

Buildings for Health and Welfare

This chapter is principally concerned with Battersea's buildings and institutions for health and welfare. As elsewhere, the origins of the parish's hospitals were partly bound up with the provisions of the Poor Law. Ever since the Reformation, responsibility for the destitute had fallen to the parish authorities, but the need for anything more than almsgiving was not felt until well into the seventeenth century when a parish almshouse was set up. As the population grew, periods of economic depression, however short, brought too many cases of hardship to be relieved by charity or out-pensions from the poor rates. A parish workhouse became a necessity, later succeeded by a union workhouse and then a workhouse infirmary. Alongside these two major hospitals were founded in the parish, and their history is given after the poor-law buildings. Following on from these are some notes on smaller establishments: dispensaries and settlements. The chapter concludes with two quite different kinds of institution, the National Penitentiary proposed in the 1780s and 1790s, whose presence would have transformed the face of Battersea, had it ever been built; and Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home.

Almshouses

Two sets of parochial almshouses existed in the pre-Victorian village, one at the bottom of the High Street near the parish pound or fold, the other in King Street, now part of Westbridge Road. There are references from 1675 to the almshouses near the pound, which were rented from Sir Walter St John, but ultimately belonged to the Archbishop of York's estate. These appear on the parish map of

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c.1760 as a short row, built inconveniently forward of the road's edge. In 1769 the northern two were demolished and the materials used to repair the others.¹ They had all been razed by the time of Corris's map (1787), and replaced by the buildings in King Street, with a watch-house adjoining. An undated (probably 1770s) survey of the Archbishop's estate refers to a tenement formerly called the Almshouse, which had been converted into a cottage, a part-brick, part-timber building, comprising a low room and buttery, and two little chambers over part.²

The King Street almshouses were rented by the parish from Lord Spencer until 1835, after which they were demolished.³ By that time pensions were seen as a better way of supporting the aged poor; 70 parish out-pensioners were being maintained by 1839.⁴

A few small bequests for the maintenance of the poor were administered by the parish, alongside which some private benefactors provided more substantial aid. There were at least two other sets of almshouses, one established by Amelia Tritton near her home in Plough Lane, long since demolished, the other by Ann Maria Lightfoot in the form Dovedale Cottages, which are still standing on Battersea Bridge Road.

Dovedale Cottages

Originally called Dovedale Place, these almshouses were built in 1841 by Ann Maria Lightfoot of Balham Hill (and her daughter Mary), presumably using money left by her late husband, Dr Samuel Lightfoot (d.1835).⁵ The name apparently commemorates Mrs Lightfoot's family connections with the Peak District of Derbyshire. She intended the buildings to be an asylum for women 'in reduced circumstances professing godliness', more specifically inmates were to belong either to the Evangelical side of the Church of England or a denomination

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Wandsworth for Battersea paupers to be accommodated in the workhouse there. Meanwhile, estimates were sought from carpenters and bricklayers for building a workhouse at the almshouses near the pound. On Wandsworth's brusque refusal, the Vestry prepared to build. Thirty guineas were offered for the intended quarter-acre site, and the estimates copied to show 'some Substantial Builders'.⁸ How the scheme fell through is unrecorded, but probably it was too expensive. A workhouse was in operation by 2 April 1733, when its first account book starts, but it was an old, rented house. From the abrupt way the accounts begin, utilizing blank space left by the inventory at the front of the book, it was probably opened well before that

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offered a long lease at low rental and £50 towards building. The workhouses at Kensington and Barking were visited, and the parish surveyor James Cartwell drew up plans and an elevation based on these models, but when the cost became apparent the Vestry lost its nerve.¹³ It then balked at Cartwell's estimate of £700–800 for repairing and enlarging th

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converted into a school in 2012, Battersea General was demolished in the 1970s. Additionally there was some provision for maternity cases. St John's House Maternity Home, run by an Anglican nursing sisterhood, moved from Chelsea to a house in Albert Bridge Road in 1883, while the Battersea Maternity Home, which opened in two large houses in Bolingbroke Grove in 1921, was established by Battersea Borough Council.¹⁸

St John's and St James's Hospitals were large complexes with many phases to their construction. The older, St John's went back to the 1830s, while St James's originated in a school for pauper children from the parish of St James, Westminster, built in 1851. Building development on both these sites continued well into the era of the National Health Service, following a pattern of expansion typical of urban poor-law institutions.

The voluntary hospitals have greater historic interest. The Bolingbroke, established in 1880, has some claim to be the earliest general hospital for paying patients. It started out in a late-Georgian villa overlooking Wandsworth Common, but was eventually replaced by a purpose-built hospital. Lastly, there was the National Anti-Vivisection Hospital, known locally simply as the Anti-Viv, which changed its name and founding principles in the 1930s to become Battersea General. This too started out in a converted house, overlooking Battersea Park, later expanding into the neighbouring houses and acquiring a purpose-built out-patients' department.

All four hospitals were transferred to the NHS in 1948. Battersea General closed first, in 1972, then St John's and St James's in 1988 and lastly the Bolingbroke in 2005.

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St John's Hospital and St John's Centre

St John's Hospital evolved from the workhouse built here in 1838 to serve Wandsworth and Clapham Union. A large infirmary was later built to the rear, and after a new workhouse was erected for the Union in Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, in 1886, St John's was entirely devoted to the care of infirm paupers. After transferring to the NHS it continued in use as a general hospital until the 1980s. The original buildings have long since been demolished but some later additions have survived, converted into flats, while a new therapy centre and housing for the elderly and mentally infirm have been built at the front of the site (Ills 2.2, 2.3).

Following the Poor Law Act of 1834, Battersea became part of the Wandsworth and Clapham Union, which also included Streatham, Tooting and Putney. A Board of Guardians with representatives from each parish was elected early in 1836. Each parish already had a workhouse, and initially these carried on much as before. Wandsworth's and Streatham's were in the best condition, and offered the potential to serve the whole union if one were devoted to the aged, infirm and children, and the other to the able-bodied poor. After lengthy discussion, the Guardians decided that it would be better to have just one Union workhouse, and that the Streatham building should be enlarged to hold upwards of 600 inmates.

George Ledwell Taylor, previously designer of the Royal Naval Hospital at Chatham and of Wandsworth's vicarage, was chosen as architect to the Union. In May 1836 he drew up plans to extend Streatham workhouse, but the scheme ran into the sands when the lord of the manor refused to grant the additional land required for its enlargement. However, the Union was fortunately placed in that one of the Poor Law Commissioners was John Shaw Lefevre, who knew the district and its influential residents well. His ties with the Spencer family, and broad knowledge of their landholdings in Wandsworth and Battersea, led him to suggest that a site on

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Wandsworth Common would be ideally suited for the erection of a new workhouse. Lefevre informed the Guardians that the 3rd Lord Spencer would undoubtedly agree to such a site if there were no objections from local proprietors. He admitted that this might prove a considerable hurdle, but that

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Sampson Kempthorne and published by the Poor Law Commission. It comprised in essence a series of buildings arranged in a square, with cross ranges and walls subdividing the inner area into four courtyards which allowed the different classes of inmate to be segregated.

Around Christmas 1838, the inmates of the several parish workhouses moved to the new building. A month later it was still in an 'unsettled' state and the demeanour of the paupers 'incorrect'. It was felt that decent order would not be introduced until the inmates were supplied with the workhouse dress. A hand mill for grinding corn provided the work element of the house. As the principle of the New Poor Law was to deter the idle poor from seeking relief, there were lengthy guidelines as to how the able-bodied should be put to work. The efficacy of the system depended on its being 'repulsive...to the Idle and Dissolute', but for the Wandsworth and Clapham Union there was a positive desire not to be seen as 'hard and cruel taskmasters' or to turn a 'benevolent institution...into one of stern repulsion to those in want of work and [who] cannot obtain it elsewhere'.²³

The new workhouse only occupied about a third of the long site acquired by the Guardians. Eventually this was all but completely built over. The first of many additions was a separate infirmary built in 1849 to designs by J. Bowes, for which the building contractors were Benjamin Nicholson & Son.²⁴ Following swiftly on from the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867 a much larger infirmary was built. The Act marked the first step in reorganizing health care for paupers in London, and started the process of caring for sick and healthy paupers on separate sites. Francis Brereton was appointed surveyor in December 1867 to design the infirmary together with new casual wards, laundry boiler house and kitchen.²⁵ The infirmary was built in 1868–70 and incorporated the 1849 building as one of four ward wings in an H-plan range (Ills 2.3, 2.5). Myers & Son were awarded the building contract on their tender of £38,867. The new ward blocks were of four storeys, designed on the pavilion plan.

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At the outer ends, twin sanitary towers with economical Italianate detailing had cast-iron balconies between them, in imitation of the contemporary St Thomas's Hospital in Lambeth.²⁶ Most of this building phase survives, only some of the ancillary buildings having been demolished: the kitchens, boiler house and casual

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The original intention was that it should be self-funding, but that was never a reality and money-raising events were a continual necessity. A change to the hospital's aims was forced upon it by Battersea's rising working-class population and the growth of industries and railways, which gave rise to large numbers of accident cases. With the nearest charity hospitals several miles away there was irresistible pressure on the Bolingbroke. From the outset casualties were admitted free, and the number of paying patients could not come close to subsidising their treatment. The first dedicated accident ward opened in 1893.

In 1897 the Bolingbroke became incorporated as a free accident hospital, continuing the pay-beds alongside.³⁵ After this, with help from the Prince of Wales's Hospital (later King's) Fund, plans were made for expansion. Young & Hall, among the leading hospital architects, drew up a scheme for the complete rebuilding of the hospital, including the demolition of the house. The first phase was completed in 1901 with the opening of the Victoria Wing, a new out-patients' department (Turtle and Appleton, builders). This one-storey, red-brick block fronted Wakehurst Road at the north-eastern corner of the site. It contained a waiting hall extending almost the length of the building, with consulting and examining rooms off it, an X-ray room and a dispensary with a separate exit at the end. The main entrance at the eastern

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animals were supplied by the Poole firm, Carter & Co., while the main nursery rhyme panels in the style of Mabel Lucy Atwell were by W. B. Simpson & Sons.⁴⁰ Among other improvements was a new operating theatre, followed in 1928–9 by the erection of a small chapel adjoining.⁴¹

With the completion of the Shepherd wing, the old house was hemmed in on three sides by tall hospital buildings, its main front facing the rear of this latest addition. By 1930 the Governors had in mind the final phase of rebuilding, replacing the house and constructing a large new administration block fronting Wakehurst Road, with a Hall of Remembrance to honour the war dead. The heavy cost of building the block, estimated at £70,000, could not be raised until 1936. The following year the old house came down.

The administration block followed Young & Hall's original scheme in order to tie in with the eastern section built thirty years earlier. Its four storeys and attics over a basement dwarf the neighbouring houses. Like the rest of the hospital, it is of red brick with stone dressings, constructed on a steel frame with concrete floors. In addition to the War Memorial hall it contained the usual offices, south-facing, six-bed wards on the first floor, accommodation for nursing staff above these and the main kitchen on top.⁴²

The hospital was twice damaged in the war. Despite some initial resistance, in 1948 it was transferred to the NHS and continued to function as a general hospital. The future of the Bolingbroke still seemed bright when a department of nurse education opened in 1966, followed by a coronary care unit. But in 1974 the casualty department closed and in 1980 the hospital became a geriatric unit.⁴³ A costly refurbishment was completed in 2004, but soon afterwards it was discovered that the building had 'serious fire-safety problems'..865Tp th663o5 0 0 1T

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closed to in-patients in March 2005.⁴⁴ In 2009 the building was listed grade II. It was acquired by ARK, an educational charity, with a view to turning it into a new academy school, to be opened after conversion in September 2012. The former children's ward was to become the school library with the picture tiles preserved in situ.⁴⁵

Anti-Vivisection Hospital (demolished)

The National Anti-Vivisection Hospital, sited opposite the south-west entrance to

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purchasers were the trustees for the establishment of a national anti-vivisection hospital, who paid £7,000 for it in 1900.⁴⁸

Henrietta Jane Munroe had first proposed such a hospital in 1896. She was the secretary of the Victoria Street Society, from 1897 the National Anti-Vivisection

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vivisection and had a strict policy of keeping its animals out of the clutches of vivisectors. The location of the hospital and the Dogs' Home, together with the sympathies of Battersea Council, also lay behind the selection of Battersea as the site for the Brown Dog Memorial, the controversial anti-vivisection monument erected at the Latchmere Recreation Ground in 1906 (page xxx).

The publicity and controversy surrounding the memorial may have helped swell the hospital's funds from private donations, as by 1912 its debts were cleared and plans were in hand for expanding the accommodation for out-patients and doubling the number of beds for in-patients. When it first opened, the hospital, generally called the 'Anti-Viv', had eleven beds for adults and four for children.⁵¹ By 1910 it had begun to admit paying patients, a necessary method of supplementing income, and in 1911 opened a children's ward. Next year the leasehold interest was acquired of 43 and 45 Albert Bridge Road, a semi-detached pair immediately north of the hospital. Here a cancer research department run by Dr Robert Bell began admitting patients at the end of 1913. At that time the hospital purchased the freehold of the houses and also of 29 and 31 Prince of Wales Drive, west of the main building, for offices and staff accommodation.

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problems over the contract with the Battersea Trades and Labour Council, and further difficulties raising a loan. Although completed in 1915, the new department did not open until 1923, as there were insufficient funds for equipment or for creating access from Rosenau Road.⁵⁴

By 1928 the hospital had once more cleared most of its debts and decided to embark on fund-raising for a large extension scheme. But the subsequent purchase to that end of 47 and 49 Albert Bridge Road plunged it so deeply into debt that by 1935 it was on the verge of bankruptcy. With about half the wards closed, the then chairman, Ernest Hall, determined to drop the hospital's anti-vivisection ideals. He was reported in the *Morning Post* as blaming the hospital's 'meaningless' title for denying it official funding. Sir Cooper Perry, writing to the King's Fund, observed wryly that 'if there was anything of the old Brown Dog Spirit in the Anti-vivisectionists, Acteon in the person of Lord Ernest would be torn in pieces by his own hounds'.⁵⁵ In the meantime Hall was taking the necessary legal steps to alter the trusts under which the hospital was established, dropping 'anti-vivisection' from its title and its practice. Sanction of the High Court and the Charity Commissioners was given in the summer of 1935.⁵⁶

In 1948 the Battersea General Hospital, as it had become, was taken over by the NHS. It closed in 1972, but the buildings were retained and used as an annexe to the Camberwell Reception Centre. In 1978 plans were approved for a resettlement unit on the site, and the buildings demolished. The scheme was dropped, as was another for a psychiatric day hospital and sheltered housing. The local health authority finally disposed of the site in 1987 and a purpose-built residential care home for Servite Houses opened here in 1991.⁵⁷

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separate entrance from Ouseley Road. Here there were a weighbridge and a lodge containing the porter's office and waiting rooms, with an ambulance station adjacent. Two houses next to the entrance in Ouseley Road had been purchased early in 1906. These were allocated to the Medical Superintendent and Assistant Medical Officer, and are still standing (Nos 42A and 44). The infirmary itself followed the pavilion plan, with six three-storey ward blocks providing accommodation for 600 patients. At the centre was an administration block containing the usual offices, board room, staff accommodation, stores and a dining room for the nurses. In the north-west corner was a four-storey home for 75 nurses, set end-on to St James's Road.⁶⁵

Major extensions were made after St James's was taken over by the LCC in 1930. The old school was finally demolished in 1931 and new wards, an out-patients' department, detached boiler-house and laundry were erected. In 1935 X-ray and physiotherapy departments were added. All the works were carried out to designs by the LCC Architect's Department.⁶⁶

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clinic. Michael O'Connell designed a dividing curtain to hang in the ground-floor waiting room. Two pieces were commissioned from Douglas Wain-Hobson, a young sculptor who had exhibited at the 1951 Battersea Park Open Air exhibition. He created a life-size nude in bronze named *Recovery* but soon rechristened the 'Leafless Man of Balham'; it was placed facing pa

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Battersea High Street. It was reorganized in 1876 to become a 'provident dispensary', encouraging the industrious working classes to subscribe a small sum to entitle them to free medical consultations and medicines. From this came the germ of inspiration to found the Bolingbroke Hospital, which included the Wandsworth Common branch dispensary when it first opened. A further branch opened in 1891 at Cedars Terrace, Queenstown Road.⁷²

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dispensaries. The Battersea Dispensary was open to any resident of the borough free of charge, but was principally aimed at uninsured persons unable to pay for a doctor. This was a swift response to the introduction of National Insurance in 1911, which provided free treatment of tuberculosis by the local authority to those insured. In its first year 661 patients applied for treatment: only 179 of them were found actually to have the disease, with another 69 suspected cases. After

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trustees on condition of their putting up the building. He was assisted by a group of well-off ladies who made a public appeal for money, writing from the Belgrave Square home of Lady Beatrice Pretzman.⁷⁸ The most active of the club's supporters were Nesta Lloyd and her brother-in-law H. G. Ferguson Davie. Together with a bank manager, Reginald Skipwith, they were the trustees.

Quilter's building (for much of its existence numbered 106A) was erected in 1906.⁷⁹ It is solidly and plainly built in red brick, with a street-corner facing of green glazed brick. It contained separate club rooms for boys and girls, and a chapel on the attic floor with a simple scissors-truss roof. The Cedars itself had been used meanwhile as a clergy house. In 1912 it was bought by the trustees and Nesta Lloyd took up residence, fitting up a 'beautiful' chapel there (no trace of which remains) in memory of her sister Gwendolen Davie, a worker at the girls' club who had died in 1902.⁸⁰

Ill-health forced Nesta Lloyd to give up her work at the Cedars Institute, and in 1922 she and Skipwith (Davie having been killed in 1915 at the Dardanelles) transferred the property to trustees for a new boys' club run by

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1924 by the future Queen, H.R.H. the Duchess of York. Meanwhile, money was raised for an extension to the boys' club, a two-storey wing built in 1924–5.

In the inter-war years the settlement ran a medley of clubs for boys, girls and mothers, and during the war became first an evacuation centre and then a rest centre. In June 1944 the artist David Bomberg was teaching there part-time.⁸² That month a flying bomb hit Gwynne Road, leaving the house uninhabitable.

Subsequently the two enterprises were amalgamated as the Christ's College and Katherine Low Settlement.

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In 1958 the southern part of the site, where a detached club-room had been destroyed by the flying bomb, was fitted up as a playground by the Variety Club of Great Britain. In 2002 a crèche was built there, and improvements made to the other buildings, by Eger Architects, under the Government's Sure Start programme. The crèche has laminated-timber beams and columns, with a curved roof and glazed front; the rear wall, alongside the railway, is inset with coloured glass blocks.⁸⁵

Caius College Mission, Holman Road (demolished)

An Anglican mission and club suppo

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to live and partake in educational and charitable work under Pawson's superintendence. Evening lectures and debates, directed towards the 'respectable artisan', took place in the meeting room behind. The mission also took on 20–22 Battersea Square near by, renaming it Gonville House. It offered cheap and wholesome food for the destitute, while upstairs were reading rooms and a workmen's club.⁸⁷

These arrangements ran into trouble. Few graduates volunteered to live at Caius House, while Gonville House turned out to be beyond the mission's resources and closed. Pawson having left, the enterprise was recast with a more specifically religious intent and a warden independent of St Mary's. Clarke promised to hand over the cure of some streets west of Battersea High Street once the Caians had built a mission and club room.⁸⁸

Under a part-time warden, the Rev. W. B. L. Hopkins, the revised 'Caius

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encaustic tiles in the chancel, and an old-fashioned oak pulpit and stone font in the nave, seated with chairs. The outstanding embellishment was a Burne-Jones stained glass inserted into the central lancet of the chancel in 1914. It commemorated four local boys who drowned on a Caius Mission outing to Rottingdean. Lady Burne-Jones, who lived at Rottingdean, gave her late husband's design in their memory. At the top of the window was the figure of St Martin dividing his cloak, in the lower half a smaller-scale scene of Christ calling two of his disciples.⁹⁰

The settlement continued for some years at the vicarage (Caius House), and it was there that the doctor and Antarctic explorer Edward Wilson lived as a 'missioner' in 1896–8. He would have helped at Caius Hall, the Sunday school beneath the church, and at premises rented for men's, boys' and girls' clubs in Harroway Road, before the 1907 extension to the main building. A boxing club founded in 1912 became a distinguishing mark of the mission. Decline was slow, but by the millennium services had long been discontinued in the church and the club sorely needed new facilities. Demolition in favour of flats incorporating club rooms took place in 2008, in consequence of which the Burne-Jones window was taken to Caius College. At the time of writing, the Caius House Youth Club was temporarily in Petworth Street, pending the construction of new premises in Holman Road.⁹¹

National Penitentiary

The largest abortive scheme of development in Battersea's history was the 'National Penitentiary', projected in 1781–2 and again in 1792–4 on a site covering nearly 80 acres (some 3% of the parish), bounded in modern terms by Plough Road, St John's

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Hill and Falcon Road and so including the present Clapham Junction. As this project has been recently studied by Keith Bailey, it is only covered briefly here.⁹²

The idea of a national gaol surfaced during a seminal period for British penal reform, prompted by the prison researches of John Howard and the curtailing of transportation for felons to the North American colonies after the War of Independence broke out in 1776. Until Australia became their destination after 1787, convicted offenders had to be kept at home, and extra space (including hulks on the Thames) found for their incarceration. The Penitentiary Act, passed in 1779, provided for the building of two penitentiaries, one for men and the other for women, in which the reformed Howardian principles of ‘solitary Imprisonment, accompanied by well regulated labour, and religious Instruction’ would prevail.⁹³ Three supervisors, one of them Howard, were appointed to carry this through in 1780; Clerkenwell was the site first favoured, but nothing came of it. A fresh committee of Sir Gilbert Eliot, Sir Thomas Bunbury and Thomas Bowdler then took up the cudgels. After considering Wandsworth Fields for the men’s prison, they opted instead for land close by at ‘Battersea Rise’, large enough to accommodate prisons for both sexes and plentiful space for agricultural and industrial activity – an important part of the concept. The new site had probably been chosen by late June 1781.⁹⁴

The area in question was in the ownership of the first Earl Spencer, partly as his freehold but mostly on a long lease under the Archbishop of York. No immediate local opposition seems noted to this gargantuan scheme, perhaps because the land, some of it marshy, was thought of in low-value, agricultural terms. An open architectural competition for both prisons took place in 1781–2. So rare an opportunity met an eager response. Of the 63 efforts submitted, only John Soane’s adventurous designs seem to have been preserved.⁹⁵ Bailey calculates the combined area of Soane’s two prisons as 19 acres, or perhaps one quarter of the land. The winners were William Blackburn for the men’s prison and Thomas Hardwick for the

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effect the prison would have on the many villas lately built in the neighbourhood.⁹⁹ The Bill passed, but with the amendment that the panopticon prison was to be built at Battersea Rise 'or any other as convenient and proper Spot of ground'.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile Bentham, having acquainted himself intimately with the Battersea site, harried Spencer, Archbishop Markham of York, and the Harrisons with lengthy blandishments and reassurances.¹⁰¹ He contended that a 1,000-inmate prison would actually be 'an accession to the Neighbourhood ... So far from flying from the spot, Builders will flock to it, were it only for the benefit of the protection afforded by the Guard.' The site, he argued, had nothing on it but 'Two or three Cottages of no value, and a Public House [the Falcon] that would make a fortune by the choice'.¹⁰²

These pretensions received short shrift, yet Bentham was civilly treated. The emollient Spencer even instructed Thomas Harrison in 1796 to offer him up to 125 acres in the marshy district eastwards of Battersea Bridge, including some timber docks. Bentham, by then angling for a site at Charlton, turned up his nose at these 'repositories of putrescent mud', but soon found himself 'thrown back upon your Lordship's Marsh, spite of my utmost efforts to emerge from it'.¹⁰³ Now thoroughly fed up with the brash philosopher, the earl responded: 'I always had and still continue to have very strong objections against your pursuing your plans at Battersea ... I am determined to keep my Estate unless compelled by law to give it up.'¹⁰⁴ So terminated a proposal which, had it been implemented, would have shaped Battersea's history profoundly.

Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home

Since 1871 Battersea Dogs' Home has occupied the same site, wedged between the railway lines behind Battersea Park Road, close by Battersea's two great

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building of the RSPCA in Jermyn Street built in 1869-70.¹⁰⁶ Thomas Joseph Tully

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in the number of dogs received after a muzzling order issued by the LCC in response to a rabies scare.

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unashamedly utilitarian appearance. It contains 200 kennels, primarily to house dogs for re-homing. Requirements such as the need to hose down the kennels regularly dictated the use of non-deteriorating materials, including non-corrosive steel, and lining each floor with epoxy resin to prevent water penetration. The ground floor contains garages, holding kennels, incinerators and a mortuary. More kennels occupy the upper floors and there are exercise runs on the partially covered roof. The principal contractor was Neilcott Construction.¹²²

Plans to repeat the Tealby block on two other areas of the site were abandoned and in 1993 eight architects were invited to produce 'concepts' for further new buildings: dog kennels, a cattery for the increasing number of cats, and a new visitor and reception block. Martin Richmond Associates were appointed for the first phase comprising dog kennels and reception block, with Martin Richmond and Charles Knowles responsible for the designs.¹²³

Richmond and Knowles's block now dominates the site. It was named the Kent Building after Prince Michael of Kent, the home's president, who laid the foundation stone in June 1995. Of constructional yellow brick with reconstituted-stone dressings, it rises to four tall storeys, partially fronting Battersea Park Road and looming above the low-level railway lines on the eastern boundary of the site. It comprises three sections: 300 dog kennels in two, four-storey blocks with inset balcony runs; a visitors' block, with interview, meeting and clinic areas; and a top-lit 'ramp hall' between the two, creating an acoustic barrier, as well as a more dog-friendly means of ingress and egress. The visitors' block has a curved entrance front of grey-tinted glass curtain walling, facing Whittington Lodge. The Kent Building was built by R. Mansell Ltd and opened in 1996.¹²⁴

In 1995 the Home also acquired the 1½-acre site to the north, with eleven further railway arches under the line into Victoria Station. This provides access

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from Queenstown Road, staff parking and exercise runs and some temporary office accommodation.¹²⁵ The expansion followed on from an earlier agreement for a new lease of the seven arches converted to kennels in 1906 together with the land to the west.¹²⁶

Fronting Battersea Park Road, the new cattery was built in 2009–10, designed by Charles Knowles Design Architects (project architect, Charles Knowles, design team Knowles, Ross Sweetman and Andrew Scott). The