

GLA 65 Old Gravel Pit, Blackheath (Vanbrugh Pit), LIGS

Royal Borough of Greenwich TQ 3980 7715

Ownership: Local Authority. Open access, Metropolitan Open Land, in Metropolitan SINC

Vanbrugh Pit is an old gravel pits at the edge of open space in the northeast corner of Blackheath. It is one of many sand and gravel pits on Blackheath, most filled-in with wartime rubble. Many rounded pebbles of the Blackheath Member of the Harwich Formation can be seen in the paths that go down from the top to the quarry bottom. Much of the area contains heathland vegetation. A second gravel pit can be seen to the west of Blackheath: Eliot's Pit (GLA 24) where there is a board explaining the gravels.

The exposure at Vanbrugh Pit gives an opportunity to examine the Blackheath pebble beds that form part of the flat ridge from the River Ravensbourne at Lewisham through here, Plumstead Common and Bostall Heath to the River Cray at Erith. The round black pebbles give Blackheath its name, rather than the other way round which is usually the way rock names are created.

The pebbles are unusually rounded and predominantly black in colour, composed of flint that originated from layers within the Chalk. It is possible that they have been reworked from the underlying top of the Upnor Formation.

Access

Open common with public access at all times



Photos: Diana Clements 2012



General view of pit in November 2020
Photo: Laurie Baker

Site Map

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