

Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks

Welcome to Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks. These walks are designed to provide a gentle stroll of about 5 to 10 kilometres or 3 to 6 miles, approximately 5,000 to 10,000 steps, taking in a few buildings and sites of interest, and where possible using green spaces and footpaths.

East Finchley to Finchley Church End Walk

This walk is from East Finchley to Church End in Finchley via East End Road, ending at St. Mary's at Finchley Church approximately 0.3 miles from Finchley Central Tube Station on the Northern Line. This walk has nine stops. It is approximately 5.0 kilometres or 3.1 miles.

You can reach East Finchley Tube Station, which is our starting point, by tube via the High Barnet branch of the Northern Line or by a number of bus routes. The 263 bus arrives at East Finchley, Bus Stops F (heading towards High Barnet) or Bus Stop G (heading towards Highbury). Other bus routes include the 143, 102, 234 and 603 at Bus Stops E or G. For full public transport details please visit the Transport for London [website](#). Before you set off on the walk, there are a number of cafés and newsagents on the High Road near the front exit of East Finchley Tube Station where you can find refreshments.



Audiotour part 1 – East Finchley Tube Station

Built in 1867, this station was originally on the Edgware, Highgate and London Railway that was used by steam trains from Finsbury Park to Edgware via stations at East Finchley and Church End (today, Finchley Central). However, it became part of the electrified London Underground system early in the 1940s. East Finchley station is a classic example of Art Deco architecture and now a Grade 2 listed building. The present building was constructed in 1939 to a design by Charles Holden, one of the most celebrated transport architects of this period. The statue of an archer that sits above the main entrance to one side of the bridge over the High Road is by Eric Aumonier and has become the area's emblem. His arrow is being aimed along what was at one-time Europe's longest tunnel– 17 miles to Morden.

You will need to pass through the station to the back entrance. On exit, turn right on The Causeway towards Edmunds Walk. A little further up this path, turn left onto Edmunds Walk and you will come out onto a Close with elegant suburban houses laid out as part of the Hampstead Garden Suburb. Continue straight along Edmunds Walk until you reach Deansway. Cross safely over Deansway and continue along it to your right, past Brim Hill. Turn left into an alley way, which brings you out onto Abbots Gardens., which is point 2 on your map. Continue straight ahead along Abbots Gardens until you reach a sign and footpath to Cromwell Close. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Cromwell Close on Abbots Gardens.



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Audiotour part 2 - Abbots Gardens and Cromwell Hall

Abbots Gardens was laid out on what had previously been Cromwell Hall. Nothing is left of the hall itself except for a key stone situated in the front garden of number 50 Abbots Gardens opposite the footpath to Cromwell Close.

In the 1680s Thomas Pengelly, a Shoreditch merchant, had a house called Belle Vue on a plot of what is now Cromwell Close. Its name derived from Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell's son, Richard, who was Pengelly's friend and is said to have lived in the house until about 1696. Richard Cromwell became Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland for a few months after Oliver's death but lacked his father's exceptional authority and competence. He was the last commoner to rule England before the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

Still facing house number 50, from the footpath to Cromwell Close - to the left is a plaque in front of number 113 Abbots Gardens that commemorates the death in November 1944 of six residents and destruction of eight houses by a V2 supersonic ballistic missile.

Now continue on the footpath, along Cromwell Close and onto East End Road, turn left and use the pedestrian crossing to cross over the road to The Five Bells public house, which is point 3 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach The Five Bells.



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Audiotour part 3 - The Five Bells

There has been a public house called the Five Bells on East End Road since at least 1751. The original house was at the top of the driveway and was owned by the Finchley Charities, a local charitable organisation dating back to 1488 that still provides housing, allotments and grants in the Barnet area. One of the features of the 18th century inn was a cock pit for fighting cocks. In 1812 Finchley Parish leased the house as a poor house and the inn and license moved to its current location. The present house was built after a fire around 1870, at which time the area was still relatively rural and undeveloped.

During the first half of the 19th century the pub became renowned for bare-knuckle boxing. Norfolk-born Jem Mace - a middleweight fighter known as "The Gypsy" - trained at the pub in the 1860s and due to his speed and technique, Mace defeated even heavyweight opponents. Mace later made a successful transition to using gloves according to Queensberry rules governing the modern sport. A man of integrity, he is recognised as one of the fathers of modern boxing.

East Finchley was formerly known as East End and developed in the 14th century at a time when the principal settlement of 'Finchley' would have been in Church End, where this walk ends. East End was a small settlement with farms and pig markets and, later, hay production. Connecting Church End with the Great North Road, East End Road is named after the eastern exit of a road through Hornsey Park, part of the Bishop of London's wooded estate used for deer hunting.

Continue along East End Road, turning right onto Trinity Avenue. You will shortly see a cast iron gate into Holy Trinity Church graveyard on your left which is point 4 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Holy Trinity Church graveyard.



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Audiotour part 4 - Holy Trinity Church and Shree Aden

Depala Mitramandal

Holy Trinity church consecrated in 1846 was designed by the architect Anthony Salvin (who lived from 1799 to 1881). He lived in Elmhurst House on East End Road opposite the Five Bells. Fist fighting contests at the Five Bells had a reputation for attracting the “wrong sort” from London and the building of this church was an attempt to redeem the neighbourhood, with funds contributed by Lord Mansfield (of Kenwood House) as well as members of the Salvin family and their friends. The church looks very similar to the chapel in Peckforton Castle, Cheshire built for John Tollemache, 1st Baron Tollemache, which Salvin was working on at the same time. Baron Tollemache was greatly disturbed by the revolutions taking place across continental Europe at the time and feared that he and his family might be at risk of attack by mobs from Manchester or Liverpool. The castle was therefore built for actual defence in the style of a 13th century stronghold worthy of King Edward I. Holy Trinity, as a copy of the chapel Salvin was working on, displays some of that defensive mass. Today the church has some fine stained-glass windows. Please visit the church [website](#) for opening times. Noted as a Gothic Revivalist, Salvin’s architectural legacy ranges from East Finchley’s former Holy Trinity School (lately used by the Bobath Centre, a specialist treatment centre for children and adults with cerebral palsy and other neurological conditions) to restoration work at Windsor Castle, the Tower of London and Alnwick Castle.

Continue through the graveyard and come out on the opposite side on to Church Lane near a bridge over the Northern line. Next to the church is Shree Aden Depala Mitramandal, a Hindu community centre serving the local community. There are shops and cafes a little farther along Church Lane should you want refreshments.

Before crossing over the road into Manor Park Road, you might like to know that the renowned singer, songwriter, musical producer and social campaigner George Michael (who lived from 1963 to 2016) was born at 73 Church Lane.



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Cross safely over the road and walk to the far end of Manor Park Road. Turn left onto Hamilton Road, with Bishop Douglass School grounds on your right. Before you reach the end of Hamilton Road, cut through onto Cecilia Close and Helen Close on your right and continue to East End Road, coming out opposite East Finchley Cemetery which is point 5 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach East Finchley Cemetery.

Audiotour part 5 - East Finchley Cemetery

The cemetery was originally opened as St. Marylebone Cemetery in 1855 and is now managed by the City of Westminster. The chapel in front of you was designed by Barnett and Birch Ltd, who also did the landscaping of the cemetery, and is now a Romanian Orthodox Church dedicated to St Ilie. Note the fine Lebanon Cedar trees planted back in 1856. The cemetery is the smaller of the three municipal cemeteries in East Finchley, measuring only 47 acres and has space for 22,000 burials.

Famous burials include: Thomas Huxley (who died in 1895) the scientist and defender of Darwin's theory of evolution, and the music hall singer Harry Champion, originally named William Crump (who died in 1942). Champion was famous for such popular songs as *'Boil'd Beef and Carrots'*, *'I'm 'enery the Eighth I Am'*, and *'The End of Me Old Cigar'*. The whimsical illustrator of elaborately mad contraptions, William Heath Robinson (who died in 1944) is also buried here, as are Sir George Hayter, a favourite painter of Queen Victoria (who died in 1871), Lord Northcliffe (Alfred Harmsworth, died in 1922), the press baron and founder of the *Daily Mail*, the classical conductor Leopold Stokowski (who died in 1977), PC Keith Blakelock (who died in 1985) and industrialist Henry 'Inky' Stevens (who died in 1918), whom we shall encounter again later on this tour.

Once you have explored the Chapel and grounds, cross safely back over East End Road and, walking away from the cemetery, continue to your left along the brick wall. Just by the Bus Stop (J) you will pass a small green door with a barred peep hole and a Victorian post-box set into the wall. The houses behind the wall, previously East End House, are point 6 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach the gated entrance to these houses on your right.



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Audiotour part 6 - East End House

Recently in use as a Carmelite friary, the house was originally East End House, known from the 16th century. During the anti-Catholic 'Gordon Riots' of 1780, the leading Roman Catholic in England, Bishop Richard Challoner was sheltered in the house, then the home of William Mawhood, a leading Catholic merchant. The House was rebuilt in the form we see today by Samuel Cullum in the 1820s. From 1864 to 1995 it was the Carmelite convent of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. At first it was used as a school, but at the request of Cardinal Manning, the order moved its penitentiary for offenders to East Finchley and built a large complex of buildings to that end at the beginning of the 1870s. As such, it was part of London's penal system. The idea was to rehabilitate female ex-prisoners by providing them with laundry and needle work. The penitentiary closed in 1948 and part of the large site developed for Bishop Douglass School. In 1972 a disastrous fire burned most of the buildings to the ground. Now there remain only the house, a handful of the smaller buildings and the strange door you passed.

Continue along East End Road, passing on your left the eight indoor and outdoor courts and social facilities of Chandos Tennis Club (formed in 1922), St. Marylebone Crematorium and Christ's College. Founded in 1857 as a church school and later renamed, Christ's College merged and moved to this site from Finchley Church End in 1991. More details about this school later on our walk.

When you reach the North Circular Road, on a clear day you may see the distinctive sweeping arch over the national football stadium in Wembley in the distance on your left. Continue along East End Road, passing on your right two venues connected with another sport - Middlesex Indoor Cricket School; note the county's heraldic symbol of three 'seaxes' (swords) - and Finchley Cricket Club. On your left behind the high brick wall you will see a manor house known as the Sternberg Centre and the flat roof of New North London Synagogue, which is point 7 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach the Sternberg Centre.



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Audiotour part 7 - The Sternberg Centre

Keep on the cricket club side of the road to the corner of Manor View. From this side of the road, you will view Bibbsworth Manor House rising up opposite behind its imposing brick perimeter wall. When the manor was established and when the first manor house built are not known but a moated manor house existed by 1253. Named after a prominent 15th century resident and originally at the centre of a large estate, Bibbsworth was in truth Finchley's manor house. The remains of the original moat are to be found in the grounds of the present centre. The building we see today dates from 1723 when Sir John Allen's family held the manor. After the Allen family ceased to occupy the house, it was leased as a school from 1819 to 1857. Later in the century it was leased by William Pearce Jones, the owner of Jones Brothers, a then thriving and much-loved suburban department store on the Holloway Road that finally closed in 1990. The house was used for public worship by the local Catholic community in the 1920s before Derwent House in Gravel Hill, Finchley Church End was converted into a chapel dedicated to St. Philip the Apostle; you may still see St. Theresa's, a Catholic primary school, adjacent to this site. The Sisters of Marie Auxiliatrice opened a small boarding school at Manor House in 1921. In 1984 the Manor House Centre for Judaism was opened by local MP and Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. The centre was later renamed the Sternberg Centre for Judaism in honour of the generosity of the Hungarian-British philanthropist, interfaith campaigner and businessman, Sir Sigmund Sternberg (who lived from 1921 to 2016). The campus is said to be the largest Jewish educational, religious and cultural complex in Europe and includes a synagogue, school, training college, offices and other community facilities.

Now, turn right onto Manor View until you see a path to your left called The Avenue. The Avenue was built in the 18th century as a carriage way for the Allen family to get to St Mary's Church at Finchley Church End. Continue along the Avenue with the Wilf Slack Sports Ground on your left, past Sylvan Avenue and the Avenue Tennis Club on your right until you reach the entrance to Stephens House & Gardens. Wilf Slack (who lived from 1954 to 89) was a Middlesex and England cricketer of West Indian heritage, who died suddenly aged only 34.



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As you enter Stephens House & Gardens follow the path straight ahead towards East End Road passing the children's playground and a castle-like building called the "Bothy" to your right (now home to the [Terapia Centre](#), a training organisation specialising in child and adolescent psychotherapy and counselling). Before reaching the gate onto the main road, follow the path round to the right and continue down through the gardens.

At the bottom of the slope, you will find an unusual statue celebrating the comedian 'Spike' Milligan (who lived from 1919 to 2002), "Conversation with Spike" by John Somerville (2014). This popular artwork draws on local resident Spike's unconventional humour that brought him fame as an author, actor and member of the ground-breaking 1950's comic radio troupe 'The Goons'. As a campaigning local resident, he served as President and Patron of The Finchley Society, who now hold many of their meetings in Stephens House.

At this point, there are also accessible toilets, play spaces and a café should you need a refreshment break. In the visitor centre you will also find the Stephens Collection, a boutique museum telling the story of this world-famous company. Ahead is Stephens (formerly Avenue) House, which is point 8 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Stephens House.



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Audiotour part 8 - Stephens House & Gardens

Also known today as Stephens House, the first Avenue House was built by Reverend Edward Cooper, lord of Finchley Manor, in 1859. The house was restyled and the grounds were improved after 1874 when acquired by Henry Charles 'Inky' Stevens, son of the inventor of blue-black ink and Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Finchley. 'Inky' was a successful businessman and marketed the Stephens Company's range of writing products all around the world. It was he who employed the respected landscape designer Robert Marnock to lay out the gardens of his family home. It has been suggested that there was a greater variety of trees than any other park in London, with the obvious exception of Kew Gardens. The castle structures in and around the gardens, including the "Bothy" walled garden, provide a romantic and intimate feel to the site. There are information panels throughout the grounds that help interpret the many natural and architectural highlights, including examples of very early use of reinforced concrete.

During and after the First World War the house served as a military hospital. In 1918 the estate was left to the people of Finchley. The gardens became a public park, the house became in effect Finchley's Town Hall, but it was also Finchley's first library from 1933 to 1939, a centre for the A.R.P. (air-raid precautions) and fire defences during the Second World War, and after the destruction of Highgate Court in 1944, a Magistrates Court until 1955.

Continue exploring the grounds, making your way along the path to the right with Stephens House on your left and proceed around the lawn and down to the lower entrance back onto The Avenue, turning left. Continue until you reach Regent's Park Road, facing the Two Brothers restaurant opposite. Turn right to walk up the hill to cross over on the pedestrian crossing by Finchley Library. Notice the round green roof on the corner above King Edward Hall, now Grade II listed. During the First World War, this brand-new banqueting hall was repurposed as a Voluntary Aid Detachment (V.A.D.) hospital. Follow the road around the corner, cross another pedestrian crossing over Hendon Lane and continue left until you reach Saint Mary's at Finchley Church on your right. This is point 9 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Saint Mary's.



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Audiotour part 9 – St Mary-at-Finchley and Finchley Church End

Legend has it that the church of Saint Mary's was founded by Erkenwald, Bishop of London around AD 675 for the workmen felling timber used to build Saint Paul's Cathedral. The earliest parts of the current church date to the 12th century, including the restored font, but much of the church is from the 15th century and the 1870s. The eastern end of the church was partially demolished in 1940 when it was hit by a bomb and much of what is seen today in the front is a restoration dating from the 1950s. Inside are a Willis organ and several fine memorials including members of the Allen family. Should you wish to visit, please visit the church [website](#) for opening times.

The graveyard contains the bones of Major John Cartwright (who lived from 1740 to 1824). In his book *The Legislative Rights of the Commonalty Vindicated*, Cartwright argued for regular parliaments, a secret ballot and that all men should have the vote. He is considered one of the fathers of voting reform in Great Britain.

On the other side of the road is a large school building with blue-black diaper pattern brickwork and an unusual French Gothic 'pepper-pot' tower with a green copper roof that has become a local landmark. This remarkable building, designed by Edward Roberts, was constructed in 1860 to house Christ's College, an Anglican fee-paying school founded by the Rector of Finchley, Thomas Reader White. It became a county grammar school in 1903. As we have discovered earlier on this walk, it later merged with another school and moved to a larger campus on East End Road, with Pardes House, an Orthodox Jewish school, now occupying this site. Famous alumni who attended the old school include: Sir William Tritton (who lived from 1875 to 1946), an innovative agricultural engineer who became one of the principal inventors of the tank during the First World War, Charles John Monro (who lived from 1851 to 1893) who introduced rugby to New Zealand in 1870 and became a founder of that country's iconic All Blacks rugby team, W.D. Perrins of the eponymous Worcestershire Sauce family, and the former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Lord Jonathan Sacks.

This is the end of the audiotour.



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To make your way home, Finchley Central Tube Station on the Northern Line is a short walk back along Hendon Lane, passing Barnet County Court and the start of the shopping area on your left. Cross at the pedestrian crossing, continue along Regent's Park Road towards Ballards Lane (its continuation) over the bridge above the Tube lines with the traffic on your left, then turn right down Chaville Way at the Ballards Lane junction. There is also a wide choice of bus routes including the 125 (towards Winchmore Hill) or 326 (towards High Barnet) from Bus Stops G directly outside St Mary's Church or several options on Regent's Park Road and Ballard's Lane (buses: 13, 125, 143, 326, 460).

We hope you enjoyed this walk. Perhaps you might like to try one of the other walks in the Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks programme? Please visit our website www.barnet.gov.uk/heritagewalks to find out more.

If you would like to give feedback or comments or suggestions on the walk, please do get in touch. Details are on the website.

