



Town of Greenwich
Department of Parks & Recreation - Programs
Town Hall - 101 Field Point Road - Greenwich, CT 06836-2540
Phone: (203) 622-7814 – Fax: (203) 622-6494

Greenwich Point

Location: Tod's Driftway, At the end of Shore Rd.

Directions from

Central Greenwich: U.S. 1 heading towards Stamford, turn right at Sound Beach Ave. (Opposite Caldor's) Riverside, Go under I-95 bridge, keep right at rotary, go straight through downtown Old Greenwich Shopping district (on Sound Beach) until you reach next rotary, turn right onto Shore Rd. Stay on Shore Rd. until you get to Greenwich Point Park.

Size: 147.3 Acres

Hr. of Operation: 6 am to sunset (year round)(lifeguard on duty from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm from Memorial day to Labor day)

Parking: after 1700 cars parking is limited

Outdoor Facilities:

- I. Gate House
- II. Ticket Booth
- III: Spotting Tower (w/Lavatory)
- IV. Queen Anne Building
 - A. Lockers
 - B. Rest rooms
- V. Electric Power Supply Vault
- VI. Bicycle Racks:
 - A. 15' wooden rack
 - B. 15' metal rack
- VII. Old Concession Building:
 - A. Concession
 - B. Life Guard Shack
 - C. Seaside Museum
- IX. Beach Area
 - A. Wood Shelters (20' x 40') (4)
 - B. Wood Life Guard Tower w/ Flagpole
- X. New Concession Building
 - A. Concession
 - B. Police booth
 - C. Seasonal Lockers
 - D. Lavatories and showers
 - E. First Aid Station
 - F. Bicycle racks (15') 4
 - G. Tractor Shed w/ overhead doors
- XI. Clambake Area w/ lavatories
 - Clam Bake Picnic Area w/ Shelter (reservations required weekends)
- XII. Greenwich Yacht Club Building (leased through Parks & Recreation)
 - A. Dock master's office
 - B. Flagpole
- XIII. Chimes Building
 - A. Boat Lockers

- B. Lavatories
 - C. Greenwich Yacht Club Sailing Program
- XIV. Cow Barn
- XV. Work Barn
- XVI. Truck Shed
- XVII. Tidal pond seawater pipeline & exchange chamber
- XVIII. Caretaker's cottage
- XIX. Gas House
 - A. Parks & Trees Equipment Shed
- XX. Family Picnic Area
 - A. Picnic tables Approx. 275
 - B. Grills (60)
 - C. Rest rooms
 - D. Water Fountains (13)
 - E. Temp. Benches (30)
- XXI. Corn Crib
 - A. Kamp Kairphree Office
- XXII. Day Camp Boathouse
 - A. Canoes 2 (16')
 - B. Canoes 3 (14')
 - C. Flat Row Boats 8 (12')
 - D. Life Jackets & Paddles
- XXIII. Eagle Tower Lake
- XXIV. Tidal Wetlands
 - A. Marsh inlets w/ foot bridges (4)
- XXV. Greenwich Point (Boats & Harbors)
 - A. Main Dock
 - B. Landing Floats (4)
 - C. Connecting pontoons (3)
 - D. Gangway
 - E. Sunfish Racks(20)
 - G. Galvanized pipe pram racks (2)
 - H. Boat Launching ramp
 - I. Mobile Boat handling dolly
- XXVI. Miscellaneous
 - A. Grills (60)
 - B. Temporary Benches (30)
 - C. Picnic Tables (275)
 - D. Water Fountains (13)
 - E. Network of trails throughout park
 - F. Seaside Center of the Bruce Museum
 - G. Old Greenwich Yacht Club (leased through Parks & Recreation)
 - H. Secret Garden (maintained by Knollwood Garden Club)
 - I. Remains of Tod's Mansion

Recreational Uses:

From 6:00 am until sunset, the Point can be used for jogging, walking, cycling, nature study, boating, fishing, sailboarding, sun bathing, swimming, and picnicking. At various locations there are benches and walls to sit on for quiet contemplation and enjoyment.

Greenwich Point (147 acres)

Greenwich Point is a multiple-use recreational park on a peninsula into Long Island Sound. It is open from 6:00 am to sunset year round.

To reach it go south on Sound Beach Avenue through the Old Greenwich Business center, turning right onto Shore Road. Parking is limited after 1700 cars. No dogs are allowed in summer, and must be leashed during winter.

Greenwich Point is a popular spot for swimming, fishing, boating, water sports, walking, and nature study. There are picnic tables and grills available as well as restrooms.

The mystique of Greenwich Point, this peninsula where land, water, sun, and fog interact, has been through the ages a joy to people who seek to replenish their spirits. Enter the gates and the excitement of open water on each side of the causeway begins. Early in the morning, Herring and Ringbill Gulls are calling, clamming and swooping over the *Rosa Ragusa*, pink-flowered tamarisks, and Russian olives. In summer, you can see the Least Terns, federally endangered but nesting nearby, abruptly plunging into the salt water to capture minnows. The regal Snowy and Great Egrets feed amidst the cord grass. In winter, look toward Long Island Sound to see the bobbing flocks of water fowl which are resting and feeding here: Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Mergansers, Bufflehead, Oldsquaw, and Black Ducks.

Stretching before you is low-lying land with fine sandy beaches enclosed by sand dunes. The dunes are protected from erosion by plantings of salt loving grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, Beach Plums, red Cedars, Japanese Black and Pitch Pines. Healthy Salt marshes wave, at high tide, with cord grass beckoning to little children to study the tiny fish and crabs that are nourished and sheltered here.

The hilly areas were formed by glacial till which settled on Gneissic Granite. They are covered with field grasses or second growth hardwoods, predominantly red and black Oak, sycamore, black and white Birch, sassafras, white Pine. Such diversity of habitat offers critical resting and feeding places to both migrating and resident birds. Roving throughout are small mammals such as gray squirrels, raccoons, skunk and rabbit.

A network of trails leads along the changing coastline and weaves among the woods, marshes, groves, and gardens. A trail guide, available at the Sea Side Center of the Bruce Museum, locates special features: Memorial Boulder, where field grasses attract insects, butterflies, and meadowlarks; the restored salt marshes where you can double check for the nesting Clapper Rails; the Clambake Area, a favorite party place; majestic Anniversary Holly Grove where luxuriant red berries sustain winter Robins and migrating Cedar Waxwings; the Totem Pole recalling our early history; the Lake Eagle, sculpted with a 14 foot wing spread.

Some point visitors prefer the land on the westerly tip which renders more intimacy with salt water and sea breezes so valued by sailors and surfers of the Old Greenwich Yacht Club. Refuge from wind and a worry is waiting in the Secret Garden, maintained by the Knollwood Garden Club, where the colorful plantings are as cheering as the spellbinding view.

A footpath leading from the garden wall through the woods onto the lawn. Here the old Tod Mansion's stone foundation has been transformed into the Hanging Garden, dedicated to Helen Binney Kitchel. From this vantage point, one can experience a panoramic overview of Long Island Sound.

Although formerly the high tide turned the peninsula into two islands, the parade of visitors to the Point is centuries old. A 1955 archeological dig dated an aboriginal camp to about 1100 A.D. the Sinoway Indians called it "Monakewago" (shining sands), but in 1640 when they sold it for 25 coats to Robert and Elizabeth Feakes and Captain Daniel Patrick, it became known as Elizabeth's Neck.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, oystermen, fishermen, hunters, and farmers profited from its water fowl, shore birds, and bountiful waters. In 1884, however, a Scottish merchant banker, J. Kennedy Tod, began its transformation into a grand estate, "Innes Arden" (little inlet), complete with a forty room mansion, a road system, and a 9-hole golf course. Now it was Tod's Point. When he died and the Town bought the Point for \$ 550,000 in 1945, the mansion was remodeled into apartments for returning veterans.

The Greenwich Point Committee formed in 1956 as an advisory group to the Selectman, works to protect and enhance the natural character and beauty of the Point, and to ensure there will be “a park and not all parking”. Their superb master plan goes far to balance the needs of its fragile ecosystem with the vast number of Greenwich people who love to visit it.

Please enjoy this tidal park thoughtfully. If you leave Greenwich Point in better condition than when you arrived, we all continue to take home happy memories.

Mary Hope Lewis

Greenwich Point

Location: Old Greenwich, west end of Shore Road

Size: 147 acres

Natural Features:

Greenwich Point is very diverse and ecologically productive area. Coastal habitats include sandy beaches, sand dunes, rocky shore, salt marsh, and mud flats. Inland habitats include a pond, a lagoon and surrounding inland wetland; groves of Oak, Holly and Honey Locust, Elm(?) and Sassafras areas, patches of Cherry, Apple and various berry producing shrubs. Some Areas are left natural while others are cleared of understory trees and shrubs to make possible picnic and play areas. The Honey Locust grove has been set-aside as a wildlife sanctuary.

Such a rich variety of habitats shelter many types of wildlife. Mammals - skunks, rabbits, chipmunks, and muskrats- seek protection in thickets and marshes. Also found here are water birds such as Terns, Canadian Geese, Gulls, Green Heron, Blue Heron, Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets. Various Songbirds abound. The Point is a winter haven for some birds and summer home for others. Altogether more than 200 species have been identified here.

The salt-water environment provides a habitat for typical shoreline and intertidal organisms including mussels, killfish, silversides, fiddler crabs and barnacles. Clams and Oysters are common in offshore beds. Greenwich Point is subject to occasional storms and hurricanes that, in the past, have severely flooded and eroded portions of the park.

History:

Greenwich Point is the site of the founding of the Town of Greenwich. In 1640 Daniel Patrick, Robert Feake and his wife Elizabeth, who were fleeing from the oppression of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, landed in Greenwich. They purchased Greenwich Point and what is now Old Greenwich for 25 coats and some trinkets from the Sinoway Indians. Indians had used the island as early as 1000 AD for hunting and fishing camps in the summer months. It is doubtful that they conceived of the transaction with the Europeans as a sale of the land. Southern New England Indians possessed rights to use the things of the land for hunting, fishing, or gathering; ownership of the land itself was an unheard of concept.

Elizabeth Feake had a special fondness for the Point. Monekewago or “Shining sands” became her possession. During this period, it was referred to as Elizabeth’s Neck and was two Islands during high tide.

Perhaps because Greenwich Point was not accessible at high tide, it was not highly desirable and only used for pasturing in the early days of Europeans settlement. Later, squatters and fishermen took possession of the land. In 1889, J. Kennedy Tod, a wealthy bank and railroad magnate, bought the island from this collection of people.

The Tods made changes on their island estate. They built a causeway that linked the island to the shore, laid out a golf course, enclosed the lagoon to form a lake for boating, and built a 37 - room mansion, cottages for guests and various outbuildings. They renamed the Point “Innes Arden”.

The Tods had no heirs, and after Mr. Tod’s death in 1925, the Point was bequeathed to The Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. The Hospital used “Innes Arden” as a vacation treat for nurses until World War II.

The Town of Greenwich was offered the Point during the early years of the war, but it was not until 1946- after one year of experimental usage of the beach- that the Town purchased the Point for \$ 550,000 for the enjoyment of all townspeople.

Park Development:

A citizen's group, the Greenwich Point Committee, was appointed by the First Selectman to oversee and guide the development of the park along with the Department of Parks & Recreation. In turning a private estate into a public park, the Town hoped to strike a balance between maintaining natural areas and clearing areas for intensive, or active recreation. Trails were established through natural park areas and picnic and clambake areas were developed. Special gardens were planted and the jetty by the Old Greenwich Yacht Club was improved. Seaside plantings and a fence were added to protect the sensitive sand dunes and prevent storm damage to the beach. The bird sanctuary near the lake, which had been set aside by Mr. Tod, was fenced to continue the protection of nesting areas.

The Tod buildings were also utilized by the Town. Due to the post-war housing shortage, the mansion was modified to create thirteen apartments for veterans and their families. Rental of the apartments continued until 1961 when the house was in need of such extensive repairs that updating it was uneconomic, and it was demolished. All that remains of the grand house today is a portion of the foundation and the "tower".

Other buildings- the locker room, the carriage house with its chimes, the stables, corn crib (day camp building) and the old wagon house (Yacht Club Building), - were retained and are still utilized. Amenities were added: snack bars, restrooms and water fountains.

The use of the Point - which began in 1945 as an experiment by far-sighted Town officials - has grown with each passing year.

Townspeople agree with William Fink who described Greenwich Point as "the most valuable town treasure that was ever acquired".

Recreational Uses:

From 6:00 am when the gates open until sunset, the Point can be used for jogging, walking, cycling, nature study, boating, fishing, sail boarding, sunbathing, swimming and picnicking. At various locations, there are benches and walls to sit on for quiet contemplation and enjoyment of vistas.

Life Guards are on duty from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm during the summer season which runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Town residents can arrange boat moorings through Department of Parks & Recreation Marine Division at Town Hall. Currently there is a 2 - 10 yr. Waiting list.

The Old Greenwich Boat and Yacht Club, the Department of Parks & Recreation and the Greenwich Cove Racing Association hold coed sailing classes at the Point in the summer. The GCRA and the Yacht Club also sponsor races for adults.

Greenwich Point is the home of day camp, Kamp Kairphree, for 5 - 12 year olds, sponsored by the Department of Parks & Recreation. The camp is organized into four two-week sessions.

Various activities sponsored by the Department of Parks & Recreation and other civic groups are held annually at the Point. A partial listing includes Kite Flying Contest(April), Sand Castle Contest (July/August), Tods Jog(October), Hot Line Road Race (April), Bike -a-thon (October) and "Point Perspective", a five mile foot race (February).

The southwest peninsula has been designated as a site for surfishing.

The Bruce Museum supervises the Seaside Center during the summer months. The Center arranges exhibits and special programs and activities which relate to coastal natural resources.

A self-guiding tour booklet including information about the Point, **A guide to Greenwich Point,** published by the Greenwich Audobon Society is available at the Seaside Center and the Conservation Commission Office in Town Hall.

Facilities:

Restrooms

Snack bar

Old Greenwich Boat and Yacht Club

Lockers

Clambake Area with Shelter (reservation required, 203-622-7824)

Picnic Tables

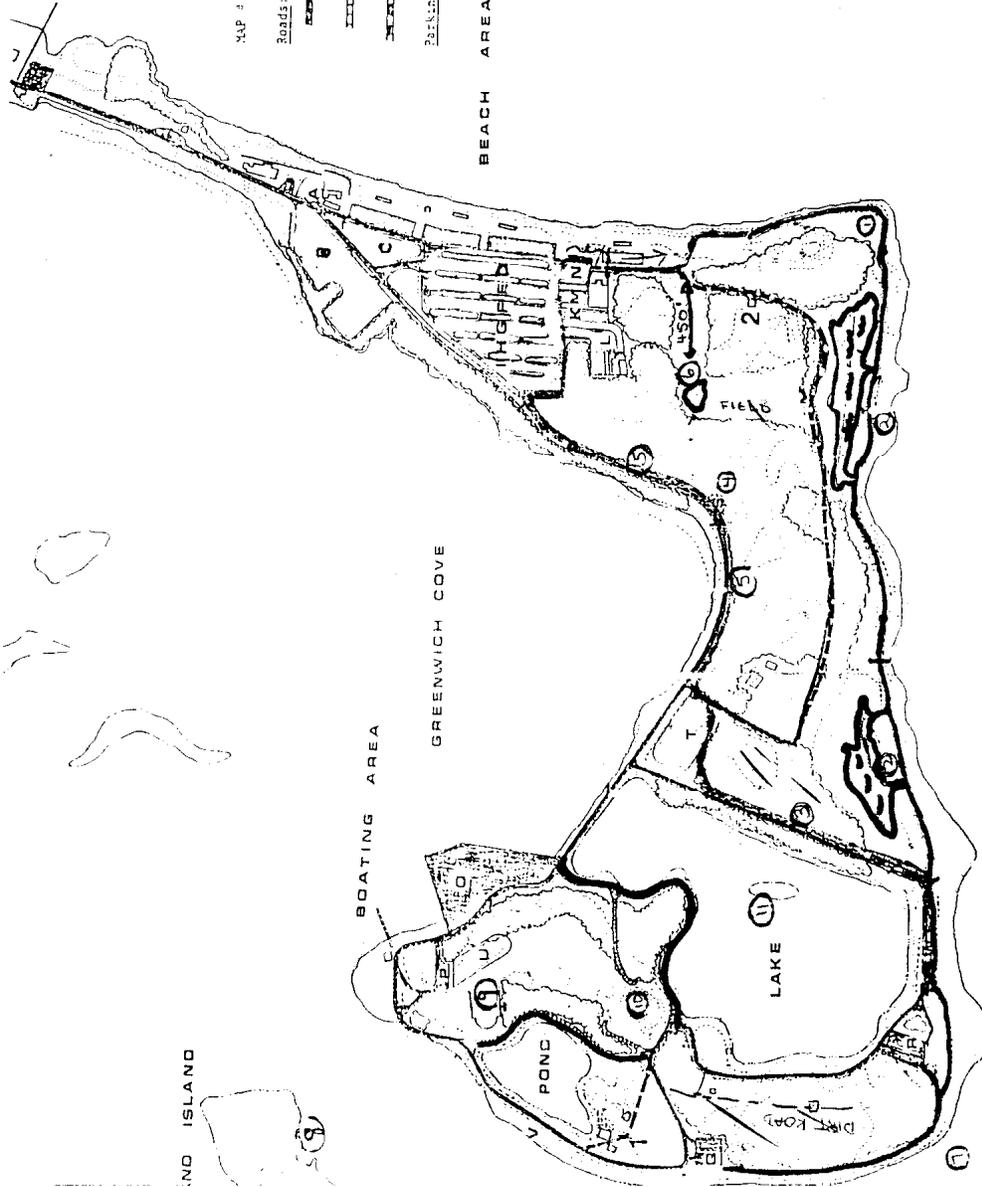
Telephone

GREENWICH ISLAND

AND ISLAND

BOATING AREA

GREENWICH COVE



MAP # 1: TRAFFIC AND SERVICE AREAS

Roads:

▬▬▬ Roads and parking areas open to visitor's vehicles.

▬▬▬ Roads reserved exclusively for pedestrians.

▬▬▬ Service roads combined with foot closed to visitor's vehicles.

Parking Areas:

BACKSIDE PARKING

- W Beach Parking
- X Boating Area Parking
- Y Cow Barn Parking
- Z West Parking Lot
- AA South Parking Lot

Field Parking

- AB Holly Grove Lot
- AC Clamhake Area
- AD Cow Barn Field

Roadside Parking

- AE Pond's Edge
- AF South side of lake, overlook. the Sound
- AG East side of lake, overlooking the west salt marsh.

Service Areas

- 1 Existing shed and barn area.
- 2 Existing dumpster area (to be consolidated and screened).

**Greenwich Point
Greenwich, Connecticut**

