

For families, friends, single explorers and cyclists

the journey begins...

...Lea Bridge

The Lea Bridge area brings a breath of fresh countryside air right into the heart of the city. Bordered by Hackney and Walthamstow Marshes to the south and north, its fascinating mosaic of nature reserves, bridle paths, towpaths and cycle tracks are a safe and accessible introduction to all the park has to offer.

A convenient and peaceful place to begin is the **Middlesex Filter Bed Nature Reserve**. The nearest rail

station is Clapton with regular trains from Liverpool Street and Seven Sisters. There are also a number of bus routes that run along the length of Lea Bridge Road. Enter the park where the busy Lea Bridge Road meets the gentle Lee Navigation. On a bright summer or leafy autumnal day, the reserve is the perfect place for chatting to old friends or to set out on a magical family exploration.

What else about Lee Valley...

The Lee Valley Regional Park is a truly unique and magical stretch of urban parkland. Its 26 glorious miles follow the route of the Lee Navigation from Ware in Hertfordshire right down to the River Thames in East London. The numerous nature reserves, leisure facilities and pretty lake and riverside trails offer a truly surprising and at times breathtaking array of sights and activities to see and do.

the journey continues...

Walk past **The Princess of Wales** pub on the banks of Lee Navigation and let the rush of water and drifts of birdsong lead you minutes south to a small bridge crossing. Once over, you'll discover a path of imposing stone slabs, leading into a secret garden. A mysterious stone circle takes pride of place with the mysterious name of 'Nature's Throne'. Despite appearances this is not an ancient monolith, however, rather a work of art

built in 1990 out of the derelict foundations of the old Victorian pumping house that once dominated the site. Once you've tired yourself out playing druids and wizards, follow the left bank of the old River Lea and walk out onto the **Middlesex Filter Beds**. During the early 1950s, this was a major site for the purification of London water.



Time for nature

Today the area has been totally transformed into a wildlife-rich mass of marsh reed beds, home to over 200 plant species, Herons and Reed Warblers, dragon flies and Great Spotted Woodpeckers. The overgrown sea of reeds, birdsong and dim hum of traffic give the place a distinctive urban beauty. But the buzz of electric pylons looming overhead is a gentle reminder you're still very much in the city (and to keep your children close to hand).

now the journey gets interesting...

Stroll past the quirky Ceramic Magic Fish, yet another sculpture sitting playfully in the dried out beds and onto Hackney Marshes. This amazing open expanse of land

offers the rare opportunity in London to look out into the distance - and holds the record for the largest number of football pitches in one place in Europe.

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Walk north over the cutely named Friends Bridge and the old River Lea and you're set on the way towards the Waterworks Nature Reserve. The path leads you around its western edge and you need to walk out onto the busy Lea Bridge Road to find the entrance.

The nature reserve is signposted right for three hundred yards - the walk seems longer, but it's the right direction. After the calm of the filter beds, the hit of city traffic can seem disorientating however, so do be careful if you're with children as the road is always very busy.



Fancy a game

the journey continues...

Take the next turning on your right, and you'll see the sign for the Nature Reserve.

Alternatively, after crossing Friends Bridge you can follow the path round the golf course, which will take you to the Nature Reserve. A new dynamic centre hosts both the Reserve itself and a small 3-par golf range. Perfect if you

want to combine a bit of nature with practicing your driving arm. There's a useful bike park, but be forewarned - you can't take your bike into the reserve itself. And there's a nice café too, which serves up very reasonably priced drinks and meals. A good place if you need to make a pit stop.



Coppermill Field

The nature reserve is noisy with birdsong and there are frequent sights of magpies swooping down onto the newly laid gravel paths. A series of radial beds, each managed to show a different stage of natural succession, starting with open water through to wet woodland (some flooded, others grassed) enclose an impressive bird hide - one of the largest in London.

the journey continues...

You can get right up close to over 25 species of breeding birds. The Reserve also plays impressive host to one quarter of all the species of dragonfly found in the UK. Look out for Grass Snakes too. With 15 interactive exhibits providing free information on the area's history and wildlife, it's a great environment for inquisitive people of all ages.

If this is a good point to call it a day, walk back onto the Lea Bridge Road and directly left and down back to where you began. If you're out on a Sunday morning you can always stop off at the local pubs for an authentic East End roast dinner.

contact information

London Transport

T: +44 (0)20 7222 1234

E: travinfo@tfl.gov.uk

W: www.tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner

Lee Valley Regional Park

T: +44 (0)1992 702200

E: info@leevalleypark.org.uk

W: www.leevalleypark.org.uk

Information desk opening times: seasonal variations, closed Christmas Day.

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Myddelton House

Bulls Cross

Enfield

EN2 9HG

T: +44(0)1992 717711

British Waterways towpaths

There is no general public right of way for cyclists on the towpath, but a permit to cycle can be obtained free of charge. Information can be obtained from British Waterways Customer Services.

T: +44 (0)1923 201120

British Waterways London

W: www.britishwaterways.org.uk

The Princess of Wales

46 Lea Bridge Road, E5 9RB

T: +44 (0)20 8533 3463

Hackney Marshes

Homerton Road / Lea Bridge Road/ Hackney Eastway, E9 5PF

Clapton Rail

48, 55 and 56 buses all run along the Lea Bridge Road

Car. Hackney Marshes is situated south of the A104, Lea Bridge Road

Middlesex Filter Bed Nature Reserve

Lea Bridge Road, Hackney Marshes

E9 5PF

Clapton Rail

48, 55 and 56 buses all run along the Lea Bridge Road

Car. Middlesex Filter Bed Nature Reserve is situated south of the A104, Lea Bridge Road

"Once you have discovered this 'sanctuary' you will return, again and again. It has a rich history and an abundance of wildlife which combine to make it one of the most intriguing and relaxing places to visit. Bring a picnic, take photographs, try your hand at painting - this beautiful place has so many unusual vistas." - Lee Valley Park website

Waterworks Nature Reserve

The WaterWorks

Nature Reserve and Golf Centre

Lammas Road off Lea Bridge Road

Leyton

London

E10 7NU

T: +44 (0)20 8988 7566

E: thewaterworks@leevalleypark.org.uk

W: www.leevalleypark.org.uk

