

A tour of old Wallington Hamlet

Although most local people consider Wallington to lie around the Public Hall, the original Wallington Hamlet lay further north, beyond Wallington Green, up to and beyond Wallington Bridge. The settlement has its origins in geology: like the parishes of Croydon, Beddington, Carshalton and Cheam, Wallington is a spring-line settlement, where man settled close to the clear springs which spurt out of the chalk, and the road leading to London crossed the Wandle River.

From the Wallington Bridge car-park, the visitor can walk into Beddington Park to view the remains of Alfred Smee's late nineteenth century WATER GARDEN, including a mid-eighteenth century MILL POND (now boating lake) which was given by Sir William Mallinson to the public in the 1930's. The Wandle flows under WALLINGTON BRIDGE, ordered in 1809 and rebuilt in 1812 to a design provided by Mr J Still, Surveyor, with an estimated cost at £380; and again in the 1930s and 1990s. Dominating the bridge is the fine yellow brick BRIDGE HOUSE built in 1782-6 by James Newton, proprietor of Merton Abbey Mills on lands leased from the Bridges family of Wallington, incorporating typical late eighteenth century details (e.g., the porch). Formerly dilapidated, it has been recently repaired as a Care Home. Excavations behind the building suggested occupation during the later medieval/early post-medieval period. Following the paths from the Mill Pond, MANOR GARDENS contains a small LODGE, once part of the Wallington House (Bridges) estate, looking over a 1930s circular fountain and beyond this, a natural spring containing the cleanest spring water in the borough. Further east lies a long pond along LAKESIDE, a survival from the landscaping to the entrance to Wallington Manor House, with a small stone pump house from a 1934 scheme. Across the London Road is the fine early eighteenth century red-brick WANDLE BANK ('Wandle Manor') owned by the Dredge family during the late 18th/early nineteenth century. Note the plat-band and small attic windows in the gable ends. This south-facing 'showcase' facade is probably a later remodelling of an earlier building, the wings to the north are less majestic. An extension to the east for a studio in the 1870s by Arthur Hughes, the pre-Raphaelite painter, includes a large Venetian or Serlian window

Along the frontage of Wandle Bank is a small leat or stream, which formerly carried water from the ELM GROVE pond, now dry, which lies at the corner of BUTTER HILL. This pond, and the land around it, was sold by William Bridges to Francis Gregg of THE ELMS for £600 in 1799. The 'rustic' flint bridge at the west end is early nineteenth century, as is the small yellow brick LODGE. A short distance north was the medieval WALLINGTON CHAPEL, demolished in the 1790s; stone fragments can be seen in the wall of the church hall along Butter Hill.

A walk along Butter Hill (including the Rose and Crown), CALDON and WESTCROFT ROADS reveals part of the Bridges estate development of the late 1870s. Westcroft Villas, built by Howe and White, is the best example, similar in style to examples at Danbury Terrace and South Beddington. Note the fine SEWER VENT, probably dating to c.1880, on Westcroft Road. On the same side a brick pier with a stone plaque stating C P / 1792 defines the boundary between the parishes of Carshalton (west) and Beddington (east), the attached walls form the north-western boundary of the Old Manor House grounds, which lay until the early 1930s along Manor Road North up to Wallington Green.

Originally called the Bowling Green in the later eighteenth century, WALLINGTON GREEN was once planted with walnut trees and, as waste, belonged to the Lords of the Manor. THE DUKES HEAD, called the Bowling Green House, was privately owned until sold to brewers Young and Bainbridge in the 1830s. The original Georgian building was extended to the west in c.1840-65, and has had a large extension built along the total frontage in 1998, on the site of a late eighteenth century terrace similar to that along WRIGHT'S ROW, developed c.1785-1792 of double pile plan, 2 up, 2 down (4 rooms), sharing a central chimney with a pretty brick dentil frieze below the eaves. A rent of £5 was charged in c.1800. Nearby WHITEHALL PLACE, originally called OXDEN'S PLACE, was built for John Oxden after 1792, a view from here shows the rear of MANOR

TERRACE.

Retracing steps to the Green the high gabled, diachrome brick shop and residential facades of DANBURY TERRACE can be seen across the Manor Road. A Bridges' development, built by Henry Clark from 1868, this ornamental facade hides a quieter, cobbled courtyard at the rear containing gabled stables and slaughterhouses. A passage under a modern office development reveals the pretty ornamental back walls of these buildings.

Along Manor Road (passing the 1840s stable block for the pub) the fine MANOR TERRACE, lying back from the road, comprises eleven terraced houses built by January 1794, converted to five larger properties by c.1853, by the London cheesemaker William Juggins. Further south are other detached and semi-detached properties of late eighteenth to early nineteenth century date, and ending with 20-22 MANOR ROAD (Victorian semi-detached villas) built before 1867. In 1881 they were called Lorraine Villa and Harley House. The brick wall facing the drive beside this terrace includes a re-set black Jubilee Brick (1887), and beyond is a Victorian barn/shed with honeycombed gable.