

Historic Timeline

The Level was open grassland set within an agricultural landscape. The two streams which ran down the valleys of London Road and Lewes Road converged here and The Level was marshy and prone to flooding.

Cricket was played on The Level from at least the mid eighteenth century. The northern part of The Level was laid out as a cricket ground for the Prince of Wales in 1791.

Brighton Toy Fair was held at The Level. Pony racing took place on The Level and a sheep fair selling South Down Sheep was held.

The Great Peace Festival to mark the overthrow of Napoleon Bonaparte took place.

The Level was now the only recreational area in the town. The coronation of George IV was celebrated by the roasting of two bullocks at a public dinner on The Level.

The present area of The Level was formally laid out by A.H. Wilds and Henry Phillips. Union Road was constructed to link the Ditchling and Lewes Roads. The land to the north was sold to James Ireland who laid out the Royal Gardens.

The coronation of Queen Victoria was celebrated by a large public dinner with the roasting of an ox and some sheep.

An avenue of elm trees, a gift of the Earl of Chichester, was planted.

A public celebration to commemorate peace with Russia was held.

The building at the southern entrance to The Level was a branch police station from about 1865 - until 1919. Following use as a police building it was used as main offices for the Brighton Parks Department.

The Level was enclosed by railings and planted with shrubs.

Between 1921 and 1926, the Open Market was held on Rose Walk.

The children's playground designed by Bertie Hubbard MacLaren was laid out with a boating pool, bridges and pergola. MacLaren, the Superintendent for the Brighton Parks Department. MacLaren previously designed Preston Park in Brighton.

Part of The Level was occupied by Royal Engineers and the northern section taken over by Nissen huts. The army stayed on The Level until 1955.

The skate park was built.

Brighton Peace Camp, intended as a protest at the arrest of 44 women at the Greenham Common, remained on The Level for over two months.

Many of the elms on The Level destroyed by The Great Storm. Replacement trees were subsequently planted, of different ages and species to avoid a repeat of such wholesale loss.

New playground equipment was installed.

The columns and pergolas were taken down.

Parks for People.

1700's



Open market on Rose Walk 1920

1791



Drawing of cricket match

Early 1800's

1814



Brighton Police Station c.1905

1817



Removal of railings 1923

1822

1838



Boating lake 1923

1844

1855

1865

1877

1921

1927

The Playground 1927



The Playground 1927

1944

1979

1983

1987



The Level 1935



Digging trenches 1939



Children skating 1955



Damage from 1987 storm

Late 1990's

2007

2011