

## 12. Oak Avenue Brick Pit

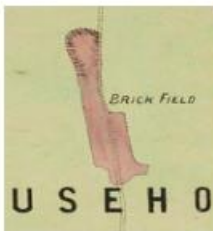
Until 1880 this leafy dell was a scene of industrial activity, as the 'brickearths' of Mousehold were quarried here for brick making, and the sands and gravels for aggregate.

The site was known as 'Deep Hole', and the pit was even deeper than we see today. The sides of the valley made it easy for the diggers to get at the valuable silts and clay beds.

Digging ceased when the Heath became a 'People's Park', and the valley became Oak Avenue, one of three avenues of trees planted on the Heath.



1. Oak Avenue is one of the most visible examples of a dry valley on the Heath; it is one of the tributaries of Long Valley.



2. A map showing the shape of Oak Avenue Brick Pit, 1881.



3. A fresh cutting has been made at the northern end of the pit, showing fine, brown clayey sand draped over a dipping surface of sandy gravel. It is likely that this clayey sand is what was extracted for brick making. The underlying gravels probably date from the Anglian glaciation, over 430,000 years ago.



4. A sample of the 'brickearth' from Oak Avenue. It is likely to have originated as a layer of 'coverloam' (a wind-blown deposit) or colluvium (a hillwash deposit) which slumped into the valley during the last glacial period, over 14,000 years ago.

### Photo credits

1, 3 and 4. © Tim Holt-Wilson, 2. Courtesy Norfolk Record Office N/EN 26/1.