

Acknowledgements

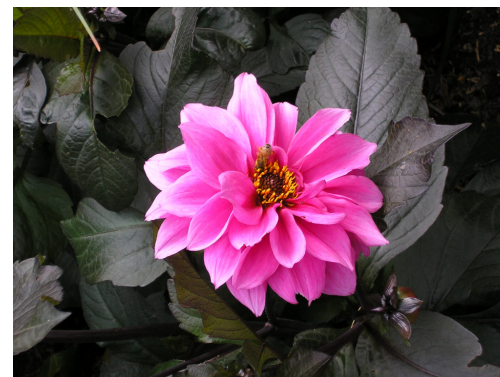
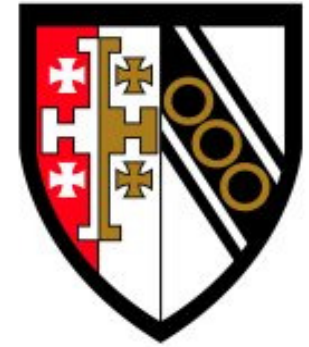
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Selwyn College Gardens Guide



Welcome to Selwyn College Gardens

Selwyn College takes its name from George Augustus Selwyn, first Bishop of New Zealand (1841-68) and later Bishop of Lichfield (1868-78), and in whose memory the College was founded.

More information about the College and its gardens can be found on our website, www.sel.cam.ac.uk. A garden 'wish list' and a list of past donations to the gardens is also available on the website.

Overview

This guide has been designed like a tour, which you may follow if you wish. The route and locations along the route, shown in **red**, are marked on the map in the centre of this booklet. More information on some of the features along the walk is given in the boxes in green text, such as the **Health and Safety at Selwyn** box below.

Health and Safety at Selwyn

We would like to remind you of the dangers that can be found in the garden.

All small children should be supervised at all times, especially near the pond. On open days and special occasions the pond is fenced off, but please be observant.

Many plants can be toxic and should not be ingested. Plants can also be skin irritants, so it is a good idea not to touch plants.

Finally, paths and steps can become uneven over time, or be slippery in wet weather. So, be careful, be safe, and enjoy the garden!

The tour will take you round the College in a planned route to give you the maximum pleasure from our gardens. We suggest that you go round Old Court in a clockwise direction, starting at the Porters' Lodge, and move to the lower part of the garden either by going through E staircase, which gives disabled access to that part of the

garden, or by following the building round on to the terrace.

Start the tour here

Walk into College past the Porters' Lodge, and stop (**map location 1**). You are standing in Old Court, facing the Chapel. The lawn that you see before you was originally a sunken lawn, just like our sister college, Keble, in Oxford. In 1961 it was filled in, making it a more practical lawn to manage. It is about a quarter of a hectare in size.



The Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) you can see on the buildings is one of the original plantings. Although a good habitat for birds to nest in (sheltering insects and providing autumn berries) it must be maintained regularly; otherwise the world would be a lot darker for our students. Old Court, like a walled garden, is a lot warmer than the rest of the College, so we can put in plants here that are not reliably hardy.

Continue round to the left, and you will pass B staircase (**2**). Near here you should see some *Echium pininana* from the Canary Islands. These plants are selfset biennials and are not always flowering. In their native habitat they can reach heights of 12ft.

Moving on to C staircase (**3**), there is a silk tree (*Albizia julibrissin*) which originates from subtropical regions of the world, from Iran to Japan. The fern-like foliage is very eye-catching. This plant does well here as this side of the College is south facing. We have many tender

In the middle of this part of the garden is our **Victorian border (15)** with the gravel path running through it, which is always a blazing riot of colour towards the end of the season.

The Victorian Border has a path that runs from north to south through the middle. The border itself is edged with hand-made tiles made from local clay, found in Old Court, Cripps and around this area. Originally a smaller border that contained shrubs, it was extended in the 1950s, and most of the **dahlias** date from this time. Each year they are lifted and stored under the nearby Chapel, and then the old tubers are planted again in early April. In 1996 the shrubs were pulled out and replaced with an extensive Victorian-style bedding scheme and the path was redesigned with a curve in it.

It takes about a week to plant the border, and the same to remove the plants at the end of the season. This border flowers from mid-June through to the first frosts. We use architectural and tender perennials to form the main structure and then infill with drifts of fragrant, exotic and unusual plants. These are not listed as they vary from year to year - that is one of the charms of this border.

The border on the opposite side (**16**) has been

Dahlias commemorate Dr Anders Dahl (1751-1789), a Swedish botanist. Dahlias are native to Mexico. They were discovered by Dr Francisco Hernandez, who found two species growing in the mountains, which the locals used for food. (They do not feature on Selwyn's menus - yet!)

Most of our dahlia stock dates from the 1950s, and the plants have been replanted since that time. Consequently, the stock needs revitalising with new plants, adding a few new plants each year. Over time, most of the plant name labels have been lost, although they do now have labels with colour and height on them; this helps with organising the display.

designed with plants that will thrive in full sun and well-drained soil.

On the lower lawn (**17**) there are borders of old-fashioned roses. Near the Chapel are two

large Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), and a young specimen of the handkerchief tree (*Davidia involucrata*). After an amble round this part of the garden you can make your way back to Old Court by going up the semi-circular steps near the Chapel (**18**) and turning left. Remember that most of the plants on this side of the College tolerate shade and cooler temperatures, such as *mahonias*, *viburnums* and *hostas*.

We hope you have enjoyed this tour and we look forward to seeing you enjoying the garden some time in the future.

Further Information

Spring Colour at Selwyn

The garden is worth a visit at this time of year. Many bulbs are planted in the grounds, such as aconites, snowdrops, anemones, daffodils, hyacinths, tulips, *Chionodoxa*, *Fritillaria*, *Leucojum*, and *Scilla*. We also have shrubs noted for their spring colour, such as *Chimonanthus praecox*, *Chaenomeles*, *Cornus mas*, *Cytisus praecox*, *Daphne*, *Forsythia*, *Garrya*, *Hamamelis*, *Mahonia*, *Skimmia*



as long grass all through the summer, to enhance the naturalistic appearance.

Now walk along the grass path and take the first turning on your right. This takes you to the middle of the woodland walk (12). In front of you is a fine specimen of Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*) which, along with the horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), are some of the earliest tree plantings.

Continue walking to your left. This takes you



Pond, Banks and Woodland Walk

The pond and woodland walk were redesigned in 1998. The pond was the main focus for this makeover, but the scheme also integrated the existing trees, shrubs, and borders.

The area behind the woodland walk, known as the Banks, is a riot of colour in spring as a profusion of bulbs are planted. The gardeners used to grow bulbs as cut flowers for display in the college throughout the winter, and over the years the bulbs were planted out in the Banks. We try to work in harmony with nature, and so leave the grass long until mid-summer to provide food for insects. We have an

Pond and Woodland Walk (continued)

abundance of common frogs, butterflies-birds, and squirrels; and a fox and a family of Muntjac deer can be seen occasionally. We also have to co-exist with almost every kind of pest and disease.

behind the pond (13), and gives you an excellent view of the College.

Then walk round the end of the pond, out of the shrubs, and on to the lawn (14). The border that you see in front of you is designed to flower early in the year, so the students can appreciate it when they are here.

On your left is the Fellows' Garden (not open to the public), used for summer functions and it is also a good retreat for the Fellows. A recent makeover has resulted in a replanted herbaceous border, a new arbour and a summer house as a focal point. It is not one of the largest Fellows' Gardens in Cambridge, but we think it has a certain charm.

Opposite the Fellows' garden is the Master's Garden (not open to the public), with the Weymouth Pine (*Pinus strobes*) weeping over the gate on your right. The Master's Garden is designed in a typical English style, with borders round the outside and a lawn in the middle. The border at the end of the garden is quite recent, and so is the path running at the back of the border on the left hand as you face the house. The Master and his wife use the garden for functions in the summer.



plants, such as *Agave*, *Eccremocarpus*, *Melianthus* and more, which successfully overwinter here most years. Most of the plants have labels, but you will have to search for some that have become hidden over the years.



Moving on, you will pass the College's **new sundial**, on the wall between D and E staircases. It was a gift from an alumnus in 2010,

The Selwyn Sundial

The sundial, put up in March 2010, was created for the college by Frank King, and details of the design, cutting, gilding and painting were undertaken by the Cardozo Kindersley Workshop in Cambridge. Frank King is a world expert on sundials and regards dialling as a form of recreational mathematics.

If you wish, you may enter E staircase (4), which will take you through to the lower part of the garden and gives disabled access to that part of the garden from Old Court. If you do go this way, continue along the tarmac path until you get to the path towards the Sidgwick site (9) and the salvia border (10).

Between E and F staircases you will find our New Zealand border (5). All the plants in this border come from New Zealand, and do very well here. The railing border you can see from here (6) is planted up with annuals in summer (alyssum, salvias and a few spot plants to give height) and winter bedding in the winter (polyanthus, wallflowers and tulips).

Follow the building round. This will take you on to the terrace and towards **Ann's Court** and also some interesting trees. Go down the steps

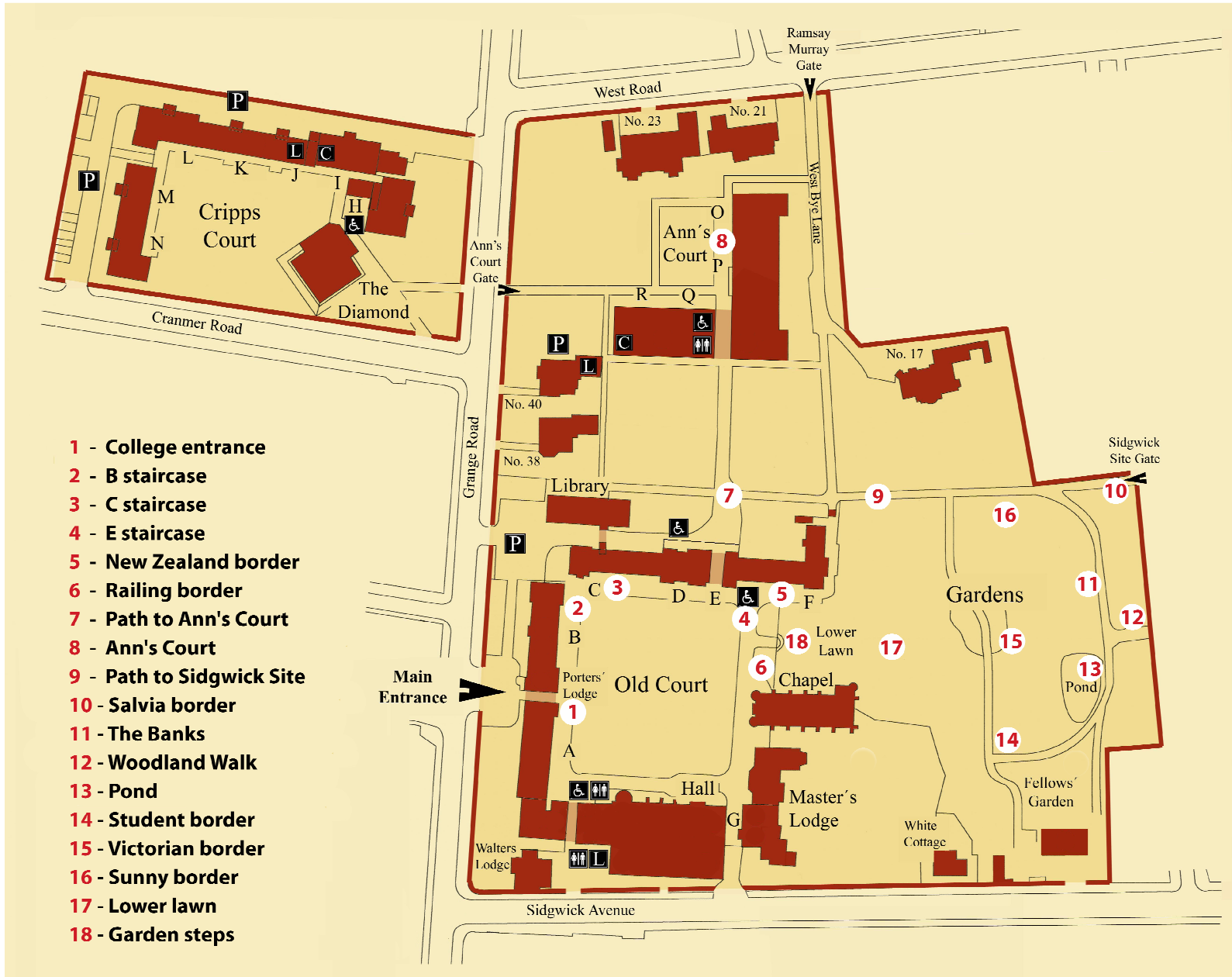
Ann's Court

Phase I of Ann's Court (O and P staircases) was completed in 2005, and Phase II (Q and R staircases) was completed in 2009. Ann's Court currently contains more than 80 study bedrooms for students and an administration block for various College offices. The new rooms enable Selwyn to offer accommodation to more of its students and are also valuable as conference accommodation. Generous donations from alumni and friends enabled Selwyn College to build this.

Further phases planned include additional student accommodation, a new library and an auditorium.

Two College houses with gardens and out-buildings were demolished to enable the building of the new development, and the new gardens for Ann's Court have been planted with trees, hedges and ground cover plants to provide a fitting setting for the new buildings.

The gardens were designed to enhance an area that had been neglected over the years. In the past this area was given over to gardens for those living in the houses that were previously on the site, a nursery area for growing cut flowers and bedding plants, and storage of large trees and shrubs. It also housed the heart of any garden: the compost heap.



- 1 - College entrance
- 2 - B staircase
- 3 - C staircase
- 4 - E staircase
- 5 - New Zealand border
- 6 - Railing border
- 7 - Path to Ann's Court
- 8 - Ann's Court
- 9 - Path to Sidgwick Site
- 10 - Salvia border
- 11 - The Banks
- 12 - Woodland Walk
- 13 - Pond
- 14 - Student border
- 15 - Victorian border
- 16 - Sunny border
- 17 - Lower lawn
- 18 - Garden steps

and turn left. Follow the path part way towards Ann's Court and you will be at **(7)** on the map. To the left, you will see a good specimen of Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) and, to your left, a young specimen of the Indian bean tree (*Catalpa bignonioides aurea*). In the distance, over the Library arch you can see a mature Scotch Elm (*Ulmus glabra*).

Continue until you are in **Ann's Court (8)**.

You can also see Cripps Court, across Grange Road, from your vantage point in Ann's Court. Cripps Court is an example of 1960's minimalist buildings designed by Gordon Woollatt, with similarly minimalistic gardens, but there are plans to improve the gardens. There is now a new pathway linking Cripps Court and Ann's Court.

Continue along past Ann's Court and follow the path around the building, turning right. You will come to a junction with West Bye Lane. Turn right on to West Bye Lane and walk back towards the College along the lane. When you are almost back at the College, take the turning to the left towards the Sidgwick site **(9)**. There is a student hostel and croquet lawn on your left. Continue walking towards the Sidgwick site gate, and you will see the **salvia border (10)**. This border flowers right up until the first frost.

Salvia At Selwyn
 We have many different types of salvias in the garden. About two thirds are not reliably hardy in this country. New cuttings are propagated each year and the plants are overwintered in cold frames.
 We also have a bed of *Salvia splendens* near the railings in Old Court and often put *Salvia farinacea* in the border in front of Walters Lodge and the Victorian border. The Salvia border contains plants from all over the world.

Turn around, so that the salvia border is behind you. You are now facing the part of the garden that we call the **Banks (11)**. The Banks are spectacular in the spring, with many different species of daffodil and narcissus. This area is left