

# CHRISTOPHER ROBBINS WOODLAND WALK

LEYTON  
JUBILEE  
PARK



**THIS BOOKLET  
CONTAINS ACTIVITIES  
TO CARRY OUT WHEN  
IN LEYTON JUBILEE  
PARK. TO DO THESE  
ACTIVITIES MAKE SURE  
YOU BRING PENS AND  
COLOURED PENCILS  
AND A4 SHEETS OF  
PAPER WITH YOU, OR  
TAKE THE BOOKLET  
HOME TO FINISH THEM  
THERE. ACTIVITIES  
CAN BE DOWNLOADED  
FROM THE WEBSITE**

Welcome to Christopher Robbins Woodland Walk. The trail will take you around the southern part of Leyton Jubilee Park, through the plateau into the woodland and along the Dagenham Brook. Follow the paths to explore and learn surprising facts about the physical, natural, and social history of this wonderful place. Within a short walk, you will discover grassland, woodland and aquatic habitats that are home to a variety of plants and animals.

Councillor Christopher Robbins served the Waltham Forest community from 2002 until his untimely passing in 2021. He worked tirelessly in his various roles as ward councillor, cabinet member, Leader of the Council from 2009 to 2017 and as Mayor from 2019 to 2021. He was recognised for his service to the community in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in 2017 with a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire). Christopher Robbins was a Councillor in Grove Green ward and loved Leyton Jubilee Park, the establishment of which he oversaw as part of the Waltham Forest 2012 Olympic Games legacy. Even before he was elected, Christopher Robbins volunteered for litter-picking with our maintenance crews on the land that became Leyton Jubilee Park.

The woodland walk has been created in his memory to honour his commitment and service to the local area and diverse communities, including his work with children and young people. It brings together a collection of his passions: the local area, nature conservation, improving the environment and education. Most importantly, Christopher Robbins was passionate about providing quality green spaces for everyone to access, enjoy and make memories with their loved ones.

The pillars are cast from low carbon cement and recycled aggregate such as glass, brick and limestone. The layers are inspired by the rubble from clearance following bomb damage in World War 2 that is buried underneath the site.

# THE WOODLAND WALK



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STAIRS STEP-FREE ACCESS



1

## BUZZING LEYTON: POLLINATORS AND INSECTS

Attracted by the many different varieties of plants and flowers, the park is full of insects, especially in the summer. Some of these are pollinators which transfer pollen from one plant to another, such as bumble bees, honey bees, solitary bees that nest in the ground, hoverflies, moths and butterflies. Other insects which play a part in the biodiversity of the park include beetles, ants and grasshoppers. Dragonflies can frequently be seen hunting across the grass of the Jubilee Wood during the summer; these breed in either the Dagenham Brook or nearby on the marshes.

How many can you count?







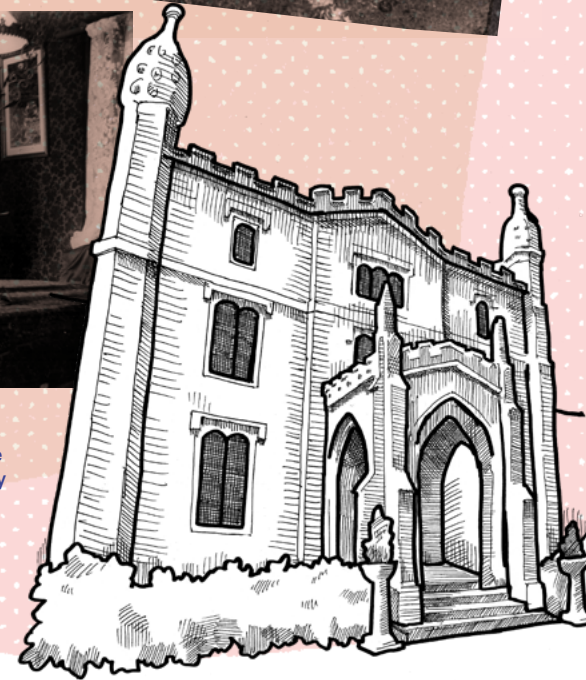
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## HOUSES AND LIVING PLACES

There were several fine mansions and large houses along Church Road, including Ive Farm, Etloe House and Leyton House. Amongst the occupants were Huguenot refugees, who had fled from persecution in France, and in another century a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church, which was just gaining acceptance in Victorian England. From one of these families came Henry Solly, founder of the working men's club movement. Leyton House was also known as Park House or St Agnes's Orphanage. It stood in Church Road until around 1910 to 1913, almost opposite Capworth Street. The last private occupants of Leyton House were the family of the poet, writer and artist William Morris. His mother Emma Morris is recorded as living at Leyton House from April 1856 until July 1871. The 'plateau' area is raised up higher than the rest of the park as it is made up of rubble from WW2 bomb-damaged buildings and industrial debris. The remains of Bronze Age settlements were found on the site of Oliver Close Estate.



Archive images, clockwise from top: Leyton House by A.G Stout, 1902; photos of Park Place, Church Road, 1900; all courtesy of Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest





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## DAGENHAM BROOK

The Dagenham Brook skirts around the edge of Jubilee Park. A tributary of the River Lea, it was named in the late 19th century after the 'Dagenham Commissioners of Sewers' who oversaw it. In and around the brook can be found ducks, moorhens and sometimes grebes, herons and kingfishers. In the spring you might see tadpoles and the occasional small fish. Pipistrelle bats, damsel flies, Jersey tiger moths and devil's coach horse beetles can sometimes be spotted, while wasp spiders with their zig-zag webs are a more recent arrival.



Brook drawing by Safa,  
Willow Brook School





## 4

## PLANTS AND LEAVES

How many different plants and leaves can you find in the park? Among the thousands of different types you may see comfrey, wood sorrell, plantain (*Plantago major*), ivy, Jack-by-the-hedge, nettles, dock, cranesbill and many more. Historically some of these were used for their herbal and medicinal properties. Leaves absorb light and air in a process called photosynthesis to make food for the plant. The wilder areas provide nesting and feeding sites for insects. Teasels, with their tall spiky seed heads, can be seen long after the plants have died back for winter. They are visited by bees when in flower, and birds when seeding. Buddleia, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed are the more invasive plants that can be found in some areas. Man-made dead hedges, created by local volunteers, can be seen along some of the pathways; these are made from branches tied together and are intended to provide habitats for birds and insects.



Leaf rubbings by Hannan and Aliyah,  
Willow Brook School



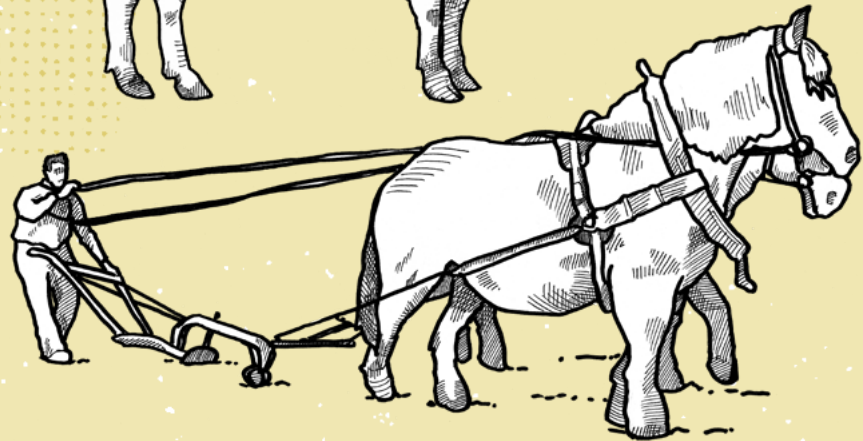
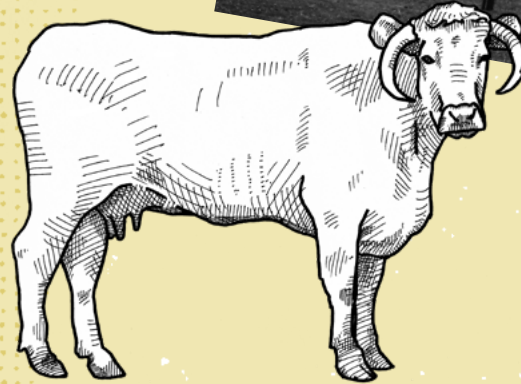


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## AGRICULTURE

Much of the land around the park was farmland, including Ive Farm which had a large farmhouse probably built in the 17th century and demolished in the 1940s. It was two storeys and included attics. On the other side of Lea Bridge Road were Low Hall Farm and Lea Bridge Farm. In the 1920s parts of what is now the park and the grounds of Lammas School, previously the grounds of Leyton House, were used for orchards and for farming. In 1924 an Abbevillian industry hand axe was found in an archaeological dig in what is now the park. A prehistoric stone tool, this dates from the Old Ice Age, many thousands of years ago.

Photo: Ive Farm, c.1910, courtesy of Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest





## 6

## INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORT

In the 20th century businesses came to Leyton making products related to the technologies of their time, such as insulated electric cables, typewriter ribbons, vacuum flasks and radio cabinets. Potter & Moore was a perfume and cosmetics factory at the end of Seymour Road which closed in the mid 1980s. The London Electric Wire Company, at 210 Church Road, was established in 1899, and grew to become Leyton's largest employer by the 1960s. Lea Bridge Gasworks was in the corner of the park accessed from Clementina Road. It was built in 1853 and supplied gas to parts of east London. The gasholders were demolished in 2019. The huge goods truck sorting centre, the Temple Mills Marshalling Yards, grew to have 47 sorting sidings and 300 workers. There is still a sign on Orient Way for Temple Mills, but this is now a storage facility for Eurostar.

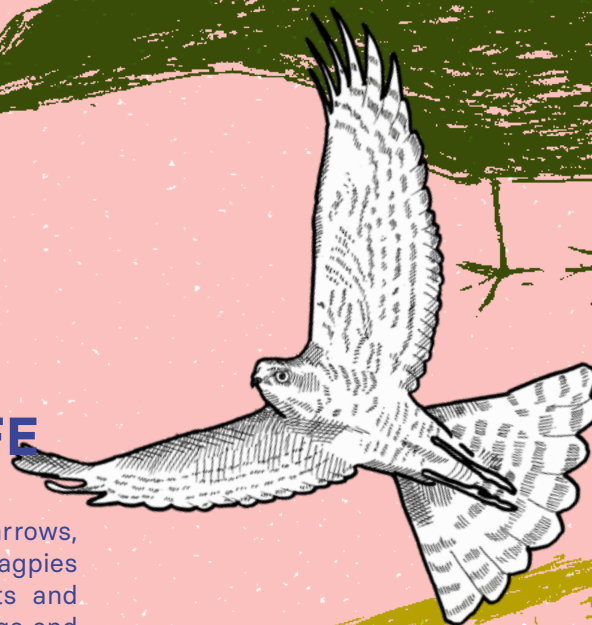


Archive images clockwise from top: London Electric Wire Co & Smiths, 1959, Potter & Moore pamphlet, Potter & Moore photos, 1959, courtesy of Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest



## 7 BIRDS AND WILDLIFE

There are many habitats for nesting birds: sparrows, pigeons, robins, starlings, blackbirds, crows, magpies and more. You may also see foxes, squirrels, bats and maybe rabbits. Historic remains of bears, bison, stags and mammoths have been found nearby. If you are lucky you might see a woodpecker or sparrowhawk in the park. Early in summer you might find hundreds of young frogs the size of a fingernail in the grass and later in the year large frogs can be found in the long grass. Muntjac deer have been seen nearby and maybe one day will arrive in the park. In recent years the population of parakeets has increased; they eat fruit from trees and bushes in the park, including sloes and apples.



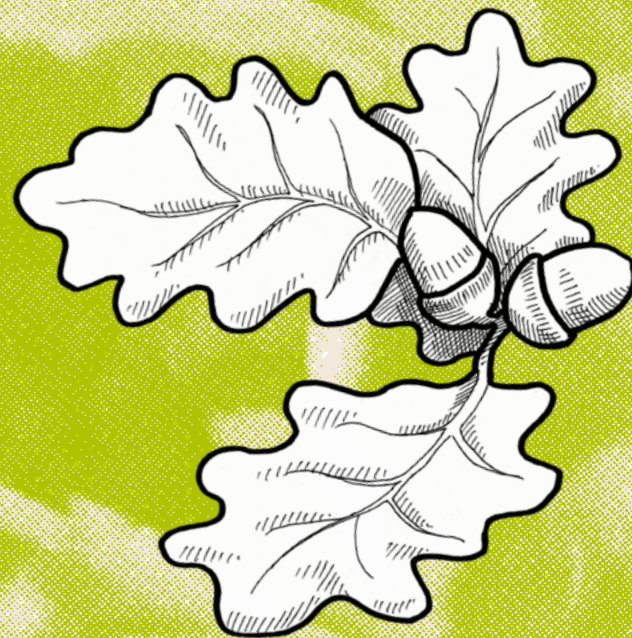
Crow drawing by Varian, duck by  
Daniel from Willow Brook School



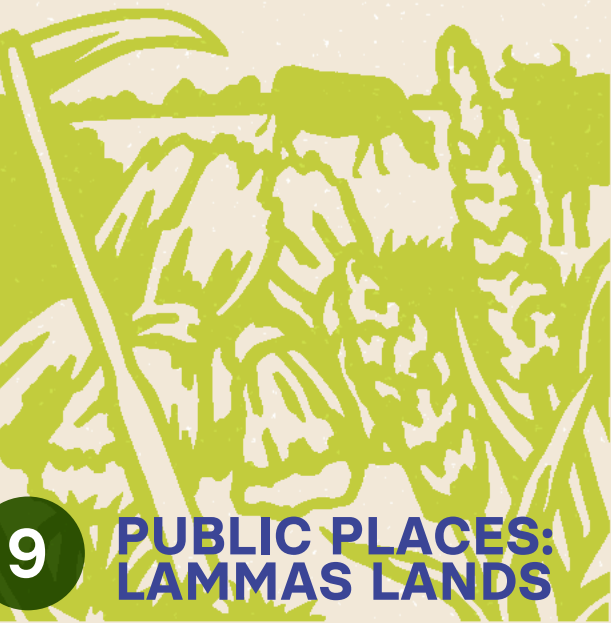


## 8 TREES

Ash, sycamore, poplar, London plane, elder, yew, birch and hawthorn are just some of the trees growing proudly in and around the park. Those planted in 2022 include trident maple, upright pine, blue Atlas cedar, giant redwood and Chinese elm, providing habitats for birds and wildlife. There are also various oak species including American oaks which have larger leaves, blackthorn, locust and cherry trees. Galls can be found on some of the trees; these are growths caused by flies nesting in tree buds and laying their eggs. The galls on oak trees look like marbles, and were used to make black ink in the Victorian era. Groups of seeds called keys can be seen on the many ash trees.







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## PUBLIC PLACES: LAMMAS LANDS

Some of the land previously used by important landowners to get crops of hay in early summer, and allowed to be used for grazing by the animals of others from 'Lammas Day' in August, was taken by the railway company for the line up the Lea Valley in 1840, and by the East London Waterworks Company for an extension of its water filtering operation in 1854. When the Waterworks Company fenced off more Lammas Land in 1892, direct action was taken to pull down the fences, and local people supported the protestors. Following the continued input of the Leyton Lammas Lands Defence Committee and ongoing protests by the local community, the Lammas Lands with grazing rights were converted into public recreational space. A plaque on the building at the Marsh Lane entrance to Jubilee Park commemorates their victory.



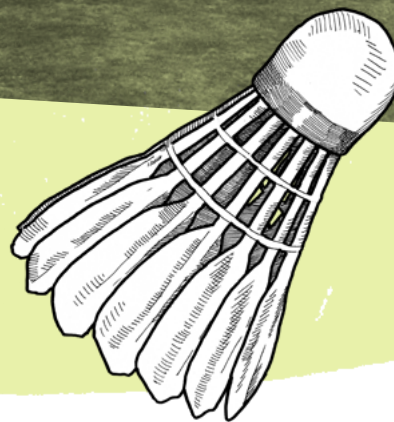


## 10 SPORTING HISTORY

Leyton Jubilee Park was given its name in 2012 for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee for her 60 years on the throne, the same year as the Olympic Games came to London. Before this it was known as Marsh Lane Playing Fields or Seymour Road Playing Fields, and has been used for sports and exercise for many years. It is now the meeting place of Eton Manor Athletics Club, whose history goes back to the Eton Manor Association formed in 1913 at 'The Wilderness', now part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.



Football pitches on Leyton Marshes, 1964, courtesy of Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest

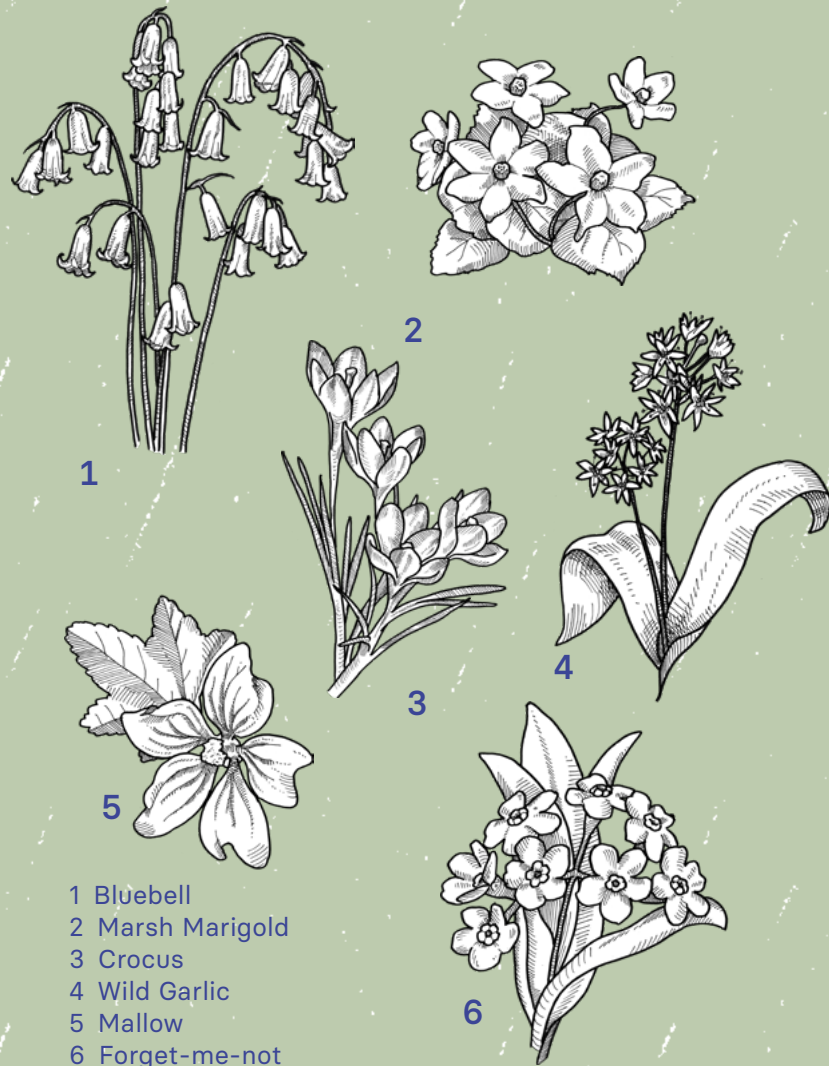




## 11 BLOOMING LEYTON

Borage, buttercups, cow parsley, yarrow, dandelion, herb Robert, clover, hawthorn and dog rose are just some of the flowers you may see and smell in the park, some wild and some planted, all helping the biodiversity and using their smells and bright colours to attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Cowslips can be seen along the woodland walk in the spring and these have started to spread around other areas of the park. Primulas have been planted in the woodland walk, including some non-native colours.

Can you pick a favourite?







## 12 LEISURE AND PLAY

Before 2012 Leyton Jubilee Park was known as Marsh Lane Playing Fields or Seymour Road Playing Fields. The Avenue of trees dates from around 1900 and is the oldest landscape feature in the park, lining Marsh Lane. The children's playground and recreation ground has been recorded on maps since the 1930s; it has been a place for playing games, relaxing and enjoying open space for centuries. Throughout the 20th century the park continued to be developed and used as a recreational space for the local community.

Photos of Seymour Road playground, 1963 and 1964, courtesy of Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest



# CREDITS

This booklet is part of the Leyton Jubilee Park Woodland Walk, designed by Matter Architecture. The family of Cllr Chris Robbins are pleased to support the Woodland Walk and thank everyone involved.

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For more information and to download a digital version of this booklet visit [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/libraries-arts-parks-and-leisure/parks-and-open-spaces/leyton-jubilee-park](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/libraries-arts-parks-and-leisure/parks-and-open-spaces/leyton-jubilee-park)



BALSAM • BALSAMINACEAE – HIMALAYAN BALSAM • BEDS  
HEDGE/HEATH BEDSTRAW • FIELD MADDER • BINDWEED CO  
• FIELD BINDWEED • MORNING GLORY • BORAGE BORAGI  
ME-NOT • GREEN ALKANET • COMMON COMFREY • RUSSIA  
LERS JOY • MEADOW BUTTERCUP • LESSER CELANDINE CA  
• SHEPHERD'S PURSE • HOARY BITTERCRESS • HOARY CRE  
HERD'S CRESS CARROT UMBELLIFERAE – COW PARSLEY  
YARROW • LESSER BURDOCK • MUGWORT • DAISY • COMM  
• SPEAR THISTLE • ARTICHOKE • CATSEAR • GREAT LETTUC  
TLY OXTONGUE • GROUNDSEL • COMMON RAGWORT • SMO  
SALSIFY • DOCK POLYGONACEAE – RUSSIAN VINE • REDS  
SCROPHULARIACEAE – IVY LEAVED TOADFLAX • COMMON  
SPEEDWELL • WALL SPEEDWELL • FLAX LINACEAE – PALE I  
GERANIUM GERANIACEAE – CUT LEAVED CRANESBILL • DO  
FLOWERED CRANESBILL • HERB ROBERT • ROUND LEAVE  
HEN • LILY LILIACEAE – ROSY GARLIC • FEW FLOWERED GA  
AE – MUSK MALLOW • COMMON MALLOW • MARROW CUC  
HOREHOUND • RED DEAD NETTLE • WHITE DEAD NETTLE  
URTICACEAE – PELLITORY OF THE WALL • STINGING NETT  
PEA • GREATER BIRD'S FOOT TREFOIL • SPOTTED MEDICK  
CLOVER • GORSE • COMMON VETCH • TUFTED VETCH • P  
SOAPWORT • RED CAMPION • WHITE CAMPION • BLADDE  
TAGINACEAE – RIBWORT PRIMULACEAE – SCARLET PIMP  
NIGHTSHADE • PRIMROSE • CREEKING CINQUEFOIL • FIELD  
THORN • HERB BENNET • DOG'S MERCURY • DOG'S MERCURY •  
– SUN SPURGE • ANNUAL FLUENCY • DOG'S MERCURY •  
SQUARE STEMMED ST JOHN'S WORT • TEASEL DIPSACACE  
• WILLOWHERB ONAGRACEAE – BROADLEAVED WILLOWHE

