

Putney Society Modern Buildings Walks no 2

Putney Heath. A selection of interesting modern buildings



Do look and admire from outside but please note the houses and most estates are private.

If you have just been admiring Alton East, cross Roehampton Lane and, via Putney Heath woods, join the western tip of Portsmouth Road where this Walk starts.

Past the bland mid 80s Lynden Gate on your right to some real jewels on your left.

Bowling Green Close, Portsmouth Road

This enclave contains a remarkable mix of 1930s styles. Pitt Cottage, 1936, is in Arts and Crafts vernacular revival cottagey style, while flat roofed, squared off Chatham House 1933 in brown brick with green paintwork (the original colour) represents the Art Deco/Modern Movement. Bowling Green House with its green pantiles is in a more Spanish style.

These are eclipsed by the dramatic cream rendering and black paintwork of the glorious curving corners and balconies of Hollywood/Moonside 1935, Pitts Walk 1935, and the spectacular Ridings 1935, all attributed to the famous firm of Wallis Gilbert and Partners, which was responsible for major Art Deco buildings including the Hoover and Firestone factories.

Highlands Heath, Portsmouth Road, 1936

Of the same decade, yet vastly different, this planned estate illustrates the demand for mansion flats. Originally fronting the main road to Portsmouth, the 10 Tudor-esque blocks stand around central tennis courts reflecting the 1930s fixation with health but with, nevertheless, underground garaging for the car-owning residents. Aimed at an upmarket clientele, the show flats were furnished by Liberty's.

Turn right and right again for Wildcroft Manor.

Wildcroft Manor, Wildcroft Road, 1930s

A much more pretentious estate set in formal landscaped gardens. Its magnificent entrance gates date from 1900.

Or follow Telegraph Road to bring you out opposite the Ashburton Estate.

Ashburton Estate, Putney Heath/Carslake Road, 1952

The 62 acre estate occupying the sites of five major mansions helped ease the post war housing crisis. It originally provided 1233 flats and houses, laundries, storage, 41 garages, 21 shops, a health centre, pubs and a library, altogether an excellent example of well-planned, well-designed public housing.

Exeter House, Putney Heath c1935

Replaced the first of the great mansions along Putney Heath to be demolished. 3 blocks of 4 storeys with a petite central polygonal lodge at the entrance. Laurie Lee, describing his Putney days in *As I Walked out One Midsummer Morning*, may have worked as a labourer on the site.



From The Green Man, you can continue down Putney Hill or across into South East Putney via Old Putney Hill / Putney Heath Lane for more modern architectural delights.