

A Brief History

Malvern Hall was completed in 1702 by Humphrey Greswold, completely remodelled in the late Eighteenth Century for Henry Greswold-lewis by Sir John Soane. Set in it's own parkland it has featured in several paintings by **John Constable**.

By the end of the nineteenth Century it was in a poor state of repair and following its purchase by David Troman in 1896 the top storey was removed and baluster rails added. With adjacent modern school buildings, Malvern Hall became the home of Solihull School for Girls in the 1930's and is now known as **S^t Martin's School**.

Henry Greswold-Lewis died in 1829 and the estate passed to the Wigley's (the name Greswold remained although an 'e' was added). **Francis Wigley-Greswolde-Williams sold Malvern Hall to Solihull Council in 1896.**

In April 1944 **Brueton Park** was given to the people by M^r Horace Brueton. The two parks were linked by a footpath in 1963. The lake was extended when more land was donated by M^r and M^{rs} Gell.

The river Blithe or **Blythe** was first recorded as Blitha in the time of Henry II (Mon IV 212). The name means "calm flowing". There are many references to the river Blythe as a Parish and Manor boundary. It also gives reference to Mills, fish ponds and fish traps along it's course. It joins the river **Cole** at Blythend, Coleshill. It is recorded as a family name "DeBlith" circa 1290 and since.

A bridge over the river at Widney Manor Road was first recorded in 1360 as Blythebrugge. The early date of the bridge indicates that it this was an important and much used bridge and road, being the old route between Solihull and Warwick, Oxford and London. The road approaching each side of the bridge is built up on a courseway above the boggy ground. The stream marks the boundary between Solihull and Knowle Parishes.

Can You See the Join?

Although there are two Parks, the join is by no means obvious.

Malvern Park is the area nearest to the Town Centre and offers a **Children's Play Area** (including disabled play equipment), four free **tennis courts**, picnic tables and benches, all set in beautiful grounds including an arboretum, sensory garden and outstanding **formal flower beds**. As the visitor walks through the park, away from the Town, the formal gardens and facilities give way to the more "natural feel" of Brueton Park, but can you spot the join?

Brueton Park offers an ornamental lake, many native and exotic trees (these can be identified following the **Brueton Tree Trail**), access to a large marsh/meadow **conservation area** and the new Parkridge Centre, run by the **Warwickshire Wildlife Trust**.

Solihull Park Rangers

The Park Ranger Service was launched at the beginning of 2003 with the remit "to increase responsible usage of parks in the Borough" through education, events and a presence in the parks. For more information about Solihull's parks or the Ranger Service contact - 0121 704 8472 (24hr answer phone).

Location

**Malvern – Car Park off New Road.
Bus Stop on New Road (nr St Alpheges Church).
Walking distance from Town Centre from St Alpheges.**

**Brueton – Car Park off Warwick Road (access from junction 5 M42).
Bus Stop on Warwick Road**

For more information contact
Solihull Park Rangers 0121 704 8472

Solihull Park Rangers Guide To

Malvern & Brueton Parks



TWO PARKS IN ONE
Each with it's own, unique identity.
Malvern Park with it's superb flower beds & formal play facilities.
Brueton Park with it's natural appeal and peaceful atmosphere. 62 acres of parkland in walking distance of Solihull Town Centre.



Prancing Horse & Man

This statue was originally located in Tudor Grange Park.



New Road Gates



Wildlife in the Park

With so many trees in the park it should not be a surprise that there is a wealth of bird life. All 3 Woodpeckers are present, along with breeding Nuthatch and Treecreeper. Many Finches may also be seen, including Goldfinch, Chaffinch, Greenfinch and Bullfinch. Mistle Thrushes and Song thrushes are joined through the winter by Redwings and Fieldfares. Flocks of Siskins feed in the Alder trees in the same period. Buzzards and Kestrels are occasionally seen over the park. The most obvious mammal species is the Grey Squirrel, but Badgers Otters and Foxes are all known to be in the area. Most of the trees have been planted but in areas such as the Dell there is evidence of an Ancient Woodland site with plants such as Dog's Mercury, Wood Anemone and Bluebells carpeting the floor beneath the trees.

To Town Centre



Carpet Bed

The planting changes each year to commemorate relevant events.



The Parkridge Centre

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust in Brueton Park
The centre was opened by Dr David Bellamy in 2002 and occupies the site of the old zoo. This area is now managed to improve it's value to native wildlife. There is an information/interpretation centre, a nature trail, education facilities, a café and toilets.



Vista Lounge Information



Free Tennis Courts

Children's Play Area

Main Paths

Car Park

Lake & River Blythe

Secret Garden Pic-nic Area

Created from "reclaimed timber"
In 2003/4



Flowers of the Dell



To Conservation Area



Britain in Bloom

Solihull has a proud record in this important, annual event (in 2000 the borough went on to win European and World titles!) and Malvern plays a key role in the overall scheme.