



Village Walk 5

Bedfords Park, Broxhill Road and The Walled Garden (open Tues & Thurs from 10am)

Bedfords Park has been an area for recreation for over 1000 years. As far back as the 1200's, before the signing of the Magna Carta (1215), it has formed part of the Royal Hunting Forests. In 1212 King John gave the land to William d'Aubigny. The estate, which totalled 100 acres of land, 15 acres of wood and 5 acres of meadow, changed tenancy several times and is associated with local areas. In 1243 tenancy was granted to Richard Elms who gave his name to the Bush Elms District of Hornchurch, in 1245 it was given to the Abbey of Stratford and in 1445 Bedfords Park became part of the Gidea Hall Estate. It also has links to Harold Hill and Harold Wood.



The mansion, shown in the picture, was built by John Heaton who purchased the Estate in 1771. Many improvements were made to the house and gardens in 1865 by the, then owner, Charles Barber.

Bedfords did not become a public park until 1933 when it was purchased by The Council. the official opening took place on June 30th 1934.

During the Second World War the house was occupied by the National Fire Service. Unfortunately the mansion fell into rack and ruin and was demolished in 1959. The only original features visible are the steps and terrace. There is further history and a time line of the Park in the Visitor's Centre and Cafe

The walled garden also fell into a complete state of disrepair but has recently been lovingly and completely restored by Lois and her team of volunteers over the past few years. It is now the wonderful haven of fruit, vegetables and flowers that you see today.



