

The History Of Ightenhill Park

As mentioned elsewhere The Mayor and Mayoress opened Ightenhill Park on 25th June 1912. Initially The Park consisted only of the top part of The Park (South of Ightenhill park lane) and was built on land given to Burnley Corporation in 1908 by Lord Shuttleworth of Gawthorpe. The land had previously been used for grazing. The Park at the time contained a bandstand a small shelter and pavilion, Rose and shrub beds, ornamental lawns and other formal planting. It was completely surrounded by impressive wrought iron railings and is described as having huge iron gates. The railings were later removed as part of the war effort.

Later in 1912 The Corporation bought additional land to the north of Ightenhill Park Lane and laid out the Bowling Green area. The greens were opened in 1913.

The bottom portion of The Park (tennis courts) was originally a private tennis club founded in 1887. But by 1926 when major works were carried out (the removal of grass courts and laying of clay courts) records show the site was owned by Burnley Corporation, although No records can be found of any purchase. This site originally had a small pavilion and toilets as well as basic grandstand seating. These have now long gone although the site of the seating is still there.

The Park was designed and laid out G H Pickles Burnley's Borough engineer and Robert Murray the Parks Superintendent. Unfortunately early photographs of The Park are few and far between and not good quality, none are available at the moment to be included in this plan. However The Chairman of F.O.I.P is currently carrying out research into The Parks history, which should produce some old photos.

In the beginning as previously mentioned there were several buildings in The Park of which only one of the bowling pavilions and the gardener's mess room survive. The most well used and most spectacular of the old buildings was The Bandstand which was used weekly during the summer months in the early years of The Park. Sadly no further information on The Bandstand is available. However it was recorded in the local Burnley Express at time of the opening ceremony that the impressive new bandstand was not yet available for use so The Catholic Band marched around the Park stopping to perform at appropriate sites. The weather also got a mention (needless to say it was raining!). It is a mystery how and when the Bandstand met it's end.

The Park depot was originally a small nursery and contained 2 greenhouses where bedding plants etc were grown for use in The Park. This of course was common practice at the time. The glasshouses were eventually knocked down in the early 1980's after becoming derelict. Shortly after the steel container was placed on site to be used as a store for tools and machinery. The depot serves as a base for The Ightenhill neighbourhood team. A team of 5 men including team leader that are responsible for maintaining all the public green spaces within the local geographical area