

- 1 Waltham Abbey.** Well worth a detour, the first church was built in the 11th century, during the reign of King Canute. Harold, the last Saxon king, who famously died at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, is buried here. The Abbot of the Church was the first to improve the River Lea for navigation in the 14th century. The Abbey is on the Meridian Line.
- 2 Cornmill Meadows,** reached via a subway to the north of the Abbey, was once part of the Greater London Council's Arboretum, which supplied trees for some of London's finest parks. Across Cornmill Stream is the Lee Valley Regional Park Dragonfly Sanctuary, home to more than 23 different types of dragonfly. (Parts of this area are not accessible to wheelchairs.)
- 3 Royal Gunpowder Mills** produced gunpowder for more than four centuries, fuelling battles such as the Napoleonic Wars. The gunpowder was shipped down the River Lea, quickly reaching the Thames at Woolwich. The walls of the buildings are particularly thick to contain blasts when explosives were tested. The Royal Gunpowder Mills closed to production and research in 1991, and are now open to the public on weekends and Bank Holidays from April to October.
- 4 Gunpowder Park** Formerly a Royal Ordnance munitions testing facility, the land has been transformed into a new country park, including areas for entertainment, the arts and outdoor recreation.
- 5 King George V Reservoir** is one of 13 reservoirs that stretch for 7 miles along the Lee Navigation and supply over 10% of London's water. The reservoirs are an important habitat for wildlife, especially over-wintering birds.
- 6 Brimsdown** is where footballer David Beckham started his career playing for the Brimsdown Rovers' youth team.
- 7 Myddelton House** is now the headquarters of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority but was originally the home of the collector and plantsman E. A. Bowles (1865 -1954). The gardens are well worth a visit and contain the national collection of Bearded Iris.
- 8 Ponders End** has importance in the history of the 19th-century Industrial Revolution, as the invention of the light bulb in 1886 by Sir Joseph Swan and the thermos flask in 1892 by Sir James Dewar took place here. A plaque can be seen on the building opposite the Granville Tavern.
- 9 The Navigation Inn** at Ponders End is a former Metropolitan Board pumping station. In the early 19th century, the Thames was heavily polluted with sewage so outbreaks of cholera were common. In 1858, the newly formed Metropolitan Board of Works began building 85 miles of sewers and pumping stations to remedy the situation.
- 10 G.R. Wright & Sons** flour millers at the end of Wharf Road was established in 1867. In the 19th century, annual production was around 1,000 tons; today, that amount can be produced in less than a week.
- 11 Pickett's Lock** is the site of the £16 million Lee Valley Athletic Centre, the newest training facility in the South of England. Look out for some Olympic and Paralympic hopefuls!
- 12 Tottenham Marshes** Straddling the Lea at Stonebridge Lock is a large area of open grass and scrub. In 1987, a plant new to science, called Wurzell's Wormwood, a strongly scented herb flowering from late October, sprang up here.
- 13 Markfield Beam Engine** was built in Yorkshire and transported to the Lea Valley by barge to pump four million gallons of water a day into the London sewage system. The engine, operational until 1964, can be viewed on the second Sunday of the month, March to November, and there is a small Museum.
- 14 Springfield Park,** created in 1905 from the grounds of three 19th-century houses, provides a pastoral contrast to the working landscape of the Lea Valley. The climb to the top of the hill, created by deposits from the Ice Age, gives one of the best views of London - and there is a café! Springfield Park is designated a Local Nature Reserve for its springs and acid grassland which are unique in Hackney.
- 15 Walthamstow Marshes Nature Reserve,** a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), home to Water Voles, the Dotted Fanfoot moth and Webb's Wainscot moth. Only six miles from Piccadilly Circus it is a rare remnant of ancient marshland that has never been ploughed or planted. A plaque on the railway arch commemorates inventor A.V. Roe who was the first British person to fly over British soil in a British-designed aeroplane (a triplane) in 1909.
- 16 Middlesex Filter Beds,** built in 1852 to supply clean drinking water to London, has become a walled nature reserve, home to more than 200 different plants, 60 species of bird and 14 different types of butterfly. Artwork includes 'Nature's Throne' by local sculptor Paula Haughney and 'Magic Fish' by potter Kate Malone - two must see items.
- 17 Hackney Marsh,** a former haunt of highwaymen, was filled with rubble from bomb damage after the Second World War and is now one of London's largest playing fields. It will be temporarily used for parking for the Olympics.
- 18 Olympic Park.** By 2012 this area will be radically changed for staging the Games, leaving a world-class park to be enjoyed as a legacy, and accelerating the regeneration of the Lower Lea.
- 19 The Hertford Union Canal** is probably the shortest canal in Britain at 1.3 miles. It connects the Regent's Canal with the Lee Navigation and Bow Creek, avoiding the long haul around the Isle of Dogs. Sir George Duckett financed its construction and to repay his initial investment he levied a toll of one shilling per ton of goods carried.
- 20 Old Ford Lock** is just above the old Roman London to Colchester road. It is said Matilda, daughter of Henry I, nearly drowned here in the 12th century, resulting in Bow Bridge being built.

**21 The Greenway** is part of the Bazalgette sewer system that gave us The Embankment between Westminster and Blackfriars bridges. Disguised as a landscaped path and cycleway, it affords magnificent views across London and direct access across East London from Becton to Victoria Park in Bow.

**22 The Bryant and May match factory**, built in 1861, was made famous by the London Match Girls' strike of 1888, prompted by appalling working conditions with highly toxic phosphors; the girls were said to glow in the dark. Lasting three weeks, the strike was successful in prompting legislation prohibiting the use of yellow phosphorus in matches. The current building dates from 1911 and continued to produce matches until 1979. It has since been converted to residential use.

**23 St. Mary Bow church**, marooned on a traffic island, was once the centre of a bustling medieval village. By 2012, it will once again resume prominence on the 'Olympic Boulevard', as a gateway to the Games. Deputy Labour leader and local MP George Lansbury's funeral was held here, attended by Winston Churchill, amongst others.

**24 Prime Minister William Gladstone's statue** stands outside the church, paid for by the Bryant and May match company. The tradition of applying red paint to his outstretched hand dates back to the time of the London Match Girls' strike.

**25 Three Mills** is a remarkable collection of historic industrial buildings with the Grade 1 18th-century House Mill as its centrepiece. This is the largest tidal mill left standing in Britain. Much of the internal machinery, including waterwheels and millstones, can be seen during tours held every Sunday, May to September, and there is a café here.

**26 The Limehouse Cut**, dug in 1770 to avoid the river's natural oxbow bends and the tidal Bow Creek, now enters the Thames through the dock of Limehouse Basin. Limehouse Basin was built in 1812 for the Regent's Canal, which carried coals from Newcastle, and was only linked to the Limehouse Cut in 1864.

**27 Bromley-by-Bow gasworks** was built by the Imperial Gas Company on land that had been occupied by William Congreve's rocket factory. Memorials to gasworkers who perished in both World Wars can be seen in Twelvetrees Crescent. The gasworks have a further decade of service before inevitable redevelopment takes place.

**28 Bow Creek Ecology Park**, part of the Lee Valley Regional Park, was once an ironworks and a coal wharf but has since been filled with flowers and ponds attracting a variety of wildlife.

**29 East India Dock Basin** was built in 1806 for large ships needing deep moorings. Known as 'East Indiamen' these ships were famed for sailing to the tropics and returning with precious cargoes of tea, spices and silk. The dock is now managed as a nature reserve by the Lee Valley Regional Park. It is a haven for Kingfishers and nesting terns, and supports a salt marsh flora. The Salome Gates, designed by Sir Anthony Caro, give access on to Orchard Place.

**30 Trinity Buoy Wharf**. Trinity Water is where Bow Creek meets the Thames. In 1514 Henry VIII granted a charter to Trinity House, the body responsible for navigational aids around the coast. Here Michael Faraday developed electric lighting for lighthouses. Today this former buoy factory is a centre for the arts.