subtle, painterly approach to the arrangement of the gardens she created, particularly her "hardy flower borders". Her work is known for its radiant colour and the brush-like strokes of her plantings.

Dr George Williamson commissioned Gertrude Jekyll in 1908 to design the gardens of Burgh House,

and this is the main remaining section. While Camden have re-built the gardens and put new walls around them, nevertheless there are areas of path that retain the original materials and the outline of paths and beds that is so typical of Gertrude Jekyll have been retained.





Google Earth: The communal gardens of Wells House and Gertrude Jekyll gardens, winter and summer



Some of the retained brickwork and materials

Use by Local Community: The flats of Wells House have no private outdoor space; these communal green spaces are residents' sole amenity for children's play, dog walking, gardening and outdoor recreation. Estate residents contribute towards caring for the garden, managed by Camden's Housing district area manager.

Hampstead Ward has only 0.1sqm of play space provision per child, by far the lowest in the borough, where the proposed quantity standard for children's play provision 0.65 sq.m per child. Atkins Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Version 1.0 24 February 2014.

Special Policy Area:

Area of Special Character: Hampstead & Highgate Ridge.

Other LA designation:

Hampstead Conservation Area.

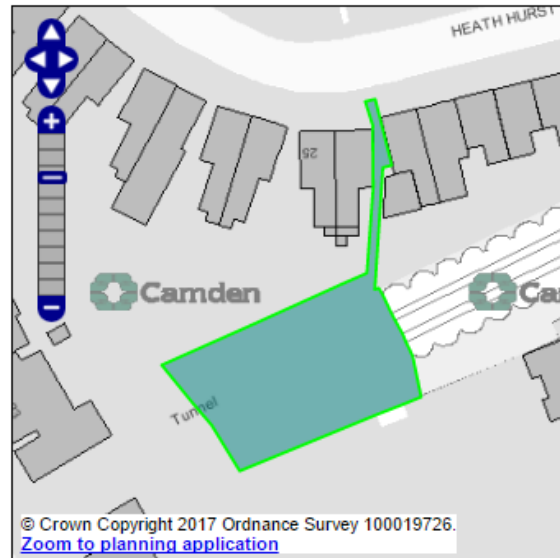
Supports Local Plan Policies:

Designation of the Communal Gardens of Wells House and Gertrude Jekyll gardens as a Local Green Space would support **Camden's Local Plan Policy A2 'Open Space': b, c, f and h; A3 'Biodiversity': a, c, e, f and h. By providing informal play space for its residents children as well as a restful and beautiful space for adult residents** it is consistent with Local Plan Policy C1 'Health and well-being': a, and Policy C2 'Community facilities'.



Local Green Space: **Heath Hurst Gardens**

This communal garden is sited over the entrance of the tunnel for the North London line west of Hampstead Heath rail station. The communal garden is approached via a pathway between 21 and 23 Heath Hurst Road on the south side of Heath Hurst Road. It is run by the Heath Hurst Gardens Association (HHGA) for all the residents of all houses in Heath Hurst Road, both north and south. HHGA have leased this garden since 1970.



Entrance to the
North London line tunnel



Use by local community

Heath Hurst Gardens are kept locked with all residents of all houses of Heath Hurst Road having access. Principally it is an area for children from Heath Hurst Road to play safely, and for adults to have a tranquil green area for relaxation. This is very welcome as some Heath Hurst Road houses - due to the railway line and lay-out of other roads in the area - do not have large private rear gardens. HHRA maintain the communal garden and trees, and the access.

Richness of Wildlife

The communal garden consist mainly of grass (a large area with football goal posts), trees including poplars, sycamore, ash and elder, shrubs and flowers both wild and cultivated, and a play area with swings and a climbing frame.

Wildlife that the residents note include foxes, squirrels, many bird species, newts, frogs, abundant insect life hence bats that hunt here too, and bees that are enticed by the flowers and flowering shrubs.

Special Policy Area:

Heath Hurst Gardens are a short distance from the western end of the strategic biodiversity corridor 'North London Line railway corridor'. This railway corridor is a narrow corridor across the Borough and although in places is of limited value for wildlife, the areas of greenspace are valuable 'stepping stones' for wildlife movement.

It therefore has recognised links to the strategic Hampstead Ridge corridor (a hilly ridge that bisects Camden and runs through from the neighbouring boroughs of Barnet and Haringey) and the Nash Ramblas Link corridor (a link corridor running up from Parliament Square and the Thames, through the Royal Parks and Primrose Hill to Parliament Hill and Hampstead Heath)¹.

Other LA designation:

Heath Hurst Gardens are in the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Supports Local Plan Policies:

Designation of Heath Hurst Gardens as a Local Green Space would support **Camden's Local Plan Policy A2 'Open Space': c, e and j; A3 'Biodiversity': c and j. Through its provision of safe and secure play facilities for its residents' children**, it is consistent with Local Plan Policy C1 'Health and well-being': a, and Policy C2 'Community Facilities'.

Links to other Green Space in the Hampstead Local Plan area

Heath Hurst Gardens are a link in a local chain. They connect the most southerly part of Hampstead Heath, along the rail sides with the South End Green and Mansfield Allotments (also part of the SINC CaB104), then on to Hampstead Local Plan Biodiversity Corridors F (the rear gardens of Hampstead Hill Gardens, Heath Hurst Road and Keats Grove) which is an historical tree line and hedgerow, Biodiversity corridor D (an historical tree line between Downshire Hill and Pilgims Lane) and thence on to Biodiversity corridor J along Shepherds Walk, Spring Walk and Spring Path.

How will the green space be managed in the future?

HHRA wish to maintain the communal garden and trees and are about to re-sign a further lease on this plot.

Owners of the land

Age Concern, Camden are the freeholders.

¹ Mayor of London's 'Green Infrastructure and Open Environments: The All London Green Grid' Supplementary Planning Guidance March 2012





Communal gardens stability over the years as seen with Google Earth: 1999, 2003, 2006, 2010, 2013, 2015

Local Green Space: **The Pryors**

Description of Space

The Pryors are two blocks of private flats, Block A and Block B, situated on the edge of and within Hampstead Heath with a large communal garden between them. It is mainly laid to grass but has many specimen trees, hedges, shrubs and flower beds.

Local Significance: (Historical and Beauty)

The Pryors was originally a large single house with stabling and extensive gardens, owned by the Pryors family. It is shown as present on Rocque's *Map of London* (1741-5). Walter Field, water colour artist of some repute, and main founder of the Hampstead Heath Protection Society, lived here up until his death in 1901. He was untiring in his efforts to preserve the natural beauties of Hampstead Heath. The whole plot of 1¾ acres was sold the following year with its grounds described as charming and secluded, shaded by cedar and other trees. The house was then pulled down and the present two large blocks of flats built, but retaining much of the gardens.

SALE THIS DAY.

HAMPSTEAD-HEATH.—Within five minutes' walk of Hampstead-Heath Station (North London Railway) and a like distance of tram and omnibus routes and a cab rank, thereby ensuring ready access to all parts of Town. Notice of Sale by Auction by

MESSRS. G. W. and H. G. POTTER, at the Mart, Tokenhouse-yard, E.C., THIS DAY (Friday), June 6th, at 2 o'clock precisely, the exceedingly valuable FREEHOLD PROPERTY, equally suitable for residential purposes or development, known as **The Pryors, East Heath-road, Hampstead, occupying a choice position on the edge of the heath, which surrounds it on three sides, having very valuable building frontages to existing roads, commanding extensive views, and comprising the old-fashioned mansion, containing 15 bed and dressing rooms, bath room, with hot and cold water supplies, billiard room (23ft. by 18ft., 16ft. high), dining room with bay (29ft. by 15ft.), drawing room (23ft. by 17ft.) with French casements opening to garden, morning room, smoking room, servants' hall, two staircases and extensive domestic offices; detached stabling for four horses, with double coach-house, harness room, loft, and living rooms; also a brick-built modern detached Artist's Studio, containing lofty studio, storeroom, model's room, and lavatory accommodation. The charming and secluded grounds, shaded by cedar and other trees, comprise pleasure gardens, tennis lawn, and lawn tennis court, and contain store-house, vinery, shrubbery, and flower beds, &c. The whole comprises an area of nearly 1½ acre. The drainage has been reconstructed and kept up to date throughout.**

The premises can only be viewed by appointment, to be made through the Auctioneers. Particulars, with views, plans, and conditions of sale, can be obtained at the Mart, Tokenhouse-yard, E.C.; of Messrs. Pennington and Son, Solicitors, of 64, Lincoln's-Inn-fields; or of the Auctioneers, 28, Rosslyn-hill, Hampstead, N.W. Telegraphic address, "Pulmonary, London," Telephone, No. 57, King's-cross.

1902 sale announcement for the old house and its garden

Thomas J Barratt in his 'The Annals of Hampstead' of 1912 reported (vol iii, page 214) 'A fine Copper Beech stands immediately in front of a new block of buildings known as The Pryors in the East Heath Road.'

The Pryors Ltd was set up in 1976 when the lessees bought the freehold. It is expected to continue into the future with the continued help of a managing company. The garden is managed by the 'Garden Group' which is a subcommittee of the Board of The Pryors Ltd. They produce a newsletter about the garden twice a year for the residents.

The Pryors garden is important to residents; a very popular amenity particularly with young families giving safe enjoyment to people of all ages, including children. It has 550 yards of hedges, 115 yards of planted beds around Block B, further beds in the car park and in the main garden. In addition there are hanging baskets and tubs adjacent to both blocks, a rose garden between Block A and the Heath, and a

composting area for both garden and kitchen waste. There is an important and much used huge area of grass and 27 trees.

The trees in the garden are inspected annually. There are 17 different tree species, including maples, beeches, holly, birch, cedar, oak, whitebeam, oriental plane, ash, tulip tree and various fruit trees.



The Pryors photographed from Hampstead Heath, demonstrating how well it blends into its surroundings





Richness of Wildlife

Being quite literally within the Heath, the trees in the gardens here are managed for their habitat as well as their beauty; one can be seen from the Heath with a splendid set of holes. The smaller bats are regularly seen to fly around in the garden and the larger noctule bats are known to fly high over the Heath at dusk from this direction.

Special Policy Area:

Area of Special Character: Hampstead & Highgate Ridge

Other LA designation:

The Pryors are in the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Supports Local Plan Policies:

Designation of the gardens of The Pryors as a Local Green Space would support **Camden's Local Plan Policy A2 'Open Space': c, e and j; A3 'Biodiversity': c and j. By providing informal play space for its residents children as well as a restful and beautiful space for adult residents** it is consistent with Local Plan Policy C1 'Health and well-being': a, and Policy C2 'Community facilities'.

Hampstead Local Plan:

Heath fringes; Biodiversity corridors