

Southgate District Civic Voice

Newsletter No.273
October 2025

We cover Southgate, Winchmore Hill,
Palmers Green, New Southgate, Cockfosters
and Hadley Wood

(Registered as an amenity society with Civic Voice).

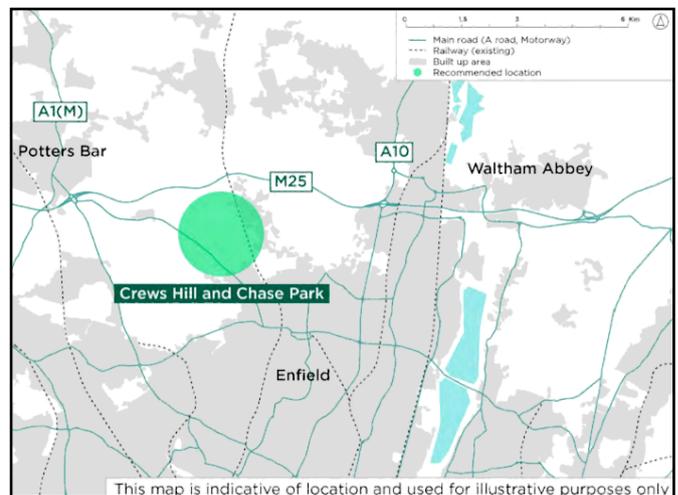


PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN CREWS HILL

A new town in the north of the borough: 'opportunity' or 'cause for alarm'?

Is the proposal for a "new town" in the north of Enfield borough "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us to change lives and help families grow and thrive", as council leader Ergin Erbil describes it, or "a cause for great alarm", the view taken by the Enfield Society?

Our Membership Secretary, John West, has commented on this proposal on **page 7**, in his role as the new Joint Chair of The Enfield Society.



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Contributions to the January newsletter should be sent by Friday 17th December 2025
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Note:- Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing **12th January 2026**

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Contact us: info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

PALMERS GREEN FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

Sunday 7th September

We had a stall at the Palmers Green Festival again this year. It was as usual a fantastic event, with lots of people visiting during the day. The weather was kind, although perhaps a bit too windy – our display boards hated that!



Our lively stall attracted interest and we had lots of interesting conversations with members, supporters, councillors and various others.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help on the day, especially **Colin Barratt** who organised our pitch, transported our stuff, put it up and manned it for part of the day.

Roll on 2026, when we will be back again!

Jane Maggs

Photos: Mervyn Maggs

Autumn Open Meeting

Saturday 27th September 2025



We were delighted to welcome our speaker **Greer Dewdney** BA (Hons) MSc ACIFA, who is the **Archaeology Adviser** for the **Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS)** at Historic England.



Greer is the Archaeology Adviser for this part of north London, covering 12 boroughs from the Thames to the Lee, including Enfield, Barnet and Haringey. The remaining boroughs are covered by other members of the team.

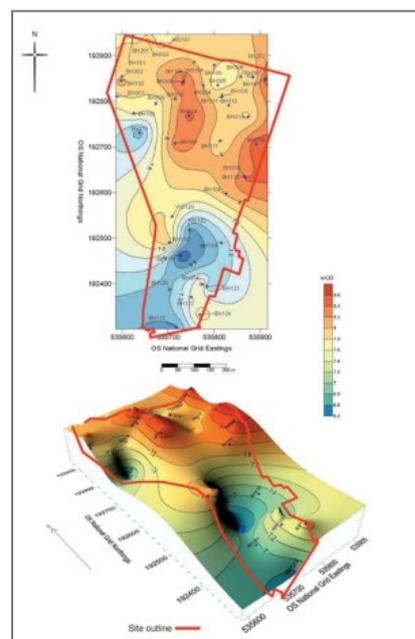
She gave us a fascinating insight into her work and how it impacts us and the developments around us. This article can only give an overview of what was discussed and sadly does not fully do it justice.

Greer gave us a brief overview of the work of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), which is part of Historic England and provides advice for most of Greater London.

In Enfield, GLAAS are consulted on planning applications or preferably at the pre-application stage, although sometimes they are consulted directly by a developer. The historic environment must be considered in planning decisions, which makes Greer's role invaluable.

She can recommend various evaluation techniques including desk research, digging a trench or test pits, geophysical survey, geotechnical monitoring, historic building assessment. If further mitigation is needed, then there may be more physical investigation or possibly just a watching brief where the archaeologist records details as the building work continues. The investigation work is done by Archaeological contractors or commercial archaeology units who then send a report to GLAAS to add to the Historic Environment Record. As technology advances, they can use more sophisticated and less invasive techniques some of which were explained to us.

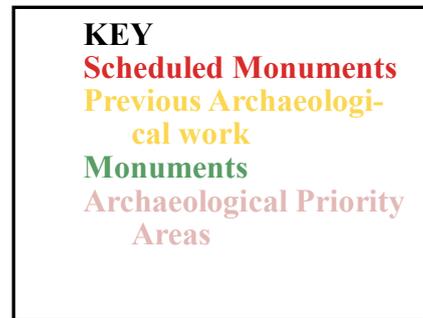
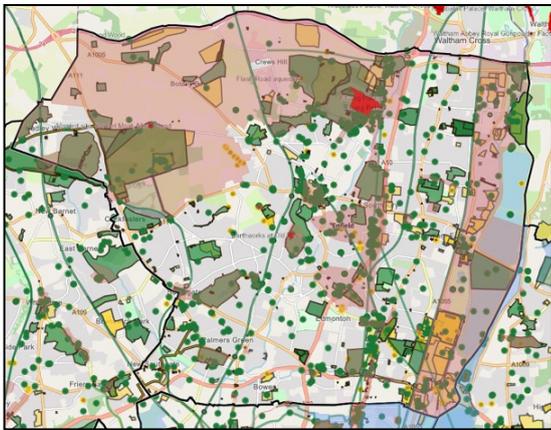
GLAAS staff use the invaluable Historic Environment Record, a database of assets in the London area, with a timeline of over 2,000 years. This makes it incredibly powerful, particularly as it also includes undesignated assets, which may not have the same protection. The record is online and can be viewed at: <https://glher.historicengland.org.uk/>



North London Heat and Power Network, Edmonton Eco Park – 2D & 3D Deposit Models © MOLA

Greer asked that if you notice anything missing or an error, then GLAAS would like to hear from you.

This is the record for Enfield that was shown during the talk:



Some local sites that were mentioned during the meeting are:

The Cherry Tree – where an archaeologist was on site during the works. The work would be paused while the archaeologist recorded the details.



Timber-framed wall exposed and recorded under watching brief, Cherry Tree Inn © MOLA

Bush Hill Park – there is a roman road running through the area. So, at places alongside the road, various settlements have been found, that probably provided a stop off for travellers.

Broomfield House – the dig over the summer provided more evidence for the history of the park. Greer also explained how a physical dig can provide valuable information that is not possible any other way. The example she gave was how the sides of this canal were treated. This could show if the canal was part of a feature incorporated into the garden or a more utility water way. There was quite a lot spoken about Broomfield House, too much to do justice to here.

Enfield Chase – the replanting scheme has been designed to incorporate the historic landscape, such as long walks, views etc. This aspect of the Chase project was surprising but made sense.

Following the talk, there was a Q&A session with some thought provoking and topical questions. It was clear from this that everyone had been extremely engaged by the talk and discussion.

The meeting closed with refreshments – our thanks to Elaine Tyler for organising these.

Jane Maggs

Images: From GLAAS & Jane Maggs

FLOWER BEDS IN SOUTHGATE

Southgate Station

This is a collaboration between Local Volunteers, TfL, The Bee Friendly Trust, Enfield Council & SDCV

The planting of the station beds started in May with The Bee Friendly Trust and volunteers. The aim was to have some plants that attracted pollinators and the remainder of the beds seeded with wildflowers.



Many of the plants grew fantastically well. During the hot weather volunteers watered the plants regularly. We are grateful to TfL and Nando's who stored the watering cans and hoses.



In August volunteers cut back the Lavender, which was given to the volunteers and visitors to our stall at the Palmers Green Festival.



What Next for the Flower Beds?

It became clear that the bed near the bus stops was not thriving. The reasons were partly due to people walking on the beds, but also because there was too much concrete and not enough soil.

Dan Maier in partnership with TfL has been working on a new plan. It is not possible to remove the concrete, as TfL need to retain a particular depth above the train tunnels. So, a resin bonded gravel layer will be laid shortly. This will be followed by several raised beds, that can be planted up with interesting, pollinating plants.

The plans rely on a team of local volunteers so we can do some planting before winter.

Want to volunteer?

Volunteering is organised via a WhatsApp group. If you are interested, please send your phone number to info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org and you can be added to the merry band.

Chase Road/Winchmore Hill Road

This flower bed is having a makeover and will be back soon.

Following the recent removal of much of the planting, some of our members met with the Council Officer to discuss the future of the flower bed.



We are pleased to report that there is a plan and work will start soon. However, it must fit around the current maintenance schedule, so will take a few weeks.

Watch this space!

Jane Maggs
Photos courtesy: Dan Maier, Mervyn Maggs & Ralph Kley

A New Town for Enfield?

With the Enfield Local Plan, Stage 3 hearing due to start on 21st October, it was a shock to hear a New Town in Enfield being proposed at the Labour Party Conference. There had been no indication of these plans prior to the press release and we understand that even many senior Council Officers were unaware of the proposal. An unusually well-kept secret. Details of the proposal are still very vague, but Crews Hill and Vicarage Farm, east of Trent Park and either side of Enfield Road (referred to by the Council as Chase Park) are both included in the press release. It is unclear how these distinct and separate sites will be joined to form a 'New Town'. But these areas are identified in Enfield draft Local Plan as future development sites, but on a smaller scale to that now proposed. Virtually all the land proposed is designate Green Belt designed to prevent London sprawling towards towns in neighbouring Hertfordshire. This is why there has been considerable opposition to Local Plan as submitted by the Council. Creating a New Town will almost certainly further erode the Green Belt.

It appears likely that the Local Plan Inspector Steven Lee was also aware of the proposal. The Council wrote to him recently following the initial press release as follows –

“From the Council’s perspective as local planning authority, the Taskforce’s recommendations and the Initial Response serve to underline the significant potential of Crews Hill and Chase Park to deliver sustainable development in Enfield in a well-connected location. The Council is taking legal advice on the implications of these proposalsand will be happy to discuss any such implications, if deemed appropriate, during the Stage 3 hearing sessions.”

In his reply the Inspector has commented –

“Your letter provides some initial views on how you consider this announcement effects the Plan. However, I note that the Council is also seeking additional advice. I am therefore writing to ask the Council to provide me with its full formal position on how it considers the New Towns announcement effects the examination of the Local Plan, if at all. This should include views on any procedural implications.”

SDCV will continue to monitor the situation and support groups and individuals who are firmly opposed to both the Local Plan as drafted and a possible new town on the northern edge of Enfield.

John West

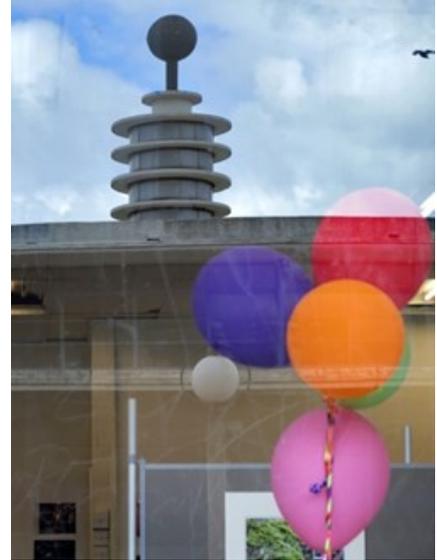
SOUTHGATE CELEBRATES!

Cultural Events in Southgate: Expressions of Interest

Southgate District Civic Voice (SDCV) has received a small grant via Enfield Council to host a series of free, community-focused activities between now and June 2026.

We are inviting local groups and individual practitioners to submit proposals for cultural activities in Southgate.

The goal is to *celebrate the best of Southgate* and bring more vibrancy to our town centre. We're looking for memorable, feel-good activities that bring people together through a series of events based around the "pocket park" (the green space outside Nando's).



We are open to a wide range of ideas, including but not limited to **music, art, crafts, food and well-being activities**. All activities must be free for the public to attend. The grant will be used to cover the costs of delivering these activities and the events as a whole.

How to Apply

If you'd like to get involved, please send a brief paragraph to Southgate.celebrates@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org as soon as possible, but by **9th November**.

Your submission should include:

- **Who you are:** a paragraph about yourself or your organisation
- **Your Activity:** a short description of the event or activity you propose
- **Target Audience:** who the event would appeal to
- **Duration:** the planned length of the activity
- **Requirements:** any specific needs, size / area of space. Please note there is no running water or electricity at the site.
- **Availability:** the time frame in which you could offer your activity (please note all events must be approved by end March and take place before end June).
- **Cost:** the amount required to cover the costs for running your event

Please also answer the following:

- Do you have public liability? YES / NO, if YES to what value?
- Do you have a network that you can publicise the event among? YES / NO

Please include:

- your email address
 - your postal address
 - your phone number
 - your website (if you have one)
 - your social media links (if you have them)
-
- maximum 6 photos of previous work / activities you've run



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We look forward to hearing from you and making Southgate brighter together!

Dan Maier & Jane Maggs

John West Elected Co- Chair of the Enfield Society



We are very pleased that John West, our membership Secretary, has been elected Co-Chair of the Enfield Society. He will share this position with John Cole, who has been working on the Unlocking Broomfield Project, on which Richard Purver is our representative.

The co-Chairs take over from Dave Cockle who chaired the Society for 12 years. Dave has been a good friend to SDCV, for example in supporting us with our campaign against the inappropriate Southgate Office Village high rise development. Dave has stepped down from his role for health reasons.

John West is one of Enfield's most active citizens. Apart from the many responsibilities he has taken on with the Enfield Society he has contributed greatly to SDCV. For us John is involved in planning issues and has recently led on historical plaques for the shops and cafes along Aldermans Hill in Palmers Green.

We wish John every success in his important new role.

Graham Davis

MERKUR SLOTS IN SOUTHGATE

Merkur Slots, the adult gaming company, has applied to open its fifth outlet in the borough of Enfield. This time in the old NatWest building on Southgate Circus.

We have already seen them open a site in Palmers Green and now they are moving to Southgate.



SDCV was approached by the Enfield Dispatch local newspaper to give our views on this latest development. This can be seen here: <https://enfielddispatch.co.uk/adult-gaming-centre-bid-causes-alarm-in-southgate/>

This article formed the basis of the comments SDCV submitted to Enfield's planning department on the planning application for the change of use. However, we recognise that the council has limited powers to refuse this type of change of use.

Our comments concluded that we would like to see better controls, as well as a change in the planning/licensing rules to give local people and councils more powers to protect their communities from potential harm.

Jane Maggs

POSSIBLE TOUR OF EDMONTON ECOPARK

At our Open Meeting in October 2023 representatives of North London Waste Authority (NLWA) gave a presentation about their work. NLWA now offer tours of their bulky waste processing facility and public reuse and recycling centre, along with a visit to EcoPark House – their new education and visitors' centre. The bulky waste facility is where fly-tipped waste and large items such as mattresses, sofas, etc. go after being collected from households. The public reuse and recycling centre is where the public can come and drop off items to be recycled. NLWA also provide a safe vantage point to view construction progress on the new Energy Recovery Facility being built onsite.

The tours are offered on select Wednesdays and Fridays. The tour duration is approximately 1.5hrs. NLWA can accommodate a maximum of 10 guests to ensure safe movement around the operational areas. There is about 45 minutes to 60 minutes of walking with stops and there are lifts to all areas.

If you are interested in joining a SDCV group on a tour of the EcoPark please email me at info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

If we have a group interested in visiting the EcoPark I will ask NLWA about possible dates and times.

Graham Davis

Here Before Us



An example from Lancaster Road, Enfield

SDCV have been working with the Enfield Society and local businesses to develop blue plaques on selected shops along Aldermans Hill. 'Here Before Us' are a company that search through the history of a building from the late 19th century to World War II and produce an individually customised vinyl blue plaque for a shop window. They give a wonderful insight to the history of the area. For example, along Aldermans Hill, no 56 was once a dairy, no.70 an umbrella maker and no.92 a baker. The project has been tested in Enfield Town, along Lancaster Road and Chase Side shopping centres.

Businesses report that the plaques have generated interest and bring customers into the shops. Along Aldermans Hill the estate agents have all expressed interest, but the take up from other businesses has been disappointing, Efforts are currently being made to increase the number of sites involved.

John West

The Museum of Enfield's Online Collection

The Museum of Enfield has launched an online platform, showcasing its collection for the public to view digitally for the first time, allowing everyone to search and browse the online catalogue, and deep dive into the objects that tell powerful stories about Enfield.

The collection also includes cultural and personal objects donated by residents, allowing the Museum to accurately represent the diverse communities that have shaped Enfield throughout history to the present day.



Our new CollectionsOnline platform was made possible thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of their Dynamic Collection programme.

You can search the new platform by clicking the 'start to explore' link on the Museum page of the Dugdale Arts Centre website:

<https://www.dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/museum>

We will continue to add more objects from the collection, so keep a look out for new additions!

*Sarah Kirkham
Museum Officer,
London Borough of Enfield*

THOMAS H MAWSON IN SOUTHGATE

Whatever may be said of the aims of landscape gardening, civic art must be inventive, and, as applied to parks and gardens, is rightly described as "landscape architecture." It is essential therefore, in the first instance, that a clear knowledge should be gained of the objective to be attained and the motif to be expressed. This should be done in a traditional manner, consonant with the medium dealt with, the local requirements, and the necessities of the site. [from Civic Art by Thomas H Mawson, p162]

Thomas Hayton Mawson (1861-1933) was a highly successful landscape architect and town planner who worked in this country and abroad for private clients and municipal authorities and wrote several books on these subjects. Among his other projects Mawson provided advice to Southgate Urban District Council following the opening of Broomfield Park to the public in 1903 and for Grovelands Park in 1913 and the design with R Daw of the Bounds Green Estate for Wood Green UDC in 1921.

In his autobiography *The Life and Work of an English Landscape Architect* (1927) Mawson discusses various commissions including The Hill garden in Hampstead for WH Lever (later Lord Leverhulme) and states that 'Other work of considerable interest during this period was the remodelling of Broomfield Park for the Southgate Urban District Council, which has remained our client ever since'. He also says that the Council 'for whom I had improved Broomfield Park some years before, had purchased a part of the Grovelands Estate, and this they instructed me to lay out. This work was duly carried out, and it is interesting to note that at the time of writing my firm and colleagues are town-planning advisers to this Council'.

The Historic England Grade II* listing information for Grovelands Park states that Mawson was 'responsible for new paths, fencing the lake (with post and single rails), perimeter planting of chestnut trees, and providing tennis, putting and bowling facilities. The putting green has been moved to the other side of the south entrance drive but the other elements of Mawson's scheme survive'. (Prompted by this entry I included a reference to Mawson's role at Grovelands in my text for the Enfield Society Heritage Walk for Winchmore Hill (2022).)

One factor which is difficult now to gauge is how Mawson's commissions from the council related to the work of their highly-thought-of surveyor Charles Lawson who was also involved in the development of the parks and is mentioned specifically in this respect in articles about the opening of Grovelands Park in editions of *The Recorder for Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Southgate* for 1913.

Proposed Improvements to Broomfield Park

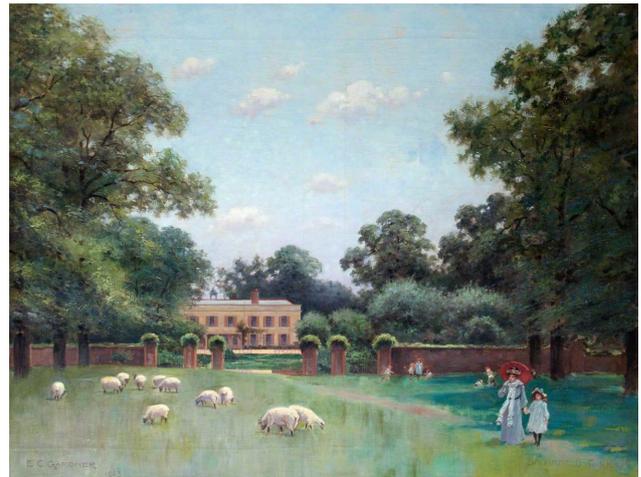
In relation to Broomfield Park, the minutes of the SUDC Parks and Open Spaces Committee meeting on 27 November 1905 record that they had 'considered the Report and Plan prepared by Mr T. H. Mawson in accordance with the council's instructions as a scheme for the general improvement of the Park, together with Mr Mawson's estimate of the probable cost of the suggested works' and referred to his proposal to construct open air swimming baths for men and women. The minutes for 29 May 1906 state that 'Mr T. H. Mawson explained to members the details of his scheme for the improvement of the Park' and that they had also 'visited and inspected, with Mr Mawson, various parts of the Park'. On 26 November that year 'The Committee decided to ask the Finance Committee to recommend the payment of Mr T. H. Mawson's agreed fee of fifty guineas for the report and plan prepared by him'.

Mawson reproduced his detailed Proposed Improvement design in his book *Civic Art: Studies in Town Planning, Parks, Boulevards and Open Spaces* (1911). This placed tennis lawns, an archery ground, a cricket pavilion and bowling greens to the north and east of the house as well as a gymnasium and gentlemen's and ladies' swimming baths to the south.

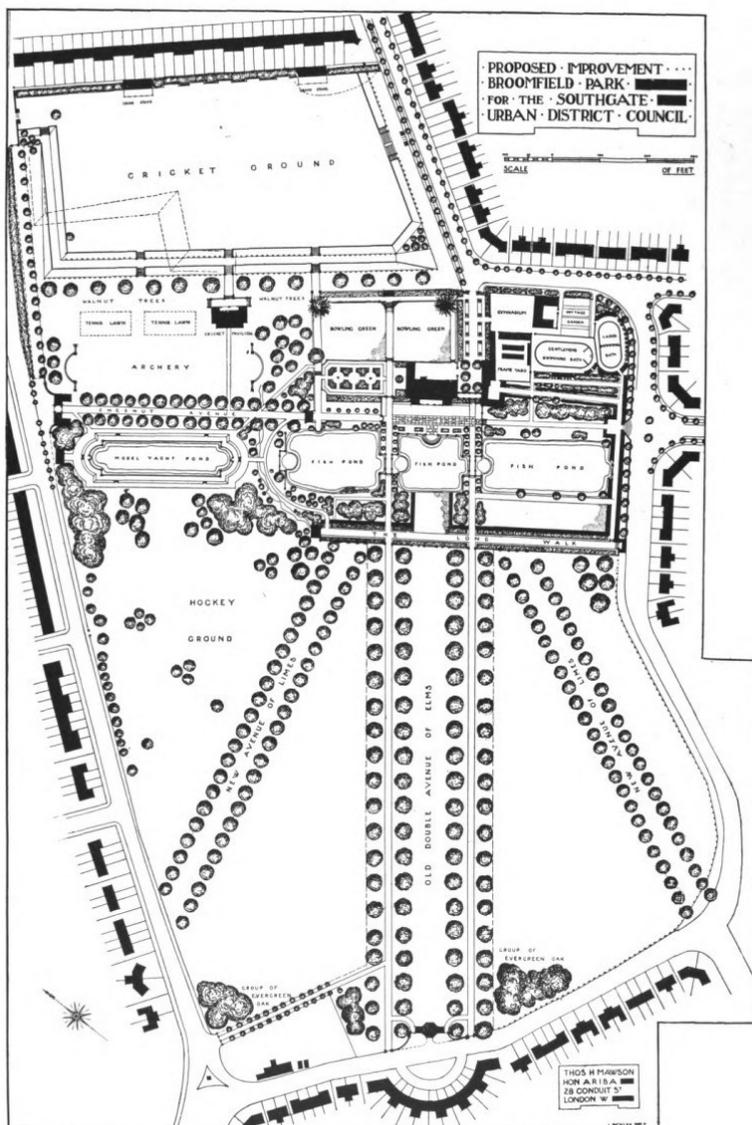
Mawson also emphasised the importance of creating or utilising a central point in a park as the main focus:

A park centre is often most successfully formed when an old mansion has been retained, as at Broomfield Park, Southgate ... This is a particularly commendable arrangement, especially when the old mansion can be converted into a picture gallery or museum, for then residents are encouraged to make greater use of the park, knowing that wet or fine they may find some interesting object for study. [p194]

This was an accurate scenario for what did happen here, with the house being used for various purposes including as the council's museum from 1925 until the disastrous fire in 1984, leading eventually to the current plan to demolish the house (Grade II* listed in 1950) and memorialise it and the park (Grade II on the Register of Parks and Gardens) by displays and artwork through Enfield Council's *Unlocking Broomfield Park for the Community* project, which is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Best Laid Schemes

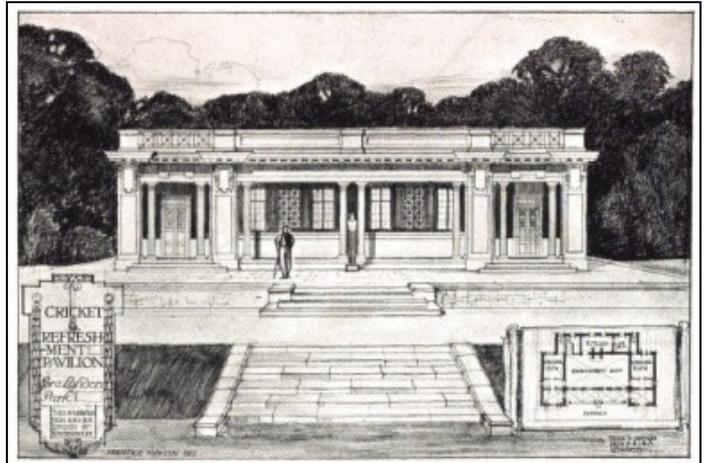


However although the councillors were probably influenced generally by Mawson's report and their meetings with him in their thinking about what was needed to provide facilities for the public in the park, some of his recommendations as shown in the published design were not implemented and others had to wait several years before versions of them were introduced in different locations from where he had suggested. Costs were a factor, particularly in relation to Mawson's proposed swimming baths, with swimming already being allowed in the lower lake and other areas of the park earmarked for improvement competing for funds. (A newly-constructed swimming pool was later opened at Barrowell Green in 1913.)

The two bowling greens were not installed (to the west of the model yacht pond, rather than near the house) until 1921 and 1923 (with a ladies' croquet lawn added in 1929). Following the closure of Southgate Bowling Club in 2012 these are now a performance space and community orchard respectively. Tennis courts were established next to them to the south and also became used for netball, with a major refurbishment being carried out in 2021.

Mawson's design included avenues of limes extending diagonally from each side of the eastern end of the double elm avenue which led towards the house and would certainly have been a striking feature had they been planted. Coincidentally limes were chosen to replace the elms when they were lost to Dutch elm disease in 1978.

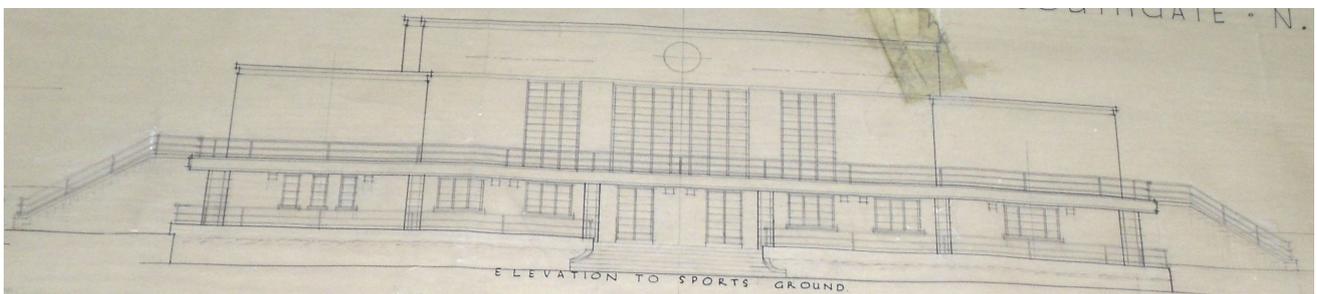
With respect to the cricket pavilion, which would have overlooked from a central position the sports field to the east, this was not built but architectural drawings of two suggested designs, the second of which was apparently the type proposed for Broomfield Park, were included in *Civic Art* (the other was a three-sided building with steep thatched roofs prepared for WH Lever MP):



Cricket pavilions offer many suggestions to the architect ... The second design, which is more pretentious [than the first], was intended for a London suburban park. In this design the roof is used as a grandstand, and on the ground floor are a verandah and large tea-room with all the necessary dressing-rooms and conveniences. [p190]

A sports pavilion and fitness centre (including an equipped gymnasium for use by men and women and a restaurant) was planned in the 1930s to be built further along the bank to the north above the concrete steps leading down to the running track but eventually cancelled on grounds of cost (although the surviving brick WWII gas decontamination building to the south was later used as changing rooms). The initial design was by Stanley Brown in 1933 on behalf of Southgate Social Service Council (which advised the council on various matters including health) but this was superseded by architectural plans devised by the Borough Surveyor DM Mactavish in 1937/8 and his successor JTW Peat in 1939. The scheme had met with opposition within the council over the years, particularly from Councillor Peverett and when it collapsed in July 1939 after it was found the projected budget fell short of the lowest tender for the work drew sensational headlines in the local press, with the *Wood Green and Southgate Weekly Herald's* *Broomfield Park Pavilion "Bomb-Shell" / Elaborate Scheme May Be Abandoned / Serious Under-Estimate of Cost matched by £10,744 Pavilion – No Thanks! / Broomfield Park Scheme / Was Discussed On £6,250! / Town Council Are Not Amused* in the *Palmer's Green and Southgate Gazette*.

Another proposal was put forward by the Parks Committee for a sports pavilion in 1959 because of concern about the lack of facilities for athletes competing in the park, especially girls and women, but the cost of £25,000 was rejected by a large majority of the full council. *



The Fascination of Water

A model yacht pond is included in Mawson's plan and he was keen on ponds in parks generally, as emphasised in the chapter Design and Construction of Public Parks in *Civic Art*:

They [open-air bathing ponds such as the one he planned for Broomfield Park] are in every way desirable, and whether considered as an ornamental feature or not, there is a fascination about water which appeals to all who are susceptible to poetic sentiments; the imagination bounds free at the sight of a sheet of water. The pond, considered as a diversion for sailing model yachts, affords endless delight, and there is a fascination for boys in the mastery of the craft of seamanship in miniature. In fact, for myself as elder, I confess to the feeling yet of childish delight in seeing youngsters start their ships off on imaginary journeys, noting how some are baffled and foiled and thwarted in their course; the picture is so true to life. [p182]

As built the model yacht pond (dating from 1910) had an oval shape rather than Mawson's rectangular design, with the person responsible for its construction, local councillor Thomas Melville becoming so associated with the pond that it was known as 'Loch Melville'. Over the years the pond became an established location for this hobby, motorised versions were introduced (despite objections from some quarters) and the Broomfield Park Model Boat Club was formed. They were pleased to be able to resume their activities in April 2025 after an extended period of difficulty in supplying water to the pond.

A children's playground and bandstand are not shown in Mawson's plan but he discusses both in the chapter The Adornment and Equipment of Public Parks with a drawing of a bandstand having a similar square shape to the one in the park which was opened in 1927, but lacking its half-timbered gables on each of the four sides which match the Tudorbethan facade of the house installed in stages from 1928 to 1932. The children's playground was established in the area where the Mini Golf course and green gym (2012) are now, with the Borough Surveyor reporting to the Parks Committee in January 1935 that 'the levelling and resurfacing of the Children's Playground, and the construction of the Fairy Cycle Track by unemployed labour [for the make of children's bicycle popular at the time], have been completed'. The playground was relocated to the east field in 1990.



Mawson did not include a conservatory either in his design for the park although one was provided by Southgate Borough Council in 1934 to the west of the upper lake. It was refurbished in 2010 and again in 2018 and is now managed by volunteers from the Friends of Broomfield Park.

Despite the disparities between Thomas H Mawson's design proposals for Broomfield Park and the way it was actually developed the engagement by Southgate Urban District Council of a renowned landscape architect as an adviser here and at Grovelands reflected the importance of their decision to purchase land so local people could enjoy green spaces within a rapidly developing suburban area.

* Sporting activities on the east field included cricket and netball and notably athletics, using the running track which was laid down in 1919 and replaced in 1950 and football on the 'track pitch' which was created within it. (See my two-part article "*The Greatest Collection of Athletic Talent Ever Assembled in This Part of North London*", Newsletters 250/251, October 2019/January 2020 and the film *Southgate's New Running Track* on the London's Screen Archives website.)

As well as sports the field became the venue for a variety of other events, as shown for example in *Southgate Celebrates the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II* (issued on DVD by SDCV) and there are scenes featuring views throughout the park in 1950 in our DVD *Southgate – A Glimpse of the Past*, some of which were revisited in the complementary film originally issued in 2002, *Southgate – A Half Century of Change*.

Images from Civic Art by Thomas H Mawson sourced from Hathi Trust website; painting of Broomfield Park in 1903 by Edwin Charles Gardner courtesy of Museum of Enfield via Art UK; architectural plan for proposed Broomfield Park pavilion December 1937 by DM Mactavish, Borough Engineer & Surveyor (detail) by permission of Enfield Local Studies and Archive

Richard Purver

