

Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks

Welcome to Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks. These walks are designed to provide a gentle stroll of about 5 to 10 kilometres or 3 to 6 miles, approximately 5,000 to 10,000 steps, taking in a few buildings and sites of interest, and where possible using green spaces and footpaths.

Barnet and Hadley Walk

This walk is in and around High Barnet and Hadley ending on Barnet High Street a half-mile from the Tube station. There are ten stops on the walk. This walk is approximately 5.5 kilometres or 3.42 miles.

To help set the scene, we suggest that you begin the walk from High Barnet Tube station which is at the end of the Northern Line. As you exit the Tube station, turn left to walk down the hill until you meet the road, Barnet Hill. Cross over Barnet Hill at the pedestrian crossing and stand on the grass facing out over the houses and with the station behind you. You can also reach this point by bus (including the 263, 34, 234 and 326) getting off at High Barnet - Bus Stop R and crossing the road at the pedestrian crossing a few feet up the hill or getting off the bus at High Barnet - Bus Stop Q. For full public transport details please visit the Transport for London [website](#).

Audiotour part 1 – Underhill and East Barnet

From this position on the hill rising up to High Barnet (also known as Chipping Barnet), the origins of the name become evident. This hill, some 11 miles out of central London on the Great North Road, has played a central role in Barnet's development since the 12th century. Indeed, at 130 metres above sea-level, it is reputed to be the highest point between London and York.

Below you, is the area known as Underhill. Football fans remember this as the site of Barnet Football Club's stadium from 1907 to 2013. Arsenal Football Club (FC) also played reserve team fixtures here for several years. The pitch was notable for a pronounced slope. The adjacent 'Green Belt' includes fields that have been developed at various times as a sewage farm, market gardens, housing estates, schools and sports facilities.



The slopes of Barnet Common were the site of Barnet Fair where cattle, horses and other livestock were traded twice a year. Granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1588, an animal market near such a major highway attracted people from far afield, who needed places to stay, as well as to eat, drink and socialise. The market became one of the largest in England and by the 19th century it was said that 40,000 cows were to be seen on market days. The rise of the railways, led to the decline in the decline in horse transport and this aspect of the fair, in the early 20th century. Still held annually in early September, a pleasure fair developed alongside the livestock market and explains the origins of a local street - Fairfield Way. Boxing and horse racing once were popular activities during market days, as well as fairground attractions such as helter-skelters, coconut shies and hoopla stalls. A pioneering exponent of modern 'scientific boxing', Daniel Mendoza (born and raised in London's Jewish East End) defeated 'The Bath Butcher', Sam Martins in a keenly contested prize-fight here in 1787, when the Prince of Wales also attended horse races. Races took place until the construction of the rail station (today, High Barnet Tube station) in the 1870's.

Beyond the station to your left lies East Barnet, which developed as an agricultural community in the early 11th century. The church of St. Mary the Virgin was the centre of this community. Haymaking became an important economic activity. Part of the meadowlands on the Lyonsdown estate were acquired by the Great Northern Railway company in 1849 and New Barnet station helped stimulate development of middle-class neighbourhoods, places of worship, shops and other amenities associated with modern suburban life. It was the arrival of the railways that would transform the general character of High Barnet too.

Continue to walk up Barnet Hill on the left-hand side, listening to audiotour part 2.



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Audiotour part 2 – Red Lion Pub

Continuing up the hill, it's worth noting that however steep it feels today, it was levelled out to some extent in the 1820's by the civil engineer James McAdam, surveyor to the local toll road company and son of celebrated Scottish road builder, John 'Tarmac' McAdam.

Our next landmark is the Red Lion on the High Street. Looking up you will see a large sign in the shape of a red lion. Barnet is known to have had a Red Lion inn for hundreds of years. By the 18th century it became known as a 'town of inns' because it had become a principal stop for stage coaches on their way north. Here was where the first change of horses was made on the long journey and refreshments sold to the waiting passengers. By the early 19th century there were 150 coaches a day passing through, resulting in furious competition between local inns and alehouses. It was boasted that the Red Lion owned 'Hercules' horses with extra strength to haul passenger coaches and freight up the steep hill. Barnet's economy thrived thanks to the market and fair, breweries, coopers, agricultural enterprises, ostlers, farriers, harness makers and coachbuilders. The drainpipe hoppers show the house was rebuilt in 1930 by the Meux Brewery, but the old Victorian lion pub sign was kept.

Across the road you will see another inn called The Mitre with an arch leading from the street to the former stables. The Mitre has also been here for hundreds of years and claims to be Barnet's oldest inn (perhaps dating back to 1449); the present building is thought to date from the 1780's. General Monck stayed here in 1660 on the night before he led his troops into central London to help restore King Charles II to the throne; his 5000 soldiers camped on Finchley Common. It is also said to be one of many watering holes of the notorious early 18th century highwayman, Dick Turpin. It was the railways that were to cause the eventual demise of the stagecoach trade that kept so many of these inns in business, but the roads are still busy.

Follow the road round to the left, onto Wood Street. On your left you will find Tudor Hall in the quad of Barnet & Southgate College which is point 3 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you arrive at Tudor Hall.



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Audiotour part 3 – High Barnet

In the quad of Barnet & Southgate College stands Tudor Hall. With its distinctive red Tudor-style brickwork, this is the original building of Queen Elizabeth's School, often known as "the grammar school." The date stone commemorates that this boys' school was opened in 1573, when it filled a larger part of this quad. It was founded under the patronage of Elizabeth I, but the money was raised in the local community and in the City of London principally by Edward Underne, Rector of the adjacent parish church. The idea was promoted by influential people including the queen's cousin, Henry Knolles, who lived locally and was brother-in-law of Elizabeth's favourite at the time - Robert, Earl of Leicester. Leicester was granted a royal charter "for one Common Grammar School in or near the town of Barnet which shall be called the Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth, for the education, bringing up, and instruction of boys and youth, to be brought up in grammar and literary matter or grammar art, and the same to continue for ever". The boys school moved in 1932 and is now located on Queen's Road. Elizabeth I passed through Barnet frequently on her way to Hatfield. As noted on the plaque, Barnet & Southgate College was opened in 2011 by the Duke of Gloucester, cousin of our current queen, Queen Elizabeth II – a neat piece of royal symmetry, one may say.

On the other side of the road, at the junction of Wood and High Streets is the church of St John the Baptist. The narrow space between these two streets was once known as the 'Squeeze'. St John's was built in the 13th century as a chapel of ease for St Mary the Virgin church in East Barnet and has 15th century remnants in its north wall. After the Reformation in the 16th century, this former Roman Catholic church became part of the Church of England. Under 'Bloody Mary' (Queen Mary I) William Hale, a Protestant martyr, was burned at the stake close by - a public display of the religious upheavals of those times. In the mid-18th century the church's curate was Nevil Maskelyne, later becoming better known as Astronomer Royal. After Chipping Barnet became a parish in 1866, the church was greatly rebuilt in the 1870s to designs by William Butterfield, an acknowledged master of the Gothic Revival style (see also his Keble College, Oxford and cathedrals in Cape Town, Bombay and Perth). The tower is occasionally open in the summer which was built in 1875 and at 30 metres high is a major local landmark. The interesting interior features beautifully carved wooden pew ends and several fine tombs and memorials, including one to local benefactor



James Ravenscroft (see below) and other members of the Ravenscroft family. Check the church [website](#) for opening times

Continue on the left-hand side of Wood Street passing the entrance to the Old Court House Recreation Ground until you reach Barnet Museum on your left, which is point 4 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Barnet Museum.

Audiotour part 4 – Barnet Museum, Ravenscroft Almshouses and Elizabeth Allen School

As you continue along Wood Street, on your left you will pass Barnet Museum. Housed in one of several handsome early Georgian buildings in the Wood Street conservation area, the museum is staffed by volunteers and tells the fascinating story of the area back to the Bronze Age. Besides being crammed with interesting aspects of Barnet's heritage, it is also a family history resource centre. Check opening times on their [website](#).

Continue to walk along Wood Street, pass Manor Close and Manor Road.

On your left, you will come across a grand-looking white house called Cedar Lawn. As noted on the blue plaque, this building was once the home of the horticulturist and international grain merchant, William Cattley (who lived from 1788 to 1835). Cattley made important contributions to the study of plants, especially orchids and the genus *Cattleya* is named in his honour. After 1923, the site was used for Victoria Hospital (opened at Underhill in 1888 to coincide with that queen's Golden Jubilee). It became a maternity hospital after World War Two before closing in 1988.

Opposite Cattley Close (the road adjacent to Cedar Lawn) are Ravenscroft Almshouses named after James Ravenscroft, a 17th century lawyer, who provided construction funds in 1672 thanks to income from land in Stepney. Six widowed women or as he stated, 'Six sisters who may not be addicted to witchcraft', were provided with comfortable accommodation. Ravenscroft is buried in St John the Baptist Church. *Continue walking along Wood Street* and note Garrett's Almshouses across the street, built in 1728 for poor widows of dissenting ministers.

Continuing on the left-hand side of Wood Street, crossing Hillside Gardens, you will find on your left the buildings of what was the Elizabeth Allen School; much of the building is hidden by tall hedges. Allen left money in 1727 to build a free school for



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Barnet but the money was used to pay for the Grammar School instead. The building of Elizabeth Allen Parochial School had to wait for nearly 100 years and was opened in 1824. The school closed in 1973.

NB: There is an optional extension along Wood Street at this point, details of which can be found in the additional notes on the heritage walks webpage.

Continue to walk past the Black Horse pub and the mini roundabout (both on your right) until you reach the zebra crossing. Cross the road safely at the crossing and walk back down to the mini roundabouts with Ravenscroft Gardens and black railings on you left. Continue to the left onto The Avenue. Opposite the turning to Ravenscroft Park is the gateway of the Leathersellers Almshouses, which is point 5 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you arrive at the gateway.

Audiotour part 5 - Leathersellers Almshouses and Ravenscroft Park

The presence of so many almshouses shows that Barnet was a prosperous town. The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers is a City livery company, given a Royal Charter in 1444, that owned land in Barnet from the 17th century. This livery company (or 'guild') controlled the trade in leather and would have been closely connected with the local livestock market. The almshouses were constructed between 1837 and 1866 in the Gothic Revival style with additions made in the 1960s. They were for the use of elderly members of the company or their widows. The small park opposite on Wood Street is Ravenscroft Park, named after James Ravenscroft. Thomas Smith, who built much of the adjacent housing bought this last undeveloped remnant of Barnet Common and created High Barnet's first public park in 1883.

With your back to the gateway of the Leathersellers Almshouses, walk to the left back to the mini roundabout and follow the road round to the left onto Union Street. Keep to the left, joining Stapylton Road. It is half a mile until the next major stop on this tour. Continue along Stapylton Road, passing Thornton Road, The Drive and Salisbury Road. You will pass Barnet Spires Car Park on the right-hand side of the road and Barnet Library on your left. There are public toilets and refreshments in The Spires shopping centre, should you need them. Continue to the end of Stapylton Road where it meets St Albans Road and turn left. Continue until you reach the



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zebra crossing and cross the road to Christ Church, which is point 6 on your map.
Now pause the audiotour until you reach Christ Church.

Audiotour part 6 - Christ Church, Mimms Side

Christ Church was designed by George Gilbert Scott and built in 1845 with money from Captain Trotter of Dyrham Park in Hadley. It was needed as a chapel of ease because this part of High Barnet is in the parish of St Giles, South Mimms, whose church is nearly three miles away. Inside is a gallery originally for orphans of soldiers who fought in the Crimean War (1853 to 1856) from Silesia College off Wood Street. To the left is The Pennefather Hall opened in 1907 and named after Reverend William Pennefather, the Irish Vicar who served the church in the 1850s and 1860s. There is a small war memorial between the church and school building in the shape of a stone needle. It is a rare example of a memorial connected with the Second Boer War and commemorates the old boys of Christ Church school who fell in South Africa between 1899 and 1903.

Walk back down St Albans Road for about 150 metres and take a sharp left into Christ Church Passage, the alley at the side of the Army Reserve Centre, with metal railings on your right. Walk along the Passage and take the first right onto Christ Church Lane. Cross over Gladsmuir Road and enter the southern end of Hadley Green via the path on the corner, which is point 7 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you arrive at Hadley Green.

Audiotour part 7 - The Battle of Barnet, Hadley Green

Hadley Green and the adjacent lands are traditionally identified as the location of the Battle of Barnet, fought during the Wars of the Roses in the 15th century. On 14th April 1471 Edward IV of the House of York fought against the House of Lancaster, who backed Henry VI for the throne. However, at this time, Henry VI was a prisoner of Edward. The Lancastrian army was led by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick. A successful commander, Neville had controlled the succession to the throne since the 1450s and is popularly known as Warwick the Kingmaker. In the early morning mists, Warwick was killed during the fight and the Lancastrians were routed. The battle is regarded as one of the most important in the Wars of the Roses, because with the death of Warwick, Edward was able to rule England until his death from natural causes in 1483.



Walk up the path which runs along the total length of the western edge of the green until you reach the small road – Old Fold Lane; the Old Fold Manor Golf Club is on your left. Turn right onto the Lane and continue until you reach a main road - Hadley Highstone, part of the Great North Road (A1000). A stone obelisk erected in 1740 that commemorates the battle is a few hundred metres farther along Hadley Highstone, should you wish to see it.

When you are ready, cross over Hadley Highstone and turn right onto Dury Road. Continue on the left-hand side of Dury Road until you reach St Mary the Virgin Church in Monken Hadley, which is point 8 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach St Mary the Virgin.

Audiotour part 8 - Saint Mary the Virgin, Monken Hadley

On the site of earlier religious buildings dating back to the 12th century, the Grade II listed church of Saint Mary the Virgin was rebuilt in 1494. Over the main door way is a rare example of early Arabic numbers showing this date. The strange shape looking like the top half of a number '8' represents half that amount i.e. '4'. Replacing Roman numerals, Arabic numbers had only started to be used in England in the 1450s and still had not quite formed into what we would recognise today. On the roof of the flint and ironstone Perpendicular Gothic style tower is a beacon, whose earliest use is unknown. However, the district was known as Beacon Hill in the Elizabethan period and the beacon was probably lit as a warning signal when the Armada threatened invasion in 1588. The current iron beacon "bucket" dates from the 18th century. The church was painted by J.M.W. Turner in the 1790's. Much modified by the architect George Edmund Street (an architect of the Royal Courts of Justice who lived from 1824 to 81), the interior of this Anglican church retains an intimate feel and several notable features including a fine encaustic tile pavement by the altar – see the [church website](#) for details.

Follow the footpath to the right of the church through the churchyard to the road on the other side, Camlet Way.

In front of you is Monken Hadley Common, once part of an enormous private hunting estate known as Enfield Chase that dates back to the period after the Norman Conquest of 1066.



Turn right on Camlet Way. Turn right on to Hadley Green Road where you will come to white gates. These white gates were put up to stop cattle straying off Hadley Common and into the town. Walk through the white gates towards the church.

On your right are the Gothic Revival style Pagitts Almshouses, named after a local lawyer, Justinian Pagitt. When who left provision for six poor couples of Hadley. The present houses were constructed in 1822 and 1848.

To continue, cross the road and walk back along Hadley Green Road following the road round to the left along the east edge of Hadley Green.

On your way you will pass Wilbraham's Almshouses on your left, named after Sir Roger Wilbraham of Clerkenwell (who lived from 1553 to 1616), who had these houses built in 16 12 for six 'poor, decayed, housekeepers'. There is a memorial to him and his family in St Mary's. You will also pass a house with a blue plaque that commemorates Fanny Trollope (who lived from 1779 to 1863), who was the author of several popular books including *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. Fanny was also the mother of the novelist Anthony Trollope, known best for his Barsetshire chronicles and for his role as a civil servant in promoting the use of pillar boxes.

After you have passed an elegant row of 18th century houses lining the east side of Hadley Green, keep left on Hadley Green Road and you will reach Livingstone Cottage on your left, which is point 9 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Livingstone Cottage.

Audiotour part 9 - Livingstone Cottage

A stone plaque indicates Livingstone Cottage, the famous Scottish doctor, missionary, explorer and national hero, [David Livingstone](#) (born 1813 and died 1873) lived here with his family for nine months in 1857 to 58. Here he wrote his book *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, which became a best-seller. During their short residence, they worshipped in the Congregational church on Wood Street. Livingstone's body was later buried in Westminster Abbey, although his heart was buried in the Zambian village where he was much respected.

Continue along Hadley Green Road, passing a pond on your right and King George's Fields, a green open space on your left. You may also enjoy fine panoramic views over central London's skyline when the weather is clear. Follow the road round to



your right and join the High Street to your left. Continue to walk down the High Street until you reach Bath Place on your left just after the traffic lights at the junction with St. Albans Road.

Bath Place takes its name from a Victorian swimming pool established in what had been the town gas works by a local tailor called Schmidt in the late 1870s. In the winter, when the unheated pool was too cold for swimming, it was used as a roller skating rink. The venture was not entirely successful and closed after a few seasons but the name remained.

Cross the High Street at the traffic light junction, and walk into St. Albans Road. Walk on the left-hand side until you reach Chipping Close.

Chipping Close was for many years the location of Barnet's weekly market first chartered in 1199 by King John to the Abbot of St Albans, later re-chartered by Elizabeth I in 1588 when the livestock fair was also established. Originally located in the narrow streets and shambles (butchers' slaughterhouses) around the site of St John the Baptist church, the market has relocated several times and settled near St Albans Road in the mid-19th century. The meat market and shambles declined as Smithfield took over in central London, although trade in pigs helped replace trade in live cattle before stagecoaches and railways put animal drovers out of business. The last auction of cattle apparently took place as recently as 1959. However, along with the livestock fair, for many years Barnet Market played a major role in the town's commercial life and wider reputation, with stalls selling food (especially meat), pottery (often using local clay) and all kinds of household goods as well as supplying merchants trading in wool, corn, grain and hides.

Through here you can cut through back on to Stapylton Road with The Spires Shopping Centre on your left. It is named after the towers of the former Methodist Church on this site that were absorbed into the High Street frontage of the Centre opened in 1989. Continue to walk back along Stapylton Road to your left, past The Spires car park and Salisbury Road until you reach Union Street; turn left onto Union Street which is point 10 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you arrive at Union Street.



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Audiotour part 10 – Barnet Union Workhouse, The Old Town Hall and Saint Mary the Immaculate Church

Union Street was so called, as it was the road that led to the Barnet Union Workhouse in Wood Street near to the current site of Barnet Hospital. This fearsome institution is said to have inspired the Victorian novelist Charles Dickens when writing *Oliver Twist*, in which the hungry young hero asks for more food when lodged temporarily in a workhouse. Created in 1834 to look after the local poor, Barnet Workhouse employed 200 people in often harsh conditions. An infirmary was added in 1895 and the workhouse closed in 1939. Look for number 33 which is opposite the Mary the Immaculate and St. Gregory the Great church. A brewery once stood on this site. Ignore the date of 1889 in the apex of the roof, this hall was actually built as "Victoria Hall" in 1845. It became the Town Hall, possibly after the Local Government Act was adopted in 1863. The hall also functioned as Barnet court until the new court was built in 1916. From 1920 it was used by Stellar Press Ltd printers, which explains the large windows of the house adjacent. On the other side of the road is the Roman Catholic church dedicated to the honour of [Mary the Immaculate and St. Gregory the Great](#). It was built in 1850 and replaced with the present church in the 1970s after the Victorian chapel burnt to the ground.

This is the end of the audio tour.

To make your way home, continue to make your way along Union Street until you reach the High Street where you can access several bus routes. Or, to make your way back to High Barnet Tube station (approx. 10 minutes' walk), turn right out of Union Street onto the High Street, and follow the road down back past St John the Baptist Church, past Queen Elizabeth's School for Girls, crossing Meadway where you will then shortly see the entrance into High Barnet Tube station.

We hope you enjoyed this walk. Perhaps you might like to try one of the other walks in the Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks programme? Please visit our website www.barnet.gov.uk/heritagewalks to find out more.

If you would like to give feedback or comments or suggestions on the walk, please do get in touch. Details are on the website.

