

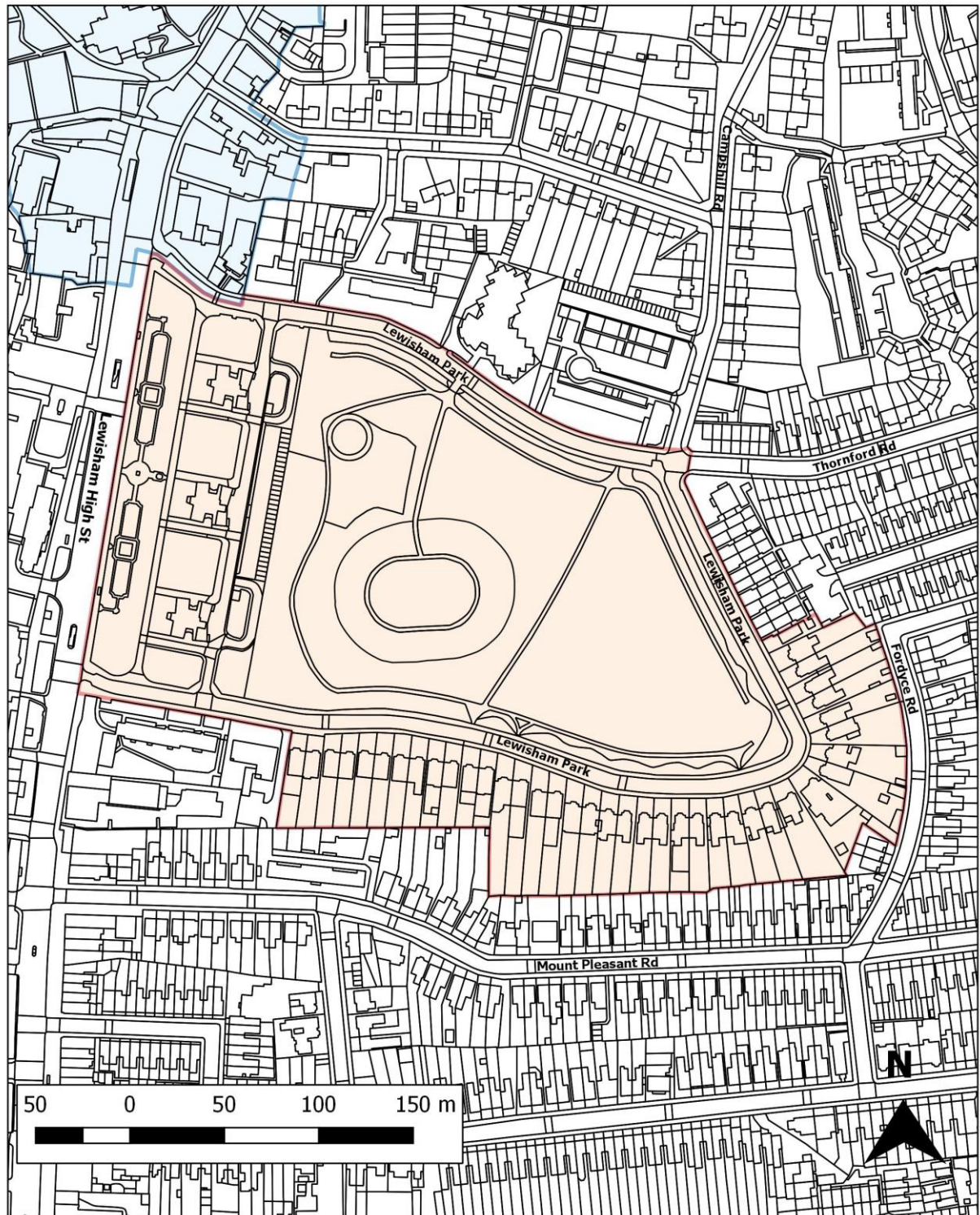
Lewisham Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Consultation draft October 2018



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Lewisham Park Proposed Conservation Area November 2018



Key:

- Proposed Conservation Area Boundary
- St Marys Conservation Area

Area: 9.04 ha



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Summary of special interest

Lewisham Park Conservation Area lies on land formerly part of the great South Field of the Manor of Lewisham. This fell to the east of the Ravensbourne, a tributary of the Thames which influenced the development of industry, agriculture and settlement along its shallow valley from before the date of the Domesday book.

Lewisham in the early 19th century was still dominated by the several grand houses built in brick dating to the 17th and 18th, alongside the smaller timber structures for those working on the land and in the riverside industries. The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century enabled speculative developers to build for middle class commuters, and the Viscount of Lewisham, Lord Dartmouth, developed his Lewisham Park as a prestigious rural retreat to entice wealthy city merchants.

Initial development was in the form of large detached and semi-detached houses in spacious plots along the western and northern edges. The southern and eastern edges were subsequently developed from 1880 and completed in 1906 with the two groups comprising Victorian semi-detached houses in local yellow stock brick, and Edwardian semi-detached and detached houses in red brick. The houses were set around a central park, which was planted with a variety of ornamental tree and shrub species to provide a private amenity for the residents, and the streets lined with limes, chestnuts and London plane trees.

The substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses on the southern and eastern edges remain, and it is these that comprise the architectural significance of the conservation area. The Victorian houses are of massive stature and sit behind their front gardens with a rather reserved appearance and a striking consistency of detailing albeit with subtle variations between the houses. The Edwardian houses have a more genial appearance with warm tones, textures and playful details which, along with the rather more human scale, contributes to their continued appeal as single family dwellings.

The gardens to front and rear partially screen the built form and connect it visually with the Park opposite. They also introduce colour, movement and wildlife to the setting of the buildings and enliven the architecture. The arrangement of built form around the park creates a unique arrangement which allows views of green open space and mature planting into, through and out of the conservation area.

The Park became a public amenity in 1965 and it retains much of its original layout and many of the original trees, which are now enormous, including ornamental species such as weeping ash, tulip trees, horse chestnuts and variegated hollies. The Memorial Garden at the western end, on the site of former semi-detached villas, provides a green link between the High Street and the Park, enhanced by the generous spacing between Lewisham Park Towers which allow the trees and mature vegetation beyond to be seen.

1. Introduction

Background to appraisal

This appraisal is based on a draft undertaken by the Lewisham Park Resident's Association, who prepared it to support their proposal of Conservation Area designation of the area in 2014. A key source of information was the records of the Residents Association dating back to 1878.

Following discussions with the Council's conservation team, the area was re-surveyed in summer 2018 and a revised draft produced in line with Historic England's current guidance (Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2016).

Topology and geology

The Conservation Area lies about 200meters to the east of the River Ravensbourne, which flows from Keston Ponds to the south of the borough northwards towards the Thames.

The geology of the local area is complex with Alluvium along the river, Flood plain gravels flanked by Claygate beds and London Clay, and pockets of Thanet Sand and Upper chalk. Lewisham Park itself lies on flood plain gravels to the west and London Clay to the east.

Location, boundary and setting

The Conservation Area is located close to Lewisham's historic centre close to Ladywell. Whilst in more recent times the town centre focus has shifted approximately three quarters of a mile northwards to the 20th century Market Place, the historic centre originally sat on the eastern bank of the Ravensbourne River, and was focused on the 15th century Church of St Mary the Virgin, 150 meters to the northwest of the Conservation Area. Some 17th and 18th century houses remain nearby, as well as a notable cluster of civic buildings which expanded the settlement in the later 19th century, including the public baths (1884), coroners court (1895-98), fire station 1898), police station (1899) and library (1901). These buildings all fall within the adjacent St Mary's Conservation Area, which was designated in 1976.

The boundary of the Conservation Area has been drawn to include the park and the Victorian and Edwardian family houses that form a crescent of continuous built form on its

southern and eastern sides (nos.15 to 52). On the western side, the boundary has been drawn to include the memorial gardens fronting Lewisham High Street.

A villa (no.78) that survives from the original layout of Lewisham Park at the north west corner is excluded from the Conservation Area because it is already included in St Mary's CA, where it has group value with other historic buildings to the west. It is considered expedient to let it remain in St Mary's Conservation Area and not change the boundaries at this point, although it is referred to in the section on historic development in this appraisal.

Planning Policy Context

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has a duty to identify areas of special historic and architectural interest and to formulate and publish proposals for the management of such areas. In determining applications for development in conservation areas the Council also has the duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of the areas.

National planning guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2018). Conservation Areas are classified as 'designated heritage assets and it advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (NPPF para 193). Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should be clearly and convincingly justified (NPPF para 194).

Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, 2016, is one of a suite of Advice Notes which sit beneath three over-arching Good Practice Advice Notes. These provide advice and guidance on matters relating to the Historic Environment and inform how it is considered by the planning process.

The requirement to protect and enhance the historic environment is reflected in Lewisham's Core Strategy Policy 16: Conservation areas, heritage assets and the historic environment. The Core Strategy, together with the London Plan is the borough's statutory development plan. It states the Council's commitment to work with its partners, including local communities, to ensure that the borough's heritage assets and those yet to be identified will be valued positively and considered as central to the regeneration of the borough. It also commits the Council to continue to review its conservation areas, designating new ones and preparing associated management plan and policies to conserve their character.

Once adopted, character appraisals are a material consideration in the planning process and are used when determining planning applications and appeals. The Council will adopt a positive and collaborative approach to conservation, one that focuses on actively managing change in the area in a way that preserves what is of significance.

Public consultation

A public consultation was held between **** to ****. Residents, businesses and stakeholders were sent details of the proposed conservation area and Character Appraisal and were invited to attend a drop in session on **** to discuss the proposals with Officers. A final revised draft was taken to Mayor and Cabinet and adopted at their meeting on ****.

2. Historic interest

The Domesday Book of 1086 paints a picture of a largely forested area, with water meadows on either bank of the river and scattered farmsteads. The manor was held by the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter's in Ghent (now part of Belgium) and the priory is thought to have been located close to the present day Church of St Mary the Virgin. 11 water mills were in operation.

The river was clearly influential in attracting settlers to this shallow valley, and in shaping how the area was used. Many of the Domesday water mills remained in use until the industrial revolution, producing the power to produce a wide range of products including steel for weapons (Armourers Mill) as well as being used in production of leather (Riverdale Mill) and the grinding of mustard and corn. Extensive leather yards also existed on the far side of the river due west of Lewisham Park which relied on the river's water in the tanning process.

Loss of the surrounding woodland began in a piecemeal manner by individuals who cleared areas for agricultural use. The site of Lewisham Park was in use as pasture as early as 1260, when it was owned by a William de Plummer of Leueusham, who granted all his land in 'the field called Suthfeld in Leueseham' - the great South field of the Manor - to a John Ferdebin (Duncan, 1908, p133-4). It is mentioned in the Court Rolls of 1335, when a John Sutor was fined 4d for allowing his swine to run in it (Smith, 1997, p14); and . In 1370, it is recorded that "in the same manor there are in Suthfeld 40 acres of arable land of the value of 3d. per acre." The land was 'half- year' land, which meant that it was open to the commoners for pasture from Lammas (1st August) to Candlemas (2nd Feb).

The clearance speeded up in the 1600s when demand grew for timber for house and shipbuilding. The close proximity of the Royal Naval Dockyard in Deptford suggests that there was a ready market for the local timber.

The woodland clearances and enclosure of common land inevitably resulted in conflicts with the commoners, most of whom were farmers and husbandmen working small farms of around 5-10 acres. Commoners had rights to graze animals and collect wood for burning and building on common land and, when this right was removed, their livelihoods were threatened.

In the early 17th century Abraham Colfe, Vicar of St Mary's Church, led a deputation of some 145 local peasants to London to petition King James in protest of the attempted enclosure of a large area of Westwood (now Forest Hill and Sydenham) by a gentleman named Henry Newport, and was successful in defeating the attempt.

In another case, Sir Nicholas Stoddard, who lived in a large Tudor mansion just south of the current hospital site drove his cattle across South Field, trampling the commoner's crops in the process. Sir Nicholas managed to prove his right of way following 'angry confrontations in the High Street' (Coulter, p16).

The later 1600s saw development spread between the settlements of Catford and Lewisham, to almost form a continuous ribbon of development along the coaching route from Kent to London – now Lewisham High Street. The street saw a growth in high status housing, with fashionable houses, such as no. 330 Lewisham High Street at the junction with Ladywell Road, for the merchant classes being built in local brick rather than the timber cottages of the commoners.



Image 1: brick and timber houses north east of St Mary's church, on site of current Olby's and the Hire Shop (photo is undated but prior to demolition of the timber houses in c1877)



Image 2: John Roque's map, 1745.

John Roques map of 1745 shows the area still largely laid out to pasture or ploughed fields, with some orchards behind the houses on the east side of the street. Houses were predominantly on the west side of the road, with a concentration opposite and to the north of St Mary's Church. The surveyors drawings for the first edition of the OS map of Britain of 1799, show a similar picture, but the orchards are no longer shown, nor, curiously, is the church depicted.



Image 3: Surveyor's drawing for the OS 1st edition, 1799

Edward Hasted, an antiquarian from Kent, wrote of a visit to the area in 1776 '*The village of Lewisham consists of one street, of more than a mile in length, in which are numbers of neat*

and handsome houses, inhabited by opulent merchants and traders of the City of London, the vicinity of which makes this place a most agreeable and convenient recess for them'.
Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent (1778-99).

The Enclosure Act of 1810 terminated commoners' rights to use the land to gather wood or graze animals. This ended their long held connection with the land, which was enclosed and divided up amongst local landowners. The land on which Lewisham Park was formed was allocated to the major land owner in the area, William Walter Legge: Viscount of Lewisham, Lord Dartmouth. The Enclosure award map of 1819 shows the field, with the footpath running diagonally across it, and by the time of the 1843 little had changed

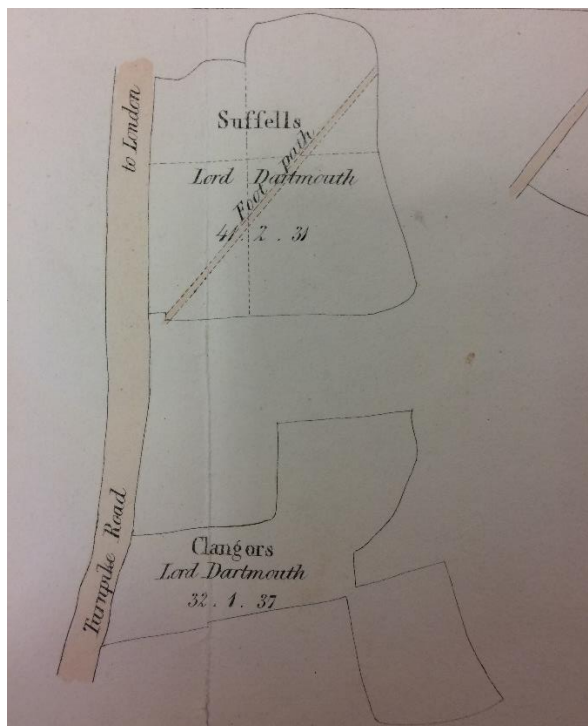


Image 4: Reference plan to the Lewisham
Enclosure Award 1819



Image 5 : Tithe map 1843

At this time Lewisham was dominated by City merchants and the wealthy, but developments which catered to the middle classes began to appear in the middle of the 19th century. 1849 saw the opening of Lewisham Station on the North Kent line, and in 1857 Ladywell Station opened on the Mid-Kent Line. This made commuting to central London easier and cheaper and stimulated the growth of housing for the middle classes built by speculative developers.

The area around St Mary's Church however was still dominated by the several large detached

houses set within gardens, and Lord Dartmouth resisted the emerging trend for lower status housing by choosing for Lewisham Park large villas in spacious parkland settings. The plan reflected a popular architectural vision of 'rural retreats' for wealthy City workers that brought the benefits of living in the country within a commutable distance from London.

Lord Dartmouth laid the area out for development in around 1846 with a road curving around a large central private pleasure ground, and construction appears to have commenced with a Lodge building next to handsome piers at the northern entrance to the development. The Scots Pine shown in the image below still survives.



Image 6: Lodge and Villa (no.73) at the north west corner of the Park c 1850s

The initial grand plans were not realized in their entirety: the way that the scheme evolved reflects the scaling back of ambition seen widely in the second half of the 19th century. Nonetheless, Charles Booth's second survey of 1898-9 noted that Lewisham had the highest proportion of 'middle class and above' – his second highest category – in the whole of London. Of Lewisham Park he said that it had 'some of the best houses in Lewisham' (Booth Notebooks, B374, p37)

The building of Lewisham Park

Along with the Lodge 3 semi-detached houses facing Lewisham High Street (originally numbers 1-6) were complete by the time of the 1863 OS map, along with 3 other detached houses along the northern edge of the Park. The Villa at the western end is shown above, and is the only Villa which remains from this early phase of development. It is a neat and attractive house, small in comparison with some others which were to be built soon after. It is

now numbered 73, is contained within the adjoining St Mary's Conservation Area, and listed at grade II.

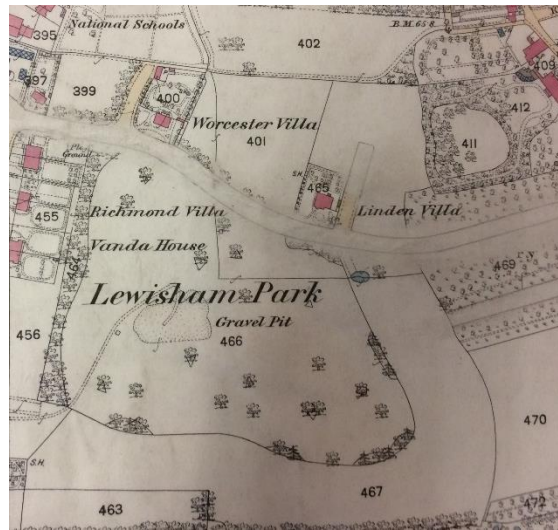


Image 7: OS 1863 showing early development to west and north, and the gravel pit.



Image 8: View westwards across the Park towards the Villas (Nos 1-10)
and St Mary's Church.

By the date of the next OS edition in 1875, 7 houses were completed on the northern side. These were predominantly detached, with names such as Oaklands, Sunnyside, South View, and Springdale. Oakdale's large plots was subdivided soon after it was built to enable more houses to be built in the grounds. Despite this, overly dense development appears to

have not been favoured: in 1885 permission was refused for 5 houses to be built at the north west corner of the Park, but was later granted for 3.

All 5 pairs of villas on the western side were complete by 1875 as well as 'Horbling Lodge', at no 11 in the south west corner. Horbling Lodge was particularly impressive and sales particulars of 1906 describe its ten bedrooms on the two upper floors, and a billiards room measuring 28ft by 18ft. The acre of grounds had tennis and croquet lawns as well as a productive kitchen garden, and a detached stable block with two stalls, a double coach-house, and loft accommodation above. In 1906 the sale price of Carlton Lodge was £1,500. It was indeed the equivalent of a Mayfair mansion today.



Image 9: OS 1875 showing Oakdale (no64) to the west of Linden Villa

1878 saw a lease drawn up between Lord Dartmouth and five residents who, as owners of houses around the Park, would act as trustees to manage the enclosure. The ensuing style of development changed somewhat with nine substantial semi-detached houses commencing in 1880, closely spaced along the southern edge of the Park. The development may have run into difficulties as a number of developers seem to have been involved and the scheme was not completed until 1888.



Image 10 : Aerial Photograph of 1925 looking west, showing Horbling Lodge in the top left corner and the 1880s houses on the left hand side

Following a gap in activities of some 16 years, the remaining southern and eastern stretch of the Park's perimeter was built up between 1904 and 1906 with 9 semi-detached and 2 detached houses built by James Laird, a local builder from Hawstead Road. These responded to the form and scale of their neighbours to the west, but in a more overtly domestic style. Internally these houses were lavishly appointed: electricity was installed alongside the gas lighting, including an electrical signalling system for staff. They were fitted with generous internal coal bunkers with side access and fireplaces in all rooms including the halls. The level of internal decoration exceeded that on the exteriors with Art Nouveau cast-iron fireplaces, encaustic geometric tiled hall floors, dado rails with Lincrusta wallpaper below in halls and landings, deep skirting boards, picture rails, ornate plaster cornices and wide ceiling roses, many of which still survive. Purchasers could specify the internal detailing, touchingly illustrated at no. 39 where plaster work in the rear ground floor room contains a thistle and rose reflecting the nationalities of the couple who first purchased it.



Image 11: OS 1906 showing the southern side of the Park, complete except for nos. 49-50 to the east

From the turn of the century to the outbreak of the Second World War several of the larger houses became educational establishments which made use of the private park for games and recreation. These included Lewisham Park School for Boys (in the original no. 71 on the north side) which supplied Clerks to the City, and Malvern House school which educated girls in Nos 4,5 & 6 facing the High Street. Horbling Lodge was used as the Lewisham branch of Pitman's School in 1926, which later moved to another of the villas facing the High Street.

Image 12: Newspaper advertisement featuring Horbling Lodge

Post WW1 development 1920s onwards

In 1921 the land facing the high street in front of the villas nos. at 1-10, was donated to Lewisham Council by the Earl of Dartmouth and the Lewisham Park Trustees for the creation of a Memorial Garden. The foundation stone for the Portland Stone obelisk was laid by Harry Chiesman, Mayor of Lewisham, on 6 November 1920 and the memorial was unveiled on the 7 May 1921 by Major General Sir William Thwaites.. Bronze lamps were added to the tops of the flanking piers in 1926 (subsequently removed, but leaving their bases) and the memorial gardens were laid out after the second world war.



Impact of WW2

The impact of the second world war changed the very form of Lewisham Park. Three V2 long range rockets fell within the area during the Blitz of 1940-41; one at the junction of Guyscliffe Road and Lewisham Park, one on the hospital site on the High Street opposite, and one to the east along Thornford Road. Three large houses at the junction with Guyscliffe Road, and Horbling Lodge at the south west corner were totally destroyed or damaged beyond repair. 5 other houses on the north and west were seriously damaged to the extent that it was considered doubtful if they could be repaired, along with 4 of the Victorian semi-detached houses on the southern side and a neighbouring detached house (nos 12 to 20). All other houses around the Park suffered general blast damage. An aerial photo of 1949 shows the cleared sites on the north side, and the neighbouring Lodge and neighbouring Villa still standing.



Image 13: Aerial Photo 1 September 1949 showing the north western corner of the Park

After the end of the War the Council began an intensive programme of rebuilding across the borough that had been so badly damaged by bombing and dilapidation. Nationally, the task was led by Local Authorities because they had compulsory purchase powers intended to assist in slum clearance, and central government provided subsidies which encouraged higher densities and heights. Housing was a highly political area, and national league tables were used to show how many homes the Councils were delivering. Very large family houses were prohibitively expensive to run, and after the war they were no longer supportable, socially or politically.

Lewisham Council undertook large scale compulsory purchase and redevelopment in the worst affected areas, and at Lewisham Park its response was to acquire the freeholds of buildings and develop plans for their replacement once leases expired. Initially some existing houses were repaired and converted: No. 37, one of the Edwardian houses converted in 1948 into two self-contained flats. Later on, however, damaged houses were demolished and replaced with the 3-4 storey flat blocks and towers that exist today.

The sites of the 4 destroyed houses on the north side (originally numbered nos. 68 to 71) were purchased in 1952 along with Horbling Lodge (no.11), and replaced with 1-4 Guyscliffe Road, the 4 set back terraced houses (nos 68-71 Lewisham Park) and the small block nos. 72 to 77 Lewisham Park (1955). The following year the thirty-three flats in Plummer Court were built (1956) and named after the earliest known owner of the land, William de Plummer.

The cleared site of the large house on the east side of Guyscliffe Road no. 68 was redeveloped with a block now known as 5-20 Guyscliffe Road.

In 1960 the Council's Housing Department resolved to purchase the freeholds of the badly damaged Victorian houses on the south side (nos 12-30) (among others), and in light of the high cost of the extensive repairs needed, plans were approved in 1962 to demolish and replace them with four storey flat blocks. This scheme was delayed due to the leases not expiring until between 1974 and 1984, and happily the majority of this group (excluding nos 13 & 14) has survived.

The Lodge at the north west corner survived the War but was replaced by the Colfe and Hatcliffe's Glebe Almshouses in 1962.

Villas on the northern side, west of Campshill Road, were demolished in 1964 and replaced by Chiddingtone House, (although gate piers from the former house at no. 64, Oaklands, survived the demolition and can be seen on site adjacent to the flank wall of Mauritius House)



Image 14: Gate pier to the former Oaklands (no.64) north side

The 5 semi-detached villas fronting Lewisham High Street (nos 1-10) were demolished and replaced by three seventeen storey towers in 1965. These were named Bredgar, Kemsley and Malling after villages in north Kent.

Canterbury House replaced the three houses that stood east of Campshill Road, in 1971.

Ten years later in 1981, the group of three semi-detached houses on the east side of the Park (nos. 53 to 58) were demolished and replaced by a block of flats designed by Royston Summers.

Two further redevelopments took place after the post war phase of redevelopment: Morton House Residential Care Home on the southern side replaced nos.12-14 and Saint Mauritius House on the northern side, which replaced nos. 65 to 67. Both were completed in 1995.

History of the Park: from Private Playground to Public Park

The Park's first steps towards becoming a formal open space took place on the 10th October 1878, when a 'Deed of Arrangement' was agreed for management of 'the

enclosure' between Lord Dartmouth and six residents who would act as Trustees. In the same year Leopold Stiebel (of Worcester Villa) paid for the resurfacing of the road around the Park, previously a dirt track: "Asphalte was laid by Mr. Leopold Stiebel, at 4s. 6d. per superficial yard, the Board's horses and carts removing the surplus earth."

The Enclosures Rule Book of 1902 sets out how the administration and affairs of the Park were managed for the benefit of all residents. Interestingly, Rule 10 decreed: "*No person shall fire any gun or other firearm within the Enclosure*"!

In 1959 the Council purchased the freehold of the park for £5,500 and four years later an exchange of letters between the Town Clerk and Trustee A. H. Walker (of 43 Lewisham Park) revealed that the imminent building of the tower blocks and Chiddingstone House would require a five foot strip of land the width of the park during construction and the existing privet hedge was to be removed to be replaced by a seventeen foot high boundary - consisting of a twelve foot concrete wall surmounted by five foot high open park railings.

The money troubles of the Trustees can be seen in the End of Year Accounts of 1963, where the Treasurer recorded a loss of over £95. One can imagine that it was with some ruefulness that the Trustees told the Council in 1964 that they were experiencing difficulty meeting the costs of maintaining the enclosure and decided to hand it over to the Council on 1st January 1965, to be used as a public open space.

On 21st July 1965 the Council's General Purposes Committee approved proposals for the first stage of development of the green space which provided for the improvement of the lawns, interspersed with ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and flower beds, the development of the old gravel pit as a formal garden with a series of paved terraces approached by a broad flower-lined path from the main entrance, a children's playground and a building to be located close to the children's playground, comprising mess room, store, shelter, refreshment kiosk and lavatories, with a groundsman's flat over.

At the same meeting it was proposed to replace the timber fencing around the Park with metal hoop top railings of same appearance to those erected already on the western boundary.

By October 1965 The Deptford Post described breathlessly how the 'run-down nine acres' of Lewisham Park was to become an 'oasis' for Lewisham, complete with fountain, paddling pool, playground, and formal gardens. The newspaper talks of the park as ... "for many years the exclusive preserve of residents of the Victorian houses which skirt the un-made horseshoe-shaped road..." It quoted a Lewisham Council spokesperson as saying..."We are

very keen on the development and see this as a place of beauty and quiet where one can, within a few seconds, escape from the hustle and bustle....This new look will bring pleasure, I am sure, to both young and old.” Work on the park was due to be completed by the summer of 1966.

The last annual meeting of the Trustees was gleefully reported by The Mercury on 31st December 1965. The Treasurer, Trustee Frederick Noquet is quoted as saying, rather bitterly, that the several blocks of flats built by the council were, ‘...the beginning of the end of our peace and quiet’. He goes on, “With the influx of children, fences were pulled down, trees hacked up and our hut was set on fire.” In their last year the Trustees had spent £140 on the park. The Council intended to spend £25,000, so it was crystal clear the Trustees would have to admit defeat.

Years later in the 1980’s Frederick Noquet, the last treasurer of the Trustees, wrote a short and wistful history of the Lewisham Park area. Of the enclosure he wrote that some residents had had their own tennis courts in the Park, practiced their golf shots, picnicked on it, regularly made use of it for a pleasant stroll on their way to enjoy a session in the Coach & Horses (after attending evening service at St. Mary’s Church) and even taught their children to drive in it! He described it as a sanctuary for birds, in particular featuring sparrowhawks, rooks and owls. Some residents remembered when trees were planted surrounding a lake which was later emptied for safety reasons - the slopes of the sunken area were then used for meetings of Girl Guides and Brownies, During the Second World War a barrage balloon was stationed in the park on the site of a former bowling green.

On 13th October 1971 the Council decided as a matter of urgency that the oval pit be laid out as an open grassed play area for children. The oasis of flowerbeds and broadwalks seems not to have taken place and the committee felt that the trees surrounding the oval would help reduce the noise of the children’s activities.

In March 1975 the cost of a new playground (£13,800) and pool (£9,500) was approved by the Mayor. Again the ex-Trustees had something to say on the matter: Councillor Walker presented a petition on 14th July 1976 signed by 342 residents, requesting that lavatories be installed and the paddling pool be restricted to the under 8’s. The Council proposed mobile toilets during the summer until permanent toilets could be provided; the age limits were said to be enforced informally as some infants obviously need to be accompanied. In 2014 the pool was filled in after maintenance problems, and it is now a basket-ball shooting range.

In the 1970s or 80s the Council produced a booklet entitled “The Parks of Lewisham” which

poetically described Lewisham Park as a sylvan paradise:

'Just behind Lewisham High Street and serving as a garden to the nearby high blocks of flats is Lewisham Park. At first sight, it can be deceptive. A patch of grass, the occasional handsome oak and some randomly placed flower beds. But if you enter from either of the gates in the road which bears its name you could almost be in a mediaeval glade, so tall are the elms and horse chestnuts and so generous their cover, so rich the verdant ground beneath your step.

Set in the middle of the park is a very large sunken rose garden with beds of lavender and completely surrounded by plane trees. Steps lead down on one side and it is protected from tumbling children by a low wooden fence. Down in the hollow you enter a quiet private world away from the neighbouring traffic, which is unheard and unseen.

The Park continues to be a public amenity, and its fine trees, shrubs and floral borders are managed by Glendale on behalf of the Council. The children's playground survives and the original gravel-pit-come-rose-garden lives on as a grassed bowl, surrounded now on just three sides by the 22 majestic plane trees that survived the Great Storm of 1987.

3. Assessment of Significance

3.1 General character, plan form and uses

The Conservation Area is characterized by substantial semi-detached and detached Victorian and Edwardian houses which are relatively closely spaced on a curving street to the south and east of the central park. Abundant mature planting in their large front and rear gardens and in the spacious park is complemented by large canopied street trees which all together create a grand and verdant setting for the large houses. Views through, into and out of the conservation area are all shaped by the mature trees and shrubs.

The historic use of the area was residential with some service sector business (private schools and colleges and residential care homes) which was introduced to some of the houses. The area remains predominantly residential and, in addition, includes a Salvation Army Residential Care home at Morton House and a Community Rehabilitation unit, Cygnet Lodge, at number 44 Lewisham Park. The Edwardian houses largely remain in single family dwelling use whereas the Victorian houses have been subdivided into flats.

3.2 Built Form materials and detailing

The built form within the conservation area comprises three key forms: Victorian semi detached houses; Edwardian semi-detached and detached houses; and the three tower blocks dating to 1965.

Victorian Villas

8 pairs of three-storey semi detached houses (nos.15 to 30 consec) dating to 1880-1888 are situated on the southern side of the Park. Each pair has two full height projecting bays topped with gables either side of a paired entrance bay, with front doors paired under rendered broken pediments. The yellow stock brick elevations are relatively austere and relieved slightly by Gault (grey) brick detailing used around the windows, doors and for string courses: in some houses these details are emphasized instead using render.



Image 15: Victorian Villas nos 15-30 (consec).

Front entrances are recessed, with doors set into a glazed screen. Original doors survive in most houses and these have a single timber panel below with two glazed lights in the upper half.

The elevations are dominated the windows, which all have multi paned top sashes over single bottom sashes, and with flat rendered lintels. At first floor, french windows open onto terraces on top of the ground floor single storey projecting bays which have simple black painted metal railings.

At roof level the central bay terminates in two smaller dormer windows with pediments which complement the gables either side. The roof is shallow pitched, and covered in grey Welsh slate with terracotta ridge tiles and prominent slab chimney stacks with clay pots project above each flank wall. Some gables are topped by floral terracotta finials.



A degree of variation exists in the use of render vs gault brick elevational detailing, rendered or fair faced brick for the ground floor projecting bays and 2nd floor window pediments. There are two designs for the pediments above the entrance doors, and some houses have decorative terracotta panels in the front gable wall.



Between each pair there are narrow gaps which allow glimpse se of large mature trees in the rear gardens beyond.



Image 16: Details of Victorian houses

Each house has a large front garden, with paired paved paths leading directly from gate to entrance door. Paths area generally cement slabs or crazy paving and there are no examples of historic paving. The gardens and their soft landscaping are important in softening the effect of the substantial houses and reinforcing the visual connection between the park and the built form. Boundaries are generally low stock brick walls with higher gate piers, one (at least) of which has retained its original stone cap.

Edwardian Houses

Nine pairs of semi-detached houses (nos. 31-42 & 45-52 consec) and two detached houses in the centre of the group (nos 43 & 44) are located to the immediate east of the Victorian houses, extending around the corner onto the eastern side of the Park. Each semi-detached pair is of two storeys plus an attic, with two storey projecting bays either side of a central entrance bay.



Image 17: Edwardian Houses nos 31-52

All of the houses have red brick front elevations, with brightly contrasting white painted rendered details, including a roughcast first floor elevation above the paired entrance doors and to the gables of the semi-detached houses. The side and rear elevations are yellow stock brick.

The roofs have paired gables above the projecting bays below, and each gable has a vertically proportioned window set centrally within it and terracotta finials of different designs on top. Chimney stacks with clay pots extend above either flank and on the central party walls. The roof covering is of grey Welsh slate.

Windows are timber sliding sashes, with glazing patterns of 1 over 1 in the projecting bays, 6 over 1 at first floor above the entrance doors, and 2 over 2 at attic level.

Front entrances are recessed behind round-arches with rendered banding. Doors are set into a glazed screen. Original doors survive in several houses and these have two vertical timber panels below and two stained glass lights in the upper half.

The two detached houses follow a similar architectural approach with the same materials but without the symmetry of the semi-detached pairs.

The development includes elements from the architectural language known as 'Queen Anne revival' – an eclectic and extremely popular design approach in the later 19th and early years of the 20th century, which came to represent good taste and beauty that was available across society as it essentially comprised simple traditional forms using machine made components. It was used elsewhere in prestigious commuter suburbs such as Bedford Park by Norman Shaw in west London (1875 onwards), and in Lewisham at the Christmas

Estate, Perry Vale (c1900-1906).

The semi-detached pairs have two storey kitchen extensions to the rear which is unusual in this period when domestic plan forms increasingly brought the kitchen within the main part of the house.

Each pair is set closely to the next, although rather more spaciouly than between the Victorian houses, and the staggered building line results in more views of the flank elevations being gained, where large stained glass staircase windows are visible. Some houses have added a single storey lean-to extension to the side, set back from the front elevation, over which are views through to the gardens and mature trees.



Image 18: Details of Edwardian Houses

Lewisham Park Towers

The three tower blocks at the western side of the Park, Bredgar, Malling and Kemsley date to 1965 and replaced the original 5 pairs of semi-detached villas which fronted Lewisham High Street. Whilst most of the twentieth century replacement development has not been included within the conservation area, these blocks are included because they sit within the area rather than at the edge. They do not form part of the original architectural concept for Lewisham Park and are not considered to fit the criteria for making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Nonetheless they are of architectural interest in their own right, as decent examples of a characteristic type of post war redevelopment which have aged particularly well. They have concave front and rear elevations with a restrained visual rhythm created by the brick cladding panels and projecting balconies set into the curve. Their flank elevations are convex, with larger recessed balconies. They are important landmarks in the local area, and signal the location of Lewisham Park in views along Lewisham High Street. Their grounds act as a visual link between the memorial gardens and Lewisham Park and the wide gaps between the towers facilitates views through to the Park. The green roofs on the top of the subterranean garages is particularly sensitive to the Park surroundings.

3.3 Open spaces, gardens and trees

The Park

The park still adheres in many ways to the original Victorian lay-out, with original trees now having reached an awe-inspiring height and maturity. Such trees include ornamentals such as yew, variegated holly, a beautiful pair of large rare weeping ash trees, a tulip tree, and huge horse chestnuts. Flowering shrubs such as rhododendrons, azalea, camellia, and forsythia grow alongside beds of roses and in spring the park can be seen scattered with emerging snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells.

Works to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 included new rose beds and trees within the main gate on the northern side.



Image 19; The Park

The original stunning avenue of twenty cherry trees towards the eastern end, created in the 1960s had been in gradual decline and was restored in 2012 by the Lewisham Park Crescent Residents' Association with the planting of eight replacement trees, and in 2013 a rare Black Poplar was planted by the Association which can be seen along with silver birch, elm, spruce, sycamore, and beech, growing in groups or singly across large lawn areas.

The sunken bowl at the western end, originally a gravel pit, then a lake and subsequently a bedded garden is now grassed and surrounded by 22 gigantic plane trees. It is regularly used as a natural arena for impromptu games of football and cricket. The bowl was formerly entirely surrounded by Plane trees but several were lost in the Great Storm of

1987 and now the entire western side is open and the trees have not been replaced.

Other facilities in the park include a fenced children's playground and picnic area, a table tennis table and a former paddling pool now converted into a basketball shooting range. A path about half a mile long runs roughly around the perimeter, which is very popular with joggers and dog walkers.

Since the late 1990's an area at the western edge of the park alongside the tower blocks has been managed as a meadow, with a single annual cut in autumn. This area contains a particularly high diversity of grasses and various fungi can be seen growing over the entire park. In summer the park supports large populations of butterflies. Speckled Woods are particularly abundant, and Meadow Browns can be seen in the grassland.

Significant numbers of birds nest in the area; these also visit the gardens of the surrounding houses. Among the less common species to be seen and heard are Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Greenfinches, Coal Tits, Pied Wagtails, Nut-hatches and Wrens. Wagtails can also be spotted drifting across the main road from nearby Ladywell Fields and the park is also frequented by flocks of Green Parakeets.

The park is a communal resource for much of the surrounding area, providing amenities to the residents of the streets between Ladywell Fields and Mountsfield Park. The park is also used by staff, visitors and patients at Lewisham Hospital and offers a peaceful retreat for all.

Front and rear gardens

Each house (both Victorian and Edwardian) has a large front garden, with paired paved paths leading directly from gate to entrance door. The Victorian houses often have a paved drive to the outer edge of the garden. The soft landscaping, particularly shrubs and small trees, is important to the setting of the houses and has been well preserved, with a number of exceptions where gardens have been paved for use as parking. Boundaries were originally timber fences, some of which survive and others have been reinstated. Some boundaries have been replaced with railings or walls, and in a few instances lost altogether to facilitate parking. One instance of an original side brick wall exists at no. 52, with stone coping, and caps on the pier.

There is evidence that houses of both periods in Lewisham Park had high-quality materials used for their main approach. The paths to the front door are raised from the pavement by one step made of a York stone paving slab, the houses have deep and elegant stone steps leading to a tiled landing in front of the door. No historic paths remain – tiled or otherwise and so it is not clear whether there was an original material or design.

The rears of houses contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area principally through the garden creating a spacious setting for the large houses, where mature trees and other vegetation can be seen in glimpse views between houses and more prominently from Fordyce Road at the eastern end. Mature trees within the park are also visible from Fordyce Road over the rooftops. Development within these rear gardens exists at the ends of the gardens as single storey ancillary spaces such as garages and gardens rooms accessible from Fordyce Road.

Street Trees

Street trees in the area are of an impressive maturity; comprising majestic horse chestnuts, London planes and limes - in general the original plantings from when the enclosure was first established.

Trees in front gardens

Mature planting also survives in private gardens, notably a magnificent copper beech at St. Mary's Vicarage, Number 48, and other attractive shrubs such as rose trees which thrive in many gardens. Sadly there are now extensive gaps that indicate the losses have not been replaced over the years; in 2013 an ancient horse chestnut was removed due to disease on the east side and has not yet been replaced, and a yew trees in front of 43 has been lost.

Setting and views

The setting of the conservation area is predominantly residential. To the south, the large terraces and semi-detached houses of Mount Pleasant Road back onto the gardens of

Lewisham Park.

To the east the back gardens of houses within the conservation area back directly onto Fordyce Road, with a boundary fence, garage doors and garden gates. The land rises towards the east and so the height of the 2 storey houses on Fordyce Road appear comparable to the large houses set lower down within the Conservation Area.

Twentieth century buildings form the immediate setting at the northern end of the eastern side, along the northern side and at the southwest corner, which illustrate the period of housing redevelopment by the Council after the second world war with flat blocks dating to between 1955 and 1981. These have changed the architectural character of these edges of the Park, but the layout of the blocks with a relatively consistent building line set behind grassed areas front gardens reflects the historic pattern of development. The gardens and mature trees within them contribute considerably to the setting of the Conservation Area.

To the west, Lewisham High Street presents a highly trafficked boundary, with the Hospital, former civic buildings to the north, and shops to the south creating a change in character from residential to civic and commercial.

The Park is visible from Lewisham High Street in views through the Memorial Gardens and between the three tower blocks. In longer views along Lewisham High Street these three blocks act as a signal to the location of the Park. From Fordyce Road to the east the upper levels of houses within the Conservation Area are visible, screened to varying extents by mature trees in their rear gardens. From roads to the south views can be glimpsed between buildings and, in the north, more expansive views along roads enable the open space and mature trees to be appreciated from beyond the boundary.

From within the Conservation Area the surrounding residential development is visible through a screen of trees and the tops of the three towers are seen rising above the tree line.

4. Audit of heritage assets

Lewisham Park Proposed Conservation Area 2018

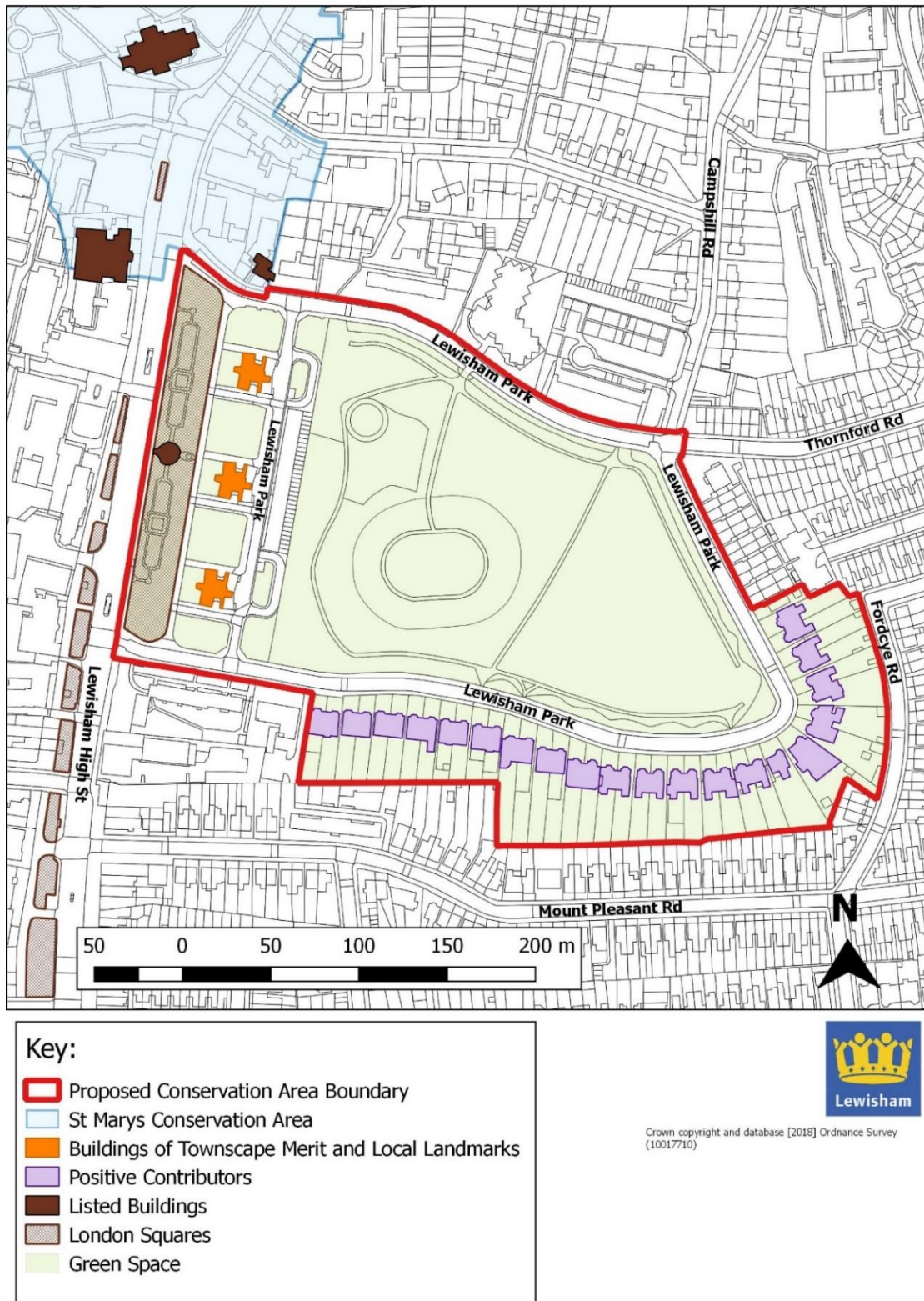


Image 20: Townscape Audit map

Positive contributors

All of the Victorian and Edwardian houses in the Conservation Area make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

Neutral contributors

Lewisham Park Towers do not form part of the historic development that underpins the area's designation. They do not detract, however: they are of some architectural merit, the gaps between them allow views through to the Park and their grounds are sympathetic to the appearance of both the Park and the Memorial Gardens. They are therefore identified as making a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Negative contributors

No buildings or structures within the area impact negatively on its character or appearance.

Buildings of Townscape Merit

Lewisham Park Towers are of townscape merit due to their presence in long views and their role as landmarks in signalling the location of the Park.

Listed Buildings

War Memorial – listed at grade II on 13 July 2016 for its historic interest as a witness to the tragic impact of war on this community; for its architectural interest as a well-executed Portland stone Classical obelisk decorated with a carved Latin cross and an inscribed stone plaque with the Borough of Lewisham's Arms; and for the design of the surrounding paved area with a path to the High Street flanked by two smaller obelisks, each inscribed to the fallen of the Lewisham Battalion and decorated with the regimental badge.



Image 21: Lewisham War Memorial

Immediately outside the boundary at the north west corner, no. 73, one of the original villas, is listed at Grade II. Further to the west is the grade II listed Public Library and to the north the grade II St Mary's Church.

Locally Listed Buildings

Lewisham's local list is an evolving document of buildings and structures of local interest which is reviewed and updated from time to time as the significance of buildings is identified. The omission of any buildings from the list it should not be held to indicate they are not of interest.

The conservation area appraisal has not included an assessment of the buildings within it against the Council's local list criteria, but instead considers how they contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Archaeology

The Conservation Area falls within Lewisham's Archaeological Priority Area 6: Lewisham and Catford/Rushey Green. This is defined as a broadly linear area which follows the course of the Ravensbourne River from Catford to Deptford where it becomes the tidal Deptford Creek. It also includes Lewisham's medieval parish church of St Mary the Virgin.

Open space designations

The Memorial Gardens is listed as a London Square under the London Squares Act 1931.

Public realm

The **park's railings** date to the period after the Park was taken on by the Council in 1965. They are hoop top metal railings, now in need of re-painting. Similar hoop -topped railings were used for the memorial gardens, the grassed areas around the blocks and the western Park boundary which helps to give these three areas visual continuity.

The main entrance to the park on the north side has railings on a low wall, brick gate piers with stone cap, and metal gates with the lettering 'LEWISHAM PARK' in the top section. Their date is currently unconfirmed but are likely to date to the installation of the railings in 1965.

Many commemorative metal **benches** of uniform design are located within the park, donated by local residents and the Residents' Association.

Standard green and gold **bins** are located within the park, with blue ones outside the

entrances on the pavement.

The Park **signage** on the southern side and north east corner is looking dated and is in need of maintenance.

Paths are tarmacked, and are generally in good order, except at the western end where they are very uneven due to the action of tree roots.

Lamp posts date to c2014. They are of modern design, and their black paint helps them to sit quietly in the streetscene.

A freestanding red **post box** marked with the Royal cipher VR dating to between 1853-1901 is located at the north eastern corner of the park.



Image 22: Public realm details

5. Condition Survey

Houses

The majority of the houses in the conservation area are extremely well preserved and in excellent condition.

Front gardens are well planted and tended particularly where the house is still in single family use. Where houses have been divided into flats the front gardens contribute less well to the setting of the houses and in some cases have lost mature planting and/or are used for parking.

Full width highly glazed roof extensions exist on many houses at the eastern end of the park, several of which are visible through the trees from Fordyce Road. A pattern of development has therefore been established which has minimal visual impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Whilst there has not been significant degree of loss or alteration, some changes have occurred which would erode the character of the conservation area were they to proliferate.

These are:

- Removal of front gardens & boundaries;
- Use of front gardens for parking;
- Changes to the original fenestration pattern;
- Visually dominant development in gaps between houses;
- Rooflights on front roofslopes
- Development in rear gardens other than single storey structures ancillary to the main house

Park and Memorial Gardens

The London Borough of Lewisham's Green Scene department manages Lewisham Park and Lewisham Memorial Gardens in partnership with the parks contractor, Glendale, with the aim of providing a safe, accessible and sustainable environment for all to enjoy now and into the future.

The park and gardens are monitored on a monthly basis by a council officer to ensure they are at the standard expected, and any issues identified are passed to Glendale for action.

Grounds maintenance tasks include the areas of amenity grass, formal bedding, wildflower areas and shrub beds. The sites are routinely litter-picked and all infrastructure and play equipment is regularly inspected and maintained.

Condition surveys are carried out on the sites' fine range of trees by the department's Tree Services Officer, and all remedial work is carried out to industry standards.

Lewisham Park has been significantly enhanced by new bins and benches which were funded by the local residents group, and major path improvement works, commissioned by Green Scene.

Lewisham Memorial Gardens are the focal point of the annual Remembrance Day ceremony and commemorative paving stones have been installed in honour of Lewisham's recipients of the Victoria Cross. Particular care is taken to ensure this site is a fitting memorial all year round.

Setting

The area immediately outside the boundary is already fully developed and there is little scope for additional or infill development. It is likely that redevelopment of post war buildings will be considered in due course. It will be important for new development to reinforce to the historic pattern of development, particularly the garden setting/green buffer and retention of large canopy trees, and maintain or create views and routes through to the park.

6. Management Plan

The management plans sets out how the area should be managed to preserve its special interest and seek positive improvements.

Designation as a Conservation Area

Conservation area designation introduces controls over the way owners can alter or develop their properties. However, owners of residential properties generally consider these controls to be beneficial because they also sustain, and/or enhance, the value of property within it.

These controls include:

- the requirement in legislation and national planning policies to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area
- local planning policies which pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area
- bringing into planning control the demolition of unlisted buildings that are over 115 cubic meters
- the need to give prior notification for works to trees
- fewer types of advertisements which can be displayed with deemed consent
- restriction on the types of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (permitted development rights)

Boundary review

Conservation area designation provides the opportunity to consider the precise location of the boundaries and whether they accurately define the area that is of special interest.

The boundary has been proposed to include the Victorian and Edwardian houses that were part of the original development, but exclude the post war redevelopment. One villa (no. 78) from the original layout has been excluded because it already falls within the neighbouring St Mary's Conservation area. In the future when St Mary's CA is reviewed the boundary should be reviewed and consideration given to include the villa in Lewisham Park Conservation Area instead.

Education and Guidance

The Council believes that the key to the successful management of the conservation area is through raising awareness of the special character of the area through community involvement. The consultation process for the conservation area appraisals and the

management plans in themselves raise awareness about the value of the conservation area and the planning controls associated with its status. In addition, specific guidance has been produced by the Council on topics that have been identified as frequent problem areas e.g. shopfronts, signage and other building alterations and extensions. It is anticipated that this will help to ensure consistency in planning decisions and limit the need for enforcement action.

There is potential for new signage within the Park which also provides information about the history and development of the area.

Planning Controls

Article 4 Direction

The majority of properties within the area are residential properties and there is a mix of houses which have permitted development rights, and flats which do not. This is likely to result in lack of clarity amongst residents over what does and does not require permission.

An Article 4 Direction would remove permitted development rights from single family dwellings and require applications for planning permission to be submitted for external works where they would be visible from a public place such as a highway, open space or waterway. The condition survey (see Section 5) indicates that the removal of the following permitted development rights would serve to protect the appearance of the houses including their architectural features and front gardens which contribute significantly to the character of the area:

1. The enlargement, improvement, or other alteration of a dwelling house.
- 2 Any other alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse
- 3 The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse
- 4 The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of
 - (a) any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such or the maintenance improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure; or
 - (b) a container used for domestic heating purposes for the storage of oil or liquid petroleum gas
- 5
 - (a) the provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a hard surface for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house as such or
 - (b) the replacement in whole or in part of such a surface

- 6 The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a dwellinghouse
- 7 The installation, alteration or replacement of a microwave antenna on a dwellinghouse or within its curtilage

Flats do not have the same permitted development rights as single family dwellings and so these same items of work already need to be permitted by an application for planning permission.

Demolition of buildings

Planning permission is required for the substantial demolition of any building within the conservation area. For buildings and structures that are considered to positively contribute to the area's significance, proposals for the demolition or substantial harm will only be considered under exceptional circumstances. Such proposals need to be fully justified and to demonstrate that public benefits of the scheme would outweigh the loss of or harm to the asset. The Council's information requirements and criteria for assessing applications for demolition are set out in Policy 38 of the Local Development Management Plans.

Locally listed buildings

The Council's local list is an evolving one which is reviewed periodically to add buildings and structures which have been nominated, or identified through the planning process. Buildings within and outside Conservation Areas can be added to the list. Whether they are formally on the adopted list or not, once they are identified they are treated as 'non-designated heritage assets', and as such Policies in NPPF and Lewisham's LDF exist to protect their significance. All of the positive contributors within the Lewisham Park Conservation Area are considered to be non-designated heritage assets, and would meet the criteria for inclusion on the local list.

Buildings at Risk

Buildings at Risk are identified by using a set of national criteria devised by Historic England, the government's advisory body on heritage in England to highlight listed buildings or structures that are at risk of neglect or decay, usually through vacancy or lack of a viable use. The only listed building currently within the conservation area is the War Memorial. Its condition will be kept under review on an annual basis.

Signage and advertisement

The display of an advertisement is controlled under the Town and County Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. Most types of advertisement can be displayed within the conservation area without the need for advertisement consent. The Council will take enforcement action against unauthorised advertisements, hoardings or signs which adversely affect the amenity and public safety.

Monitoring and enforcement

Enforcement cases within conservation areas are managed by the enforcement team with advice and support given by conservation officers. The Council is committed to using its planning powers where necessary to manage the Lewisham Park Conservation Area in order to ensure that the area's character and appearance is preserved or enhanced. A photographic survey has been undertaken at time of adoption, and this will be updated from time to time to assist in Enforcement investigations.

Highways and public realm

Streets and open spaces, collectively known as the public realm, are a major factor in the character of the conservation area. Its management takes place largely outside the planning system with the control resting with the Highway Department and Transport for London, and by Glendale on behalf of the Council's Parks and Open Space Department.

Street works within the Conservation Area should reflect national good practice guidance as set out in Historic England's 'Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places' 2018, and Streets for all: London, 2018; and the Council's Streetscape Guide 2015.

Statutory Undertakers are responsible for carrying out the permanent reinstatement of the highway where they disturb it with the existing materials, or the closest possible match, if the materials cannot be re-used.

Trees

The Council is committed to the maintenance of all trees of value within the conservation area and, where these do not fall within the responsibility of the Council, will encourage owners to carry out ongoing maintenance to ensure their health and longevity.

Opportunities for enhancement

The character and appearance of the area could be enhanced, or its significance better revealed by:

- Reinstatement of missing or non-original boundary walls or fences to match the originals.
- Replacement of lost street trees.
- Complete or partial removal of pavement parking on the park side of the street.
- Repaint the Park fencing and repair where damaged in places from trees falling on it.
- Replace the trees within the Park that are failing to thrive
- Replace the missing London Plane trees around the sunken garden area.
- Replace existing outdated Park signage and provide an interpretation panel

Site specific enhancement opportunities

- Removal of large expanses of hard landscaping and reinstatement of vegetation in front gardens at nos.15, 18, 25, 27, 35, 36, 38, 45.
- Reinstatement of boundary wall/fence at nos. 21, 22, 23, 27, 35, 36, 38, 45
- Reducing the extent of gaps in boundary walls at 15, 25
- Planting of medium sized trees in front gardens: particularly in the stretch between nos 35-41

Managing Change

The area is largely developed to capacity, with no gaps which would lend themselves to infill development, nor obvious sites for intensification. As a result the area is unlikely to experience significant development within the conservation boundary.

It is small scale incremental changes that could erode the special character through their cumulative impact. For this reason an Article 4 is an important tool in protecting those architectural features, front gardens and boundaries that contribute so much to the character and appearance of the area.

The other key area of development pressure is likely to be at the ends of rear gardens on the east side of the area. Retaining the use of these spaces as garden land will be important to the protection of the green buffer around the development. A 2018 appeal decision for the demolition of garages and construction of 4 three storey houses in the former rear garden of no. 45 Lewisham Park provides a clear statement of the importance of these rear gardens to the significance of the conservation area (case ref: DC/16/096329).

The area is likely to see redevelopment of some of the 20th century development lying just outside the boundary on the north and east sides and at the southwestern corner, and this has the potential to impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. The retention of a green buffer around the park, comprising street trees and landscaped front gardens will help new development to preserve the verdant and spacious character of the area.

7. Guidance

7.1 Roof covering

Original roof coverings are natural Welsh slate. The roofs of the two storey bays on the Edwardian houses are red clay tile. This historic fabric should be retained and repaired.

Where replacement is needed, as much historic material should be salvaged and reused as possible and replacement should be on a like for like basis. Natural slate should be used on front and other visible roofslopes. Artificial slate may be a cost effective alternative on roofslopes not visible from the public realm: this material has a different colour and texture, particularly apparent when wet and it is known to fade with age to a dull grey.

7.2 Dormer windows and roof extensions

Conversion of the loft into living space is an understandable ambition. The challenge is to achieve this without damaging the character of the building.

Suitably-detailed rear dormers and extensions may be an appropriate solution, depending on size and location. There is a firmly established precedent for full width roof extensions with fully glazed elevations on the rear roof slopes on the eastern side and proposals to additional examples in a similar design are unlikely to be considered harmful to the character or appearance of the area. Dormer windows at the rear should sit comfortably within the roof scape rather than dominating it, and respond to the fenestration pattern of the existing windows.

Hip to gable extensions and front or side dormers are more difficult to accommodate sensitively since they alter the historic form of the roof and will be visible from the street.

7.3 Rooflights

Rooflights in visible roofslopes can be intrusive as they form a shiny and reflective element in an otherwise matt roofslope by day and a brightly lit element by night. They are therefore best limited to elevations less visible from public views and carefully sized and positioned to minimize their visual impact. Rooflights should be of 'conservation type', i.e. sitting flush with the surface of the roof.

7.4 Microgeneration

Microgeneration equipment, such as photovoltaic cells to generate electricity and solar thermal panels to heat water, are desirable in terms of environmental sustainability and are permitted development for single family dwellings. On historic roofslopes their reflective surface and surface mounting makes them undesirably eye catching. In Lewisham Park the south facing roof slopes which are the optimal locations for their siting are to the rear or side and so are less visible from the public realm. The addition of PV and solar thermal panels may therefore have minimal visual impact.

Detailed advice on upgrading the thermal efficiency of historic homes can be found throughout Historic England's website (see Paragraph 11.3 below).

7.5 Boundary treatments and hardstandings

Many original boundary treatments survive: brick walls with substantial brick piers with stone caps to the Victorian houses and feather edged fencing and timber gate posts to many of the Edwardian houses. These can be used as a model for future reinstatement so that consistency in height and detailing is maintained. Generally, front boundaries should be no higher than 0.9 metres. The reinstatement of lost boundary treatments is encouraged.



Image 23: Brick walls and pier caps to the Victorian houses



Image 24: example of front garden boundary fence and gate post to the Edwardian houses

The introduction of new access drives and the creation of large new hardstandings for vehicles should be carefully considered in order to keep the loss of containment and soft landscaping, particularly shrubs and trees to a minimum. New openings in the boundary should be kept to the minimum necessary and the provision of vehicular gates can help to maintain a sense of enclosure. Ideally, the area for parking a car should be limited to two strips of hardstanding for the vehicle's wheels, with the area in between either loose or bonded gravel, since this material has a softer appearance and is a permeable surface for rainwater. Planting can be used to mitigate and soften the effect of the hardstanding (for example using low-growing creeping thyme and the like).

7.6 Windows

Windows contribute to the overall appearance of the houses, with the subtle variation in glazing patterns adding interest and a sense of hierarchy to the elevations. The stained and leaded glazing is a particularly beautiful and valuable asset to the area and this should be retained and upgraded for thermal and security purposes rather than being replaced.

Timber windows, if appropriately maintained and painted have an extremely long life and can be repaired, avoiding full replacement. The thermal properties of historic windows can be significantly improved through refitting, draught exclusion, the addition of acrylic secondary glazing and the use of heavy curtains or shutters at night. Historic England's website provides both research and practical guidance.



Image 25: Stained and leaded window on side elevation, Edwardian houses

Where windows cannot be repaired, any replacement should be in timber to match the original detailing and method of opening. uPVC windows do not provide a suitable match to historic joinery in detailing of their frames and there can be issues with the proportions and glazing bars and the reflections caused by some double-glazing units.

7.7 Doors and porches

The original doors to these houses were well designed and constructed and are a distinctive feature of the area, particularly where the door contains stained glass and forms part of an entrance screen, with stained glass in the margin lights and leaded lights in the fanlights. If the condition is deteriorating the door may be repairable by a joiner, and the security and thermal insulation of the leaded lights can be improved by the addition of secondary glazing internally. Where a new door is needed, it should be in timber and the design should match the original door as closely as possible.



Image 26: Stained and leaded glass in door and entrance screen, Edwardian houses

Covered but not enclosed porches are present on both groups of houses and their enclosure to form a sun porch will be resisted. This would obscure the architectural character of the house and the attractive original doors and glazed screens would be hidden.



Image 27: Original front doors in recessed porches: Victorian houses



Image 28: Original front doors in recessed porches: Edwardian houses

7.8 Painting of brickwork

Painting brickwork causes more problems than it solves, and if it is an impermeable paint it will trap moisture within the wall. Once the wall is painted it will later need to be maintained and re-painted. Painting also replaces the natural tonal variation of the brickwork with a single colour and reduces the sensual texture of the raw brickwork to a smooth, even surface.

In Lewisham Park the Victorian Houses are largely unpainted brickwork, with small and restricted areas of painted render for emphasis. The Edwardian Houses use the distinction between areas of unpainted red brickwork to contrast with other areas of painted roughcast. Altering this would harm the original design of the elevations.



Image 29: Edwardian houses showing varying use of fairfaced brick and roughcast render

7.9 Chimney stacks

Chimney stacks give vertical accents to the design of the houses and rhythm to the roofscape; without them, buildings can appear truncated. Chimney stacks can start to lean over time. If they become structurally unsound they should be taken down as far as necessary and rebuilt to the same height and detailing.

7.10 Satellite dishes

Satellite dishes add clutter on the fronts of houses and are best located to the side or rear where they cannot be seen. As an alternative, they can be sited on freestanding poles within the rear gardens.

7.11 Bin storage

Modern wheelie bins can be visually intrusive. Where possible, bins should be located out of sight at the side or rear of houses. Where the bins have to be located within the front garden, thought should be given to the design of an enclosure. If the front boundary treatment is being remodelled, bin storage could form an integral part of the design where appropriate. In other cases, bins can be discreetly located and shielded from view with planting, trelliswork with climbing plants or a small slatted timber bin store.

8. Sources and References

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9. Useful Contacts

Lewisham Park Residents' Association

There is a strong and coherent community in the area as evidenced by the thriving Residents' Association. The Association was formed in 2012 to represent the interests of all of the residents of Lewisham Park with the council and other local bodies such as the Police, landlords, and Glendale, the company which manages the park. To improve security around the Park, and to reduce crime, the Association has initiated a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. <https://en-gb.facebook.com/lewishamparkcrescentresidentsassociation/>

The Building Conservation Directory

01747 871717

www.buildingconservation.com

Historic England

020 7973 3000 or 0870 333 1181

www.historicengland.org.uk

www.helm.org.uk (HE Guidance Library)

Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation

01625 523784

www.aabc-register.co.uk

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

020 7222 7000

www.rics.org

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

020 7377 1644

www.spab.org.uk

The Victorian Society

020 8994 1019

www.victorian-society.org.uk

The Twentieth Century Society

020 7250 3857

www.c20society.org.uk