

# RICHMOND PARK DESIGNATIONS

## NNR, SSSI, SAC and Listed Buildings

Richmond Park enjoys a number of statutory designations in respect of its ecology, landscape and built environment. These are in part a recognition of the value of what exists in the Park, and in part a means of conferring protection against certain developments and practices which might have an adverse impact on the attributes which gave rise to the designations.

Section 3 of the current Royal Parks' Richmond Park Management Plan 2008-2018 (which is due to be replaced by an updated Plan imminently) refers to the relevant designations; the Plan is available at:

[https://www.royalparks.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/41767/richmond-park-management-plan.pdf](https://www.royalparks.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/41767/richmond-park-management-plan.pdf)

### Ecological designations

Richmond Park is a site of both national and international importance for wildlife conservation, being designated as a **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**, a **National Nature Reserve (NNR)** and **Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**. The designations primarily relate to the ancient trees and dead wood habitats, the invertebrate assemblage and the areas of acid grassland. In particular the SAC (designated in 2005<sup>1</sup>) is designated due to the population of Stag Beetles (*Lucanus cervus*) supported on the site. The Stag Beetle is considered to be globally threatened (Annex II species), and is listed as a priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. It is a protected species through its listing in Schedule 5 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

**SSSIs** are designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended and strengthened by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) states that: "*Public bodies have a duty in exercising their functions to take reasonable steps to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs*". There is an obligation to give notice to Natural England of any operation likely to damage the SSSI. The operation can then only be carried out with the consent of Natural England (Section 28E).

The Park was notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1992, excluding the area of the golf course, Pembroke Lodge Gardens and the Gate Gardens. It is the largest SSSI in London. The SSSI designation also recognises that the Park supports the most important area of lowland acid grassland in the Greater London region, which along with the ancient trees of the Park supports a wide range of invertebrates. Lowland acid grassland is a priority habitat in the Government's UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

**NNRs** are also designated by Natural England in the UK under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, with their protection further strengthened by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are designated primarily on the basis of their value for nature conservation, supporting the UK's most important habitats, but also on the basis of their importance for scientific research and recreation.

The Park was designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR) in 2000, again for its habitats, but also in recognition of its importance as a recreational resource for the London area.

**SACs** are designated and protected under the EC Habitats Directive which has been transposed in to UK law as the Habitat Regulations. SACs form part of a Europe-wide network of protected sites supporting Europe's most important habitats and species. If a plan or project which is not connected with, or necessary for, the management of the SAC is considered likely to have a significant effect on the site, an appropriate assessment must be carried out to determine whether it will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site in relation to its designated interest features.

#### Parks and Gardens

In landscape terms, the Park (including the golf courses) is included as **Grade 1 on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest**. It was so registered on 1 October 1987, and the text of the registration is set out at page 147 of the Management Plan.

#### The built environment

There are 11 listed building entries for Richmond Park, as follows:

- Barn and stables to White Ash Lodge Grade II
- Boundary walls to Richmond Park Grade II
- Game larder in courtyard of Holly Lodge Grade II
- Ham Gate Lodge Grade II
- Holly Lodge (formerly Bog Lodge) Grade II
- Pembroke Lodge Grade II
- Richmond Gate Grade II
- Richmond Gate Lodge Grade II
- Thatched House Lodge Grade II
- White Ash Lodge Grade II
- White Lodge (Royal Ballet School) Grade I

Note that White Lodge is the only Grade I structure in the Park.

Aside from these statutory listings, in 1995 the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England undertook additional survey work of 12 selected features, based on their potential importance both in a regional and national context. The 12 features are listed in Appendix 2 to the current (2008 - 2018) Richmond Park Management Plan – see page 153 of the Plan.

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