



This bridge was built by Thomas 'Diamond' Pitt in 1722 and still clearly boasts his initials with the date. The original sundial is still visible if somewhat faded. The bridge crosses The Broadwater, downstream from the weir,



and it flows on to join The River Loddon at Sheep Bridge.

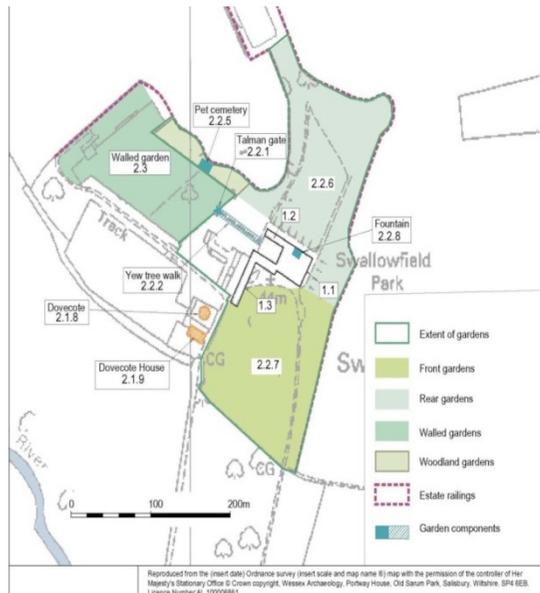


4a. We continue down the driveway to the main house. The house has a remarkable history from 1043, when Edward the Confessor originally enclosed the land. It has been a Royal residence in the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th centuries and some quite notable individuals have passed this way before us, a complete list of owners forms part of this document. The house itself was gradually improved over several hundred years,

but significant alterations were carried out by Edward III in 1355, when he converted it into an 'H' shaped property; by Henry Hyde, 2nd Earl of Clarendon, in 1689, when he rebuilt several sections; and by Thomas 'Diamond' Pitt in 1717, when it is noted that he made 'extensive alterations'.

The Russell family finally sold the property in 1965, after the death of Sir Arthur, and it was made into private apartments with one of the first people to move in being David and Richard Attenborough's mother.

The grounds are laid out almost as they always have been with few alterations. The Walled Garden was famously revived by Anneka Rice in her TV programme 'Challenge Anneka' but much of the rest has been kept together by successive teams of groundsmen for hundreds of years. It may be of interest to note that when Charles Dickens died, his dog, 'Bumble' was given to his great friends Constance and George Russell and it is buried in the pet cemetery.



5a. As we leave the house and grounds we walk back along the main drive to Pitt Bridge and follow the bank of the River Broadwater, past the weir, back to All Saints Church.



Our afternoon walk sees us leave The Crown and continue down The Street

1a. Here we see The Old Post House and The War Memorial; many of the names mentioned here are still round and about in local families. The old hall, library and school room are long gone and now replaced by a very well used Village Hall.



2a. The Red Lodge is the only remaining lodge from the three which Swallowfield Park had; the others being The White Lodge, which was by the entrance alongside the church and The Blue Lodge, which was by New Plantation entrance on the Swallowfield Road to Arborfield. The Red Lodge is a unique building and features in many buildings and surveying books. The main entrance to Swallowfield Park was down this driveway but a new drive was made when the main house was sold and converted into apartments in 1965.

3a. We enter the main entrance to Swallowfield Park and stop on Pitt Bridge.

