

# Grand Houses

Over the centuries, wealthy people spent money building grand houses in Wimbledon. These houses have a hidden history: almost all of the homes shown as models here have connections to slavery. Some owners of these houses used enslaved people, shipped from Africa, to work on their estates in the Caribbean. Others took part in buying, selling and transporting human lives.

Even Wimbledon's first manor house has links to the slave trade. Thomas Cecil built the house on land given to his father, William, by Queen Elizabeth I. As her advisor, William had organised slave-trading journeys between West Africa and the Caribbean.

The Queen visited Thomas's home three times – putting Wimbledon, still just a village, on the map. Located only a day's ride from London but with cleaner air and a countryside setting, Wimbledon became a desirable place for the wealthy to build a home.

'Prospect Place, Wimbledon. The seat of J.G. Lambton' Watercolour showing the entrance at the front of the house in 1825 by John Hassell (1767–1825)

Photography by Ian Skelton



Watercolour by Sir Thomas Graham Jackson (1835–1924) of Eagle House and garden, 1898

Photography by Ian Skelton



Watercolour by Maria Marryat (1796–1865) of Wimbledon House c. 1815

Photography by Ian Skelton

