

## A WALK FROM WEST TO EAST LINKING TWO OF HARINGEY'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS

This walk from Alexandra Palace to Bruce Castle links various parks and green spaces and eight conservation areas in Haringey. The total distance is about five miles.

This guide describes a walk from Alexandra Palace, the largest building in north London situated on the highest point in Haringey, and ending at the borough's most historic building. It is produced by Haringey Federation of Residents Associations and Haringey Friends of Parks Forum.

The walk starts in front of the BBC Tower at Alexandra Palace ❶. This can be reached by bus W3 from Finsbury Park or Wood Green – alight at the stop for Alexandra Palace Ice Rink. There are stunning views of London from the terrace in front of the palace. Toilets can be found by the boating lake or near the bar if the palace is open.

This area was originally called Tottenham Wood Farm and until the late nineteenth century was part of the parish of Tottenham so the entire walk could be called 'a walk across the old parish of Tottenham'. The original palace was opened in 1873 as the north London rival to Crystal Palace in the south. It was named Alexandra after the new Princess of Wales. It has had a chequered history, having been burnt down on two occasions.

Although 'Ally Pally' is now well loved it has not always been so popular. In 1934 it provoked this comment – 'Lastly, there is Alexandra Palace, an offence to the eye for miles around and a heavy charge on the authorities... Wood Green is overpowered and vulgarised by the Alexandra Palace' (quoted by Albert Pinching 'Wood Green Past'). **Alexandra Park** was originally 250 acres but the northern part of the park was sold off in the 1880s for housing development leaving 196 acres. It was awarded a Green Flag in 2008.

The palace and park were designated as **Alexandra Palace and Park conservation area** in 1979 and the palace is Grade II listed. The first public television broadcast in the world was made from the palace (you can see the commemorative plaque at the base of the tower). The palace and park are run by the Alexandra Palace Trust. There is currently a plan to regenerate the palace.

Set off from the car park in front of the ice rink and walk through the Rose Garden directly opposite. At the bottom of the slope turn right and then left along a paved path bringing you eventually to the point where Alexandra Palace Way exits the park and becomes Bedford Road. A short distance along this road take a footpath leading off to the right which takes you onto a bridge over Alexandra Palace station (which opened in 1859 as Wood Green station). You come out onto Buckingham Road opposite the Gate pub. This listed building was built in 1875 and was originally called the Palace Gate and then the Starting Gate in recognition of the horse racing which took place in the park from 1868 until 1970.

You are now in **Wood Green Common conservation area**.

Cross Buckingham Road by the pedestrian crossing. Turn left and then right into Bridge Road, then second right into Dorset Road. In these roads there are attractive Victorian and Edwardian cottages.

At the end of Dorset Road turn left into **Avenue Gardens** ❷ and continue into **Nightingale Gardens**. This open stretch of land owes its survival to the New River which runs in a tunnel beneath, but is visible at the south end of the gardens. The New River is an artificial watercourse dug in the early seventeenth century to bring drinking water from Hertfordshire to London and is still in use.



Nightingale Gardens are the start of **Trinity Gardens conservation area**. When you reach Bounds Green Road you will see a striking listed building on your left – this is Braemar Avenue Baptist Church built in 1907 by G.Baines, the same architect who designed the United Reform Church in Muswell Hill Broadway (now an O'Neill's pub).

Cross Bounds Green Road by the pedestrian crossing and turn right along Trinity Road, past The Prince pub built in 1870 (previously called The Prince of Wales). This open stretch of land, originally common land, is called **Trinity Gardens** ❸ and was named after the Trinity Wesleyan Methodist Chapel built in 1871. In 1970 this church became the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. Mary.

There is a 21 foot high granite obelisk with fountains and animal drinking troughs built in 1879 to commemorate the life and work of Catherine Smithies, founder of the Band of Mercy (a charitable organisation aimed at relieving the suffering of animals which subsequently became part of the RSPCA) and a campaigner for temperance. Trinity Primary Academy was originally built as Wood Green Higher Grade Board School in 1899 and is Grade II listed.

At the end of Trinity Road you reach Wood Green High Road. The building on the corner was the Fishmongers Arms pub (1855) and is now flats with the Safer Neighbourhood Team police offices on the ground floor. There is a listed horse trough and drinking fountain in front. On the opposite corner (on White Hart Lane) is the former Kings Arms Hotel (1870) – this became the Grand Palace and is now a Polish night club.

Cross the High Road, turn right then cross White Hart Lane and go into **Crescent Gardens**. You are opposite Haringey Civic Centre, built in 1958 as Wood Green Town Hall. This building has some fine 1950s features. South of the Civic Centre you can see St Michael's Parish Church, an 1870s listed building by Sir George Gilbert Scott (the spire was a later addition). There are also some handsome early nineteenth century villas on the south side of Bounds Green Road which are the oldest surviving residential buildings in Wood Green. There is a World War One memorial opposite the Church.



Walk along the High Road past **King George VI Memorial Garden** and just before you come to Wood Green underground station turn left into Cranbrook Park. Rearing above the houses ahead of you is the roof of Wood Green Crown Court. This Gothic building dates from 1865 and was originally the Royal Masonic School for Boys. It later became a training college and then gas board offices. In 1974 it was acquired by Haringey Council. The roof and upper storeys were added in the 1980s.

Turn right into St Albans Crescent and cross Lordship Lane into Vincent Road. The strange brick structure built into the wall on your right hand side just before Moselle Avenue was the parapet of a bridge over the River Moselle (now hidden in an underground tunnel).

You are now in **Noel Park conservation area**. The Noel Park estate was named after Ernest Noel MP who was chairman of the Artisans, Labourers and General Dwellings Co. which built the estate between 1883 and 1907. The houses and St Mark's Church were all designed by Sir Rowland Plumbe. The terraced houses were of five different 'classes' (sizes) all with front and back gardens. The streets were named after leading politicians and board members of the Artisans, Labourers and General Dwellings Co. No pubs were built on the estate.

Noel Park is a very handsome estate. To get an idea of the varied design of the houses take the second left into Morley Avenue, then right into Salisbury Road, then second right into Gladstone Avenue. Continue past Noel Park Primary School (built in 1889 by Wood Green School Board) and then turn left before you get to St Mark's Church into Ashley Crescent and then into Russell Avenue.

Continue along Russell Avenue until you come to the entrance to **Russell Park** ❹ on your right (previously called Noel Park). Due to the efforts of local residents working with the council this small park has been much improved and was awarded a Green Flag in 2010.