

2

VICTORIA PARK TREE WALK

West Walk

Opening times

The park is open every day except Christmas Day 7.00 am to dusk. Please be aware that closing times fluctuate with the seasons. The specific closing time for the day of your visit is listed on the park notice boards located at each entrance.

Toilets are opened daily, from 10.00 am until one hour before the park is closed.

Getting to the park

Bus: 277 Grove Road, D6 Grove Road,
8 Old Ford Road

Tube: Mile End, Bow Road, Bethnal Green

DLR: Bow Church

Rail: Hackney Wick (BR North London Line)



Victoria Park was London's first public 'park for the people'. Designed in 1841 by James Pennethorne, it covers 88 hectares and contains over 4,500 trees.

Trees are the largest living things on the planet and Victoria Park has a variety of interesting specimens, many of which are as old as the park itself. Whatever the season, as you stroll around take time to enjoy their splendour, whether it's the regimental design of the formal tree-lined avenues, the exotic trees from around the world or, indeed the evidence of the destruction caused by the great storm of 1987 that reminds us of the awesome power of nature.

The West Walk is one of three Victoria Park tree walks devised by Tower Hamlets Council. We hope you enjoy your visit, if you have any comments or questions about trees please contact the Arboricultural department on 020 7364 7104. For general parks enquiries please contact 020 7364 5000 or email: parks@towerhamlets.gov.uk

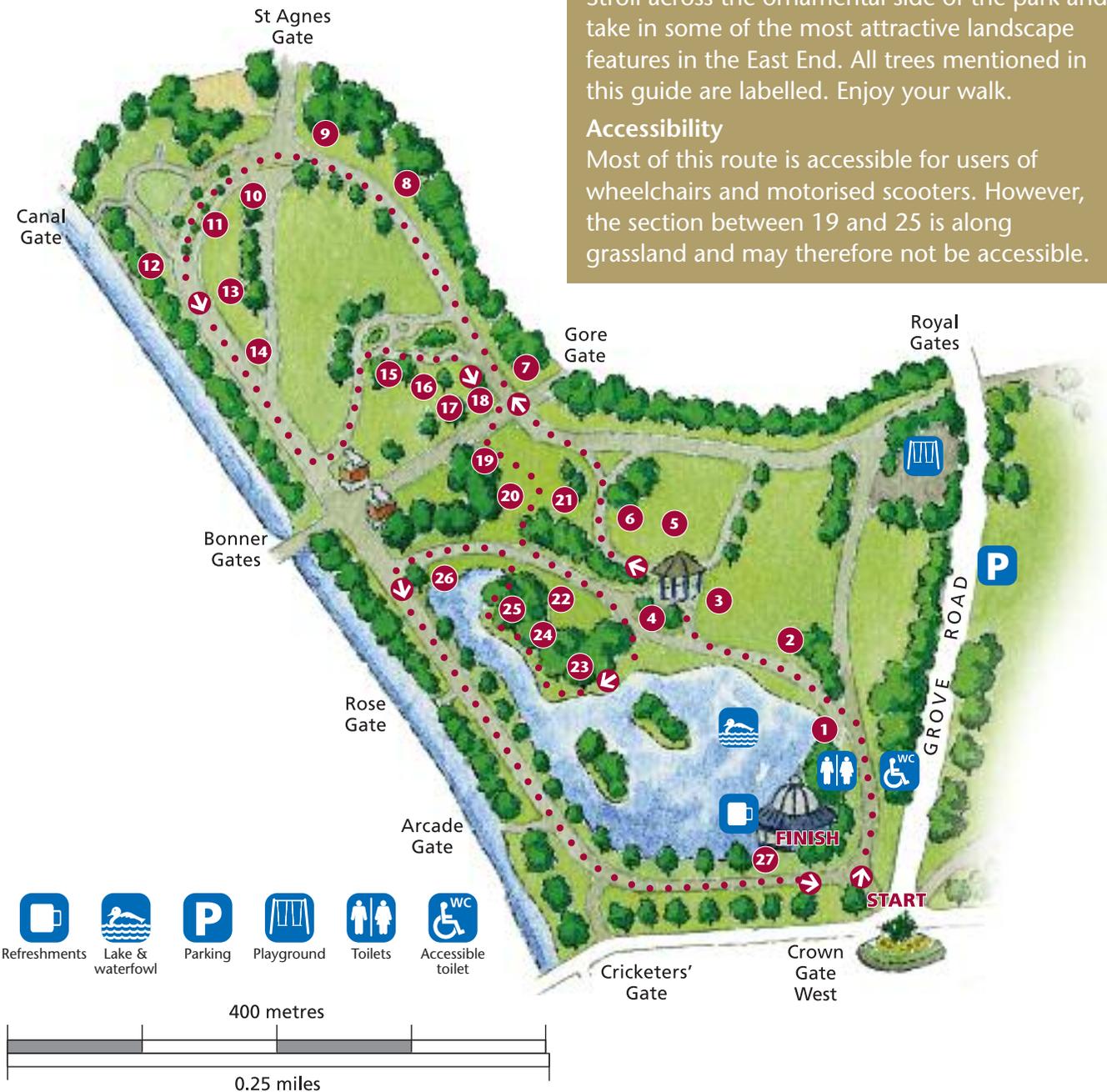
West Walk

Approximate time required: 45–60 minutes
Distance: approximately 1.5 miles

Stroll across the ornamental side of the park and take in some of the most attractive landscape features in the East End. All trees mentioned in this guide are labelled. Enjoy your walk.

Accessibility

Most of this route is accessible for users of wheelchairs and motorised scooters. However, the section between 19 and 25 is along grassland and may therefore not be accessible.



- 1 Weeping Ash** (*Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula')
Origin: Cultivated
Height at maturity: 15m (50ft)

In contrast to the normal upright growing habit of the Ash, this cultivated variety has pendulous weeping foliage and an attractive dome-shaped appearance.

- 2 Yew** (*Taxus baccata*)
Origin: Europe, Iran, Algeria
Height at maturity: 25m (80ft)

This attractive evergreen is an extremely long-lived tree and is often found in churchyards. Its leaves and seeds are poisonous and the bark is dark brown with reddish peeling thin strips.

- 3 Evergreen/Holm Oak** (*Quercus ilex*)
Origin: Mediterranean region
Height at maturity: 28m (90ft)

Common in parks, gardens and roadsides in Britain, this tree has been cultivated in England since the 16th century. It has a dense dark appearance due to its abundance of foliage and the hard, durable timber is used for joinery. The acorns fall in October in large numbers and are still used as a food source in many countries. Leaves are glossy green with a lighter underside.

- 4 Variegated Holly** (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Argenteo Marginata')
Origin: Cultivated
Height at maturity: 25m (80ft)

A variegated form of the common Holly, this tree has an attractive contrast in colour between the berries and leaves. Holly is often used in Christmas festivities as a decoration. This species is pollution-resistant and suitable for coastal locations.

5

Narrowleaf Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)*Origin:* Southern Europe, North West Africa*Height at maturity:* 25m (80ft)

This is the largest Ash specimen in the park and is a focal point in its own right. The Narrowleaf Ash can be identified by its pendulous crown and dark purple buds.

6

Turner's Oak (*Quercus x turneri*)*Origin:* Cultivated*Height at maturity:* 16m (55ft)

This is a hybrid of *Quercus ilex* and *Quercus robur* and is propagated entirely by grafting. It tends to only bear acorns once it reaches approximately 60 years old.

7

Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)*Origin:* Europe, Turkey*Height at maturity:* 25m (80ft)

Another Ash but this time look for the graft mark on the trunk. Grafting is a common form of propagation.

8

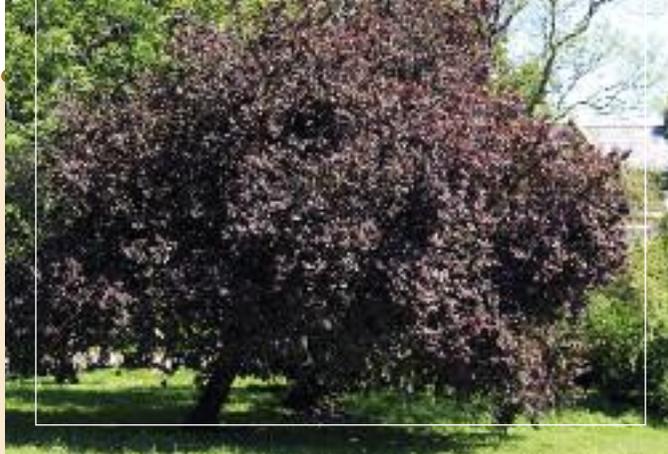
Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*)*Origin:* Southern Europe, Asia*Height at maturity:* 40m (130ft)

The Turkey Oak was introduced in 1735 and this fine example has a proud upright growing habit. Notice how it differs from the common Oak with its thick, deeply ridged bark and woolly acorn cups.

9

Purple Leaved Plum (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Pissardii')*Origin:* Balkans, central Asia*Height at maturity:* 9m (30ft)

Originally discovered in 1880 this small tree is often used as both a street tree and as an ornamental in parks and gardens.



10

Silver Pendent Lime (*Tilia tomentosa* 'Petiolaris')*Origin:* Cultivated*Height at maturity:* 21m (70ft)

Look for the distinctive graft mark and note the different bark patterns above and below this point. The leaves tend to have a hairy surface and this deters greenfly.

11

Silver Birch 'Lady of the Woods' (*Betula pendula*)*Origin:* Europe, Siberia, Turkey, Caucasus, Iran*Height at maturity:* 12–18m (40–60ft)

A beautiful tree with attractive white/silver bark. It also has graceful pendulous foliage. This is a fast growing tree and its timber is used for making plywood.

12

Turkish Hazel (*Corylus colurna*)*Origin:* South east Europe, west Asia*Height at maturity:* 21–25m (70–80ft)

Introduced in 1582 this is a sturdy tree with somewhat twisting branches. It is shapely and vigorous, growing well in difficult places.

13

Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*)*Origin:* Southern Europe, Asia*Height at maturity:* 40m (130ft)

See No. 8 for more details.

14

Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*)*Origin:* Central and North America*Height at maturity:* 42m (140ft)

This is a large tree with stout branched thorns that was introduced in 1700 from eastern United States. Planted in Europe as an ornamental, it is well known for its golden autumn colour and brittle timber.

15

Lime (*Tilia species*) (grafted)*Origin:* C, W, & S Europe, Turkey, Caucasus*Height at maturity:* 21m (70ft)

A superb example of a grafted Lime tree.

16

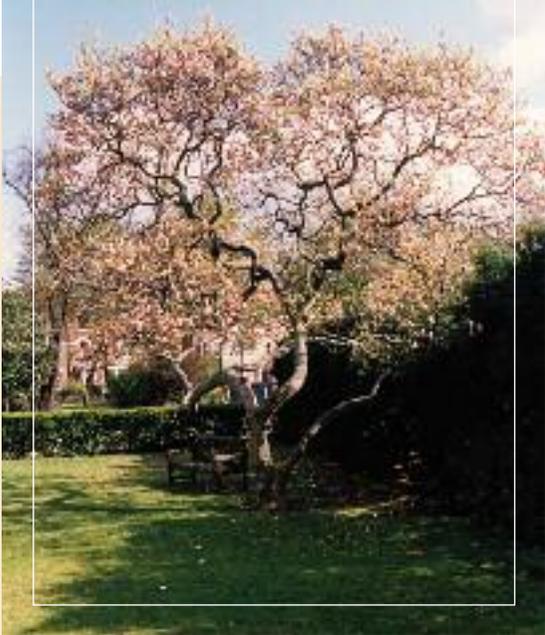
False Acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)*Origin:* Eastern & mid-western North America*Height at maturity:* 25m (80ft)

Introduced to France in 1601 from eastern United States this tree is sometimes called the Black Locust. It is often used as an ornamental and, being-pollution tolerant, is commonly found in city streets and parks. The bark is particularly distinctive, brown and deeply furrowed with a network of ridges. Twigs often have short, stout spines. Acacia is known for its shallow root system.

17

Mulberry (*Morus nigra*)*Origin:* West Asia*Height at maturity:* 9m (30ft)

First grown in England in the 16th century this tree has been cultivated in Europe for so long that its origins are obscure. Fruits are edible and have an unusual flavour if eaten raw. More commonly, they are used to produce jam or wine but take care when handling as the staining can be hard to remove. The shape is full of character, normally crooked and occasionally low and domed. The bark is ridged and burred and the leaves are heart shaped.



18 **Magnolia** (*Magnolia x soulangiana*)

Origin: Cultivated in France
Height at maturity: 5–25m (17–80ft)

A hybrid originally raised in France early in the 19th century. This old specimen flowers twice a year and has a beautiful spreading habit. Magnolias normally have strongly aromatic bark and were named in honour of Pierre Magnol, a professor of botany and medicine at Montpellier in the late 17th century.

19 **Cider Gum** (*Eucalyptus gunnii*)

Origin: Australia
Height at maturity: 6m (20ft)

This unusual tree has been widely cultivated in parks and gardens throughout Europe. Leaves are a grey and green colour and are aromatically scented. Bark is very distinctive, grey in colour and peels in large plates to expose clear white new bark beneath. Note the differing leaf size and shape between young and mature foliage. Eucalyptus is very fast growing and uses lots of water.

20 **Kentucky Coffee Tree** (*Gymnocladus dioica*)

Origin: Midwest North America
Height at maturity: 22–30m (75–100ft)

This fairly rare tree was introduced to England in the 18th century. The early settlers of Kentucky are said to have roasted the seeds to make a coffee-like drink.

21 **Pine** (*Pinus wallichiana*)

Origin: Himalaya
Height at maturity: 45m (150ft)

A juvenile example of this attractive tree which originated in the Himalayan mountains. It is sometimes grown for timber and widely planted as an ornamental in parks and churchyards.

22 **Weeping Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula')

Origin: Western, central & southern Europe
Height at maturity: 15–25m (50–80ft)

Usually smaller than the Common Beech, this tree boasts masses of drooping pendulous branches and fine surface roots common to the species.

23 **Ash** (*Fraxinus excelsior*)

Origin: Europe, Turkey
Height at maturity: 25m (80ft)

This is an important timber tree, its light coloured wood is strong and hard wearing and is commonly used to make furniture and wooden implements. Note the graft mark.

24 **Grey Poplar** (*Populus canescens*)

Origin: Central & southern Europe, west Asia
Height at maturity: 30m (100ft)

Native to UK and Europe this tree is widely considered to be a natural hybrid between *Populus alba* and *Populus tremula*.

25 **Sweet Chestnut** (*Castanea sativa*)

Origin: South Europe, Turkey, north Africa
Height at maturity: 30m (100ft)

This tree, sometimes referred to as the Spanish Chestnut, is the largest of only a few specimens within the park. The Sweet Chestnut is noted for its edible nuts which are roasted and eaten in winter. It has long catkin-like yellow flowers that let off a pungent smell when in full bloom in July.

26 **Turner's Oak** (*Quercus x turneri*)

Origin: Cultivated in Essex
Height at maturity: 16m (55ft)

A semi-evergreen deciduous tree which is a hybrid between *Quercus ilex* and *Quercus robur*. It was raised in the 18th century by Spencer Turner and is common in gardens and collections in Europe. It is almost evergreen, shedding leaves just weeks before new leaves are formed.

27 **London Plane** (*Platanus x hispanica*)

Origin: Cultivated
Height at maturity: 35m (115ft)

A large Maple-like tree with attractive flaking bark. It grows on most types of soil and is a very common sight as a street tree due to its pollution-tolerant qualities. First recorded in 1663, it has long been considered a hybrid between the American Plane (*P. occidentalis*) and Oriental Plane (*P. orientalis*).