

# Addington Hills history

Addington Hills is a large natural area that rises from Oaks Road up to a plateau which is 460 feet above sea level. The land was acquired in four stages over a period of 45 years. In 1874 the Croydon Board of Health purchased the first area following a public meeting, the lower part towards Shirley was added in 1903, the Birch wood from Oaks Road to Coombe Lane was a gift from the late Frank Lloyd of Coombe Park Estate (after whom Lloyd Park was named), and finally the Pine woods in the south east corner were added in 1919 making the largest public open space in Croydon at the time.

Addington Hills is on a plateau of Blackheath Pebbles which has been colonized by heather with scattered groups of pines and mixed plantations. The north west side of the plateau has been broken into by a number of steep valleys which are covered with Birch to the west and Oak to the east. Below the Blackheath Pebbles an outcrop of less impervious Woolwich Beds was marked by a line of springs these however have now disappeared possibly due to a lowering of the water table.

The seasonal changes of the colourful heather, birch, oak and pine and the variety of birds and other wildlife as well as the bracing situation on top of the plateau, attract visitors to the area at all times of the year.

In 1963 a Viewing Platform was provided by Alderman Basil Monk as a permanent commemoration of Croydon's Millenary. The platform, which is north west of the restaurant, is situated at the top of steeply sloping ground and provides extensive views over Croydon. A low wall around the platform is engraved with directional lines and inscriptions indicating the main view points, such as Shooters Hill, Epping Forest, Fulham, the Town Hall and skyscrapers of Croydon and on a clear day the towers of Windsor Castle.

Addington Reservoir on the southern side of the Hills is the only area that is fenced off and not open to the public. The reservoir was built in 1888 and the Valve House was initially open to the public with refreshments being served from the ground floor and a residence above. Unfortunately an outbreak of Typhoid in 1937 was traced to the reservoir and the cafe was quickly closed and the area fenced off.

Below the reservoir on the Coombe Road frontage was once Broadcombe Cottage which was part of the Coombe Park Estate. Broadcombe was the old name for the tract of land alongside Oaks Road and at the foot of Addington Hills. Also in this vicinity was the Lamb Inn, which according to tradition was the site of a fierce affray between smugglers and revenue officers.