



# Hackney Naturehood Trail

Circular step-free nature walk linking local green spaces. Enjoy nature connection opportunities, playgrounds and urban greenery.

**Distance** 3.7 kilometers / 2.3 miles

**Duration** 1 hour and 55 minutes



Wheel friendly



Public loos



## Refreshments



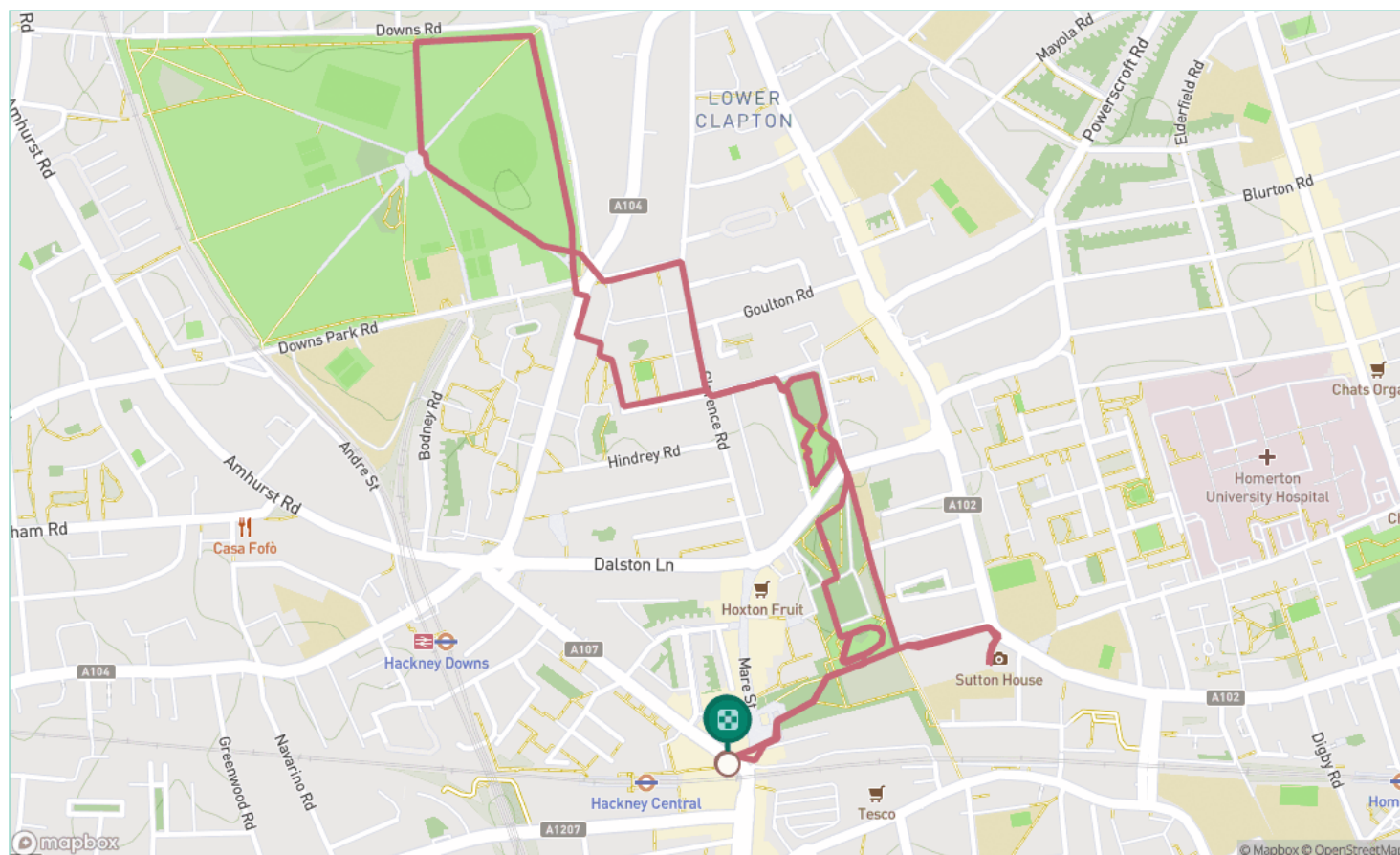
Public transport



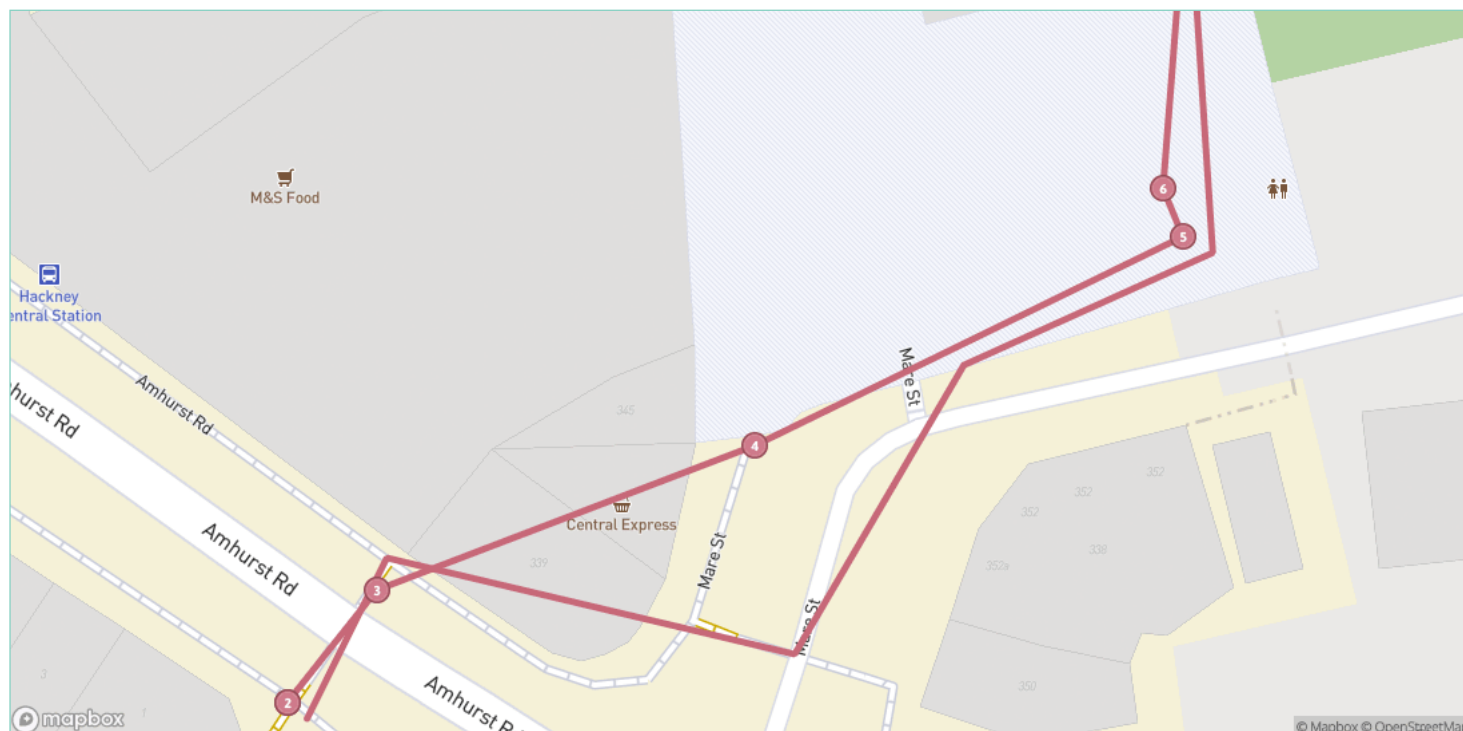
Wildlife



Child friendly



Disclaimer: Directions are provided as guidance only. Weather, construction, closures or other factors may affect routes.  
Please take care when crossing roads and avoid private land. Always follow local signage and use common sense.  
Created by Go Jauntly Ltd © 2025. Last Updated: 08 October 2025.



**Step 1:** Welcome to our Hackney Naturehood Trail brought to you in collaboration with the National Trust. Join us to discover all of the wild neighbours and hidden nature right here. Tap the 'Read More' button for visitor information.

### Transport & Visiting Information

This walk starts at Hackney Central on the Mildmay line of the London Overground. Bus routes 30, 253, 277 and N277 stop at Hackney Central.

Please note that the National Trust's Sutton House is usually open on Sundays. The house is open 11am-4pm and Breaker's Yard from 10am-dusk. If you're doing the walk at other times just skip steps 100-114 to enjoy the rest of the walk.

**Step 2:** Exit Hackney Central station at the step free entrance on Amhurst Road.

**Step 3:** Use the pedestrian crossing immediately opposite to cross over and turn right and then left onto Mare Street.

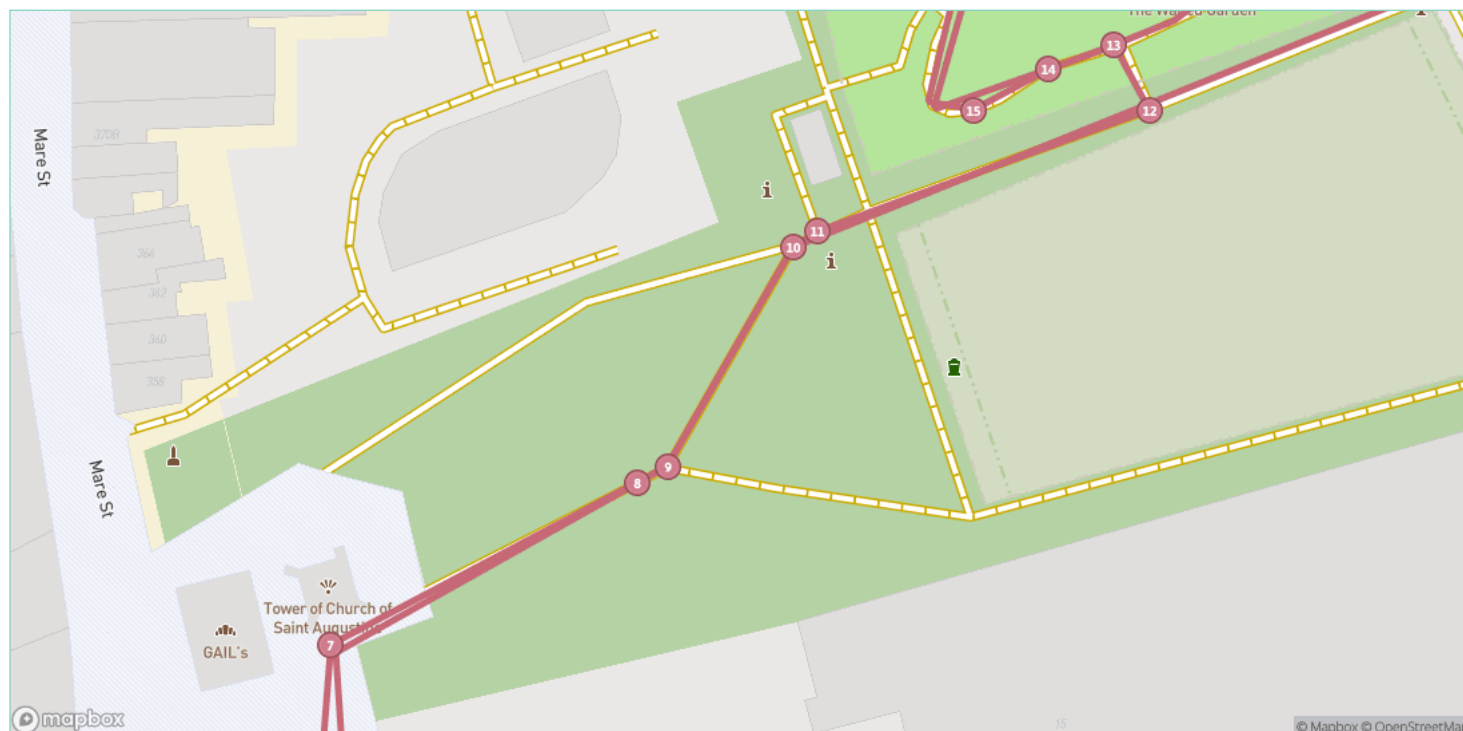
**Step 4:** The footway here becomes part-pedestrianised as Mare Street is a vibrant local high street.

**Step 5:** Cross over Mare Street and continue ahead, walk past the steps and towards the ramp and toilets.

**Step 6:** Turn left up the ramp. On your right hand side you'll see the Windrush fruit sculpture. Find out more about this artwork below. 

### Windrush Fruit Sculpture

This artwork was made by the artist Veronica Ryan. It was the first permanent sculpture in the UK to celebrate the Windrush generation. The three fruit shapes you can see are custard apple, breadfruit, and soursop. They are made from marble and bronze. Isn't it amazing to see fruit from nature in the middle of a busy city? You can even touch the bumpy edges of the sculpture if you like!



**Step 7:** Walk towards the tower then turn right to walk past it and into the churchyard. The paving stones are slightly uneven here.

**Step 8:** And breathe! What a contrast to the bustling high street. Read below for more information on the tower. 🖱️

### St Augustine's Tower

This tower is all that's left of the old church of St Augustine. Did you know that it's the oldest building in Hackney, built in the 1500s! The clock on the tower still works, even after about 500 years. When the new church, St John-at-Hackney, was built, this tower was kept so it could still hold the bells.

**Step 9:** Take a moment to look around you. Soak it all up. What can you notice? Flowers poking up from the grass? Breeze on your face?

**Step 10:** When you're ready continue ahead. There's a popular cafe here with outdoor seating.

**Step 11:** Admire the trees in the dog park on the right hand side. They are spectacular giants!

**Step 12:** We're headed to the Walled Garden next. Look out for the gated entrance (and redwood tree) on your left hand side and step on in.

**Step 13:** We're going to do a loop of this pretty garden. Turn left to explore with all of your wild senses.

**Step 14:** Let's get up close and personal with the trees. Can you spot any interesting characters of nature? Tap the 'Play' button to learn more. 🖱️



**Step 15:** The Walled Garden and the rest of the churchyard gardens are an important site for urban green wilding. Learn more below 🖱️

### Urban Greening

St John at Hackney Churchyard Gardens was once a burial ground for more than 500 years. Since 1894 it has been a public park, and today it even has a Green Flag award for being well looked after. Parks like this are really important in cities. They clean the air, give animals and birds a home, and give us humans a beautiful space to relax and feel good in.

**Step 16:** Continue following the footpath as it bears right.

**Step 17:** Up ahead you'll find a small water fountain which the little ones enjoy as a splash park. Perfect for cooling off in hot weather. 💧

**Step 18:** Follow the path as it bends around to the right. There are benches here if you want to sit and tune into the world around you.

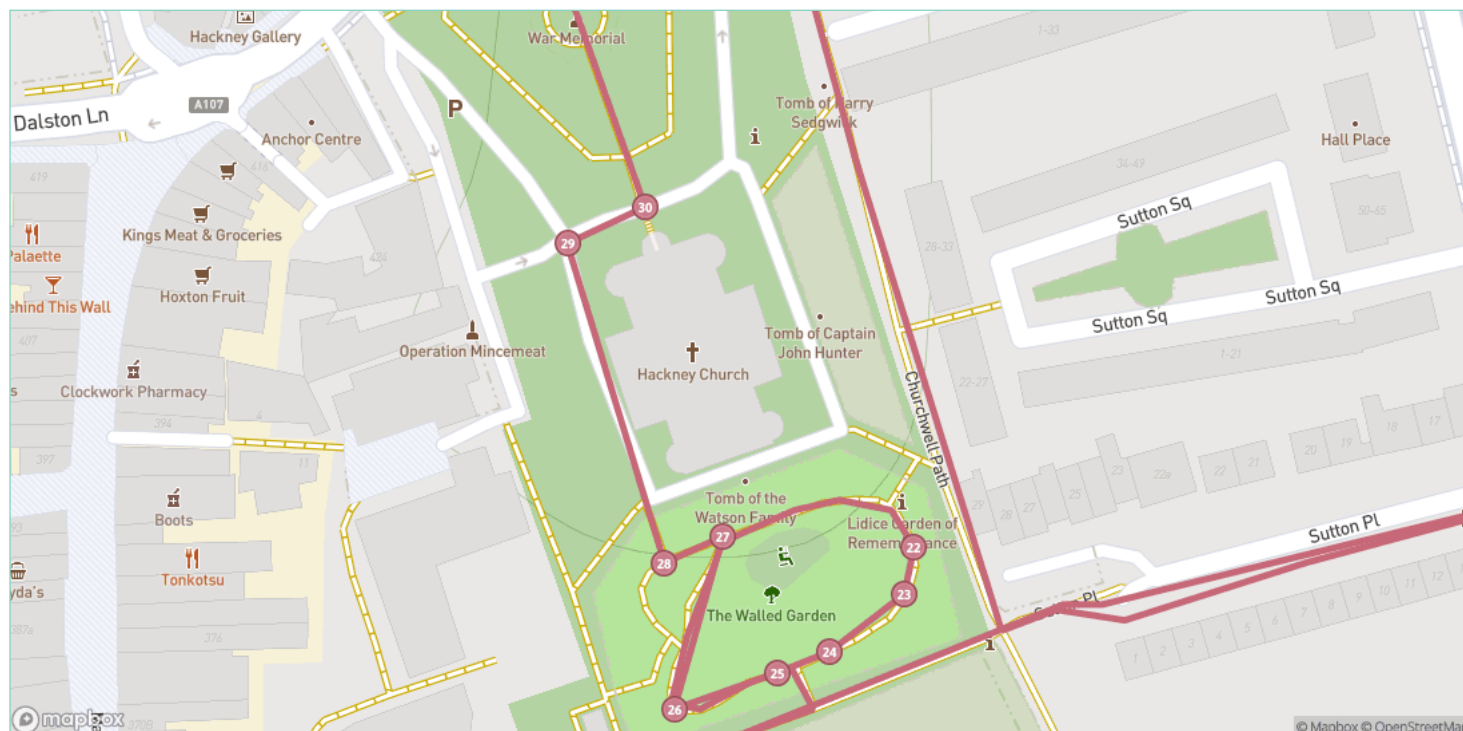
**Step 19:** Keep looping the park and you'll come across a border called 'Home' which serves as a reminder for the Windrush Generation who settled here.

**Step 20:** Have you spotted any good things in nature yet? Maybe some little birds or a flower you love the look of? Take a picture to savour it. 📷

**Step 21:** You'll even spot a palm tree as you keep walking.

**Step 22:** We can't wait to show you the very interesting trees up ahead. Perhaps you already noticed them when you walked in?





**Step 23:** This is a lovely place for a playground.

**Step 24:** Look up! What can you see? Hear more about this Indian bean tree by tapping the 'Play' button. 🖱️

**Step 25:** The next tree is equally majestic, a dawn redwood and very tall. Do you know much about identifying trees? 🌳 Discover more below 🖱️

### Tree Identification

Trees are a source of beauty and tranquility. They're also part of our natural heritage. So why not get to know them better? Click to learn how to identify common British trees.

#### Learn more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/nature/trees-plants/guide-identifying-trees>

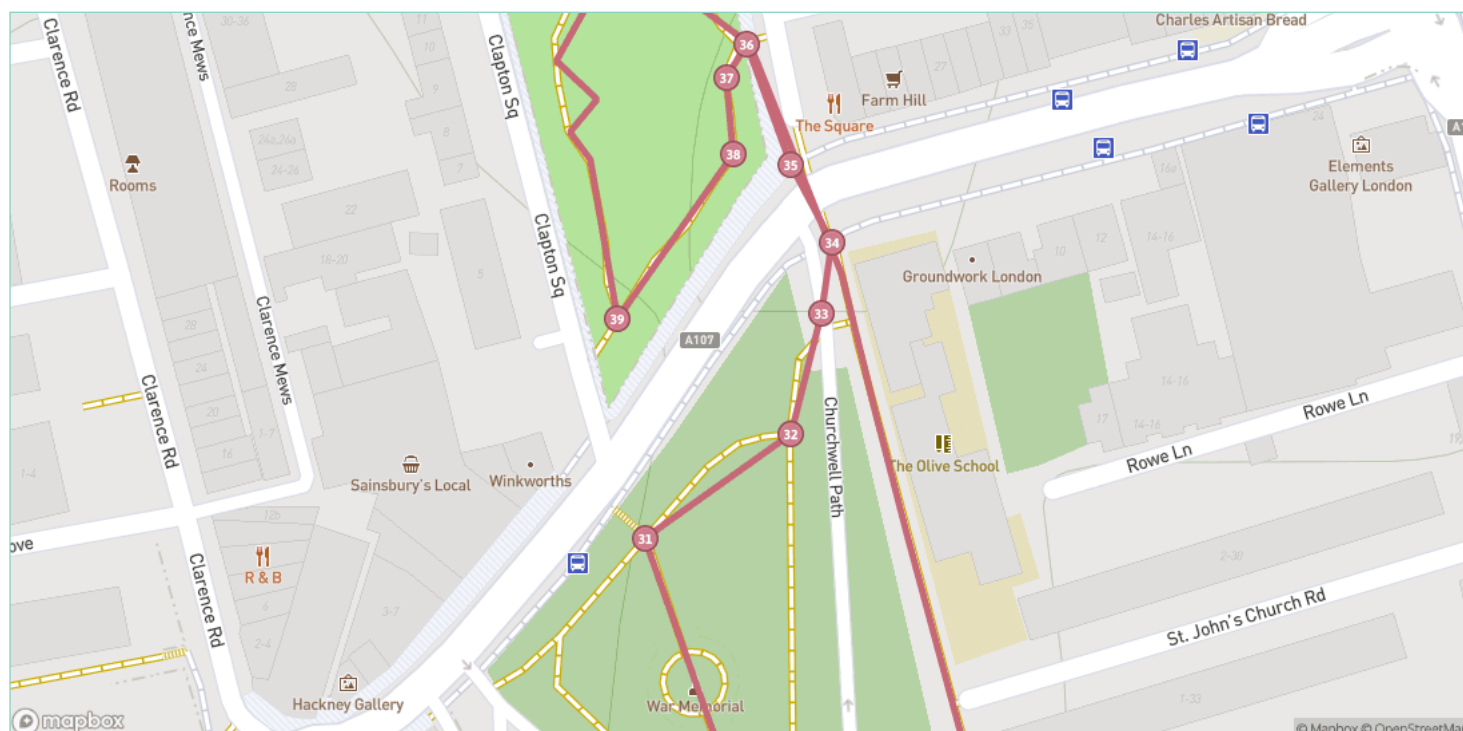
**Step 26:** We're looping halfway round again and keeping to the paths but feel free to walk across the grass if you prefer.

**Step 27:** Walk on the right hand side of the water fountain and turn left to walk towards a blue gate just up ahead.

**Step 28:** Exit the Walled Garden through the gate and continue ahead to walk past Hackney Church.

**Step 29:** Bear slight right at the church entrance to continue ahead.

**Step 30:** With the church behind you, continue ahead to walk past the war memorial.



**Step 31:** At the end of the path, turn right towards the exit of the churchyard.

**Step 32:** Follow the path left under the trees.

**Step 33:** Exit the park here and you'll be greeted by classic red telephone boxes. Turn left here and make your way to the main road.

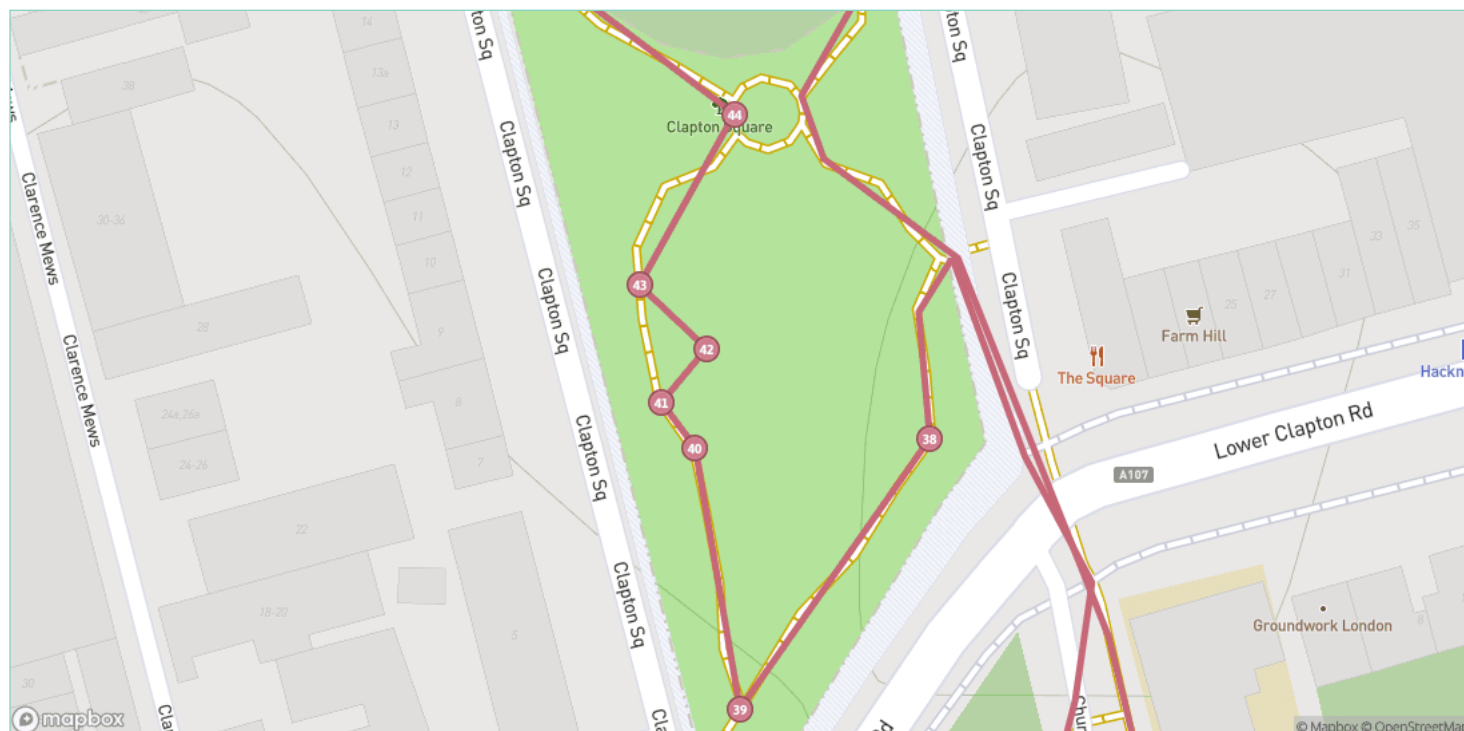
**Step 34:** Cross the cycle lane and head to the pedestrian crossing to cross over Lower Clapton Road. We're heading to our next park!

**Step 35:** After the crossing, keep left on Clapton Square and walk towards the park entrance just up ahead.

**Step 36:** Look for an entrance on the left and head on in to Clapton Square. Turn left to do a loop of the park.

**Step 37:** Can you spot any recent tree plantings? In winter they'll look much the same but in spring, summer and autumn you'll see their full colour.

**Step 38:** As always - don't forget to look up. You never know what you might see. Mini lanterns hanging from a tree for example!



**Step 39:** Continue along the perimeter path and follow it as it bends right. Or why not treat your feet to some barefoot in the grass action? 🍷

**Step 40:** Continue ahead! Look right for a log pile.

**Step 41:** Can you find it? Take a closer look if you can. See what you can spot. Maybe a critter crawling or something else?

**Step 42:** Please don't disturb it. This is a perfect habitat for hedgehogs. Learn more below about how to support wild animals in your Naturehood.



### Help Local Wildlife

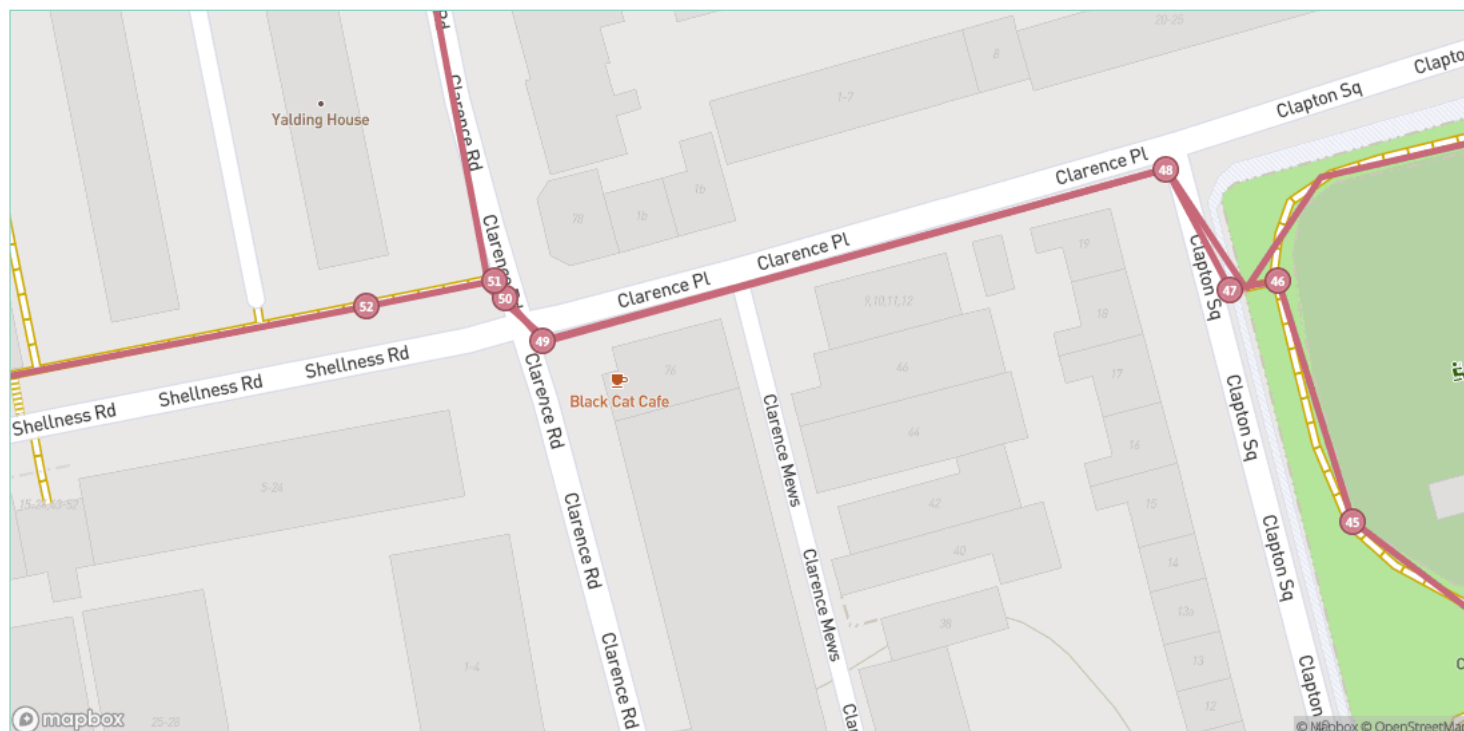
These log piles are like hotels for minibests! Woodlice and other tiny creatures love to live here, munching on dead plants. By doing this, they recycle nutrients and keep our soil healthy. You can help wildlife near you too! Try leaving food out for birds or making safe spaces, like log piles or bug hotels, where animals can rest and hide.

#### Learn more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/50-things/no.-43-help-a-wild-animal>

**Step 43:** When you're ready, head back to the main path, walk around the tree and bear slight right and then left to continue ahead.

**Step 44:** There's a fantastic kids playground here. Feel free to stop off for a break if you like. We'll walk past here later for another opportunity.



**Step 45:** Continue ahead, walking past the kids playground.

**Step 46:** Exit Clapton Square here and look for the drop kerb.


**Step 47:** Cross over Clapton Square diagonally to the right before we continue left up Clarence Place.

**Step 48:** Keep left and enjoy the pretty Victorian houses on the right hand side. Cross over the upcoming side road carefully.

**Step 49:** At the end of the street. Cross over Clarence Road and bear right on the other side.

**Step 50:** Look for a left turning between some brick pillars to walk through the estate.

**Step 51:** Mind the metal barriers as you go and continue straight.

**Step 52:** Enjoy the planting on your left hand side. In spring and summer you could look or listen out for bees or butterflies. Read more below. 

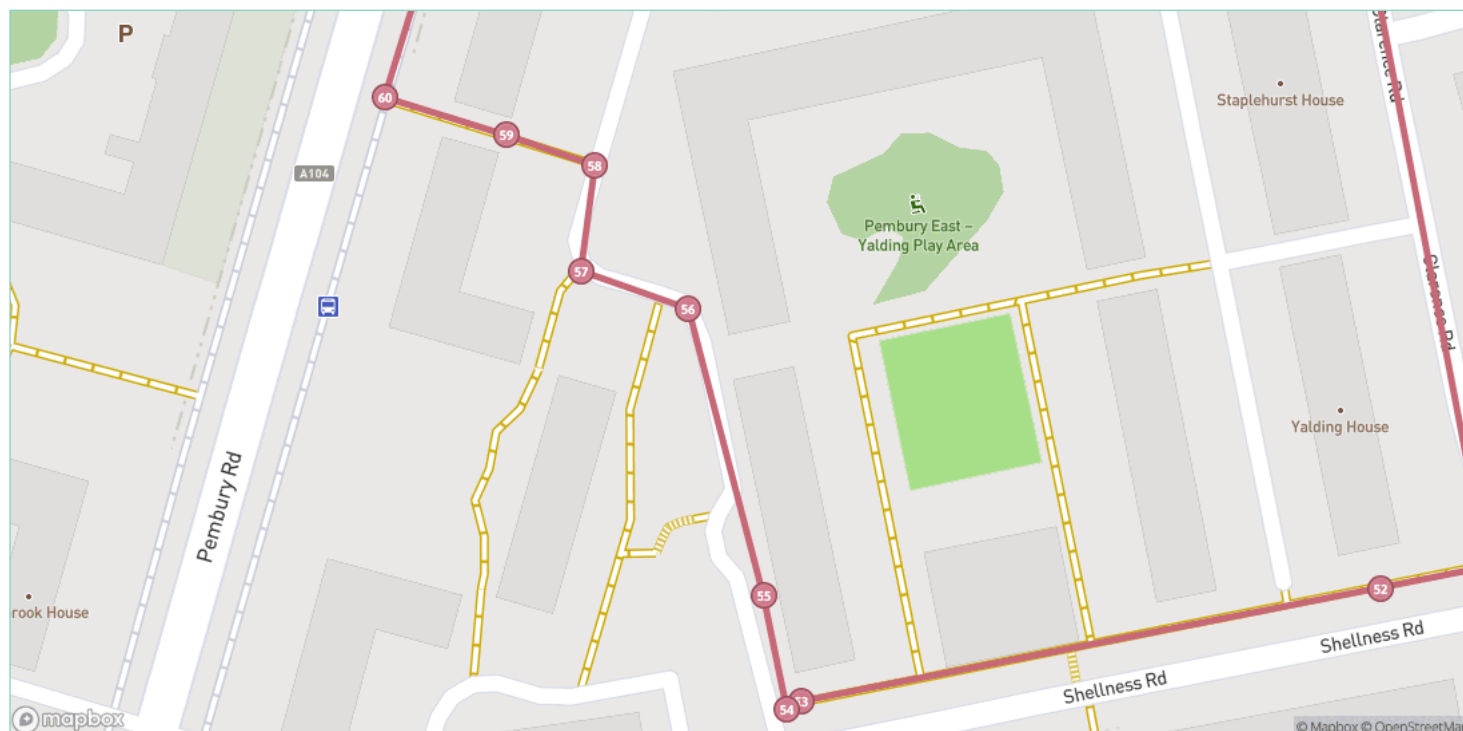
### Follow a Bug

Green spaces like this are full of tiny neighbours! You might spot ladybirds, spiders, caterpillars, or woodlice if you look closely. Searching for bugs is a bit like going on a treasure hunt but you've got to be quick and sharp-eyed. Stay alert like a true Naturehood detective and see what you can find!

### Find out more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/50-things/no.-31-make-friends-with-a-bug>





**Step 53:** Head to the end of the walkway and turn right, minding the bollards as you go.

**Step 54:** Keep right to walk on the pavement.

**Step 55:** Enjoy the mini gardens as you go.

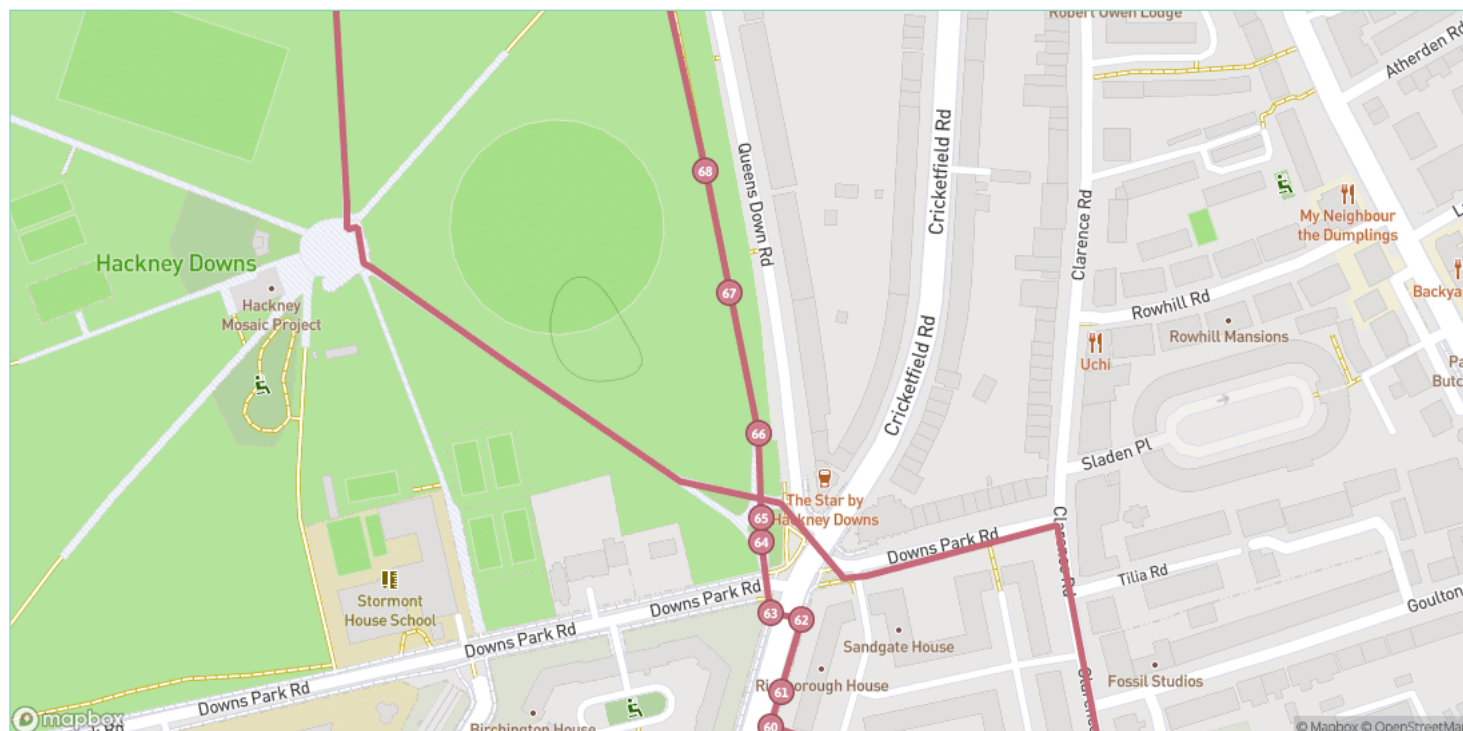
**Step 56:** Cross over to your left and bear right to continue.

**Step 57:** The path winds around the building. Keep going.

**Step 58:** Look for a beautifully framed exit onto the main road on the left hand side.

**Step 59:** Head towards the bollards on Pembury Road and get ready to turn right here.

**Step 60:** Continue right onto Pembury Road.



**Step 61:** Continue towards the upcoming pedestrian crossing.

**Step 62:** Cross over Pembury Road at the lights and turn right on the other side towards the next crossing.

**Step 63:** Use the next pedestrian crossing to cross over Downes Park Road and head straight on into Hackney Downs park. Mind the bollards as you go!

**Step 64:** Up ahead you'll find a handy water fountain where you can refill your water bottle.

**Step 65:** Keep to the right hand side of the park to follow our route.

**Step 66:** Continue walking along the tarmac footpath ahead. Have you ever made friends with a tree? Now could be a good time. Find out how below! 🖱️

### Make Friends With a Tree

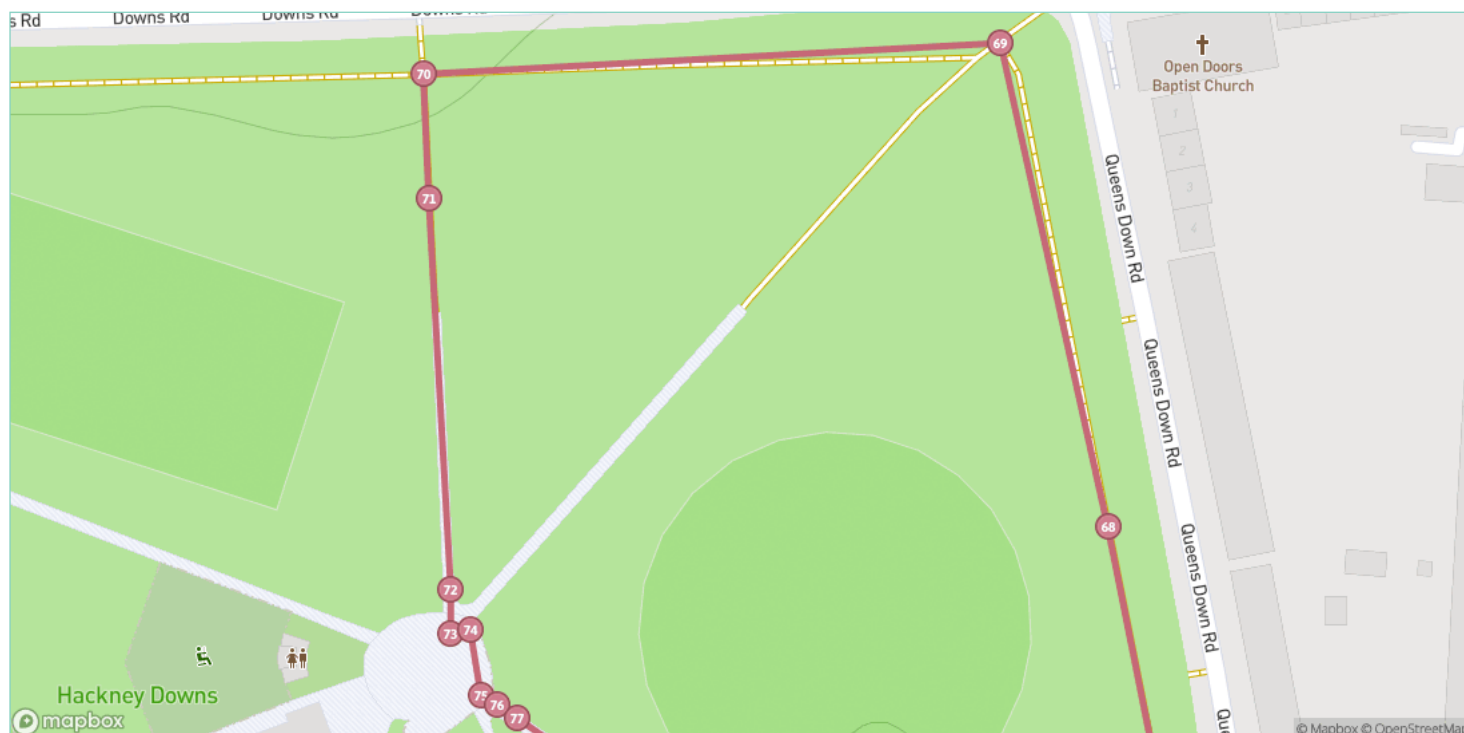
How well do you know the trees near you? Every tree is special. You could look in your garden, a park or a wood for a tree that you'd like to get to know. Go searching on your own, or invite your family or friends to join you.

#### Find out more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/50-things/no.-1-get-to-know-a-tree>

**Step 67:** Don't miss the gorgeous park views on your left hand side. What are the sights and sounds of the season? Autumn leaves? Blue skies?

**Step 68:** There are plenty of benches along the way. Take a moment to enjoy the dappled light of the trees and the moving shadows on the ground.



**Step 69:** At the end of the path, turn left.

**Step 70:** At the next left, turn left. You'll notice the grass and wildflowers either side of the path have been given space to thrive.

**Step 71:** This is great for local wildlife and adds to the park's biodiversity. It's also a good spot for hide and sneak in nature. Tap 'Play'. 🖱️

**Step 72:** When you're ready, walk to the end of the footpath. It opens up to a circle of evergreen trees.

**Step 73:** It's a perfect place for a game of nature charades! Have you ever tried that before? Tap 'Play' and then give it a go? 🎭

**Step 74:** Behind the water fountain on the edge of the path, you'll spot cute little mosaics. How many animals can you name?

**Step 75:** When you're ready, take the first turning on the left. This is known as a memorial 'Avenue of Trees'.

**Step 76:** Head to the information board to find out more about its significance to the local community.



**Step 77:** Walk mindfully down this path. Take it slow, it's too easy to rush when life feels busy or stressful. Let nature provide solace.

**Step 78:** Either side of the path, you'll find large stones. These are very cool if you take a moment to admire them as you go.

**Step 79:** You might spot lichen - those multi-coloured patches! Tap the 'Read More' button below to learn more.

### Lovely Lichen

Lichens are amazing! They're like tiny ecosystems all on their own. They're made from a team-up between a fungus and either an alga or special bacteria called cyanobacteria. That's teamwork in nature.

Lichens come in lots of shapes and colours from green, yellow, grey and even orange. Can you spot any on the rocks, tree barks or fences today?

Wherever you live, your senses can help you notice the plants and wildlife around you in every season.

#### Learn more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/nature/sense-nature>

**Step 80:** Continue down the path, you might spot more mosaics on the right which were inspired by the old Hackney greyhound stadium.





**Step 81:** Take the fork on the left fork to exit the park.

**Step 82:** Pass the bollards. Use the series of pedestrian crossings to cross the junction to the opposite side. Please be mindful of bikes & vehicles.

**Step 83:** Continue into Downs Park Road. Mind the bike lane as you make your way there.

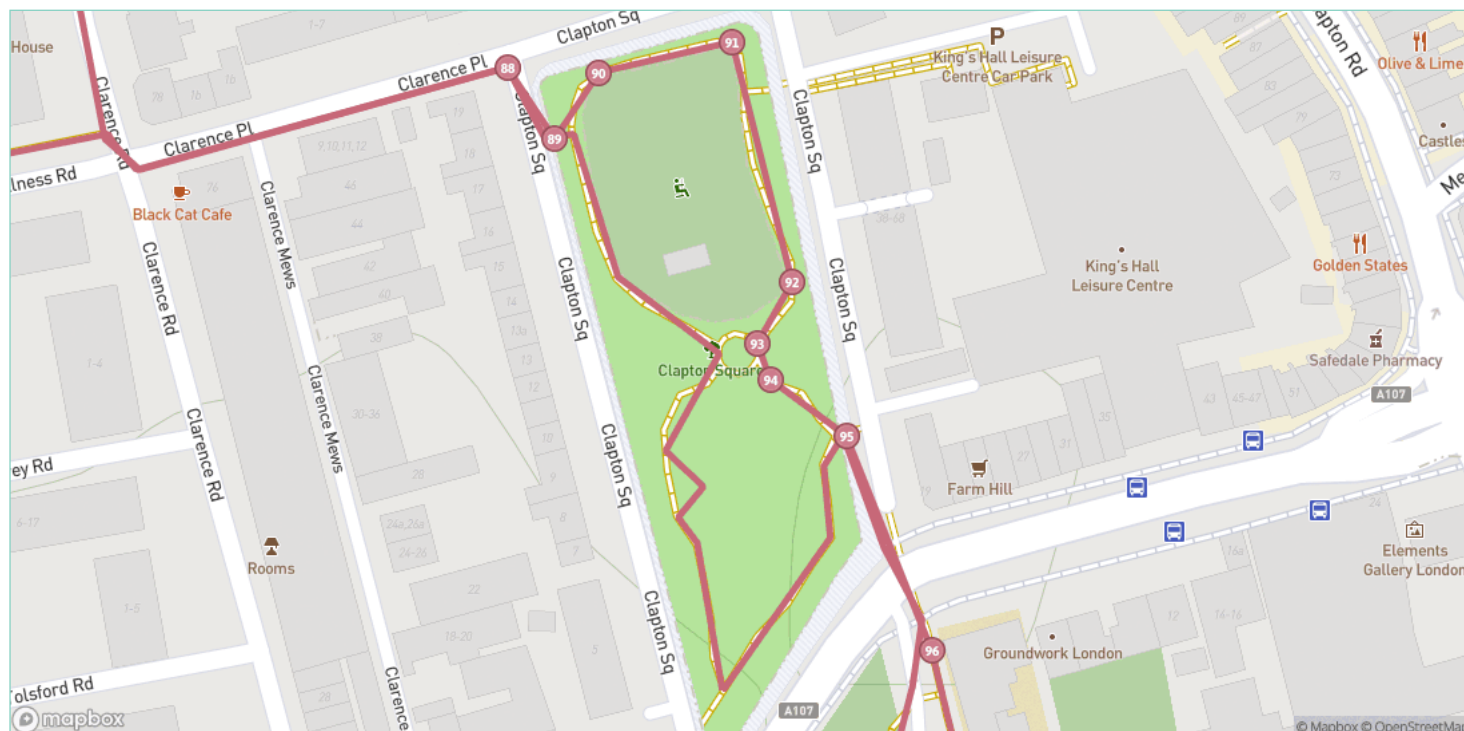
**Step 84:** Continue to the end of Downs Park Road and get ready to turn right at the end.

**Step 85:** Turn right onto Clarence Road.

**Step 86:** You're back at the corner of Shellness Road from earlier. Use the drop kerb to cross over and continue left...

**Step 87:** ...to walk back down Clarence Place, passing Clarence Mews.

**Step 88:** At the corner of Clapton Square, cross over via the drop kerb and enter Clapton Square park again.



**Step 89:** When you're in the park, turn left to follow the path around the square.

**Step 96:** Keep to the left of the red telephone boxes this time.

**Step 90:** Continue ahead and follow it as the path bends right. Take time to sit still if it takes your fancy.

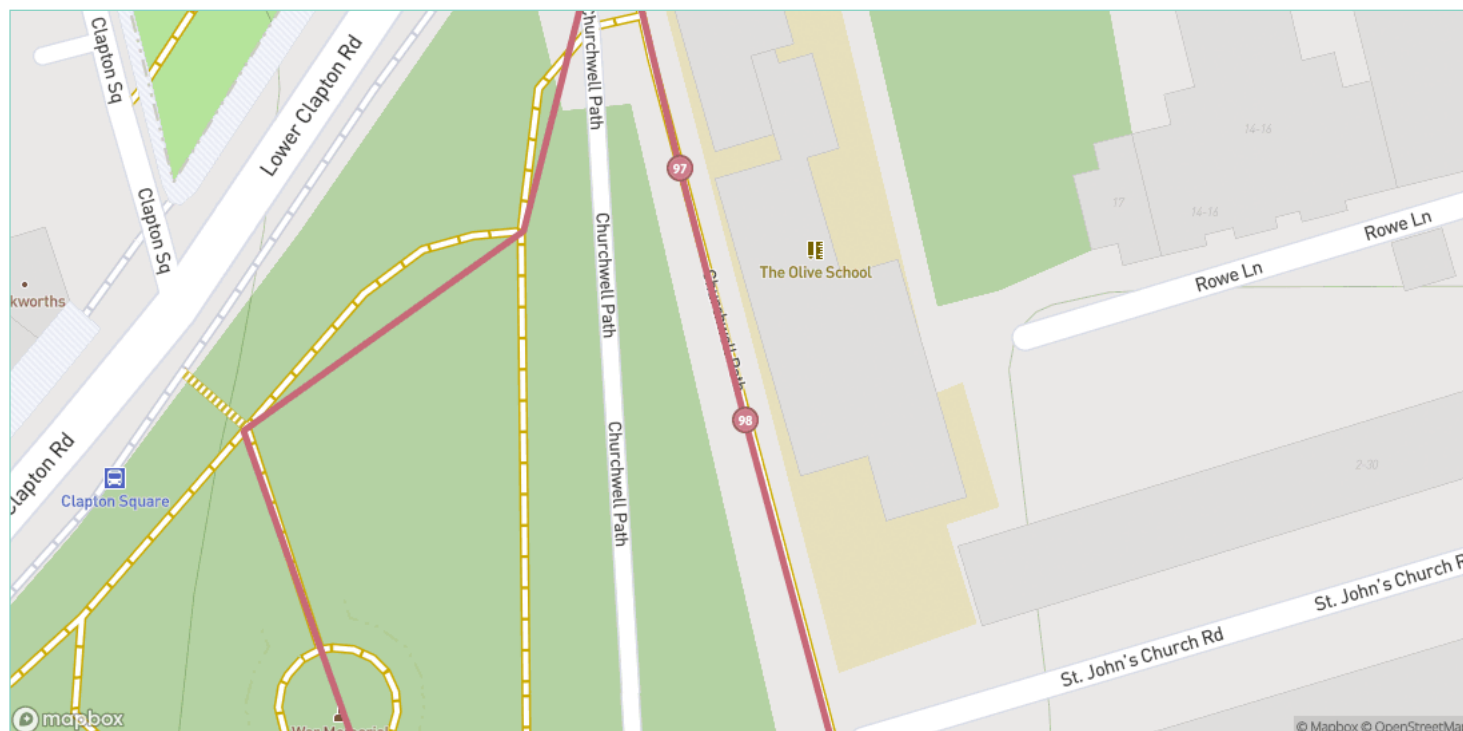
**Step 91:** If you missed the playground last time, now is a good time to try out the slides and climbing frames - kids only naturally! 😊

**Step 92:** When you're ready, keep going.

**Step 93:** Walk past the old water fountain.

**Step 94:** Exit the park at the park gate on your left and turn right. We're heading back towards the crossing from earlier.

**Step 95:** Use the pavement to make your way towards Lower Clapton Road. Use the pedestrian crossing and head toward the red telephone boxes.



**Step 97:** Welcome to Churchwell Path. It's a shared-use path with cyclists so do keep to one side. Take note of the large trees. 🌳🌳

**Step 98:** These are horse chestnut trees or you might call them conker trees. Have you ever played conkers before? Read more below.

### Playing Conkers

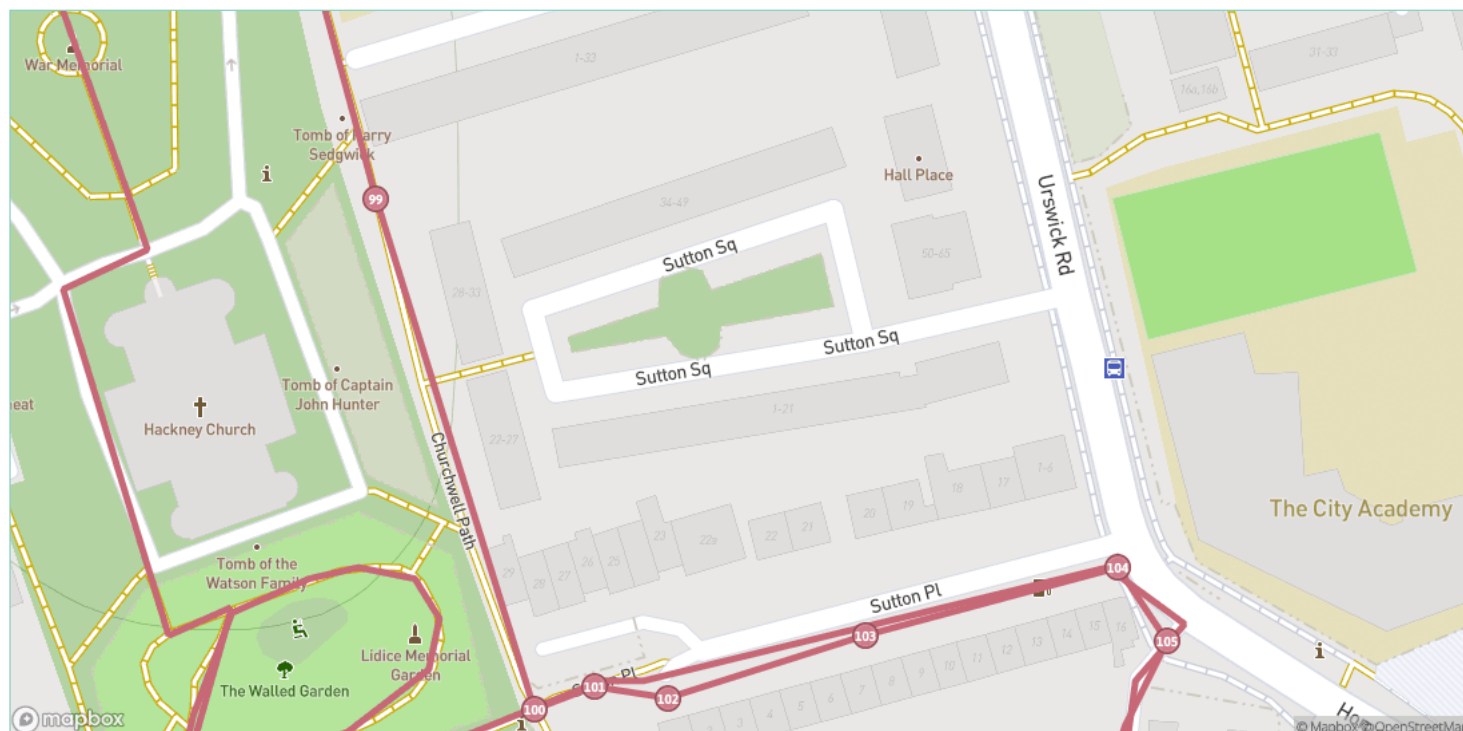
Conkers is one of the oldest games there is. In some places it's even called Kingers! To play, you'll need a shiny, hard conker with no cracks. Ask an adult to help make a hole through the middle, then thread a string or shoelace through and tie a knot at the end.

The rules are simple: take turns hitting each other's conker until one cracks. Whoever breaks their opponent's conker first is the winner! Why not challenge someone to the best of three games? You can even add your own rules like what happens if the strings get tangled. That way, every game is a little bit different!

And if you don't fancy playing, no problem. Just collect conkers for fun. You can admire their shiny brown shells at home.

### Find out more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/50-things/no.-10-play-conkers>



**Step 99:** Don't miss the creeping ivy adorning the walls. It makes a great habitat for nesting birds and looks lush!

**Step 100:** Continue until the next turning on the left and take the left turn into Sutton Place.

**Step 101:** Keep right to walk up the road.

**Step 102:** Tree pits offer a fantastic opportunity for an extra bloom of nature in cities. In late summer you might spot hollyhock flowers bursting up.

**Step 103:** Continue to the end of the road. If you get front door envy, this is a great street for that.

**Step 104:** At the end of Sutton Place, turn right to reach the National Trust's Sutton House. For info and opening times tap 'Read More' below.

### Sutton House

Sutton House is one of the last Tudor houses left in London! It was built in 1535 by Sir Ralph Sadleir, who worked for Thomas Cromwell and later became Secretary of State to Henry VIII. This was his family home.

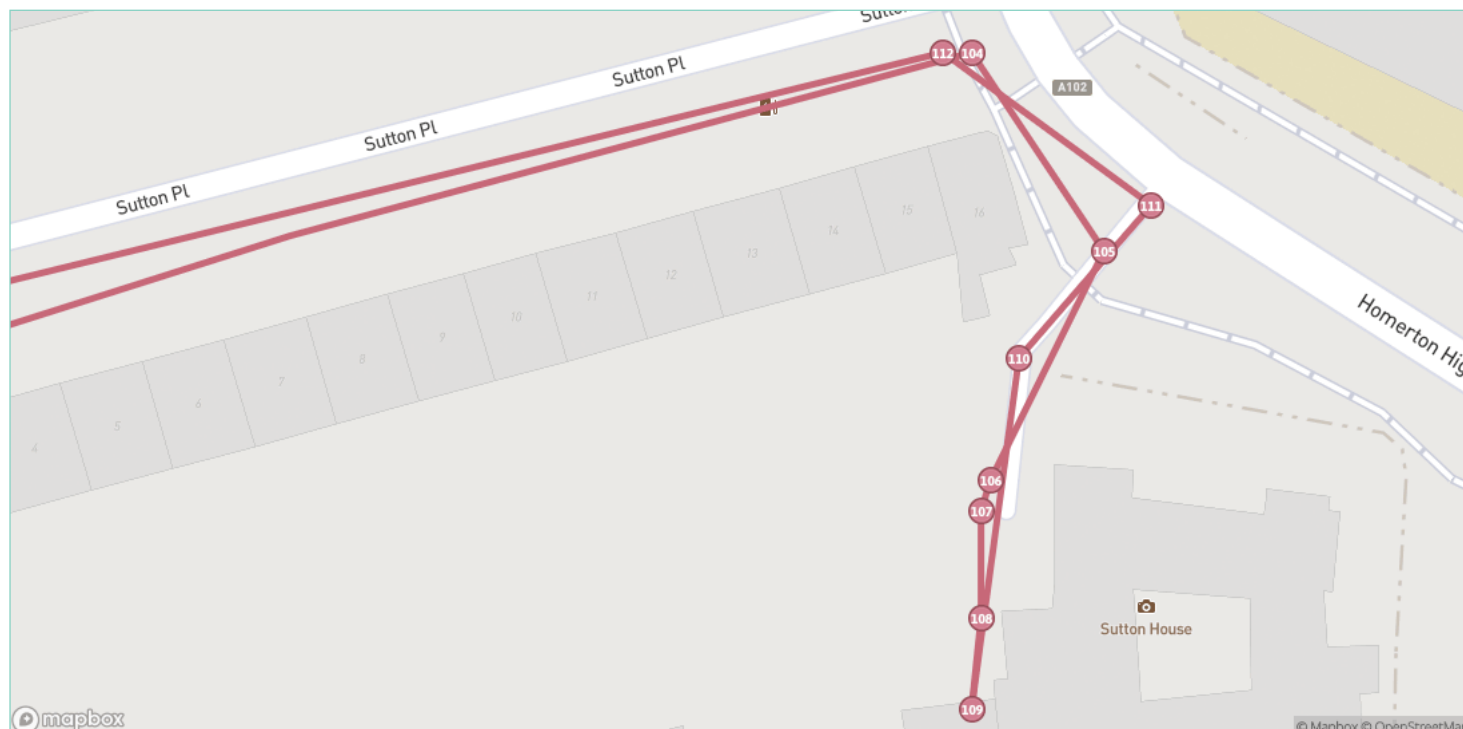
Inside, you can explore the rooms and see Tudor features alongside later additions that tell other surprising stories. Over 500 years, Sutton House has been many things — a Victorian school, a church institute during World War One, a Trades Union office, and even a punk squat in the 1980s! Outside, the garden called The Breaker's Yard is award-winning and celebrates the area's industrial past in a fun way.

Please note that the National Trust's Sutton House is usually open on Sundays. The house is open 11am-4pm and Breaker's Yard from 10am-dusk.

### Learn more

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/london/sutton-house-and-breakers-yard>





**Step 105:** Don't miss the vintage cars decorating the gate as you head or peer in.

**Step 106:** Welcome to Breakers Yard. A fun community garden perfect for exploring. Wander as you wish!

**Step 107:** Have you done a colour walk before? Not sure what it is? Tap the 'Play' button below for hints and tips. 🎧

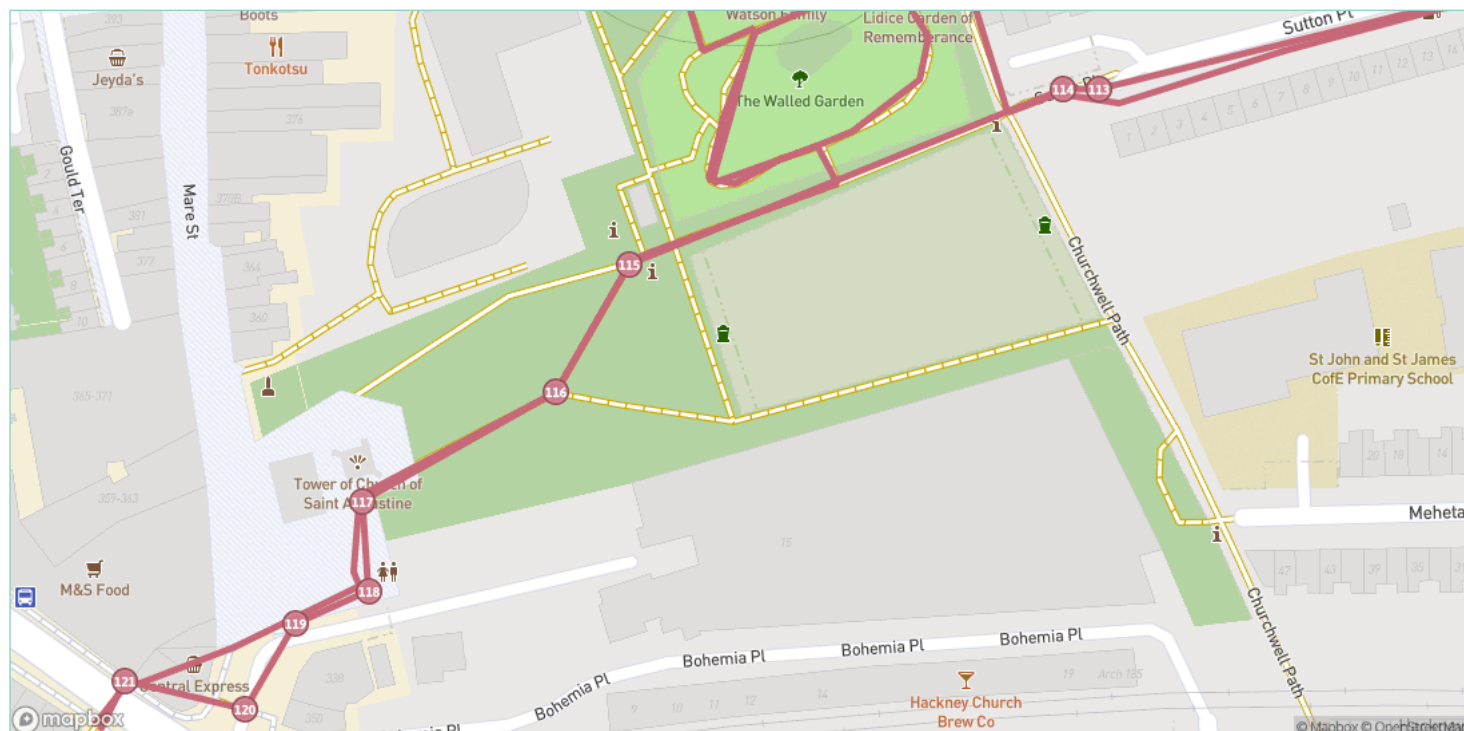
**Step 108:** Wind your way around the paths and see what cool things you can find. Can you find a grape vine or a mini pond? What else will you discover?

**Step 109:** On opening days you can even visit inside the house. The step-free entrance is around the front of the property.

**Step 110:** For a step free exit, retrace your steps back to the entrance to Breaker's Yard.

**Step 111:** Walk past the red telephone box and retrace your steps back to Sutton Place.

**Step 112:** Continue left down Sutton Place. Walk past the red post box. We're heading back towards Hackney Central train station now.



**Step 113:** Continue ahead on the path from earlier.

**Step 120:** Use the zebra crossing to make your way over Mare Street.

**Step 114:** Follow the walkway ahead. Take a moment to enjoy the trees whatever the season. From budding blossom to full leaf or bare branches. 🌸🌿🍂

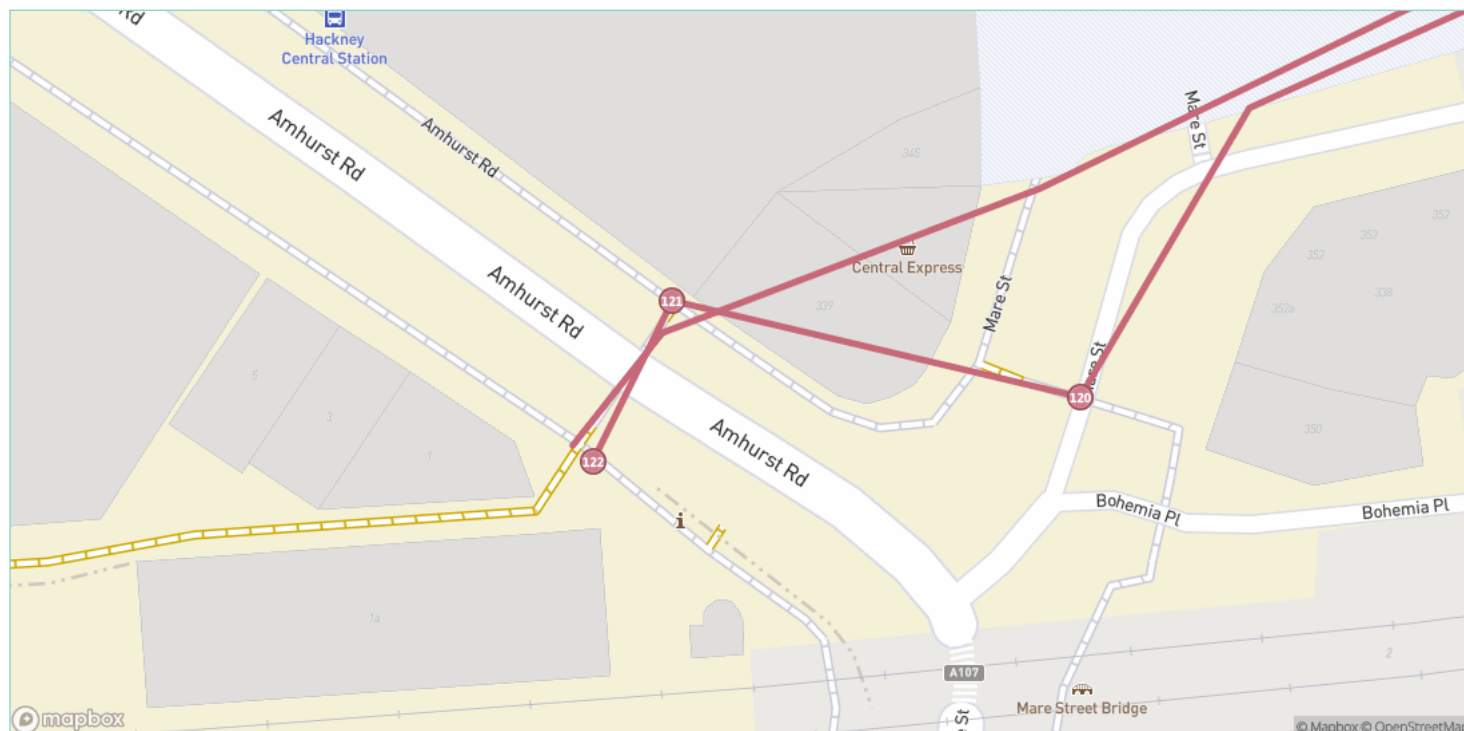
**Step 115:** Continue past the Walled Garden and cafe from earlier. Keep left as the path forks.

**Step 116:** Continue ahead, you'll soon be back at Mare Street where you'll find public toilets and more refreshment options.

**Step 117:** Get ready to walk back into vibrant city life. Hopefully feeling calm, happy and refreshed!

**Step 118:** Turn left to walk past the toilets using the ramp.

**Step 119:** Cross over the road opposite one of our favourite independent and community-led outdoor shops.



**Step 121:** Turn left to use the pedestrian crossing over Amhurst Road.

**Step 122:** We hope you enjoyed this walk around the Naturehood. 📍 If you did, do tap the 3 dots to share the walk with friends. If you'd like more walks like this, come back next time and don't forget to try out the Naturehood challenge. ❤️