



HYDE PARK.

Hyde Park has been a centre point of London since 1536 and has housed numerous historical events within its grounds. **Featuring**¹ the Serpentine Lake, Speakers' Corner and the Princess of Wales' Memorial Fountain, these gardens are free for the public to discover the wonders of the grounds. This Royal Park is definitely one to be explored.

One of London's most famed gardens, Hyde Park covers a vast 142 hectares and is one of the Royal Parks of London. The park **adjoins**² **Kensington Gardens** and together they cover a **staggering**³ 253 hectares.

¹ Featuring- Having as a prominent attribute or aspect

² Adjoins- Be next to and joined with

³ Staggering- deeply shocking, astonishing, very surprising



Apsley Gate, known as The Grand Entrance to the park was erected in 1824/25 by Decimus Burton and boasts three carriage entrance archways, two foot entrances, a lodge⁴ and iconic columns.

Despite the Gate being erected in the 17th century, *Hyde Park was first acquired by Henry VIII – in 1536 – from the monks of Westminster Abbey.* Henry used the park for riding and to hunt deer that roamed there. The parklands remained private until *James I came to the throne in 1625 and allowed limited access.* The King selected a ranger and a keeper to take charge of the estate and to keep it in order. It wasn't until **Charles I** came to the throne that he *allowed public access to the park in 1637.*

⁴ Lodge-small house at the gates of a park or in the grounds of a large house, occupied by the gatekeeper, gardener or other employee.

Hyde Park has had many historical events occur within its grounds. One of the



first saw Londoners **fleeing**⁵ to camp in the park in 1665 to try and **escape the Great Plague**. In the 1730s, Queen Caroline, wife of George II reconditioned the park and created **The Serpentine**, an 11.34 hectare

lake. The **Prince Regent** organised fireworks to take place in Hyde Park in 1814 to mark the **end of the Napoleonic Wars** and allow Londoners to rejoice in the grounds. The illustrious **Great Exhibition** was held in the park in 1851, which celebrated the works of industry from all nations. In 1930, the **lido**⁶ was set up by George Lansbury, the First Commissioner of Works, and can still be used to this day.

Most notably, in 1866 **Edmond Beales**, president of the Reform League, **marched** through Hyde Park to **press for manhood suffrage**. The group fought with police and took over Hyde Park. When the fight was disbanded the Prime Minister allowed meetings to take place **unchallenged**⁷ by authorities. **Since 1872, people have been allowed to speak in this section of Hyde Park on any subject**, or as we more commonly know it – **Speaker's Corner**.



Source theculturetrip.com used for educational purposes.

⁵ Fleeing- run away from a place or situation of danger.

⁶ Lido—a public, open-air swimming pool or beach

⁷ Unchallenged- not disputed or questioned.

Answer these questions to check comprehension.

Who did what?

Henry VIII	allowed limited access
Charles I	allowed public access
James I	acquired the park from the monks of Westminster Abbey

What happened when?

1665	Creation of the Serpentine lake.
1730	Londoners camped here fleeing the Great Plague
1814	The Great Exhibition was held in the park
1851	Fireworks to mark the end of the Napoleonic Wars.
1872	People are allowed to speak on any subject in the Speaker's Corner