Welcome to
HOLLY HILL
Woodland Park

Local Nature Reserve

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Holly Hill Woodland Park is a beautiful example of late-Victorian landscaped parkland surrounded by mature woodland. The site, located between Sarisbury Green & Warsash, covers an area of 35 Ha and stretches down to the River Hamble from the car park on Barnes Lane.
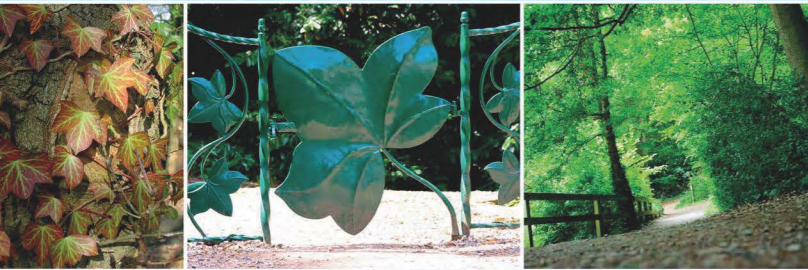

The Park is divided in two halves known as Cawtes Copse and Winnards Copse. Winnards encompasses the original ornamental landscape and is the only known site in Hampshire that features Pulhamite Stone, which creates the lakes and waterfalls. As well as other Pulhamite follies, such as the Grotto, this area is home to many exotic trees & shrubs including Swamp Cypress and Coastal Redwood.

Cawtes Copse is native woodland and is managed to conserve and increase its rich diversity of wildlife, including the Yellow-Necked Mouse, Roe Deer, Bluebells and woodland dependant butterfly species. The River Hamble can be reached by a short ramble through the woodland.

Managed by Fareham Borough Council and volunteers, Holly Hill offers visitors a unique combination of heritage interest and attractive wildlife.

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History

Holly Hill Woodland Park was once part of a large estate which had a succession of owners throughout the 19th Century. It was during the latter part of the 1800's that the grand Sarisbury Court was built, the gardens were planted with exotic species and the Pulhamite stonework was installed. In 1900, George Winn bought estate and then built Holly Hill Mansion and created the Sunken Garden, both of which survive today.

In 1917, Sarisbury Court was sold to the US Government, and after the war was sold back to the British Government. The neglected building was eventually demolished in the 1920s.

In 1954, the land was bought by Fareham Borough Council, but there was little management of the gardens until the 1990's. Since then, Fareham Borough Council, with the excellent assistance of a dedicated volunteer group and a comprehensive management plan, has reclaimed the site from the dilapidated state of old. In 20 years, the volunteer group and rangers have re-established path networks, reduced the invasive species and managed the lake environment. Holly Hill is now recognised as a Local Nature Reserve and has achieved the Green Flag award since 2008. The Council's aim is to continue to manage and sustain the ecological resource and community value of the park for future generations.

River Hamble Viewpoint 7
The River Hamble is an internationally important area for wildlife, as well as a thriving boating industry. The meadows and reedbeds are ideal places to spot birds such as Reed Warbler, Lapwing and Little Egret.

Cawtes Copse 6 Management of this native woodland is vital to retain existing wildlife interest and maximise the biodiversity potential. By removing some of the invasive sycamore and laurel stands that are detrimental to natural tree regeneration, sunny glades have been established which ensures that more wildflowers, birds and insects flourish across the Park.

Pulhamite Stone 5 Pulhamite is a synthetic hand-made rock produced by the Pulham brothers in the 1800s. Made from Portland stone, cement and rubble (although the exact 'recipe' was lost when the brothers died), all the rock features around the lakes are artificial. This includes the Grotto, which originally would have allowed guests to alight rowing boats in the cave and row onto the lake.

Exotic Species 4 There are many exotic ornamental plants and trees around the lakes. These include Swamp Cypress, Tree Ferns, Gunnera (giant rhubarb) and the mighty Coastal Redwoods. Native to California and subject to regular forest fires, Redwoods have fire-resistant soft bark. The largest Redwood by the lake is one of the oldest trees in the Park.

Sunken Garden 1 This area previously contained glasshouses which once covered the beautiful Camellia in the centre of the garden. The Camellia is estimated to be about 175 years old and the glasshouses had to be removed to allow it to grow. Some of the brickwork still remains. George Winn subsequently created the Sunken Garden in 1936, which was then restored in 1998 based on photos donated by his daughter, Miss Katherine Winn.

Winnards Copse 2 Encompassing the original ornamental garden and lakes, Winnards Copse is shown on an 1838 map as Winnards Wood. However, due to lack of management in the past, it became overgrown with Rhododendron and Laurel (originally planted by the Victorians as ornamental plants). This is where extensive work is being carried out by the volunteers. As well as maintaining the paths, such as the Old Carriageway (where once horse drawn carriages were driven to Sarisbury Court), the volunteers are systematically reducing the invasive species.

The Lakes 3 The lakes and waterfalls were created from Pulhamite stone and are one of the most striking attractions for visitors (see also 5). They are fed from several sources helping to ensure water is retained throughout the year. Unfortunately, due to the increased amount of silt that now enters the Park, the lakes have to be dredged to clear the deposits.

Map labels

Brook Avenue
To Wendlehome Nature Reserve
Stream
Holly Hill Lane
Horse Chestnut Avenue
Swamp Cypress
Tree Ferns
Ancient boundary bank
Waterfall Bridge
Winnards Park
The Old Carriage Way
Access to Waterfall Bridge avoiding steep slopes
Barnes Close
Warsash
Cemetery
Accessible Parking Bays
ENTRANCE
Holly Hill Mansion (Private)
Barnes Lane
Sarisbury Green

Key

- ⊃ Horse Trail
- Picnic Area
- Viewpoint
- P Parking
- WC Toilet
- Wheelchair access
- ····· Easy Access Route

How to find
HOLLY HILL
Woodland Park

From the M27, exit at Junction 8, take the road to Hamble, and then take the first left along the A27. Drive over the Hamble Bridge through Swanwick and turn right into Barnes Lane at Sarisbury Green. Follow this road until you see the signpost right for Holly Hill. A free car park and toilets are located at the entrance. A disabled access car park is available further along Barnes Lane.

Access Information

Much of the park is accessible to all, although there are some steep slopes. There is an easy access route from the Barnes Lane entrance and accessible parking bays in the main car park.

Dogs are welcome provided that they are kept under control. They MUST be kept on leads around the lakes.

Cycling is not permitted around the lakes.

Horses must keep to the trail provided.

Entrance to Holly Hill Woodland Park is free and and open all year round.

Contact Information
Countryside Service
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Or write to
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