

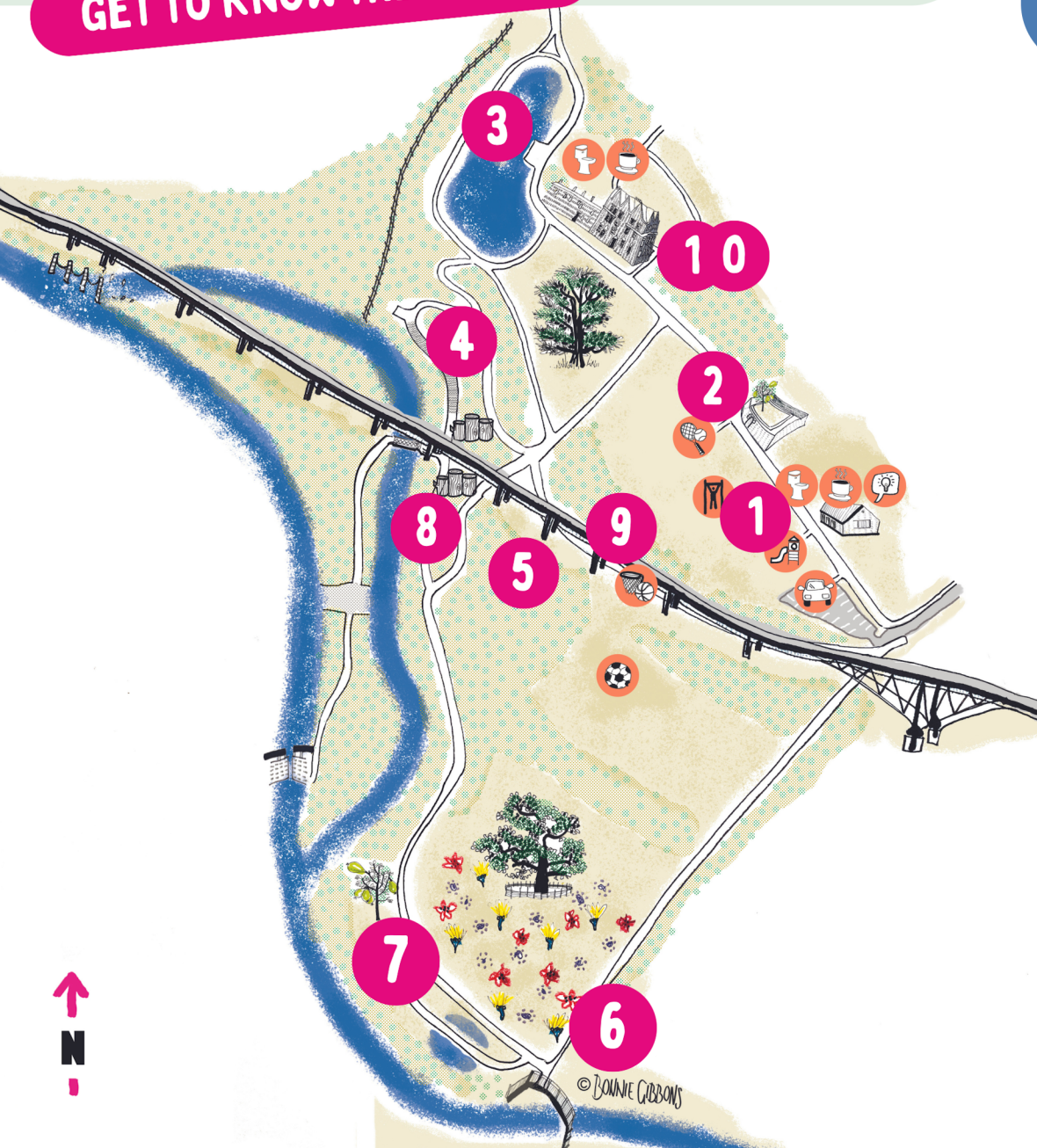


BOSTON MANOR PARK

NATURE AND WELLBEING ACTIVITY TRAIL 2

Autumn 2023

GET TO KNOW THE PARK!



Hello! This circular trail is designed to introduce you to some of the diverse habitats and landmarks in Boston Manor Park.

The House was built in 1623, and all Park buildings and grounds have benefitted from major renovations funded by the Lottery Heritage Fund since 2019, completed in Spring 2023. A major aim of the work was to improve the Park's habitats for wildlife and people, so we hope you will enjoy all the new features too.

- 1 PICK UP A COPY OF THIS TRAIL FROM THE CAFÉ
- 2 RELAX IN THE WALLED GARDEN
- 3 WATCH BIRDS FROM THE LAKE
- 4 CROSS THE WOODLAND BOARDWALK
- 5 SNEAK THROUGH THE FOREST
- 6 SPOT THE FAUNA AND FLORA IN THE MEADOW
- 7 TAKE A CANAL SIDE WALK
- 8 ADMIRE THE VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE
- 9 SHOOT A HOOP ON THE BASKETBALL COURT
- 10 END YOUR TRAIL IN BOSTON MANOR HOUSE

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bostonmanorpark@hounslow.gov.uk
so you don't miss out on any future fun!

Trail created by Natasha Gavin, Learning and Volunteer Co-ordinator
Illustration and design by Bonnie Gibbons, Artist
September 2023



London Borough
of Hounslow



Lampton
Services



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Keep up to date with our outdoor events on our Facebook page **@BMPoutdoorevents** or join our email list by emailing **bostonmanorpark@hounslow.gov.uk** so you don't miss out on any future fun!

1 PICK UP A COPY OF THIS TRAIL FROM THE POTTING SHED CAFÉ IN THE PARK HUB BUILDING



The café www.thepottingshed.london is open 7 days a week so maybe you can start here with a drink and snack? Have a look at the map before setting off so you know where this trail will help you to explore.

To start, head up towards Boston Manor House but turn into the Walled Garden by the Service Yard before you reach the House.

2 RELAX IN THE WALLED GARDEN



Have a walk around the garden and spot the fruit trees, the sensory border full of herbs and scented or tactile plants, the loggery in the shady corner. The walled garden used to provide all the fruit and vegetables for the cooks in Boston Manor House kitchens. It used to be much bigger, but was reduced in size after

World War 2 to provide temporary accommodation for people that needed homes. Sit down on one of the benches and take a few deep breaths as you imagine this being your own private vegetable garden. What would you grow to eat? Leave the walled garden and walk past the House towards the lake.

3 WATCH BIRDS FROM THE LAKE



The picturesque lake, created by the Clitherow family, replaced several fishing lakes. If you stand on the viewing platform on the House side of the lake, can you see two islands? These are safe places for water birds to hide in and nest on. How many different types of birds can you see on the lake? There are often mallards, pigeons, tufted ducks

and gulls. Long vegetation (grasses and wildflowers), the low fence around the lake and ramps are all features that help wildlife to shelter, live, eat and breed near or in water- a hedgehog can swim but it needs a ramp to get out of the water if it falls in. We have hedgehogs in the Park and have created special log piles for them to live in (called hibernacula). Hedgehogs were alive 15 million years ago! Leave the lake area, go past the picnic tables and find the woodland trail path at the bottom end of the lake, near the benches.

4 CROSS THE WOODLAND BOARDWALK



Follow the path down through the woods past the log seats and continue down towards the water. You will see a loop of the river Brent, which is connected to the Grand Union Canal at both ends. There are lots of bats here in the summer months, as they love to fly over the water and near the trees, catching insects to eat like moths and mosquitoes at dusk. Turn left towards the M4 flyover. Walk along the boardwalk through the trees- the boardwalk will keep your feet dry because it gets very muddy here in winter. As you reach the end of the yellow gravel path, walk onto the grey stoney path under the flyover and walk up the hill under the motorway until you get to the top yellow gravel path on the other side. As you walk along it, about 100m down it, you will see a path that leads off to a clearing in the woodland. Go down that and you will find a quiet spot.



5 SNEAK THROUGH THE FOREST



Our secret spot is a clearing in the woodland. Sit down on some logs in this open space, listen to the birds and watch the squirrels leaping from tree to tree. This magical space is also home to dozens of invertebrates (bugs). If you look under a log to see some beetles and woodlice (nature's recyclers) be sure to replace it so they can hide again.

How many mini beasts can you find? From the clearing, follow informal paths through the woodland down towards the wildflower meadow.



6 SPOT THE FAUNA AND FLORA IN THE MEADOW



The meadow is the largest green open space in Boston Manor Park. The veteran oak tree in the middle is surrounded by a dead hedge - the hedge is a great habitat for little creatures to shelter in, and insects live in and feed on the dead wood too. The hedge also protects the tree so that the ground and roots aren't

compacted by trampling. The wildflowers in the meadow provide food for pollinating insects and are cut after they have gone to seed. Walk through the meadow keeping to the informal paths cut through it, and watch the bees, butterflies and other insects enjoying the wildflowers and tall grasses. Aim to finish your walk by the new canal bridge.

7 TAKE A CANAL SIDE WALK



As you stand near the canal, admire the two beautiful wooden sculptures featuring a heron and cormorant. These sculptures were made in 2023 (by wood carver Nick Garnett) and they are placed at the start of the path that leads between two wetland scrapes. The scrapes are two man-made shallow ponds that naturally fill

with rainwater over the wetter months, creating a wetland habitat for wildlife, but will dry out in summer. There is a dry path for you to walk along in between them. If you follow the path between the scrapes you will reach the orchard, originally planted in 2014 by Boston Manor Friends. Keep walking along the main path at the edge of the wildflower meadow, back towards the woodland.

8 ADMIRE THE VETERAN SWEET CHESTNUT TREE



As you walk through the woodland, keep to the path that heads up towards the M4 flyover, you will spot more dead hedges. These are in front of one of the park's very old sweet chestnut trees. Sweet chestnuts are edible, and often roasted at Christmas,

but horse chestnuts (conkers) are definitely not so it's a good idea to learn how to tell them apart. The leaves are totally different- can you see both trees? Keep walking until you get to the grey stoney path under the flyover again.

9 SHOOT A HOOP ON THE BASKETBALL COURT



Turn right and continue under the flyover. The first section is fairly steep, so take your time and carry on under the flyover and you will see the new basketball courts. See you if you can get a ball (or anything else) through the hoops? Perhaps bring a ball with you next time you visit? As you walk back towards Boston Manor

House, enjoy all the different park furniture - spend some time climbing on the wooden play structures, having fun in the playground or doing some exercise on the green gym exercise equipment. Head up to Boston Manor House when you are done.

10 END YOUR TRAIL IN BOSTON MANOR HOUSE



The beautifully restored House bostonmanorhouse.org is open Tuesday to Sunday 12-5pm and is free to visit. It has a café too which is open 7 days a week, and it is all accessible. Have a quick tour around each of the rooms

to learn about the people who lived here, like Lady Mary Reade (the lady who built the house) and the Clitherow family (who owned the House for 5 generations and planted the majestic Cedar trees). Can you believe that Hounslow Council bought the House and grounds from the Clitherows in June 1924 for about £23,000?



**WELL DONE ON COMPLETING TRAIL 2
AND ENJOY BEING YOU - HAVE FUN, BE KIND
AND HELP THE NATURAL WORLD IF YOU CAN.
TRAIL 3 COMING IN 2024!**



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