



TOWER HAMLETS

eastendlife

THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR TOWER HAMLETS PRODUCED BY YOUR COUNCIL

In this month's walk, **Graham Barker** takes us on a stroll beside canals, docks and the mighty Thames. And with autumn in the air, it's a good chance to enjoy the trees changing colour with the season.

Autumn amble through locks, docks and maritime memories

AUTUMN – the “season of mists and mellow fruitfulness” – is an excellent time for walking.

The leaves turn to vibrant reds and oranges, the air is fresh. On this walk, you'll enjoy the trees in four parks, and there are glimpses into London's maritime past too.

Starting at Shadwell DLR station, follow the signs to St George's Town Hall – in other words, exit the station left onto Watney Street, then at the T-junction turn right and continue along Cable Street. Just past the Town Hall (1), with decorative lampposts and the Cable Street mural, turn left into St George's Gardens.

Enjoy a moment of calm inside Hawksmoor's St George-in-the-East Church (2), with distinctive pepper-pot turrets, visible from afar. The outer walls and tower survived the 1941 Blitz, and a smaller church was built inside the shell.

Exit the gardens along the broad gravel track beside the derelict Nature Study Museum. Cross the busy Highway at the pedestrian crossing, and head straight on down Wapping Lane. The brick walls of Tobacco Dock (3) loom high on your right. Built in 1811, it was renovated as a shopping mall in the late 1980s. But a recession hit and it closed shortly afterwards.

At the wall's end, beside a metal gate, go down steps to join the Wapping Wood Canal. Follow the signs left to Shadwell Basin – past waterfalls, through a park and under a red bridge – to emerge at the basin. Walk anti-clockwise round it – on a track

between small trees and shrubs – heading for the red bascule bridge (4), with Canary Wharf beyond.

At the end, cross Glamis Road and walk over the bridge, past the sailing club. By the Thames Path sign turn sharp right, along an alleyway beside football pitches. Now follow the river – with fine views across to Rotherhithe – through King Edward VII Memorial Park (5), past Free Trade Wharf's gardens (6) and across a wooden bridge, until forced left onto Narrow Street.

Nip first right at the Thames Path sign by Sun Wharf, and after another brief riverside stretch you'll re-join the road up steps beside The Narrow gastropub. Cross the road bridge and turn immediately left, alongside Limehouse Basin. Veer right with the towpath, towards Hawksmoor's St Anne's Church.

After the second metal footbridge, turn right into Ropemaker's Fields (7). After curving upwards, follow the main avenue of trees, signed to Riverside Pubs, through the bandstand and onto Narrow Street, opposite Dunbar Wharf. Cross over and follow Narrow Street left, as it becomes Limehouse Causeway. The old warehouse names – Sailmaker's House, Limehouse Wharf – echo the area's sea-faring heritage.

As you reach Westferry DLR station, cross first to the news kiosk, then again to the right. Follow the pavement right, for a short stretch on Westferry Road, before turning first left into Garford Street.

Go through the railway arch at the end, then immediately right through the next,

towards Cineworld and the Dockmaster's House (8) – built as an excise office in 1807 and now a smart Indian restaurant.

At the junction, follow the road right. As it curves, cross to the huge plaque (9) celebrating the 1802 dock opening – “an undertaking which, under the favour of God, shall contribute stability, increase and ornament to British Commerce.”

Turn left along the cobbles, past the Ledger Building, to the Museum in Docklands (10). You might visit one of the cafés or bars, before finishing at West India Quay DLR station along the dockside.

Thanks to Mike Askew, Russell Knoll and Rachel Maile for trialling this walk and additional photos.

Along the way...

Cable Street Mural

This impressive mural on the side of St George's Town Hall depicts the Battle of Cable Street in 1936. Jews, dockers, communists and ex-servicemen successfully grouped together to prevent the British Union of Fascists from marching into the East End.

Limehouse Basin

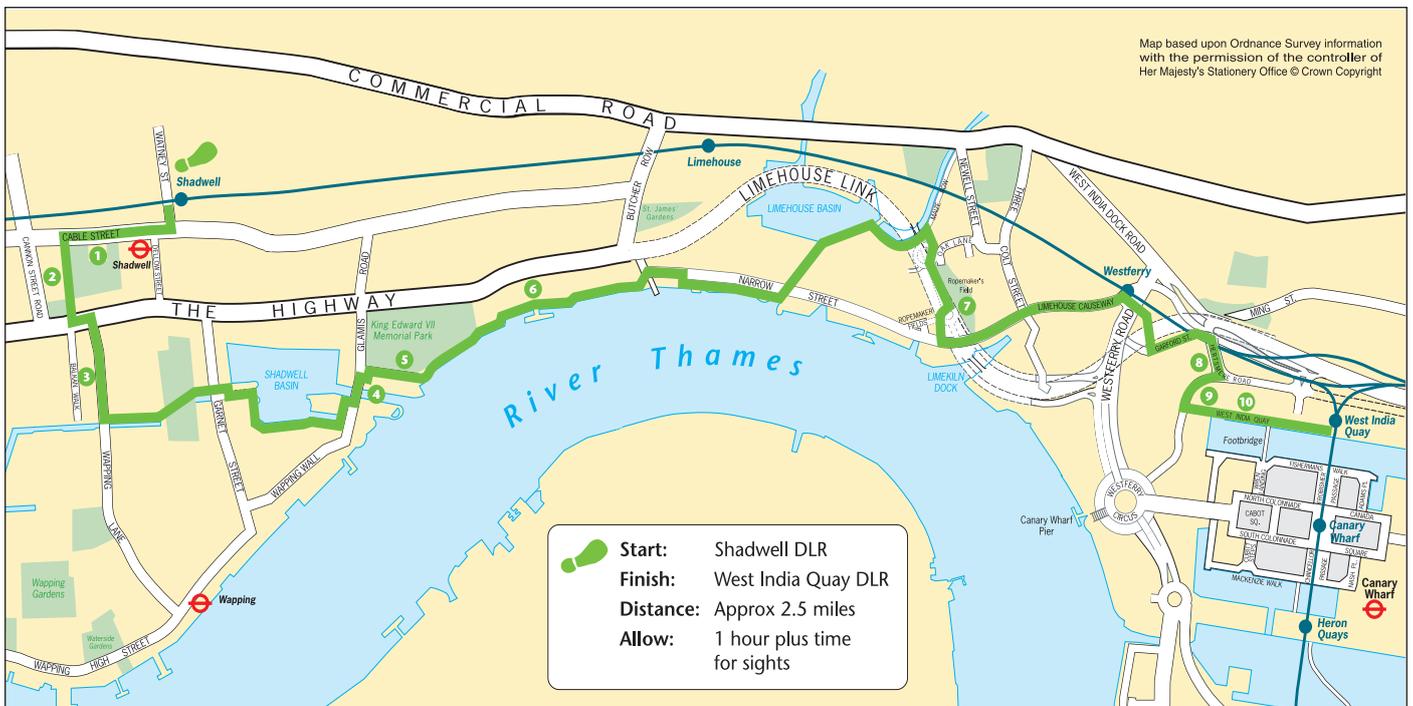
Opened in 1820, Limehouse Basin was used to offload coal and other cargoes from sea-faring ships onto barges, for onward transport along the Regent's Canal. Now it's home to pleasure cruisers, barges and smart flats.

tower hamlets

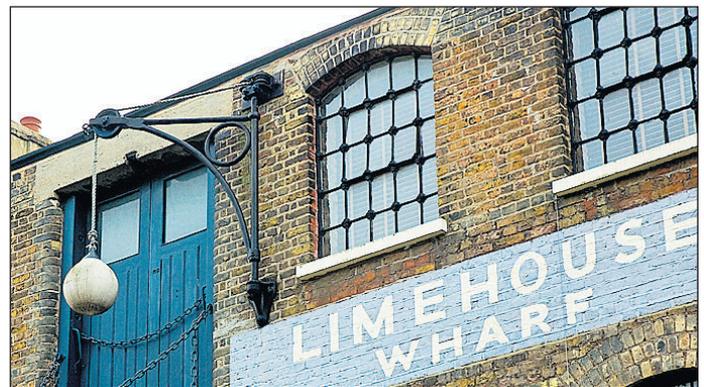
becoming a
healthy borough



To find out more about joining Healthy Walks in Tower Hamlets, contact Rachel Maile on 7364 6940 or email **rachel.maile@towerhamlets.gov.uk**



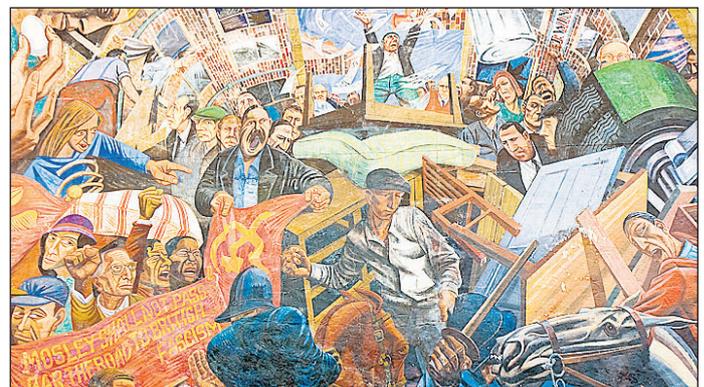
St George's Town Hall in Cable Street



Limehouse Wharf offers a glimpse into our seafaring past



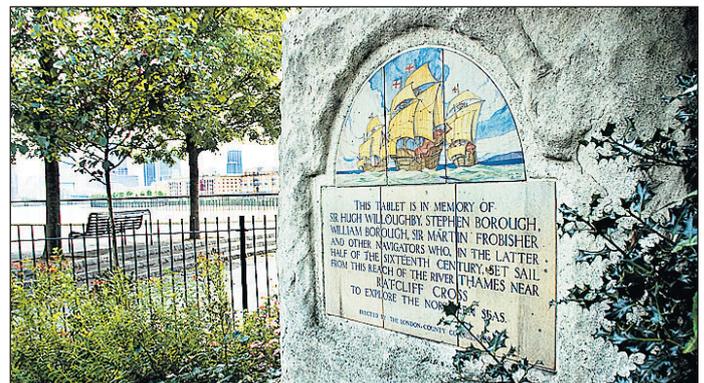
A gravestone in the churchyard of St George's gardens



They Shall Not Pass – the mural of the Battle of Cable Street



The Thames riverfront wharves at Wapping



A plaque in King Edward Memorial Park