

Figure 6.34 Gas lamp,
Park Estate, Nottingham



standards which give a soft glow at night but lovely silhouette by day (Figure 6.33). Gas lighting in the streets of the Park Estate, Nottingham, recreates a dim Victorian gloom on long foggy winter evenings. It is fortunate to find here, in this conservation area, the original Victorian cast iron gas light standard still functioning as designed and still contributing to the overall unity in the Park (Figure 6.35). In other areas of historic interest, the Victorian lamppost has been adapted to or copied for use with electric street lighting with some success.

A city can often be judged by its benches, their location, number and comfort. The bench or group of benches is often the location of activity for different age groups. The bench is a civilizing influence in a city and most appropriately sited in its streets,

squares and parks, particularly when the definition of civilization is taken to mean the culture of living in cities. The bench is a place for the old to sit in the sun to pass the time of day, for students to study, for the office worker to have lunch, for the young to embrace and for shoppers to rest their weary feet.

There are two basic types of park bench. One is the flat cubic mass without back, a sculptural shape, which is useful for some architectural compositions. However, it is cold, uncomfortable and should be used, if at all, in locations where people require only a moment's respite. The more comfortable bench follows the pattern of the Victorian park bench which supports the body properly, distributing weight evenly over the surface of the seat. The back of the sitter is supported well and the feet are able to rest on the ground comfortably. The bench when anthropometrically designed and properly proportioned for the human body encourages the sitter to stay, rest awhile, and admire the street or square. The location of the bench is important. It should be placed at a natural resting point on a path or in a square, but located, with its back protected, in a sheltered position from which it is possible to see interesting views and observe the activities of others while still feeling secure. It is also worth noting that steps are often used as *ad hoc* seating.

This chapter would not be complete without a note on the kiosk, a word derived from *köşk*, which in Turkish means pavilion. The Parisian kiosk used for advertisements and newstands is a most handsome method of dealing with important and useful notices which, if plastered over walls, takes on the appearance of graffiti. There are many types and uses of kiosks, the telephone box, for example, has already been mentioned. Probably the most interesting and potentially the most decorative kiosk is the bandstand. They are to be found in many European cities, often taking the form of a light circular or octagonal structure with raised platform and pyramid roof. They are usually placed in a

space surrounded by benches. The form, location and surrounding space if correctly judged can create a vital, lively and decorative place in the city scene.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the design and placement of three dimensional objects within the streets and squares of the city. The objective of the foregoing discussion was to try to understand the role of such three dimensional objects for decorating the city. Many of these objects, some being great architectural monuments, the jewels in the city's crown,

are major landmarks by which we organize and structure the city. Others are more local landmarks, special features of a locality by which we navigate and which are used to direct strangers. The furniture and fittings placed in street or square may be the great civic monument, for example, the equestrian statue, triumphal arch, monumental column or fountain. Alternatively the street furniture, like the street light or park bench, may be more utilitarian but no less important for the decoration of the city. Nevertheless, every increment of development from park bench to great fountain should be judged as an attempt to decorate the city and to establish and reinforce the identity of an area or neighbourhood as a place which is special and different.