



Canal &
River Trust

Making life better by water

London

Discover
great places
to visit by
the water

Brentford • Camden • Hanwell • Islington • Kings Cross •
Limehouse Basin • Little Venice • Old Ford Lock & Bow Wharf
• Three Mills & Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park •
Welsh Harp (Brent Reservoir) • West India Docks

We're the UK's largest canal charity

Enjoy

Take Action

Volunteer

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canalrivertrust.org.uk



Canal & River Trust

We are Canal & River Trust, the UK's largest canal charity.
From our countryside to our bustling cities, canals are a place
for everyone to connect with nature and our past.
We look after essential spaces for wildlife and people
helping us all feel happier and healthier.

As a charity we urgently need your support
to keep the canals you love alive.

Please support our work today.

[**DONATE HERE**](#)



Are you looking for inspiring places to visit?

Then look no further than your local canal or river. This guide features a selection of our best waterside places to visit in London – whatever the weather! Each location includes a map, suggestions of fun-packed activities you can do and useful information on where to park, places to eat, toilets and boat trips.

Discover more free places to visit in our regional guides – canalrivertrust.org.uk/fundaysoutguide

- 1 Brentford
- 2 Camden
- 3 Hanwell
- 4 Islington
- 5 King's Cross
- 6 Limehouse Basin
- 7 Little Venice
- 8 Old Ford Lock & Bow Wharf
- 9 Three Mills & Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- 10 Welsh Harp (Brent Reservoir)
- 11 West India Docks



* This map shows waterways managed by members of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA). We have not featured places to visit on waterways managed by these organisations. There are other inland waterways that have not been shown, the information on this map is for guidance only, for accurate information please visit our website.



Escape the city and spend time in nature at **Brentford**

Built during the industrial revolution, today this pocket of London encompasses green spaces, beautiful locks and paths. It's a great place for a walk, cycle or jog.

Keeping history alive

Sited at the start of the Grand Junction Canal (now Grand Union Canal), Brentford Gauging Lock was once one of the busiest places on the waterway. Its construction provided a gateway from the Thames to the country's industrial heartlands in the Midlands.

Cargo carried along the canal included timber, steel, tar, corn, bricks, coal and coffee. Boatmen would pay a toll to pass through the lock based on the weight and value of what was being carried.

You can see a small display of the working canal in the toll house.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Pause** and watch the boats making their way through the locks.
- 2 Take** a stroll along the towpath to Thames Lock, the final lock on the Grand Union Canal and the gateway to the River Thames (0.5km).
- 3 Visit** Syon House and park situated alongside the canal, it's one of the last great houses of London.
- 4 Chat** with our friendly volunteers, they'll tell you about the canal and what we're doing to care for it.
- 5 Explore** the Toll House to find out more about the area, check online for details of opening times.

Visit us at:
 Brentford Gauging Lock,
 Brentford, TW8 8HP



Allow 1–2 hours
 for your visit

Did you know?

The gauging lock is so-called because here, the toll keeper used a gauging rod to measure how high the boat sat out of the water and calculate the amount of cargo carried. From that, he could work out the toll to be paid to use the canal.



Map not to scale:
 covers approx.
 1 mile / 1.6km

Find your way around

- towpath
- swing bridge
- café
- pub
- food & drink
- shopping
- play area
- point of interest
- parking
- railway station

Stay SAFE
 Stay Away From
 the Edge!





Visit this vibrant waterway buzzing with activity in **Camden**

Enjoy a lively day out with a spot of gongoozling at the Regent's Canal in Camden, and feel better for spending some time by water.

Keeping history alive

This popular tourist destination was once a heavily industrialised area populated with warehouses, stables and gin distilleries.

In its heyday 700 – 800 horses worked along the towpath and around Camden Goods Depot. Back then, the site boasted stable blocks, horse tunnels, tack rooms, saddler's workshops and a horse hospital.

The canal buildings can still be seen today – only instead of cargo, these buildings now house pubs, clubs and one of London's most popular craft markets.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Take** a break at one of the cafés or street stalls and watch the boats making their way along the canal.
- 2 Go** across Roving Bridge, which switches the towpath from one side of the canal to the other. Look out for the rope-marks in the top rail.
- 3 Travel** by boat to Little Venice and get a new view of the city.
- 4 Try** your hand at canoeing or paddleboarding on the canal from Pirates Castle.
- 5 Pause** for a chat with our friendly volunteer lock keepers, they'll tell you more about the canal and the area.

Visit us at:
Camden Locks, London NW1 8AF

 Allow half to a full day for your visit

Find your way around

-  towpath
-  café
-  pub
-  toilets
-  shopping
-  point of interest
-  trip boat
-  canoeing
-  London Overground station
-  London Underground station



Did you know?

There isn't actually a Camden Lock. The name refers to an area of the market next to the three waterways with dual locks built in the 19th century as part of the Regent's Canal – Hampstead Road Lock, Hawley Lock and Kentish Town Lock.



 N
Map not to scale:
covers approx.
½ mile / 0.8km

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Enjoy a country walk in the city at

Hanwell

Connecting the River Brent to the rest of the canal system, Hanwell's flight of six locks is a world away from the city's busy streets.

Keeping history alive

The Grand Union Canal was the M1 of its day, connecting London with Birmingham. Canal engineer William Jessop was responsible for designing the Hanwell Flight of locks.

Built in 1794, as part of one of the first stretches of the new waterway, the series of six locks is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

On one side of the canal there are ponds to supply the locks with water. On the opposite side is a long Victorian brick wall separating the towpath from St Bernard's Hospital.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

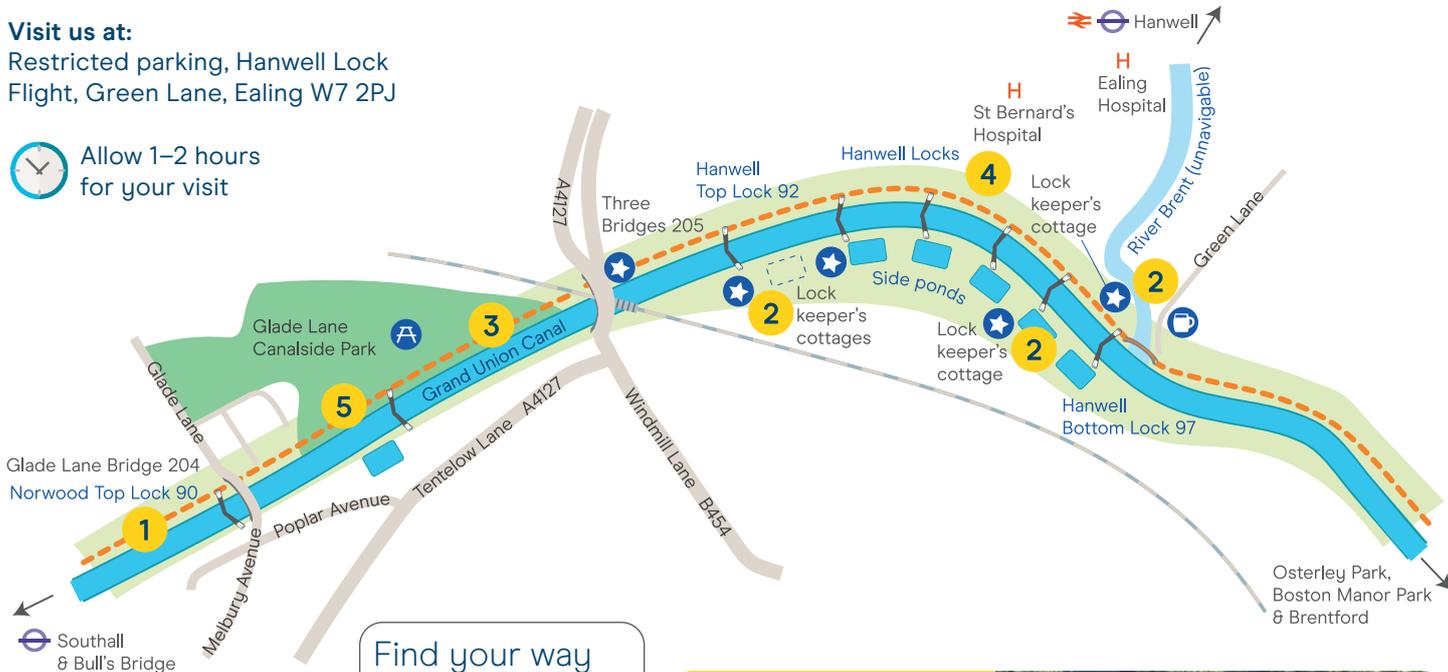
- 1 Watch** the boats passing through the locks; it can take 1¼ hours to make their way from the top to the bottom.
- 2 Spot** the old canal features – the lock keeper's cottages, bollards made from tree trunks and a ramp to help horses out of the canal when they fell in.
- 3 Enjoy** a traffic-free cycle ride along the towpath to where the canal joins the River Thames (1.8 miles/3km).
- 4 See** if you can find the filled in arch in St Bernard's Hospital wall – this is where coal was delivered for the hospital boilers.
- 5 Enjoy** a relaxing few moments bird watching – you could see herons.

Visit us at:

Restricted parking, Hanwell Lock Flight, Green Lane, Ealing W7 2PJ



Allow 1–2 hours for your visit



Southall & Bull's Bridge



Map not to scale:
covers approx.
¾ mile / 0.8km

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Find your way around

towpath



pub



bench/picnic area



point of interest



Elizabeth Line station



railway station

Did you know?

Three Bridges (Windmill Bridge) was designed by renowned engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It is in fact one road bridge, one canal aqueduct and a railway cutting intersecting on three levels.





A place to wander and spend time by water in **Islington**

Tucked away behind the busy A501 and just a few minutes walk from Angel tube station, City Road Basin is an oasis in the heart of the city. The perfect place for a peaceful stroll.

Keeping history alive

Ideas for a new canal to link the Grand Junction Canal (now the Grand Union Canal) at Paddington with the Thames at Limehouse were first raised in 1802, with permission granted in 1812.

The canal company faced many challenges raising the funds for the waterway. It ended up costing £772,000 (equivalent to £95.5m today) to build the canal – twice the original estimate.

In 1820 the Regent's Canal was finally completed. City Road Basin proved more convenient to the city than Paddington, and soon became the main distribution centre for goods into London.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Get** away from the traffic and enjoy a walk to Limehouse Basin or the River Lea (3.4 miles/5.5km).
- 2 Take** a break at the canalside café and watch the boats as they make their way through the lock.
- 3 Pause** for a chat with our friendly volunteers, they'll tell you more about the canal and how we are helping to care for it.
- 4 Have** a go at kayaking or paddleboarding, Islington Boat Club runs regular sessions.
- 5 Simply** take a moment to relax on a bench and feel the benefit of spending time by water.

Find your way around

-  towpath
-  tunnel
-  café
-  pub
-  play area
-  canoeing
-  London Underground station

Visit us at:
Graham Street, Islington N1 8GJ

 Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit



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A guide to London's waterways | Canal & River Trust

Did you know?

City Road Basin was actually a private area with no public access until 2004. When regeneration works were completed in 2009 the public were permitted to enter and use the open space for the first time.



N
Map not to scale:
covers approx.
1 mile / 1.6km



Discover an unexpected oasis of calm and peace in **King's Cross**

Sandwiched between King's Cross and St Pancras railway stations is the Regent's Canal. It's an unexpected oasis of calm and peace amid the hectic pace of long distance rail travel.

Keeping history alive

The nine-mile long Regent's Canal gently passes through London from the River Thames at Limehouse to Paddington, making its way through the heart of King's Cross.

For over 140 years, this now peaceful waterway was a hive of industry and activity, transporting coal, goods and building materials to the city.

Today, King's Cross is a place where two ages of transport meet – canal boats quietly chug along the waterway and the Eurostar streams past above.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Visit** the London Canal Museum and discover more about the city's waterways.
- 2 Enjoy** a picnic on the Canalside Granary Steps.
- 3 Wander** along the towpath to Islington Tunnel and watch the boats emerge (400m).
- 4 As** you watch the boats on the canal, keep an eye out for trains too – the tracks from King's Cross pass under the canal and those from St Pancras run above it.
- 5 Escape** the busy roads and follow the towpath to Little Venice and Camden (1 mile/1.7km).

Visit us at:
Central St Martins,
NIC 4AA



Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit

Did you know?

The building that now houses Central St Martins was once a grain store and was designed by Lewis Cubitt in 1852, while a past occupant of the London Canal Museum was Swiss entrepreneur Carlo Gatti. Gatti introduced ice cream to London and used the building to store shipments of ice from Scandinavia.

Find your way around

- towpath
- point of interest
- tunnel
- museum
- café
- marina
- pub
- trip boat
- food & drink
- parking
- toilets
- London Underground
- shopping
- railway station
- bench/picnic area





Visit the gateway between the Thames and 2,000 miles of canals and rivers at

Limehouse Basin

Once a dock, Limehouse Basin is now home to narrowboats, yachts and ocean-going pleasure craft. With its cafés and shops it's a great place for a day out.

Keeping history alive

Limehouse Basin was originally known as Regent's Canal Dock. Its opening created an important connection between the Thames and the country's inland canal system. From its opening in 1820 until its closure to commercial traffic in 1969, the basin was the interchange between the sea and the inland waterways.

In the basin, cargoes were transferred from larger ships to the shallow-draught canal boats. Coal was delivered from the North of England and timber from Norway and Finland. Ice from Scandinavia was supplied to butchers, fishmongers and ice-cream makers in King's Cross.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Stroll** around the basin to the Accumulator Tower, an important piece of local heritage, where pressurised water provided hydraulic power for cranes, locks and swing bridges.
- 2 Pause** and watch the many different boats and yachts coming and going.
- 3 Enjoy** a traffic-free cycle ride either along the Thames Path or Regent's Canal and into the city.
- 4 Find** The Grapes in historic Narrow Street – it's said to be the setting for Charles Dickens' final novel, *Our Mutual Friend*.
- 5 Follow** the towpath along Limehouse Cut to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (2 miles/3.5km).

Find your way around

-  towpath
-  swing bridge
-  pub
-  play area
-  marina
-  point of interest
-  canoeing
-  Docklands Light Railway station
-  railway station

Visit us at:
Limehouse Basin,
Horseferry Road,
Limehouse E14 8DY

 Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit



N
Map not to scale:
covers approx.
¾ mile / 1.2km

Did you know?
When tall ships, large traditionally-rigged sailing vessels, arrive in or leave the basin traffic in Narrow Street is stopped, barriers come down, the swing bridge opens and the tidal sector gates let the boats in or out.

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Visit an oasis of tranquillity in the city at

Little Venice

Just behind the busy A40 Westway and Paddington station you'll find an area affectionately known as Little Venice, one of London's most picturesque spots.

Keeping history alive

In the early 1800s, Paddington was just a village on the outskirts of London. Commissioned to redevelop the area around it, renowned architect John Nash included the construction of a canal in his plans – Regent's Canal.

Little Venice is the area where the Regent's Canal joins the Grand Union Canal. Completed in 1816, it formed part of a busy trading route connecting the Midlands to the River Thames.

Over the centuries the area has been changed and modernised, yet most of its original features remain today.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Take** a boat trip from Little Venice to Camden Lock for a different view of the city.
- 2 Have** a picnic on the banks of the canal in Rembrandt Park and enjoy some time by water.
- 3 Stroll** along the towpath to Paddington Basin, look out for sculptures 'Standing Man' and 'Walking Man' by Sean Henry.
- 4 Pause** on one of the benches and watch the boats coming and going along the canal.
- 5 Have** a chat with our friendly volunteers, they'll tell you more about the canal and how we are caring for it.

Did you know?

Paddington Bear author Michael Bond used to live in a house on Maida Avenue overlooking the canal, and Little Venice featured in the film Paddington 2.



Visit us at:
Blomfield Road, W9 2PF

 Allow half a day for your visit



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Find your way around

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  towpath |  bench/picnic area |  London Underground station |
|  tunnel |  point of interest |  Elizabeth Line station |
|  café |  art installation |  railway station |
|  pub |  trip boat | |
|  food & drink |  bus stop | |



Escape from the city and connect with nature at

Old Ford Lock & Bow Wharf

Bearing remains from our industrial past, Old Ford Lock and Bow Wharf is a great place for wildlife watching and spotting historic canal features.

Keeping history alive

The construction of the Hertford Union Canal in 1830 created a shortcut between the River Thames and the River Lee Navigation. It's known locally as 'Duckett's Canal' after Sir George Duckett, who first envisaged the canal. However, the waterway was a commercial failure. The three locks at Old Ford had huge drops, making it tricky for boats to pass through and a dam was built to prevent the Regent's Canal from losing water to the new waterway.

The Regent's Canal Company finally bought the canal in 1857, removed the dam and improved navigation, transforming it into a popular mooring spot.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Enjoy** a traffic-free cycle ride along the towpath, you can head east to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, north west to Camden or south to Limehouse and the River Thames.
- 2 Take** a stroll around Victoria Park next to the canal.
- 3 Pause**, watch the wildlife and enjoy spending time by water.
- 4 Look** for the ramps in the Regent's Canal, they were built to help horses towing canal boats to get out when they fell in.
- 5 Watch** the colourful narrowboats making their way along the waterway.

Visit us at:
Bow Wharf, Wennington
Road, E3 5SN



Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit

Did you know?
Boaters were charged a toll of one shilling, the equivalent of five pence today. A shilling was more than a day's wages for the average worker in London in the 1800s.



Find your way around

- towpath
- café
- pub
- toilets
- bench/picnic area
- play area
- point of interest
- parking
- London Underground station



N
Map not to scale:
covers approx.
½ mile / 0.8km

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London's best-kept secret leads you to a celebration of art and leisure at

Three Mills & Queen Elizabeth Park

Three Mills is one of London's best-kept secrets. Within cycling distance, it's possible to see both 300-year-old mills and great 21st century architecture in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Keeping history alive

The history of Three Mills Island dates back to at least the 11th century. Over the years, the mills have ground everything from flour to gunpowder to grain for gin.

From powering the mills to being used to transport barges carrying building materials and refuse to and from the Olympic Park during construction, the river continues to shape the area. Today the 6km/3.7 miles of waterways in the Park are a vibrant focal point for events, sport and leisure.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Take** a tour of The House Mill, the world's largest surviving tidal mill.
- 2 Enjoy** a picnic on Three Mills Green and watch boats making their way through the locks.
- 3 Pause** and see what wildlife you can spot along the waterways – swans, coots and bats are frequent visitors.
- 4 Stroll** along the towpath to the Olympic Park (1 mile/1.7km).
- 5 Explore** The Line, an ambitious pathway and public art project that connects Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2.

Visit us at:

Three Mill Lane, London E3 3DU



Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit

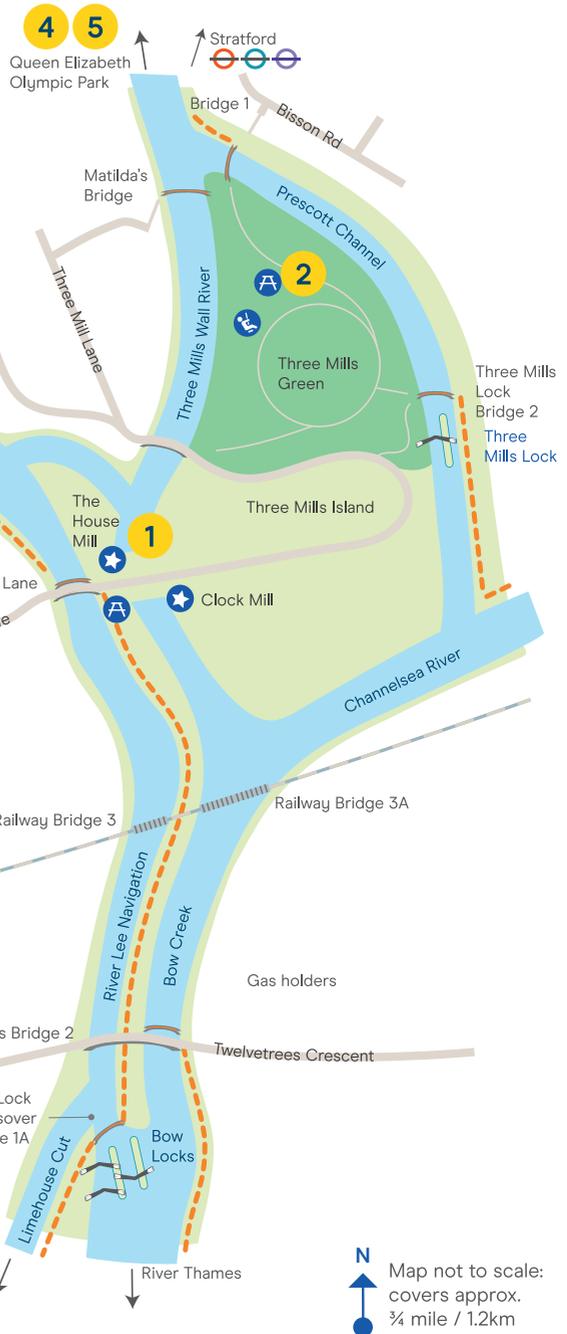
Did you know?

The 18th century House Mill is the largest surviving tidal mill in the world and the Grade II listed Clock Mill is home to Three Mills Film Studios, a favourite of filmmaker Danny Boyle and home to BBC's Masterchef.



Find your way around

- towpath
- shopping
- bench/picnic area
- play area
- point of interest
- London Underground station
- Docklands Light Railway station
- Elizabeth Line station



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Stay Away From the Edge!



An oasis of calm in the city at

Welsh Harp (Brent Reservoir)

This Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is an oasis of calm away from the busy streets, just the place to escape the bustle of urban life.

Keeping history alive

Built in 1835 by the Regent's Canal Company to supply water via the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal, Brent Reservoir was a destination for entertainment and recreation during the latter part of the 1800s. The site saw the first greyhound races with mechanical hares, Britain's first formal cycle race and the ill-fated launch of the first parachute balloon. It was also used by naturists in the 1920s until the 'Sunbathing Riots' in 1930.

While you can still see sailing boats, the site is now an important breeding ground for birds – 250 species of birds have been recorded here.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Take** binoculars, stop at the bird hides and watch the many wetland birds that can be found here.
- 2 Relax** and enjoy a waterside picnic.
- 3 Stroll** around the reservoir and feel the benefits of spending time by water.
- 4 Try** out stand-up paddleboarding, there are frequent taster sessions on the reservoir.
- 5 Explore** the variety of habitats.

Find your way around

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---|----------------------------|
|  | café |  | sailing |
|  | pub |  | canoeing |
|  | bench/picnic area |  | parking |
|  | play area |  | London Underground station |
|  | Environment Centre |  | railway station |

Did you know?

The reservoir is known locally as Welsh Harp after the historic pub which stood nearby until the early 1970s and was once one of London's most popular venues.



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the Edge!



N
Map not to scale:
covers approx.
1¼ miles / 2km

Visit us at:
Birchen Grove car park,
NW9 7NX

 Allow 1–2 hours
for your visit



A trading hub for over 200 years at **West India Docks**

More commonly known as Canary Wharf, West India Docks was the first purpose-built docks in London, which in the early 1800s was the busiest port in the world.

Keeping history alive

West India Docks were built in 1802. An enormous undertaking, it was the largest and most expensive building project in the world, costing £82m in today's money.

For nearly 200 years ships from the West Indies unloaded their cargo of rum, sugar and coffee into the warehouses, where it was transferred onto barges and delivered all over the country via the canal system.

Closed in 1980, the old wharves have since been regenerated into shops, restaurants and of course, Canary Wharf.

Discover lots of fun things to do with the family by and on the water. Go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

5 things to do (see map)

- 1 Take** a stroll around the docks and see the different boats moored there.
- 2 Have** a coffee or a bite to eat and enjoy spending time by water.
- 3 Pause** and see what wildlife you can spot – cormorants, coots and wagtails are frequently seen and a seal is often spotted in the Thames.
- 4 Visit** the London Museum Docklands and discover the history of the area from Roman times to the present day.
- 5 See** One Canada Square, at 770ft (235m) it is the third tallest building in the UK.

Find your way around

-  path
-  shopping
-  ferry terminal
-  lift bridge
-  bench/picnic area
-  parking
-  café
-  point of interest
-  London Underground station
-  pub
-  museum
-  Docklands Light Railway station
-  food & drink
-  marina
-  Elizabeth Line station
-  toilets
-  trip boat

Did you know?

Working in the docks was brutal. Sugar leaking from the sacks rubbed dockers' necks, shoulders and hands raw. This gave the quayside the name of Blood Alley. Today, Blood Alley is home to the London Museum Docklands.



Visit us at:

West India Docks,
Lawn House Close,
E14 9YQ



Allow half to a full
day for your visit

N

Map not to scale:
covers approx.
1 mile / 1.6km

Stay SAFE

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Help us to care for London's waterways

As a charity we urgently need your support to keep the canals you love alive with nature and their heritage protected for the future.



DONATE



Please support our work & donate today

SCAN ME



Text CANAL5 to 70490 to give £5

Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text CANAL5NOINFO instead.

For information on visiting safely: canalrivertrust.org.uk/safety

Details correct at time of print, please check before travelling.

