

# Explore Haringey

by walking the route of  
one of its hidden rivers

## THE MOSELLE

crossing the borough from west to east

50p where sold

# Follow the **MOSELLE** River Haringey's River **RIVER WALK**



The River Moselle is Haringey's river. It flows from the Northern Heights in the extreme west to the River Lea in the east. The Moselle is responsible for such sayings as '*When it rains in Muswell Hill, it floods in Tottenham*' or '*Highgate's rain is Tottenham's pain*'.

This guide describes a walk along the course of the river. It is produced by the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum which aims to protect and improve Haringey's parks. The river (or stream or brook as it is sometimes called) flows through a number of them.

The name *Moselle* and other names referring to water features are commemorated in some streets and buildings along its route. We highlight these names in blue.

As can be seen on the map the river has a number of sources which finally come together in Priory Park in Hornsey. The true source is generally acknowledged to be in Queen's Wood and it is from there that the walk starts. The full length of the river walk is seven and a half miles although it can of course be taken in stages.

In preparing this guide we are indebted to Albert Pinching's and David Dell's wonderful 'Haringey's Hidden Streams Revealed' which gives a detailed history and description of all the natural waterways in Haringey.

The walk starts at Queen's Wood Café **1** in Queen's Wood (Highgate Wood stop on bus 43 and 134) where one of the many springs which feed water into the Moselle River has its source. Take the path down the hill to Wood Vale. The brick wall **2** which can be seen at the foot of Queen's Wood was built to channel the water into a culvert, a large pipe buried in the ground. From here, until it emerges in Lordship Rec, only the course of the river can be followed. The river itself is buried in a culvert.

Leave the wood, cross Wood Vale and walk straight ahead along a footpath through Crouch End Open Spaces (CREOS) **3**.

At the end of the path cross Park Road and walk along Park Avenue South. The road follows the course of the river which flows at the end of the gardens on the south side of the road. Some way down Park Avenue South where the road bends to the left you take a footpath leading off to the right. You can see that the path dips down and up as it crosses the course of the river. The path comes out by an entrance to Priory Park **4**. Walk through the park. The river hugs the edge of the park on your left through the children's playground.

Turn right by the paddling pool and then keep left through the formal gardens until you leave the park near the junction of Middle Lane and Priory Road. Middle Lane is on the course of Cholmeley Brook, a tributary of the Moselle which originates in Highgate. As you come out of the park onto Priory Road, Cholmeley Brook joins the Moselle here flowing under the pavement on the south side of Priory Road.

The river swings north at this point through the grounds of Camfrey Court and the Hornsey Bowling Club. Turn right and walk along Hornsey High Street and then take the second turning on the left, Campsbourne Road. At the crossroads turn right onto Pembroke Road. This road is on the site of an ornamental lake constructed on the course of the river in the grounds of a large house called Campsbourne Lodge.

Turn left into Myddelton Road and right into Miles Road and you come to **Moselle Close**. At the end of this cul-de-sac there is a passage which brings you out onto a footpath called

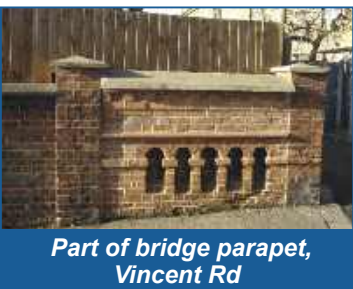
Cross Lane and the New River Estate. You can tell you are on the course of the river as the ground slopes up both to left and right.

The Moselle is now buried beneath the New River Estate and is then culverted under the New River **5** (an artificial watercourse dug in the seventeenth century to bring drinking water from Hertfordshire to London) and the railway. Turn left onto Cross Lane and at the top turn right and walk by the green railings surrounding the waterworks on a footpath called Penstock Path (not named). Following this across the New River and under the railway brings you out onto Western Road.

There is not much evidence of the Moselle to be seen here. It crosses Western Road to the right of where you are standing and passes through the Clarendon development site (previously a gas works with two large gas holders). There has been a campaign by Haringey Rivers Forum to deculvert the Moselle here and bring it to the surface. It then crosses under Wood Green High Road where Argos now stands. To reach this point walk straight ahead down Coburg Road to Mayes Road where you turn right. Turn left into Caxton Road and then, where Caxton Road turns left, turn right along a footpath which brings you out onto the High Road nearly opposite Argos.

Cross the road here and walk down the alley which runs next to Argos. This brings you out onto Gladstone Mews which leads onto Pelham Road. Turn left and you come to

Gladstone Avenue. Diagonally across on your right is [Moselle Avenue](#). You are now in the Noel Park Estate. The river here runs along the backs of the houses on the north side of [Moselle Avenue](#). At the first crossroads take a short diversion to your left along Vincent Road and you will see a brick structure which is the parapet of a bridge under which the river once flowed **6**.



Part of bridge parapet,  
Vincent Rd

At the end of [Moselle Avenue](#) turn right onto Lordship Lane. The river now runs under the north side pavement until its junction with Westbury Avenue. Here it turns south along the course of an inaccessible alley.

Walk to the next junction and turn right along Downhills Way. A short way along turn left along a passage next to St Benet Fink Church which brings you out onto Walpole Road. Turn right and enter Lordship Recreation Ground through the first entrance you come to. Turn right in the park and you come shortly to a point where you see the Moselle in the open for the first time **7**. Until 2012 it was a miserable little concreted stream but it was then re-landscaped. There is still a problem with pollution which is being addressed.

Follow the river through the park. On your right beyond the pond is Lordship Rec Hub where you can find a café and toilets. When you leave the park you come to [Broadwater Farm Estate](#), built in the 1970s by Haringey Council. The area was called '[Broadwaters](#)' because it often flooded.

At the end of the park turn left onto Freedom Road and then at the Community Centre, turn right into Adams Road passing [Broadwater Farm Children's Centre](#) and the [Brook](#) and [Willow](#) schools on your left. The river has disappeared beneath the estate here but you meet it again where a footpath with the Moselle underneath goes off to your left just after Moira Close. Follow this path to Lordship Lane.

North of Lordship Lane the river looped round to the left (shown as a dotted line on the map) but when Tower Gardens Estate **8** was built in the early 1900s it was put into a culvert which runs in a straight line to join up with its original course on entering Tottenham Cemetery where again it comes to the surface.

Your best route from here is to continue straight across Lordship Lane and walk up Bennington Road. Turn right onto Risley Avenue. Cross the Roundway by the pedestrian crossing and continue along All Hallows Road. At the T-junction turn left onto Church Lane and then left again through All Hallows churchyard. You soon come to a footpath through the middle of Tottenham Cemetery **9**.


Go through the first unlocked gate on your left and walk parallel to the fenced path you have just left, keeping it on your right. This brings you to a bridge across the river. Cross the bridge and then turn left along the north bank of the river. You soon come to the confluence where the Lesser Moselle meets the Moselle. Continue walking along the bank of the Lesser Moselle and, after skirting a hedge, you come to an artificial lake **10**. Water from a spring on the northern edge of the cemetery flows down an ornamental cataract into the lake and then drains into the Lesser Moselle.

Return to the footpath and cross the bridge. At the first opportunity turn left into the eastern part of the cemetery. Continue in this direction, walk past the chapel and bear left until you come to the cemetery gate. Turn left along a footpath leading to Beaufoy Road. From the eastern boundary of the cemetery the river is once more in a culvert. It flows under Wedge House, formerly a factory making roofing materials. At the end of Beaufoy Road turn right onto White Hart Lane. The river runs here under the road following its twists and turns. Road changes here include the installation of rain gardens (Sustainable urban Drainage Systems or SuDS) on the pavement to control and cleanse rainwater run-off.



At the junction with Tottenham High Road the river makes an abrupt right turn although it might well once have carried straight on to join Pymmes Brook and thence the River Lea. Now the river flows down the west side of the High Road opposite the giant new Spurs football stadium. The first turning on the right is [Moselle Place](#) which leads into [Moselle Street](#). The river is visible beneath a glass cover in the foyer of the Coombes Croft library **11** which, if open, is worth a visit.

Continue down the High Road passing listed [Moselle House](#) **12** and cross the road when you see the Bluecoats pub. Here the river turns left beneath Scotland Green and then splits. The Old Moselle continues south and eventually runs alongside Broad Lane until it reaches Markfield Park and the River Lea. Most of this route is built up and along busy roads so it is more pleasant to follow the other branch via Tottenham Marshes.

Continue east from Scotland Green past Hartington Park and you come to a concrete footway called Carbuncle Passage **13**. A branch of the river, in the past called Garbell Ditch and later Carbuncle Ditch, originally constructed as part of a flood control scheme in the 15th century, lies beneath this path. ( see panel on map). Follow Carbuncle Passage, crossing two roads, until you come to a footbridge. The Moselle can be glimpsed just before the bridge. Go over this bridge which crosses the railway, the Victoria Line tube depot and Watermead Way.

Once over the bridge you enter Tottenham Marshes **14**. The Moselle runs east in a culvert under the Marshes until it enters Pymmes Brook, which here runs parallel with the River Lea.

Turn right following the signs to Tottenham Hale and Markfield Park. Continue until the paths divide and then bear left. Once you reach Pymmes Brook turn right and walk alongside the river. You will pass the East Hale Allotments, Living Under One Sun (a community gardening project) and the massive Hale Village development.

When you reach Ferry Lane turn left, crossing over Pymmes Brook, and then immediately turn left down to the River Lea Navigation by Tottenham Lock. Turn sharp right along the towpath under Ferry Lane. Shortly you cross the bridge where Pymmes Brook enters the River Lea.

Continue south alongside the River Lea. You will pass the Ferry Lane Estate **15**, built by the Greater London Council in the 1970s. The Old Moselle enters the River Lea just beyond the second railway bridge you pass. A little further on, enter Markfield Park **16** through the gate on your right. The wonderful Victorian Beam Engine is well worth a visit and the café. Go to Broad Lane for buses to Seven Sisters, Turnpike Lane or Wood Green.



**Queen's Wood**, formerly known as Churchyard Bottom Wood, was purchased by Hornsey Urban District Council in 1898. It is an ancient woodland and a designated local nature reserve. Friends of Queen's Wood: [www.fqw.org.uk](http://www.fqw.org.uk)



**Noel Park Estate**, historic 19th Century affordable housing development, now a conservation area. Noel Park North Area Residents Association: [www.noelparknorth.wordpress.com](http://www.noelparknorth.wordpress.com)

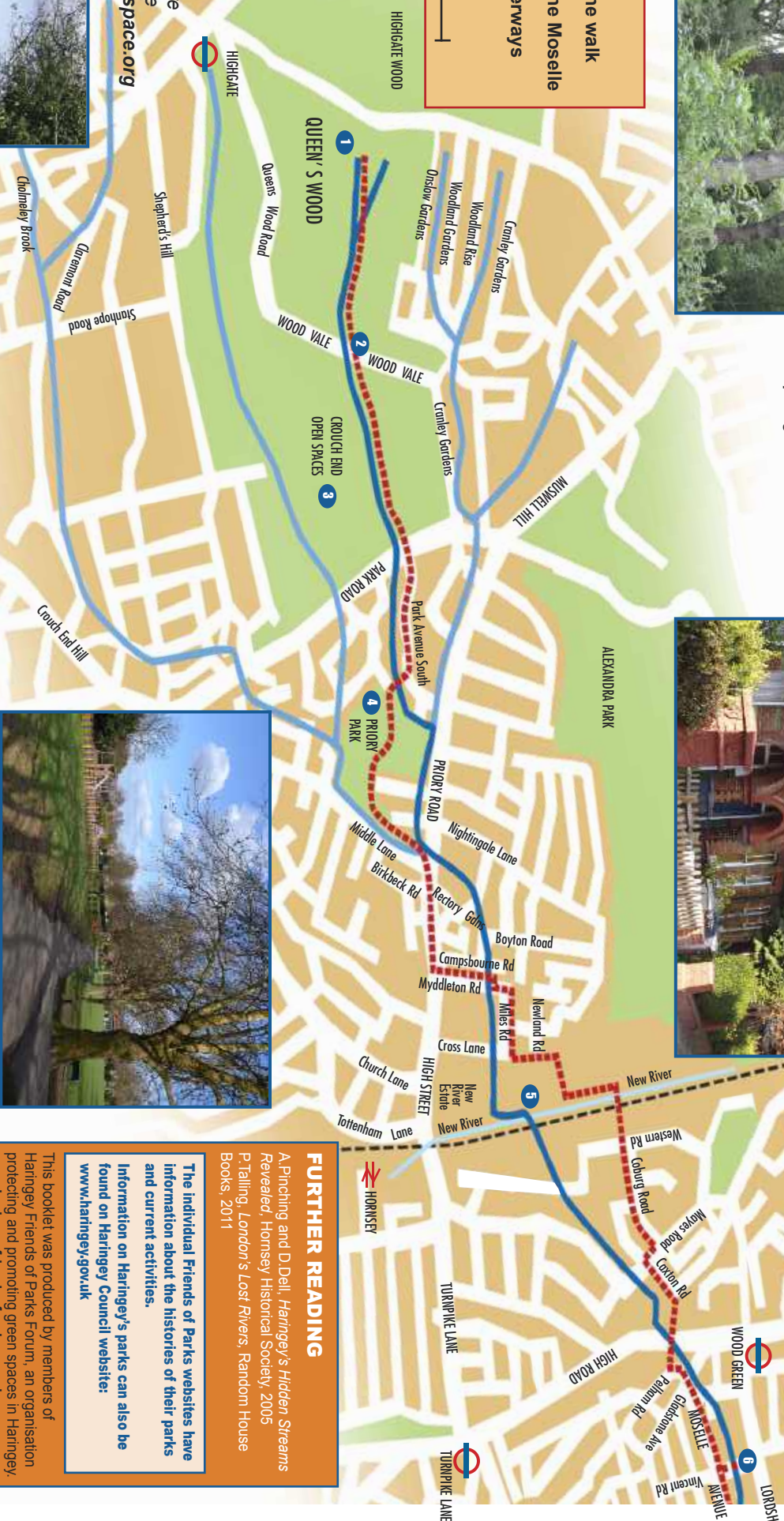
**Tottenham Cemetery** was opened in 1857 with various later extensions. It is a conservation area with listed features such as the two chapels.

**KEY**

- Route of the walk
- Route of the Moselle
- Other waterways

1/2 mile  
500m

**Crouch End Open Spaces** is the name given to a group of sports fields and areas of open space on the Highgate/Crouch End border. Friends of Crouch End Open Spaces are active in conservation work and preventing inappropriate development on the site [www.crouchendopenspace.org](http://www.crouchendopenspace.org)



**Priory Park** was opened in 1896. There are two listed fountains and beautiful formal gardens. Friends of Priory Park: [www.prioryparkn8.wixsite.com/friends](http://www.prioryparkn8.wixsite.com/friends)

**FURTHER READING**

A.Pirching and D.Dell, *Harrihey's Hidden Streams Revealed*, Hornsey Historical Society 2005  
 P.Talling, *London's Lost Rivers*, Random House Books, 2011

The individual Friends of Parks websites have information about the histories of their parks and current activities.  
 Information on Harrihey's parks can also be found on Harrihey Council website: [www.harrihey.gov.uk](http://www.harrihey.gov.uk)

This booklet was produced by members of Harrihey Friends of Parks Forum, an organisation protecting and promoting green spaces in Harrihey. [www.harriheyfriendsofparks.org.uk](http://www.harriheyfriendsofparks.org.uk)

Supported by the Harrihey Federation of Residents Associations. [www.harriheyresidents.org](http://www.harriheyresidents.org)  
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**Lordship Recreation Ground**, opened in 1936. It underwent major redevelopment in 2012 including restoration of the River Moselle (shown left), other major relandscaping work, a new community centre with café and toilets, the restoration of the Shell Theatre and the nationally unique model traffic area.

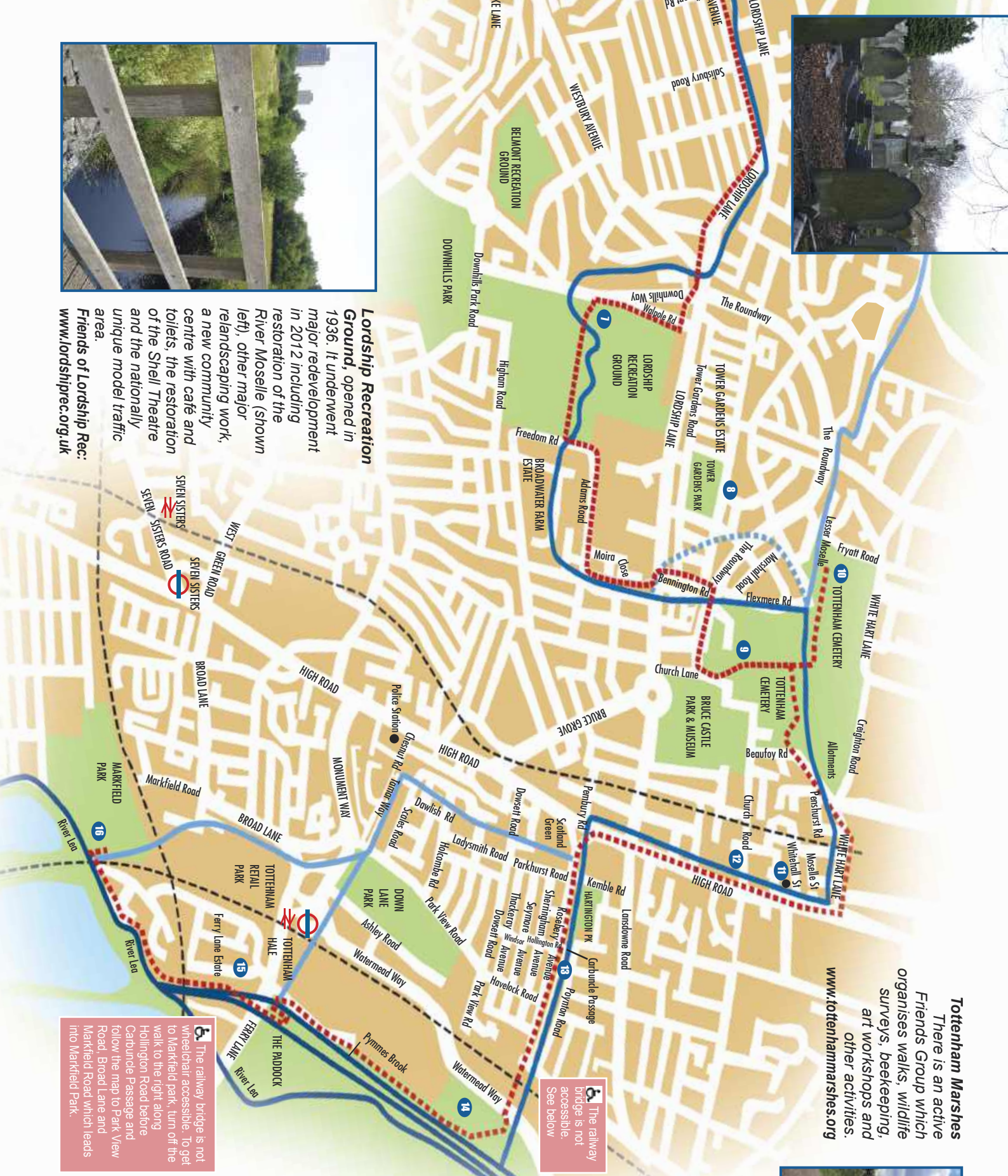
**Friends of Lordship Rec:**  
[www.lordshiprec.org.uk](http://www.lordshiprec.org.uk)



**Tottenham Marshes**  
 There is an active Friends Group which organises walks, wildlife surveys, beekeeping, art workshops and other activities.

[www.tottenhammarshes.org](http://www.tottenhammarshes.org)

Photo: Chris Fleetwood



The railway bridge is not wheelchair accessible. See below.

The railway bridge is not wheelchair accessible. To get to Markfield park, turn off the walk to the right along Hollington Road before Carbuncle Passage and follow the map to Park View Road, Broad Lane and Markfield Road which leads into Markfield Park.



Photo: Alan Stanton

**Markfield Beam Engine**, part of the Victorian sewage works, has been restored by volunteers and is operated under steam power on designated days.

[www.beam.org.uk](http://www.beam.org.uk)

**Markfield Park** opened in 1938.

**Friends of Markfield Park:**  
[www.friendsofmarkfieldpark.org.uk](http://www.friendsofmarkfieldpark.org.uk)