

= Gilwell Park =

Gilwell Park is a camp site and activity centre for Scouting groups and all Youth Organisations , as well as a training and conference centre for Scout Leaders with many business and local groups using the facilities , including the hosting of social events such as weddings and birthday parties . The 44 hectare (109 acre) site is in Sewardstonebury , Epping Forest , close to Chingford , London .

In the late Middle Ages the area was a farm , growing to a wealthy estate that fell into disrepair towards 1900 . It was bought in 1919 by Scout Commissioner William de Bois Maclaren and given to the Scout Association of the United Kingdom to provide camping to London Scouts , and training for Scouters . As Scout Leaders from all countries of the world have come to Gilwell Park for their Wood Badge training , it is one of the landmarks of the world Scouting movement .

The site contains camp fields for small patrols and can camp up to 3 @, @ 000 people , indoor accommodation , historical sites , monuments of Scouting , and activities suitable for all sections of the Scouting Movement . It can accommodate events up to 10 @, @ 000 people . Accommodation at Gilwell Park can be hired for non @-@ Scout activities such as school group camping , wedding receptions and conferences .

Gilwell Park is one of ten national Scout Activity Centres of the Scout Association , with Baden @-@ Powell House , Downe , Great Tower , Youlbury , Hawkhurst , Ferny Crofts , Crawfordsburn and Yr Hafod .

= = History = =

= = = Original farm in late Middle Ages = = =

The history of Gilwell Park can be traced to 1407 , when John Crow owned Gyldiefords , the land that would eventually become Gilwell Park . Between 1407 and 1422 , Crow sold the land to Richard Rolfe , and the area became known as Gillrolfes , " Gill " being Old English for glen . Following Rolfe 's death in 1422 , different sections of the property came to be called " Great Gilwell " and " Little Gilwell " . The two areas were named after the Old English " wella " , or spring . A farmhouse has stood at Gilwell Farm ever since .

Around this time , an adjoining 5 @. @ 6 hectares (14 acres) property was purchased by Richard Osborne . In 1442 , he built a large dwelling called Osborne Hall , which stood for 300 years . Legend has it that in the early 16th century , King Henry VIII owned the land and built a hunting lodge for his son Edward . Around 1736 the highwayman Dick Turpin began using Gilwell 's forests to conceal himself and for ambushing travellers and freight along roads leading into London .

In 1754 , William Skrimshire purchased Great Gilwell , Little Gilwell , and half of Osborne 's estate , including Osborne Hall . Skrimshire demolished Osborne Hall and built a new residence , which he also called Osborne Hall . That building is now called the White House . Timbers in the White House can be dated to this time , but not to any previous era . Leonard Tresilian (? ? 1792) bought the estate in 1771 and expanded the land holdings and size of the residence .

Tresilian 's first wife , Margaret Holland , died young after bearing three daughters . He then married Elizabeth Fawson . Desiring that Gilwell pass on to his eldest daughter , also named Margaret (1750 ? c.1844) , Tresilian drew up a detailed prenuptial agreement with Fawson 's father . By the time of Tresilian 's death in 1792 , the younger Margaret had married William Bassett Chinnery (1766 ? 1834) , the elder brother of the painter George Chinnery .

= = = Rich estate in 18th century = = =

The Chinnerys were wealthy and influential . William Chinnery 's father , also named William , owned trading ships and named one Gilwell in 1800 . William and Margaret Chinnery initially resided in London , and after three years of marriage and inheriting Gilwell in 1792 , they moved to Gilwell in

1793 . They soon shocked the populace by renaming Osborne Hall to " Gilwell Hall " . William Chinnery expanded Gilwell 's land holdings through significant purchases over 15 years and , with his wife , transformed it into a country estate with gardens , paths , and statues . Parts of the garden , paths , and dwelling modifications exist into the 21st century . William Chinnery was exposed as the embezzler of a small fortune from the British Treasury where he worked and was dismissed from all his posts on 12 March 1812 . Margaret Chinnery was forced to sign over Gilwell Estate to the Exchequer on 2 July 1812 .

The Chinnery family was prominent enough that members of the English nobility visited often during the 1790s and early 19th century . King George III visited on occasion , and the Prince Regent , who later became George IV , was a regular visitor . George III 's seventh son , Prince Adolphus , became a family friend , lived at Gilwell for a while , and tutored their eldest son George .

Gilpin Gorst bought the estate in 1815 at public auction , and his son sold it to Thomas Osborne in 1824 . When London Bridge was replaced in 1826 , Osborne bought pieces of the stone balustrades , which date to 1209 , and erected them behind the White House around the Buffalo Lawn . The estate changed ownership more times , but these families did not maintain the property and it fell into disrepair by 1900 . Reverend Cranshaw , a local resident , bought the estate in 1911 and was the last owner prior to the Boy Scout Association , as it was then known .

= = = Scouting connection = = =

The estate 's condition declined more during the 1910s . William de Bois Maclaren was a publisher and Scout Commissioner from Rosneath , Dumbartonshire , Scotland . During a business trip to London , Maclaren was saddened to see that Scouts in the East End had no suitable outdoor area to conduct their activities . He contacted Lord Robert Baden @-@ Powell , who appointed P.B. Nevill to handle the matter . Nevill was Scout Commissioner of the East End .

On 20 November 1918 over dinner at Roland House , the Scout Hostel in Stepney , Maclaren agreed to donate £ 7 @,@ 000 to the project . Part of the agreement included narrowing the areas to look for suitable land to Hainault Forest and Epping Forest . Rover Scouts searched both without success , but then John Gayfer , a young assistant Scoutmaster , suggested Gilwell Hall , a place he went bird @-@ watching . Nevill visited the estate and was impressed , though the buildings were in poor condition . The estate was for sale for £ 7 @,@ 000 , the price Maclaren had donated . The estate totaled 21 hectares (52 acres) at the time .

The estate was purchased in early 1919 by Maclaren for the Boy Scout Association . Nevill first took his Rover Scouts to begin repairing the estate on Maundy Thursday , 17 April 1919 . On this visit , the Rovers slept in the gardener 's shed in the orchard because the ground was so wet they could not pitch tents . They called this shed " The Pigsty " and though dilapidated , it still stands , as it is the site of the first Scout campsite at Gilwell Park . Maclaren was a frequent visitor to Gilwell Park and helped repair the buildings . His dedication was so great that he donated another £ 3 @,@ 000 . Maclaren 's interest had been in providing a campground , but Baden @-@ Powell envisioned a training centre for Scouters .

An official opening was planned for 19 July 1919 but it was delayed until Saturday , 26 July 1919 so that Scouts could participate in the Official Peace Festival commemorating the end of World War I. Invitations were changed by hand to save money . Significant remodeling and construction was done in the 1920s . Because of limited finances , few improvements were made during the Great Depression of the 1930s .

Baden @-@ Powell never lived at Gilwell Park but he often camped , lectured , taught courses , and attended meetings . He emphasized the importance of Scouters ' training at Gilwell Park for Scouting by taking it as the territorial designation in his peerage title of 1st Baron Baden @-@ Powell of Gilwell in 1929 when the barony was conferred upon him by the king .

= = = Origin of the axe and log totem = = =

The axe and log logo was conceived by the first Camp Chief , Francis Gidney , in the early 1920s to

distinguish Gilwell Park from the Scout Headquarters . Gidney wanted to associate Gilwell Park with the outdoors and Scoutcraft rather than the business or administrative Headquarters offices . Scouters present at the original Wood Badge courses regularly saw axe blades masked for safety by being buried in a log . Seeing this , Gidney chose the axe and log as the totem of Gilwell Park . This logo came to be strongly associated with Wood Badge leader training and is still used on certificates , flags , and other program @-@ related items .

The symbol of the axe in the log is associated with feudalism after the invasion and conquest of England by William the Conqueror . In that era , property , including forests , were owned by the landed barons and knights . Serfs , bound to the land in a form of modified slavery , were forbidden to cut wood from trees in the forest , and only permitted to gather downed wood . A freeman who carried an axe in a nobleman 's forest demonstrated that he had earned the right by service . Symbolically , the grain of an axe handle must be " set square in the eye of the head . " The steel head must have the proper temper and be kept sharp . To be useful in the hands of a skilled freeman , an axe also needed to be well @-@ balanced , otherwise the handle might break , endangering its user . The axe represented skilled laborers who had proven themselves through service . Lastly , the axe in the wood reminds those who have completed Wood Badge that they have committed themselves to be an example of service and fealty .

= = = Wartime and later development = = =

The estate was requisitioned by the War Ministry from 1940 ? 1945 as a local command , training , and ordnance centre . Little remains at the estate from World War II , except the hole created by a bomb dropped by the Luftwaffe . It was enlarged and is now used for swimming and canoeing . After the war , the Boy Scout Association bought adjoining land to increase the estate and protect it from rapidly approaching new developments . These areas are called The Quick , New Field , and Hilly Field . An additional purchase and a donation from South Africa in the early 1950s brought the estate to its present size . This began an era of expanding camping facilities for Scouts which lasted until the early 1960s . Training and sleeping facilities were added through the early 1970s . The Boy Scout Association was renamed The Scout Association in 1967 .

During the 1970s , two key and popular facilities were built : the Dorothy Hughes Pack Holiday Centre for Cub Scouts and the Colquhoun International Centre for training Scouters , originally called The International Hall of Friendship . In the 1980s extensive remodelling of the White House was done . In April 2001 , The Scout Association moved its program staff from London to Gilwell Park , where its training staff were already located . Extensive renovations were done to the White House and other buildings . With a budget of £ 20 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 and individual contributions as high as £ 500 @,@ 000 , improvements to programs and facilities have been ongoing since then in preparation for the 21st World Scout Jamboree in 2007 , which was the 100th anniversary of Scouting , hosted at nearby Hylands Park , Chelmsford , Essex with related activities also being held at Gilwell Park . Gilwell Park provides The Scout Association with over £ 1 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 a year through conference fees , accommodation fees , and sales of materials .

= = = Camp Chiefs , and other staff = = =

Captain Francis " Skipper " Gidney became the first Camp Chief in May 1919 and served until 1923 . He organized the first Wood Badge training , and contributed to setting up Gilwell Park as the Scouters ' training centre . The Gidney Cabin was built and named in his honour in 1929 to serve as a training centre . The second Camp Chief was John Skinner Wilson , who served from 1923 until 1939 . Wilson was Colonel with the British Indian Police when he became a Scout Leader in 1917 . In 1921 he traveled to Gilwell Park to take leader training , which led to his retirement from the Indian Police in 1922 to become a full @-@ time Scout Leader . He was honoured with the Bronze Wolf Award in 1937 , the only distinction of the World Organization of the Scout Movement .

R.F. " John " Thurman was a British Scout Leader who served as Camp Chief from 1943 until 1969 and was awarded the Bronze Wolf Award in 1959 . He was a strong promoter of Scout training and

wrote books on the subject that were translated into other languages . The Thurman Memorial stands near The Pigsty . Thurman was succeeded by John Huskin as Director of leader training .

Don Potter (1902 ? 2004) was an English sculptor and wood carver who was a lifelong staff member at Gilwell Park , serving as a Gilwell Master Craftsman . Potter created wood carvings at Gilwell Park , including the Jim Green Gate , Gidney Cabin , the Leopard Gates , and totems he carved for the 1929 World Jamboree .

= = Activities = =

Gilwell Park can host indoor and outdoor conferences , training , a variety of outdoor Scoutcraft activities , and special events for both Scouting and non @-@ Scouting organizations . These include conferences , leader training , team building , receptions , weddings , and funerals . Conferences are generally held in either the White House or Colquhoun International Centre (CIC) , both of which are equipped with modern information systems and audio @-@ visual aids . The CIC has a main hall , six training suites , and five seminar rooms .

= = Outdoor activities = =

The Scout Activity Centres of The Scout Association provide camping , hostelling or conferencing for Scouts and Scout Leaders from around the world . Activities at Gilwell Park include : camping , leader training , a rope swing , high rope course , archery , pedal go @-@ karts , grass sledging , canoeing , rifle shooting , crate stacking , wall climbing , revolving wall climb , jump mats , rafting , team building , horse riding , orienteering , pioneering , tours , hiking , photography , obstacle courses , and aeroball .

= = Leader training = =

While different leader training courses are conducted at Gilwell Park , the most prominent is Wood Badge . Francis Gidney , the first Camp Chief , conducted the first Wood Badge course at Gilwell Park 8 ? 19 September 1919 . Gilwell Park became the home of leadership training in the Scout movement . Leaders from all over the world receive automatic membership in 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group (Gilwell Troop 1) on completion of the Wood Badge course . These leaders are henceforth called Wood Badgers or Gilwellians . Any location in which Wood Badgers meet is called Gilwell Field . The 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group meets every first weekend of September in Gilwell Park for the Gilwell Reunion .

The Training Ground , near the White House , is the hallowed ground of Gilwell Park as this is the world home of Wood Badge , the premier Scout leader training course . A large oak tree , the Gilwell Oak , separates the Training Ground from the Orchard .

= = Special events = =

Each year Gilwell Park runs a number of regular special events . These have been established for more than 20 years with the addition of Gilwell 24 in 2004 and Scarefest in 2014 and are some of the largest annual Scout events in the UK .

Wintercamp ? taking place in early January and open to Scouts and Explorer Scouts (11 ? 18) .

Fundays ? open to the Beaver and Cub age ranges in June .

Gilwell 24 ? open to the Explorer Scout (14 ? 18) age range in July .

Reunion ? open to all adult members in Scouting in early September .

Scarefest - Open to Scouts , Explorers , Guides & Rangers . Held at the end of October

= = Accommodation = =

Gilwell Park provides accommodation for visitors , comprising camping fields , hostel rooms ,

lodges and cabins .

= = = Camp fields = = =

Gilwell Park provides camping opportunities for small groups and groups in excess of 2 @, @ 500 people . This includes everything from unit @-@ level camping up to hosting international events . Essex Chase is close to the swimming pool and stores and is the most popular campsite . Woodlands Field is a large field that will hold up to 200 campers , with space for activities , at the north end of the park . Branchet Field is the largest campsite and will hold 1 @, @ 200 campers . Mallinson Field is a small , wooded , secluded area suited to small groups . Ferryman Field is a split @-@ level field suitable for a large troop . It is at the north end of camp , past Woodlands .

= = = White House = = =

The White House and its predecessors represent over 500 years of Gilwell history . It became the headquarters of The Scout Association on 27 April 2001 , although Baden @-@ Powell House (the former headquarters) still facilitates some departments of The Scout Association .

The White House also serves as a restaurant , training and conference centre . It was totally torn down once and has been renovated , remodelled , and expanded continuously over the years . The central portion has no foundations and the chimneys are made of Coade stone . It also displays original Scouting paintings by Ernest Stafford Carlos (1883 ? 1917) ; the highlight of which is The Pathfinder . In this historic setting as a conference centre , the White House has offered over 40 rooms (single , double , twin) with all modern facilities since 2004 ? 2005 .

= = = Dorothy Hughes Pack Holiday Centre = = =

The Dorothy Hughes Pack Holiday Centre (PHC) is for young people , sleeps 40 , is centrally heated , and has a large kitchen . It is named after a Cub Scout leader from East London . The PHC is constructed with interlocking logs and , originally , without nails in the frame . It is often booked two years in advance . The PHC was built in 1970 by fitting interlocking logs together from a Norwegian design .

= = = Branchet Lodge and other cabins = = =

Branchet Lodge , or simply The Lodge , opened on 23 May 2003 on Branchet Field to replace old portable cabins . It should not be confused with another building also called The Lodge which was built in 1934 near the White House . Branchet Lodge is a single storey building that has central heating and sleeps up to 56 people in two separate wings with a single common kitchen and dining / meeting area . Each wing has its own bathing facilities . There are four single rooms for leaders , two rooms for disabled people that sleep two people each , and six rooms that sleep eight people each . The design incorporates skylights , natural lights , energy efficiency , and disabled access . It is constructed of stone , timber , copper , and a grass roof . At present , a second lodge is being constructed next door to the Branchet Lodge . This was to be called the Jack Petchey Lodge and was scheduled to open in September 2008 . Construction of a third lodge will begin in January 2009 .

Log cabins on the edge of Woodland Field sleep 8 and have bunk beds . Cooking is provided in a separate shelter or an open fire can be utilized . All of these can be rented by groups . The Storm Hut was a large hall @-@ type building for activities and games . It was moved to Gilwell Park from Wales by trucks . The Storm Hut was demolished in 2008 to make way for the upgrading of ' The Lid ' which now includes 2 classrooms , indoor climbing wall and high ropes elements . The Lid is a barn @-@ sized building that can not be rented , but is used for dances , exhibitions , and religious services . It is so named because the original building only had a roof , with no walls .

= = = Staff accommodation : Gilwellbury and Gilwell Farm = = =

After the purchase of the original site in 1919 , the purchase of Gilwellbury and adjoining land in 1945 is probably the next most important in Gilwell Park 's Scouting history because it allowed The Scout Association to close the original road and fully utilize Branchet Field . It was originally used for small retreats and conferences but is now used as staff accommodation . The Ministry of Education assisted in the purchase .

The Gilwell Farmhouse is believed to date from the early 18th century , making it the oldest original building at Gilwell Park . It is composed of two buildings that were joined together . There is a brick well head on the farm that is known as the Gil Well . A field adjoining the boundaries of Gilwell Park , known as Bill Oddie Field , affords dramatic views of the London skyline over Pole Hill , Chingford . The field was so @-@ named after employees of The Scout Association spotted TV ornithologist Bill Oddie recording a programme about circling birds of prey on the field in 2006 .

= = Attractions = =

The attractions to see at Gilwell Park include the Gilwell Museum and souvenir shop , a fully operational all @-@ volunteer hospital , gardens , gates , statues , smaller buildings , and four houses of worship : Buddhist , Catholic , Jewish , interdenominational , with the construction of an Islamic mosque due to begin towards the end of 2008 .

The bronze bust of Baden @-@ Powell was presented by the Scouts of Mexico in 1968 after the Olympics . The Lime Walk formerly surrounded the main lawn area , but few of the lime trees survive . As originally planted by Margaret Chinnery , it would have formed a shady overhead cover to the path .

The Buffalo Lawn is so called because of the replica of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Silver Buffalo Award that was presented to the Boy Scout Association by the BSA in 1926 . This was to honour the Unknown Scout that helped William D. Boyce bring Scouting to the United States . The Buffalo Lawn is behind the White House . Located there is a signpost with the directions and distances to all the World Scout Jamborees from Gilwell Park . The Buffalo Statue was originally mounted on a large tree stump . The stump has been replaced by a brick pedestal . The inscription reads :

" To an Unknown Scout Whose Faithfulness in the Performance of the Daily Good Turn Brought the Scout Movement to the United States of America . "

A copy of a statue by R. Tait McKenzie called The Ideal Scout stands near The Lid . This is also known as The Boy Scout . The BSA donated the statue in 1966 . The original stands outside the headquarters of the Cradle of Liberty Council in Philadelphia , Pennsylvania , and another copy outside the BSA headquarters in Irving , Texas .

The Buddhist Sala was donated to Gilwell Park in 1967 by the Boy Scouts of Thailand . The Buddha found inside was a gift from the Thai government and is over 1000 years old . Thai ambassadors to the United Kingdom often visit the sala , as it is their responsibility to care for it . Scouts from other countries , including Chile , Japan , Mexico , and New Zealand , have also donated gifts to Gilwell Park .

The caravan trailer , presented to Chief Scout Sir Robert Baden @-@ Powell , along with a new Rolls @-@ Royce car , during the 3rd World Scout Jamboree in 1929 is now on display . The caravan was nicknamed Eccles . The car , nicknamed Jam Roll , was sold after his death by Olave Baden @-@ Powell in 1945 . Jam Roll and Eccles were reunited at Gilwell for the 21st World Scout Jamboree in 2007 . Four Scouters , including Michael Baden @-@ Powell , a grandson of Robert Baden @-@ Powell , formed the charitable company " B @-@ P Jam Roll Ltd . " with the aim of purchasing and conserving Jam Roll on behalf of Scouting . Funds are being raised to repay the loan that was used to purchase the car .