

Lickey Hills Country Park

The Old Rose & Crown Area

'walk softly - leave no trace'

The Country Park borders Worcestershire and south west Birmingham. The Park began life in 1888 when Rednal Hill was presented to the City of Birmingham by the Birmingham Society for the Preservation of Open Spaces.

By 1947, it had grown to its present size of 524 acres (212 hectares) through purchases of land by the City and donations of land by members of the Cadbury family. Although most of the Park is in Worcestershire, it is owned and managed by Birmingham.

The Park consists of four hills – Beacon Hill, Rednal Hill, Bilberry Hill and Cofton Hill. Beacon Hill is the highest at 978 feet (298 metres). The range of the stunning Lickey Hills is a major English watershed. Some streams rising on the hills flow to the River Rea and into the North Sea via the River Trent. Other streams flow into the River Arrow and on to the Bristol Channel by way of the River Avon and the River Severn.

The first day-trippers came on foot, by carriage and, after the opening of Barnt Green Station in 1844, by train. In 1913, a motorised bus service to Rednal started, using 10 Daimler open top double-decker buses.



From 1924, trams arrived at Rednal from the centre of Birmingham. On Easter Monday of that year they carried passengers to the Lickeys at an estimated rate of 100 per minute. By 10.30am some 10,000 people were waiting for a 'tram to the Lickeys', which had become a holiday playground for many Brummies. Trams continued to run until 1952.

In 1971, the Park was formally designated a Country Park and the Visitor Centre in Warren Lane opened in 1990. In 2000, it was the first park in Birmingham to be awarded the prestigious 'Green Flag' – an international award that recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces.

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The building stands on the site of a coaching inn on the route from Birmingham to Bristol. The original road, since realigned, was the Salt Way, an old Roman Road from the salt brine pits in Droitwich to Metchley Fort in Edgbaston. It became a turnpike road in 1726.

The mediaeval Royal Manors of Bromsgrove and Kings Norton held a Great Court at Lickey here four times a year, where legal cases were heard and local officials elected. It had a 'cage', pillory and ducking stool, the exact site of which is now unknown.

Rednal Hill rising to 860 feet (262m) is the only hill that is in Birmingham – the others are located in Worcestershire.

Near to the majestic Scots Pines at the summit, a path leads down to Lickey Road passing behind Oratory House, once the rural retreat of John Henry Newman, the 19th century English theologian, scholar and poet. At the time of his death, he was a cardinal in the Catholic Church. He was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on 19 September 2010 in a proclamation in nearby Cofton Park and pronounced a saint by Pope Francis in 2019.



Geology

The rocks on the Lickey Hills range in age from around 485 million years to around 250 million years old. Five geological periods of time are represented: Ordovician, Silurian, Carboniferous, Permian and Triassic. Superficial material on the Hills – clays, silts, sands, gravels, pebbles – was deposited during the last Ice Age in the Quaternary geological period.

The rock you are standing on is soft red Carboniferous mudstone which was deposited near the end of the Carboniferous period around 300 million years ago. Within it there are thin coals from preserved plant remains and layers

containing the remains of marine worms that lived in coastal waters, suggesting that the area was formed near a river delta.

Occasional sandy layers are harder and can be seen as terraces on the golf course, as pictured.



More details on the Bilberry Hill geology board, www.ehtchampions.org.uk or this QR code:



The Park contains fragile ecosystems – home to thousands of rare and protected species of flora and fauna.

We wish to protect the Country Park for you and future generations to enjoy.

Kindly play your part by respecting these rules.

LITTERING

is anti-social, encourages vermin & can kill wildlife

HOW YOU CAN HELP

please take your litter home or dispose of it in our bins

BBQs & FIRES

are a major fire risk, damage heathland & grassland

HOW YOU CAN HELP

do not light barbecues or fires inform staff urgently if seen

UNCONTROLLED DOGS

can disturb, injure & even kill wildlife

HOW YOU CAN HELP

keep under control at all times & on a lead in busy areas

DOG WASTE

is a threat to human health & wildlife habitats

HOW YOU CAN HELP

pick-up and dispose in the bins provided or take home

CYCLING & HORSE RIDING

can be dangerous, disturb wildlife, erode paths, archaeology & habitats

HOW YOU CAN HELP

please stick to designated bridleways - see map

REMOVING FLORA

plant, fungi & wood removal damages biodiversity & spreads disease

HOW YOU CAN HELP

do not remove anything irreplaceable - ask if in doubt

AROUND & ABOUT

The Municipal golf course opened in 1921. The land was gifted to the City of Birmingham by the Cadbury family. Other sports facilities – tennis, outdoor table tennis and a children's mini-golf course are located here.

A prominent feature of this part of the Park is the duck pond, fed by a series of cascading small pools.

The panoramic views from the north end of Rednal Hill ridge are among the best in the Park – across the golf course to Beacon Hill, over to the Waseley Hills then across to Frankley Beeches and much of Birmingham.

NATURE NOTES

Bilberry; 'Vaccinium myrtillus' or European Blueberry. Their pink bell-shaped flowers appear in spring followed by small dark fruits in the summer.

They are edible and have traditionally been used to make jams, pies and sauces. Bilberries make our lowland heath special as they are usually found on upland heath habitats.

To report an incident – contact 0121 454 7810



ECO-friendly frame made of recycled plastic



Digital Map and more info HERE thelickeyhills.uk

map on reverse

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