Lea Valley Walk
Section 2 of 6
Wharf Road to Ferry Lane

Introduction

This section starts at Wharf Road, close to Ponders End station and finishes at Tottenham Hale, a distance of four miles. Alternatively, you can continue onto section three towards Lea Bridge.

The River Lea joins the Lea Navigation on this walk - so you are sure to see birds and dragonflies on the water. Places of interest along this section are the reservoirs, Wright’s Flour Mill and Tottenham Marshes.

You will find your route well marked, just keep looking out for the Lea Valley Walk logo of the swan on the signs. There are picnic places along the way and refreshments at the Navigation Inn at Ponders End. Suitable break points are at Pickett’s Lock and Stonebridge Lock, with both providing seating areas.

The route continues along the River Lea towpath, with the walk entirely on a flat comfortable surface. Access on and off the route at Tottenham Hale is via a steep cobbled slope.

In addition to rail options, local bus services are available along the route.
Directions

From Ponders End station, use the footbridge to cross the main road. Then walk along Wharf Road and cross the concrete bridge to start the walk along the towpath.

Did you know?

Ponders End, which gets its name from the family who lived here in the 14th century, has importance in the history of the Industrial Revolution; look for the plaque on the building opposite the Granville Tavern (East Duck Lees Lane, off Mollison Avenue) which commemorates Sir Joseph Swan, who invented the light bulb here and Sir James Dewar, inventor of the Thermos Flask.

The River Lea joins the Lee Navigation just after Wharf Road.

Did you know?

For centuries the River Lea formed the boundary between Essex and Middlesex. Now it forms the boundary between the boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest.

Over that time the spelling of the river has caused problems as originally it was Ley, a field covered with grass. Acts of Parliament called it Lee although it appeared as Lea on many maps. There were disputes about the spelling for a long time and to settle them it was decided that the natural aspects of the river, such as river itself, would be LEA and manmade features such as the canal would be LEE.

Continue past a footbridge over the Navigation and pass by the Lee Valley Athletics Centre and golf course, which can be seen beyond the Navigation to the right, before Pickett's Lock. The William Girling Reservoir is on the left.

Did you know?

Pickett's Lock is the site of the £16 million Lee Valley Athletics Centre, the newest training facility in the south of England. Look out for some future Olympic and Paralympic hopefuls!

The William Girling Reservoir was completed in 1959 and is named after the Chairman of the Metropolitan Water Board.

The riverside path runs parallel to a sewage works, going under the A406 North Circular and past more industrial estates (take care here as a small section is accessible to cars) and under Chalk Bridge. The small Banbury Reservoir looms to the left.

Remain on the towpath to Stonebridge Lock, crossing over to the other bank here to pass Tottenham Marshes on your right, with Lockwood Reservoir and Walthamstow Wetlands on your left.

Did you know?

The name Tottenham is also famous for football: Tottenham Hotspurs began life in 1882 when a group of football players, who were also members of the Hotspur Cricket Club, formed a football club which they called Tottenham Hotspurs.

Continue south keeping Pymme's Brook to the right and Lee Navigation to the left.
This section of the walk ends at Tottenham Locks. Turn right on Ferry Lane to get to Tottenham Hale station.

Section 3 to Clapton continues along the towpath under Ferry Lane.