

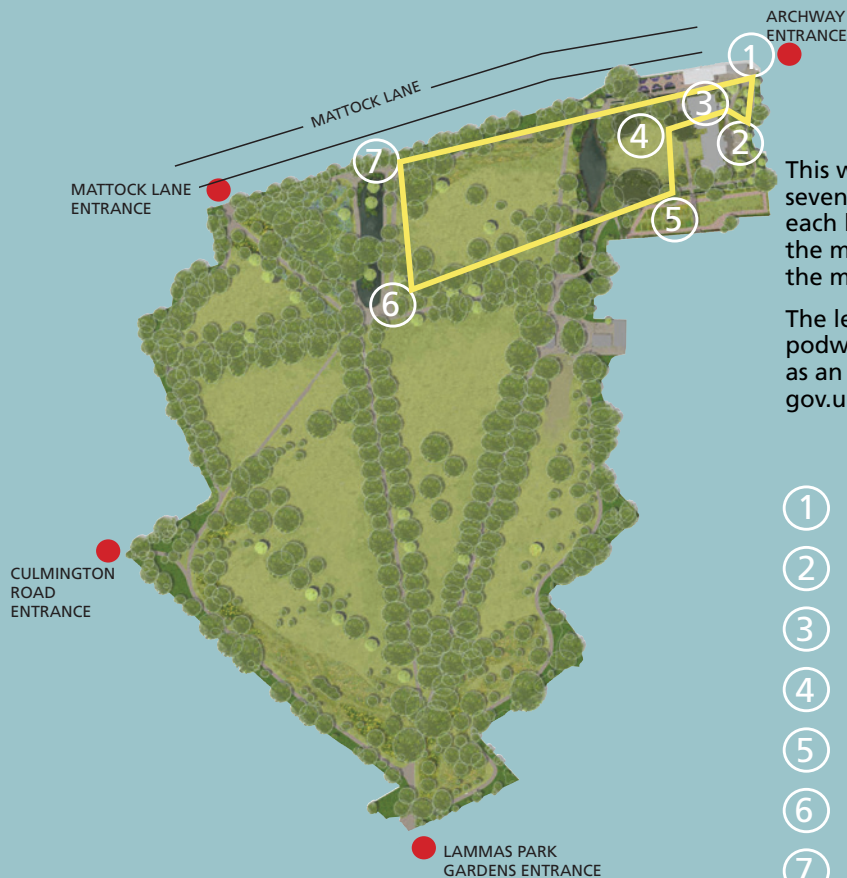


# WALPOLE PARK

Present day walks on Ealing's past

Designed for adults for whom English is an additional language

# Walpole Park MAP



This walk takes you around seven key areas in the park, each location is numbered on the map. Follow the numbers on the map to complete the tour.

The leaflet is accompanied by a podwalk available to download as an mp3 from: [www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole/walks](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole/walks).

- 1 From Top to Bottom
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# Walpole Park INTRO

Welcome to Walpole Park, one of Ealing's best-loved parks and home to Pitzhanger Manor. It has been a public park and free for everyone to use since 1901 but has a long history with many owners before that, including Sir John Soane, architect of the Bank of England. We have developed a tour of the park and house for people learning English to show some of the stories we found most interesting and to give you a taster of Walpole Park and Pitzhanger Manor's history.

This leaflet has been developed by a group of English learners and is accompanied by a podwalk available to download as an mp3 from [www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole/walks](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole/walks).



This walk starts under the archway on Mattock Lane, where you can look at Pitzhanger Manor.

Rustic Bridge

# 1 Bottom to THE TOP

**In July 1800, Sir John Soane bought Pitzhanger Manor. At the time John worked as the architect for the Bank of England and he also worked on other public buildings and private houses.**

- Sir John Soane came from a very poor family
- His father worked as a bricklayer and John had a very tough upbringing
- He worked very hard until he became a famous, rich and successful architect

**The land is 28 acres, John had lots of plans for its development:**

- The house was going to be his dream home
- The home would be big enough to store some of his art collections
- He had to demolish most of the existing house
- He did not demolish the extension designed by his first employer George Dance
- John built Pitzhanger Manor as a showcase of his talents and his personal interests

**Pitzhanger Manor was completed in 1804.**

- John used the new home for weekend breaks and parties
- The parties and banquets were for special friends and relatives to be together and have lots of fun



**Walk from the archway towards the house and stand in front of the main door. Stop here.**



**Decorative bench**



The Lodge

1 Entrance Archway and start of this tour

# show HOME

**When Sir John Soane bought Pitzhanger Manor he wanted to build a show home to show off his skills in architecture to future clients. John intended to build his dream house, his very own country villa, which in the future would be a home for his sons.**

**John wanted to:**

- **Keep the part of the house designed by George Dance with its large dining and drawing rooms**
- **Demolish the rest of the house**
- **Make the villa with yellow brick**
- **Have six main rooms:**
  - Breakfast room      - Drawing room      - Second bedroom
  - Library                - First bedroom      - Third bedroom

**The breakfast room is painted in dark colours and its ceiling is vaulted and looks like the sky. It is painted in a light blue colour to create space in the narrow room and to make it lighter.**

**There is a library room with some portraits and a lot of mirrors that create an illusion of space.**

**John used to hold parties in the drawing room; it had a large table and lots of chairs and many candlesticks because there was no electricity in those days.**

**There are two separate rooms for the couple and another one for their sons.**

**Mr Soane's bedroom had a very high bed because mattresses were made from horses' hair, making them so rough that they used a lot of them to make the bed comfortable.**

**Downstairs, there is a room called the monk's dining room, although there were never any monks in the house. In this room Soane showed all of the treasures and valuable things he had collected from his tour around European countries.**



**If the house is open, enter the house (which is free). Stop so that you can see the stairs on your left. If the house is not open, you can stand outside the front.**

## 2 Front of Pitzhanger Manor



Breakfast Room

# 3 Creating ILLUSIONS

**Sir John Soane used to make the small spaces appear bigger than the reality by using mirrors, windows and reflection**

As an architect, John Soane used:

- Different colours in his house
- Stained glass to reflect and make different patterns of light
- Coloured glass panes to create bright colours
- Glass roof to give space, height and light
- Mirrors so that you feel that there is a space extending beyond the walls
- Height, particularly in the elegant, triple staircase, to create space and spread light throughout the whole building
- Statues of people who were famous in that era or whom he admired, such as Roman warriors and goddesses

Everywhere in the house there is natural light, which comes from the glass and the windows.

Sir John Soane liked ancient Roman designs that he had seen on his travels. He included parts of classical architecture into his own designs, which made him the most famous architect in England at that time. He was always thinking of the possibilities for new designs. He used Pitzhanger Manor as a place to show off his designs and he invited his friends to show them what he had done.



You can look around the house more before you continue with this tour. When you are ready, leave the house. Turn right when you walk out of the front door. Walk around to the back of the house until you are on the grass. Stop here.



Triple Height Staircase



3 Roman Statues

**Sir John Soane was a very famous and rich architect with two sons. He wanted them to follow his career and become architects like him. So, he was shocked when he discovered that one of his sons wanted to be an actor (sadly the son died at an early age, after college) and the other wanted to be a writer. As a father he was very disappointed about their choices.**

The relationship between Sir John Soane and his son George became even worse when he got married to an 'unsuitable' woman, against his father's wishes. After this, John and George stopped talking to each other. George thought that his father was trying to control him, so he wrote horrible articles about his father in the newspapers, this made Sir John Soane very unhappy.

George and his wife had a daughter who became ill. George sent his father a letter asking him for money to help with her treatment costs, but his father did not reply. Although his mother secretly gave George money, the little girl still died and George became even angrier with his father. After George's daughter died he wrote another letter to his father asking him for permission to bury her in the family cemetery, but John refused. That caused the situation to become even worse between them.

Mrs Eliza Soane died early in 1815. John Soane believed that a horrible article written by his son, George, about him broke his mother's heart and made her very unhappy.

Soane's family did not get on with each other and did not take an interest in his work, this may have been because he was so creative that he could not understand anyone else's point of view and was very difficult. Sir John Soane wrote a letter to his son George telling him, "you are out of my will" before his health started to decline and he died in 1837. He left his main house at Lincoln's Inn Fields and collections for the benefit of 'amateurs and students' in architecture, painting and sculpture.



**Look at the house and turn right. Walk through the archway in the wall into the walled garden. Stop here.**



Mrs Soane with sons, George and John



4 Sir John Soane

# 5 Feasts & BANQUETS

**Soane was a generous person. He used to have expensive banquets in Pitzhanger Manor, invite his friends and enjoy spending time with them at weekends. Sir John Soane's friend the painter JMW Turner often went for dinner and went fishing with him in the park. Among all the guests, Turner spent the most time at the home and sometimes stayed overnight.**

Sir John Soane almost always had guests at the house and was known to invite 100 to 200 guests at once. John kept records of the time people spent at Pitzhanger Manor and who had lunch with them or occasionally stayed overnight. Pitzhanger Manor was a place for entertainment. Mrs Eliza Soane enjoyed dancing parties and was interested in collecting things for the house, picking fruit from the kitchen garden, and setting-up and decorating the tables.

There are records of the fruit and vegetables grown in the kitchen garden and Soane was interested in food; he was a member of the 'Committee of Taste' and helped to write a recipe book, which includes recipes for many of the vegetables grown and fish caught by Soane at Pitzhanger. He planted seeds such as Spanish onion, parsnip, Savoy cabbage, Dutch turnips, red beet, leeks, long orange carrot and white broccoli. There were also herbs like savory and sweet marjoram.



Leave the walled garden by the other exit. Follow the path over some water. Walk straight along the path, with the playground on your left. Stop when you get to the pond on your right.



Community Kitchen Garden

## 5 The Grand Opening of the public park, 1901



Soane designed the house and gardens as a place to spend his weekends and to relax. Soane focused on building his house in the countryside because he wanted a quiet place, which separated him from the town centre, and a place where he could think of new ideas for his designs. The space, the gardens, the landscapes and the lakes all inspired his work, which was why he felt it was important to see the gardens from inside the house and the house from the garden. He created a large window in each room with a view out to the gardens. As he liked the views so much that he also designed a conservatory on the back of the house. It had a wonderful view of the whole garden and he liked to spend time in it; later on in about 1902 the conservatory was demolished.

Pitzhanger Manor's gardens were designed as a wonderful countryside landscape. John Haverfield of Kew, who often worked with Sir John Soane, helped design the landscape with lawns, shrubberies and exotic trees. Soane created a flower garden, kitchen garden, lake with rustic bridge and it included a huge number of classical parts.

From the house, Sir John Soane would have been able to see out to the two water features in the garden. John used one lake to separate the cattle and sheep from the house and gardens and the other lake to fish in. John liked the fishpond and he caught carp and tench for dinner. He also liked to walk around the lakes.

In 1810 and after his wife's illness, John sold the house. The building has since had many owners. In 1843 it became the home of the daughters of Britain's Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval who was assassinated (killed). In 1910 the house was sold to Ealing Council and extended to become Ealing's public library. The ornamental garden, parkland, bridge, entrance arch and lodge became Walpole Park.



Walk along the pond to the other end. Stop here

## 6 Conservatory

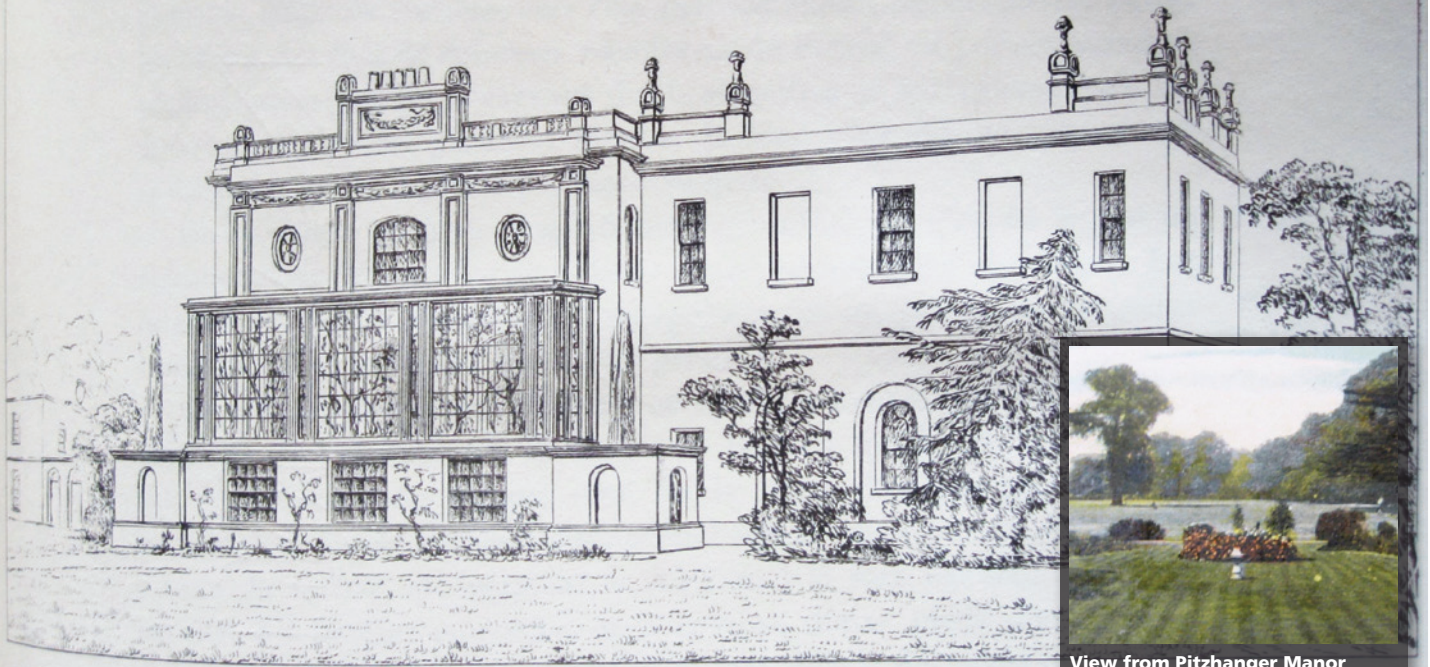


Fig. 2.

View from Pitzhanger Manor  
across the lawn



# Sir John's CHARACTER

**Sir John Soane was a very hard working person but he was known to have been a bit stubborn and selfish. Although in his life he suffered hard times and had a poor background, he achieved his goal of becoming a well respected architect. He wanted both sons to be like him, an architect, but they both chose different options and John was upset them.**

Sir John Soane was also a businessman and a sociable person. He had a busy social life and enjoyed being with other people. Despite his forward thinking he could be a conservative and traditional person; he believed in keeping the family together. He loved his family, friends and his job and they were all important to him. He was a very thoughtful person and spent a lot of time thinking about his projects and his life. He was a spiritual man, worried by deep thoughts, feelings or emotions rather than physical things.



**If you keep walking straight along the path, past the house, you will reach the archway where this walk started.**

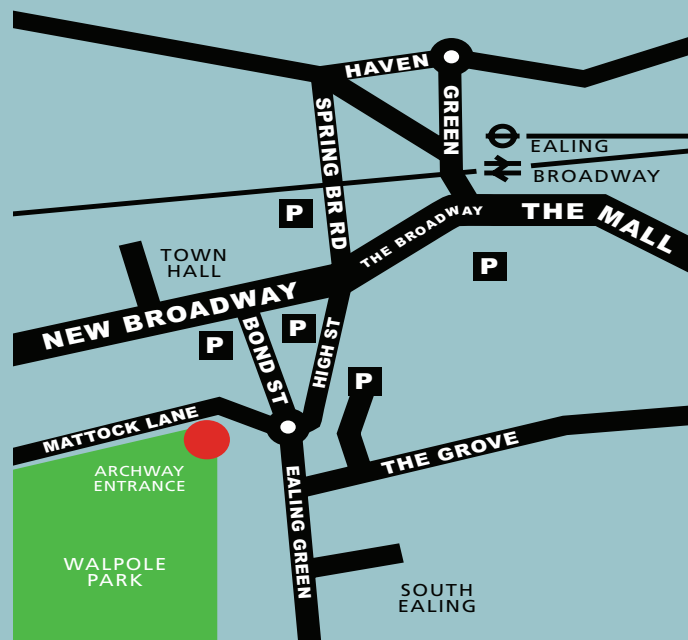


Shrubbery Walk





Watercolour of Pitzhanger Manor and park  
from Memoirs, 1832 by courtesy of the  
Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum



### Walpole Park, Mattock Lane, London W5 5EQ

**Tube:** Ealing Broadway

**Rail:** Ealing Broadway

**Bus:** 207, 83, 607, E1, E2, 112, 297, PR1, E7, E8

**Car park:** Ealing Broadway Centre, access via the Grove from Ealing Green. Springbridge Road, access via the New Broadway.

# Walpole Park

- Pitzhanger Manor House and Gallery
- Café
- Playground
- Two ponds

For more information about the park, Pitzhanger Manor, events and activities:  
[www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgwalpole)

This podwalk had been developed by a group of English for Speakers of Other Languages learners from Action Acton (Nashwa Elfaras, Fernando Lima, Nawal Mohagar, Nadia Zikara and Noha Mohamed Ashor), in partnership with Ealing Council, Accession Social Enterprise and MEL Productions. The project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) and Skills Funding Agency Equality and Diversity Partnership Project Fund

