

Reigate Priory and Priory Park Time Line

1201 – 1536

The Augustinian Period

William de Warenne, the sixth Earl of Surrey, founded Reigate Priory for the Augustinian Canons who worshipped and worked here for 300 years.

1681 – 1766 Parsons Ownership

John Parsons bought the Priory he was Lord Mayor of London in 1703 and represented Reigate in Parliament for almost 30 years. Humphrey Parsons twice Lord Mayor of London succeeded his father John.

1807-1921 Somers Ownership

John Somers Cocks later Earl Somers bought the Priory in 1807. He was succeeded by his son and grandson who both lived at the Priory. Lady Henry Somerset (nee Somers) inherited the estate from Charles Somers (Third Earl Somers) in **1883**. The house was then extensively altered and new garden areas were developed including the sunken garden and monks walk. The restoration was based on her layout.

1921 Beatty Ownership

Admiral and Countess Beatty purchased the Priory and 68.5 acres of land.

1936 The Hon Peter Beatty inherited the Priory and was its last private owner. He built stables and bred and trained race horses with wins at Ascot and the Derby.

1939 Joseph Rank Ltd (now owned by Hovis) used the House for emergency offices during World War Two

1942 Mutual Property Life and General Insurance purchased the Priory and sought permission for building development

1200

1300

1400

1500

1600

1700

1800

1900

2000

1541-1681 Howard Ownership

Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries King Henry VIII gave the Priory to Lord William Howard, uncle of Catherine Howard (Henry VIII's fifth wife)

Notable Howards included Charles Howard who led the fleet to victory over the Spanish Armada in **1588**.

1776 – 1780 Ireland Ownership

Richard Ireland a cheesemonger paid £4000 for the mansion and its 76 acres of parkland. A devastating fire damaged the house and thus significant changes were made to it including refacing the south front in its present Georgian style. Ann Jones the niece of Richard Ireland inherited the Priory followed by her son Arthur.

1801 Mowbray Ownership

George Mowbray a business man bought the Priory at public auction in London just six years later he sold it for double the price.

1920 Randal Vogan paid £15,000 for Reigate Park (the woodland and ridge in the south of the park and later presented the area to the people of Reigate 'for their quiet enjoyment'.

1947 – 1974 Reigate Borough Ownership

The whole of the Priory Estate was acquired by the Borough of Reigate and was opened to the general public.

1948 The Priory building was leased to Surrey County Council for use as a school

1974 onwards Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Developed the use as a public park .

In 2007/8 the Heritage Lottery Fund supported a major project to restore the Park and create new facilities such as the pavilion, skate park and children's play area.