

Route from Grove Park and Lee

Family-friendly walking routes to Blackheath in less than an hour



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DESCRIPTION

A pleasant route with an early opportunity to visit a lovely nature reserve which is worth exploring. It was once the garden of the author of 'The Railway Children' and where George Bernard Shaw, Beatrice Webb and H G Wells once met. The route goes through Manor House Gardens, with its lake and café, crosses the river Quaggy, past a library and children's centre and on through Blackheath village. *Bus service information is provided so if you live off the route, you can choose to take the bus to the walking route, and walk from there to Blackheath.*

TOTAL DISTANCE

3.25 miles/5.25 kms

TIME

60 minutes

CONDITIONS/TERRAIN

Some poor pavement undermined by tree routes and missing the occasional dropped kerb. An awkward signal controlled crossing over Westhorn Avenue (South Circular) that requires care. If you take the detour to Grove Park Nature Reserve, the path within the reserve can be muddy, is narrow in places and has low branches.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Grove Park Nature Reserve, two toddler playgrounds, a large copper beech and an old manor house.

1 START - Grove Park rail station (SE12 0DZ)

Turn right from Grove Park rail station to **cross** over Baring Road at the traffic island just past Le May Avenue (*Grove Park Library SE12 0BX is 4 minutes walk from here*). Walk past St Augustine's Church and Ringway Community Centre – there is an alleyway/path to your left (*Railway Children Walk*) signed to Grove Park Nature Reserve 150m, Green Chain Walk, Capital Ring and London Cycle Network.

The nature reserve is a charming spot and well worth a visit if you have time, but path surfaces are rough and can be muddy after rain.

- 2** From the alleyway/path, drop back a little to **cross** Baring Road at the traffic island, then **continue** slightly uphill away from the station, to capture the view of Canary Wharf, then **turn right** along Kingstead Road. **Turn left** at the T-junction onto Burnt Ash Road, climbing gently past several small shops. *Just beyond Farcote Road, on the other side of Burnt Ash Road, there is an alleyway/path signed to Burnt Ash Pond Nature Reserve – this is a few minute detour that will bring you back to our route via Winn Road.*

- 3** At the main junction with Westhorpe Road, take extra

care **crossing** at this 3-way signal controlled junction to **continue** straight on.

 22 minutes  1.3 miles/2.1 kms

Pass Lee rail station (SE12 9JG) on your right and **under** a railway bridge (*a short stretch here is shared with cyclists*).

Turn left into Micheldever Road – a tree lined street with fine houses with Mansard roofs, like small versions of Tintin's friend Captain Haddock's chateau.

- 4** **Turn right** into Wantage Road, passing a fine copper beech in a churchyard on the corner of Handen Road and **third left** into Taunton Road (*signed London Cycle Network*). After 150m **turn right** through the gate into Manor House Gardens.

 40 minutes  2.3 miles/3.7 kms

Go straight, between tennis and basketball courts, **cross** the pretty Quaggy river, pass a small lake on the left, then a toddlers' playground and café on your right opposite the side of the Manor House Library and Children's Centre (SE13 5SY).

Sir Francis Baring, founder of Baring Brothers Bank, bought the Manor House in 1796. It was bought by Lewisham Council in 1903 and opened as a library and public park. The original ice house is in the grounds and can be visited on open days.

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Leave the park straight ahead on to Old Road (*entrance to library on is your left along the street*). If Manor House Gardens are closed continue straight along Taunton Road and turn right at the T-junction into Manor Lane. Continue on Manor Lane as it turns right, then soon after turn right on to Old Road past the front of the Manor House Library and Children's Centre to rejoin the route as it leaves Manor House Gardens.

- 5 Turn right** and **immediately left** into Bankwell Road and **right** onto Lee High Road, to **cross** at the pelican crossing.

Lee High Road is a very old road – the main road to Kent. Old Road is the route of the old Lee High Road before it was straightened in 1827.

Continue to the right on the far side and **take the second left** into Lee Park.

- 6 Continue** to the top of Lee Park, then **straight** over via the traffic island and down steeply past Blackheath station (SE3 9LE) on your left.

At the top of the rise of Lee Park, over to your right, is Blackheath Halls, which was originally Blackheath Concert Hall and Art School, built in the 1890s.

Turn left up Tranquil Vale and **right** at the top to All Saints' Church, Blackheath (SE3 0TY).

End