

article called for such land to become the *pièce de résistance* in any parks department scheme.²⁵ Jersey Gardens would certainly have qualified.

Appendix

Barnsbury Square, Islington, 1891, 1933/4.

Conveyed to Islington Council in 1933 when the MPGA gave funds for its restoration and planting. Opened in 1934 with lawns and paths and a rockery running the length of the upper lawn. This area was later redesigned 1960-70, but some remnants of the rockery remain.

Betts Park, Bromley, 1935.

Remains of rockwork consisting largely of slag and broken concrete.

Bush Hill Gardens, Enfield, 1925-8.

Rock garden with pond and a small bridge over it, located near the entrance.

Eltham Palace Gardens, II, Greenwich, 1936.*

Rock garden of Westmorland limestone, running alongside the moat with pools and cascades. Recently restored.

Enfield Crematorium, Enfield, 1938.

Features a number of gardens including a rock garden.

Forster Memorial Park, Lewisham, 1919-22, expanded 1937.

Ancient woodland, bedding and rockery.

Heathfield, Croydon, 19th and 20th centuries; public park, 1960.

Estate bought 1927 when the house and garden were restored. The rock garden and terraces were laid out at this date.

Hillcroft College, Kingston, 1877, 1920s.
1935 garden includes rockery.

Kelsey Park, Beckenham, 18th - 20th centuries; public park, 1913.

In 1933/4 the Cedar Lawn Estate was added to the park and a rockwork cascade built at the north end of the main lake.

King George's Park, Wandsworth, 1921-3, 1938, post 1945.
Laid out as Southfields Park, 1921-3 by Percy Cane. Rockery near lake.

Springfield Gardens, Ealing, 1934.

Land reclamation project; new garden featured pergola and rockeries.

Vale Mascal II, Bexley, 1745-1775, c.1920.*

Extensive rockwork and grotto dating from the 1920s.

Vauxhall Park, Lambeth, 1890, c.1930.

Small rockery as background to miniature village of six houses installed c.1930.

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ESTUARY ENGLISH

By The Perambulator

Anyone who has followed the evolving Thames Gateway programme will have noted that the programme has generated a special language all of its own. The 'vision' behind the Thames Gateway comprises 'redefining work, reconnecting with nature, reasserting individualism and reinventing our identity'. The language is simple but opaque: this is 'A place of change: socially, culturally, economically and politically'; there will be 'a new environmental aesthetic in landscape design and architecture'; 'The truth is that identity defines us', 'the future Thames Gateway should find new ways to allow people to create the kind of communities they actually want'.¹ Beyond a kind of shallow, corporate optimism, meaning is hard to pin down. As for reconnecting with nature, this seems to come down to making the area 'a place where Britain

25. *Journal of Park Administration*, December 1937, p.225.

1. *New Things Happen: a guide to the future Thames Gateway* (London: CABE, 2006), p.7.



30. The Environment Agency's new Creekmouth Open Space;
already the lack of maintenance is reducing its environmental quality, 2008
(PHOTOGRAPH: THE PERAMBULATOR)

pioneers ways to save power and water. Expect amazing new ways to be green, making an eco-friendly life both natural and fun.²

More promisingly, a new 'Thames Gateway Parklands' concept is intended to afford a 'landscape framework' to the whole area and its planned 160,000 new dwellings. However, this translates as 'a working landscape that has many functions including renewable energy production, local food enterprises and water management systems'.³ The expected meaning of the word slips away: power stations, farms and sewage works – however green – are not parks as we know them. The suspicion begins to dawn that if we can't hold on to the semantics, we won't hold on to the parks, and that in practice such slippery language means that the green space quotient is going to be jostled continually by built development.

A favourite CABE theme has always been the importance of identity or a sense of place in designing the new developments. Interestingly, an essay in CABE's guide to the Gateway by Robert Jones of Wolff Ollins, 'brand consultants', while recognising the importance of a sense of place, writes of 'finding or managing a sense of identity', and the hesitation is revealing. It suggests uncertainty about whether in designing the new settlements in the Thames Gateway, the exercise entails finding an existing *genius loci*, or creating a new one. Jones's reference to 'place-making' as 'the key economic driver for regeneration' could certainly be interpreted as authoritarian, a building from ground-zero rather than anything more responsive. This distinction is particularly resonant given the criticisms that have already been levelled at the blandness of some of the development that has already taken place.⁴

It's not fluffy little bits of park we're talking about here, it's a whole environmental infrastructure, and the Thames Gateway green structure plans are by far the most advanced in

the UK. The thing that we now need is a strong political will to ensure that the delivery mechanisms will be put in place – delivery mechanisms that can produce results in the hard nosed business of regeneration.⁵ This vision of the city as 'total landscape' is much to be admired and has much in common with the vision of practitioners like Gibberd and Jellicoe that lay behind the post-war New Towns. However, the New Towns were enabled by primary legislation and central government investment, which allowed for a robust and authoritative planning framework to help to achieve that vision. On the contrary, for the Thames Gateway, at present the Government can only 'will' developers to deliver via its new Delivery Plan.

It could be argued that 'fluffy little parks', in the sense of discrete, high-maintenance public open space, is precisely what is missing here, for the obvious danger is of a diluted environmentalism, spread thin and 'multifunctional', with lip-service from developers. If the Parklands concept can be fulfilled by renewable energy production, local food enterprises and water management systems, there will be very little in the way of parks. 'Green' buildings, whether in terms of their function or their design, are in danger of being confused with green space itself.

Sir Terry Farrell promoted the idea of a Thames Gateway National Park, but this seems to have been discounted, principally on the grounds that the Thames estuary does not fulfil the criterion in the National Parks legislation of being an 'outstanding' landscape resource.⁶ 'Outstandingness', however, is a cultural concept, and as such a relative rather than an objective category: the Lake District, after all, was once seen as 'the wildest, most barren and frightful' area in England,⁷ and its post-industrial legacy of quarries, mines, spoil heaps, tramways and levels remains a distinctive characteristic.

CABE has also argued that such a designation would be incompatible with that idea of a 'working landscape', implying that National Park designation is incompatible with working; however, National Parks are precisely working landscapes, and National

2. *ibid.*, p.13.

3. CABE, 'Thames Gateway Parklands', www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=1606.

4. See for example, 'Sold down the river', *Guardian*, 18 June 2007; 'No vision, no clue, a disaster in the making', *Evening Standard*, 18 June 2007; the recent National Audit Office report, *The Thames Gateway: Laying the Foundations*, May 2007; and the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee report, *The Thames Gateway: laying the foundations*, November 2007, which strongly criticises Government leadership and includes the view that the project is 'heading for a disaster'.

5. John Hopkins, quoted in *Green Places*, issue 15, May 2005, p.19.

6. CABE, 'Thames Gateway Parklands', *op. cit.*

7. Daniel Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Letter x, 1725, (Penguin, 1979), p.550.

Park designation in fact does exactly what CABE aspires to, namely ensure 'landscape considerations can be at the forefront of the development process'.⁸ There is arguably no other existing mechanism to ensure this priority, and the absence of strategic authority to ensure the over-arching vision is a continuing problem.

At present the Thames Gateway Parklands is an 'umbrella' concept for a wide and diverse range of initiatives and sites, from the HLF restoration of Cobham Park to the Olympic site in the Lower Lea Valley. It also gathers in a number of existing strategic initiatives such as the Thames Path City to Sea, Thames Chase Community Forest and the various Green Grid plans. As is acknowledged, 'the challenge is to unite these' to ensure that the 'Parklands will be far greater than the sum of its [sic] individual parts'.⁹

In November 2007, the Thames Gateway Delivery Plan was published by the Government, which simultaneously announced the appointment of Farrell as 'Design Champion for the Thames Gateway Parklands'. The Plan announced a budget of £95M over three years, 2008-11, but with only £35M of that secured; the rest is to be found from the Department of Communities and Local Government and, inevitably, the Lottery. From a total budget of £500M a commitment of £35M is not as substantial as one might hope, and it is unclear both how the additional capital funding will be secured, and how revenue funding for maintaining new sites will be found.

More disturbing than the budget though is the Plan's terminology: it proposes two 'Thames Gateway Landscapes', a number of 'Thames Gateway Corridors', and two or three 'Thames Gateway Squares' – the branding is insistent and glib. The Landscapes are to total 600ha., and are presumably areas of semi-natural wilderness, nature reserves or accessible countryside; the Corridors are basically environmental improvements to road and rail routes, while the Squares are to be 'city-scale squares' with the dreary sounding 'cultural, economic and environmental activities', which may include 'flowers, fountains, food, fun, fes-

tivals and a focus for the area'.¹⁰ The alliteration makes your heart sink. None of these is a park, fluffy or otherwise.

Above all, perhaps one should feel uneasy about the new coining, 'Parklands'. What does it mean? Has it been deliberately chosen because no one can say exactly what 'parklands' are, except that they are not parks? Certainly, to date, none of the new proposals appears to offer the sort of place that demands high maintenance or horticultural skills, or that offers the security and pleasure that come with a real park's staffing and facilities. (*fig. 30*)

FREDERICK AS APOLLO AT VAUXHALL: A 'PATRIOT' PROJECT?

By Suzannah Fleming

The distinct political/cultural dimension of The New Spring Gardens at Vauxhall presents us with an interesting and yet under-explored strand of eighteenth-century 'Patriot King' patronage. As such, it deserves a complete study in its own right, far beyond the scope and space here. However, it could be argued that one of the main reasons why Jonathan Tyers, the new proprietor of the Vauxhall Gardens from 1728, was able to make such a success of his venture was the careful promotion of the 'cult' of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, (*fig. 31*) with the deployment of a cleverly layered iconographic programme. Of course, this iconography developed and changed over a number of years and would appear to reflect various aspects of the evolving contemporary image of Frederick – as devised and encouraged by his various aristocratic 'Patriot' advisors and followers.

From the late 1720s a new Whig-based opposition to the government of Sir Robert Walpole had begun to arise, and increasingly in the 1730s the opposition looked to the future hopes of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Unable to remain loyal to Walpole, but not exactly willing to risk being dismissed from their lucrative offices or – even worse – banished from court, several Whig aristocrats initiated covert support of a diverse range of extra-parliamentary oppositional activities, played out across a wide range of media including the theatre,

8. CABE, 'Thames Gateway Parklands', *op. cit.*

9. CABE and LDA Design, *The Thames Estuary Parklands*, September 2006, p.4.

10. HM Government *Thames Gateway: the Delivery Plan*, 2007, p.56.