

| Woodberry Wetlands (Stoke Newington Reservoirs) | | |
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| This walk has been checked as noted above, however the publisher cannot accept responsibility for any problems encountered by readers. | | |

Woodberry Wetlands (Stoke Newington Reservoirs)

Start: Finsbury Park Station **Finish:** Stoke Newington Overground or Manor House Underground

Length: 6.9 km/4.3 mi (Stoke Newington Ending) or 5.0 km/3.1 mi (Manor House Ending)

Time: 1 hour 45 mins for the Stoke Newington Ending, 1 hour 15 mins for the Manor House Ending.

Transport: Finsbury Park Station is served by Main Line Services from Kings Cross and St. Pancras International, and by the Victoria and Piccadilly Lines. Stoke Newington is served by Overground services from Liverpool Street to Enfield Town or Cheshunt. Manor House is served by the Piccadilly Line.

Walk Notes:

Woodberry Wetlands is a Thames Water-owned and London Wildlife Trust-run urban nature reserve on East Reservoir, one of the two Stoke Newington reservoirs on the New River (which – famously – is “neither new nor a river”). The reservoirs were built in 1833 to hold water from the New River, a man-made canal supplying drinking water to London from springs near Ware in Hertfordshire. The reservoir had been off-limits to the public for more than 180 years until 2016, when Woodberry Wetlands and its fantastic café in the former coal house opened.

The route starts with a meander through Finsbury Park before entering the Wetlands and then continues along the New River past the West Reservoir to Green Lanes, to then lead south, then east through Clissold Park (and its café in Clissold House) and along the very charming Stoke Newington Church Street to Abney Park cemetery (one of the most splendid and enlightened of the ‘Magnificent Seven’ London garden cemeteries) and from there to Stoke Newington Overground.

An Alternative Finish goes north from the West Reservoir along Green Lanes back to Manor House Underground (or even back to Finsbury Park Station, this adds 1.4 km). A start from Manor House cuts 1.4 km.

Please note:

Woodberry Wetlands Nature Reserve is only open during the day (09.00-16.00), as are Clissold Park and Abney Park, so only a reduced version of the main walk is possible in the evenings.

Dogs are not allowed in the Nature Reserve.

Refreshments:

[Finsbury Park Café](#), Finsbury Park. Open daily 09.00-18.00 Mar-Oct and to 17.00 Nov-Feb.

[Park View Café](#), Finsbury Park (Manor House exit). Open daily to 22.00 in summer and to 20.30 in winter.

[Simply Organique](#), 316 Green Lanes. Open to 23.00 daily.

[Zer Café](#), Unit A, Residence Tower, Goodchild Road, Woodberry Down. Open early morning to 22.00 daily.

[Coal House Café](#), Coal House, Woodberry Wetlands. Open 09.00-16.00 daily.

[The Reservoir Café](#), West Reservoir Centre, Green Lanes. Open 09.00-17.00 daily, but not Bank Holidays.

[The Castle Café](#), The Castle Climbing Centre, Green Lanes.

Open 12.00-21.30 Mon-Fri, 09.00-18.30 Sat-Sun and 10.00-21.30 Bank Holidays.

[The Brownswood](#), 271 Green Lanes.

[Hourglass Café](#), 263 Green Lanes.

[Park Life Café](#), Clissold Park. Open daily 08.30-17.30.

[Three Pubs](#) and [Fourteen Cafés/Restaurants](#) on Stoke Newington **Church Street** (see text for details).

WALK DIRECTIONS

Starting from Manor House Underground:

At Manor House Underground station, **take Exit 2** (Seven Sisters Road South East Side) and continue in the same direction and pick up the directions below at the asterisk *).

Starting from Finsbury Park Station:

Head for the exit signed "**Station Place/National Rail**", and emerge on Station Place under a large canopy, with some bus stops in front of you. *Turn left* along the pavement (signed "Stroud Green Road/Finsbury Park/Footpath (Capital Ring)") and in 20m pass the **mainline station entrance**. In 50m cross **Stroud Green Road** at some traffic lights and continue in the same direction a little to the left along a tarmac path running parallel to the railway line on the left. The path enters **Finsbury Park** through the **Stroud Green Road Gate**, a wide metal bar gate, and in 65m you *turn left* along a narrower tarmac path. Take either a tarmac path forking left in 35m or another one in 20m *turning left* at a T-junction, past a footpath and **Capital Ring (Link)** marker post. You have the railway line a little to the left (initially at a higher level) and a grassy area to your right, with a tree-lined road about 100m away beyond it.

You pass some fenced tennis courts in 120m and in another 220m *turn right* at a tarmac path T-junction by a Capital Ring three-way signpost. Foliage permitting, you get far views on the half right of Canary Wharf and in 50m cross the road at a pedestrian crossing to continue in the same direction along a tree-lined tarmac path. In 60m you pass the **Finsbury Park Café** and an info panel on the park's history a little on the left (toilets are located at the rear of the café building). [The route passes some of the 16 trees that form a **Tree Trail** within the park. For more details, pick up a leaflet in the café]. Continue past the sunken **Hope Picnic & Play Area** in 15m, now with far views on the hard right to the higher buildings in the City and the West End (foliage permitting), and in 60m *turn left* at a T-junction of paths, by the **Furtherfield Gallery** (located in a former toilet block). In 25m *turn right* through the **McKenzie Flower Garden** along a tarmac path with a marker post on the left. In 75m there is an info panel on the left, just before leaving this garden and emerging at a five-way path junction, with the main stand of an athletics track visible away to your left.

Continue in the same direction with another marker post, towards a roofed wooden shelter 100m away, in 20m passing a holm oak on the left (#4 of the **Tree Trail**) and in 15m a cedar on the right (#5). At the shelter *turn right* at a three-way Capital Ring signpost (signed "Manor House station") to pass tree #16 (a hornbeam) on the right. The fenced area on the left in 75m is used by a dog club. In another 50m, just after a stand of trees on the right (including tree #10, a giant redwood), *turn left* at a T-junction of paths. In 40m cross a road and in 50m leave the park through the Manor House Exit, with the **Park View Café** on the left, and **Manor House Lodge** on the right. You emerge to the left of a busy road junction and cross Green Lanes (road) in the same direction at a set of lights towards the **Simply Organique** groceries and café on the other side. *Turn right* to cross **Seven Sisters Road** and on the other side *turn left* along the road, to the left of an exit of **Manor House Underground** station.

*) You pass a bus stop in 15m and *veer right* along the pavement of **Woodberry Down** (road), away from the busy Seven Sisters Road. In 40m you pass **St. Olave's Church** on the left and then some new high rises on your right. In about 300m (about 50m before a main road) *turn right* through some metal gates through a landscaped garden area (**Riverside Gardens**) between houses. In 20m pass **Zer Café** on the left and in 30m cross a road to continue in the same direction through another part of the Riverside Gardens. In 50m emerge by a cascading fountain and a terraced seating area (**New River Steps**) on the right, at a T-junction with the **New River Path**, with the **New River** running on the other side of it, and with **West Reservoir** beyond it.

Turn left along the tarmac path and in 20m cross **Lordship Road** by an info panel for the **Woodberry Down Reservoirs** and a Capital Ring signpost. In 20m *fork either way* around a small grassy area and **[!] ignore** the Lordship Road Entrance to the **Woodberry Wetlands Nature Reserve** on the right in another 20m.

You continue in the same direction along the tarmac path past some more new housing, but *bear right* with the path in 120m (just before meeting a road), to continue towards and in 25m along the New River. In 200m you pass the **Ivy Sluice House** and in another 60m go through a metal kissing gate. In 10m *turn right* at a T-junction (signed "Walthamstow Wetlands") to cross the New River on a two-railed bridge (leaving the New River Path and Capital Ring). On the other side of the bridge *turn right* (signed "Woodberry Wetlands") to enter the Nature Reserve through the **Newnton Close Entrance** and in 20m ignore a right fork to the New River Studio. In 30m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and in 30m through a gap in a wooden fence to emerge in an open area by the shores of **East Reservoir**. A right turning path brings you in 60m to the **Volunteer's House**, the **Ivy Sluice House** and a landscaped seating area. Else *turn left* along the gravel path past a **Bird Sightings Board**, following the reservoir shore with sumptuous reed beds on your right.

Over the next 300m you pass some benches on the left as the path curves gently to the right with the shore and an info panel on reed bed regeneration on the right, after which the recommended route forks to the left down some steps along a short **wood-land trail**, which in 40m turns right to run parallel to the shoreside path and in 130m bears right to re-join the reservoir. In 30m go through a double metal gate and in 35m through a metal gate by the former **Coal House**, housing the **Coal House Café**, a recommended lunch or tea stop (there is a **viewing terrace** on the roof). Past the café *veer right* to walk along a two-railed wooden boardwalk, over 100m or so leading through the reed beds, past the water inflow sluice from the New River and past another info panel towards the **Lordship Road Entrance** to the nature reserve passed earlier. You cross the New River on a two-railed wooden bridge and leave the reserve to *turn left* along the New River Path. Re-cross Lordship Road in 50m and continue in the same direction with the Capital Ring, past Riverside Gardens, to follow the New River as it curves left with **West Reservoir** beyond it.

The **West Reservoir Centre** (in the former filter house) with its sailing club and outdoors café is prominent on the other side of the reservoir, as is the turreted Castle on Green Lanes to the right of it. In about 200m from the road crossing, just after a children's playground on the right, ignore a few tarmac paths turning right to *bear left* and continue along a gravel path right by the New River. In 400m *turn left* across the New River on a two-railed bridge and on the other side you have the option to turn left to **The Reservoir Café** at the **West Reservoir Centre** 100m away (the industrial architecture of the filter house is worth a look anyway). Else *turn right* along a pavement and through a metal gate to a T-junction with Green Lanes (originally a drovers' road along which cattle were walked towards Smithfield Market, and one of the longest streets in London), by **The Castle Climbing Centre** (in the Grade II* listed, former Victorian water pumping station, designed to look like a towering Scottish castle) and its **Castle Café** on the left.

Here you have a choice:

For the Alternative Ending back at Manor House or Finsbury Park, *turn right* along Green Lanes (there is a bus stop opposite) and in 550m reach the **Manor Park Underground station** at the junction with Seven Sisters Road. **Simply Organique** is opposite, Finsbury Park and the **Park View Café** across the junction.

For the Main Walk, *turn left* along Green Lanes (the A105) past The Castle and in 180m cross **Lordship Park** (the B105) at some traffic lights (with **The Brownswood** pub and then the **Hourglass Café** on the other side) and in 120m cross **Greenway Close**. In another 25m *turn left* through a metal gate into **Clissold Park** with a Capital Ring sign on a lamp post. You follow a tarmac path past the **Park Lodge** on your left and in 50m *veer left* at a six-way junction of paths (75°, signposted "Lakes"), in 30m continuing to the right of an ornamental lake (almost all that is left to mark the course of the **Hackney Brook**, one of London's lost rivers, now fed from the main supply – the New River). In 160m at the far end of the lake, *turn right* at a five-way junction (signposted "Clissold House and Café"). You pass a Children's Centre and some tennis courts and in 250m *veer right* across a tarmacked area to walk to the right of **Clissold House**, a Grade II listed building, with the entrance to the **Park Life Café** on the right.

Continue in the same direction with a water feature on the right-hand side (the former course of the New River, which used to continue to Finsbury) and in 80m by a wide iron bridge over the water on the right and about 50m before reaching a road, *turn left* along a tarmac path towards a church. In 75m you *turn right* through a metal gate to leave Clissold Park and, with **St. Mary's Church** opposite (usually open), *turn left* along the pavement of **Stoke Newington Church Street**. In 50m find **St. Mary's Old Church** on your left (unusually for London, this was left standing when its successor church was built). You now continue along the road for 500m, passing along the way: **The Rose & Crown** at the junction with Albion Road, opposite **Stoke Newington Town Hall** (on the site of the former Manor House), **Aun**, **Petit Coin**, **Joice**, **Ryan's**, **Stoke Newington Library**, **The Parlour**, **Spence Bakery**, **Sapid Coffee**, **Ribbons & Taylor**, **The Red Lion**, **The Caffeine Fix**, the **Green Room**, **Schnitzel Forever**, **The Auld Shillelagh**, the **Blue Legume**, **The Acoustic Brasserie**, **The Clarence Tavern**, the **Good Egg** and **Il Baccio Express**.

40m after this you *turn left* with a Capital Ring signpost ("Stoke Newington Station (steps)") into **Abney Park (cemetery)**. Originally set up as an arboretum, it is now a resting place for 200,000 people in 60,000 graves, but no longer a working cemetery. It is one of London's most central woodlands with an impressive collection of trees, a Nature Reserve and an Architectural Conservation Area, but was scheduled in 2009 as one of Britain's historic parks and gardens at risk from neglect and decay. Pass an info panel with a large-scale map of the many paths through the park. **Your aim is the easterly exit** on Stoke Newington High Street, and the route described here follows the Capital Ring, but any route is a good one in this very atmospheric park. In 30m *turn left* with a marker post at a T-junction with a broader gravel track, opposite **William Booth's grave**, founder of the Salvation Army (you'll find an info panel on other 'Notable Burials' on the right).

In 160m a gravel path joins from the right and in 20m you pass an info panel on the **buildings and monuments of the park**. In 35m *turn right* at a four-way junction towards the non-denominational **Funerary Chapel** (Grade II listed) and in 40m pass to the right of it (there is a **War Memorial** to your right and – behind it – a **Monument to Dr Isaac Watts**, a renowned nonconformist, who had lived on this ground before it became a cemetery). You pass an info panel about the chapel and continue in the same direction. In 200m pass another info panel and in 40m continue along a cobbled section at a path junction. In 70m leave **Abney Park** through its main gate onto the busy **Stoke Newington High Street** (the A10), further along named **Stamford Hill**.

Turn left along the road and in 200m *turn right* across some traffic lights and find **Stoke Newington Overground** station on the other side. Liverpool Street bound trains depart from the far platform.