



At the Heart of Hackney since 1967

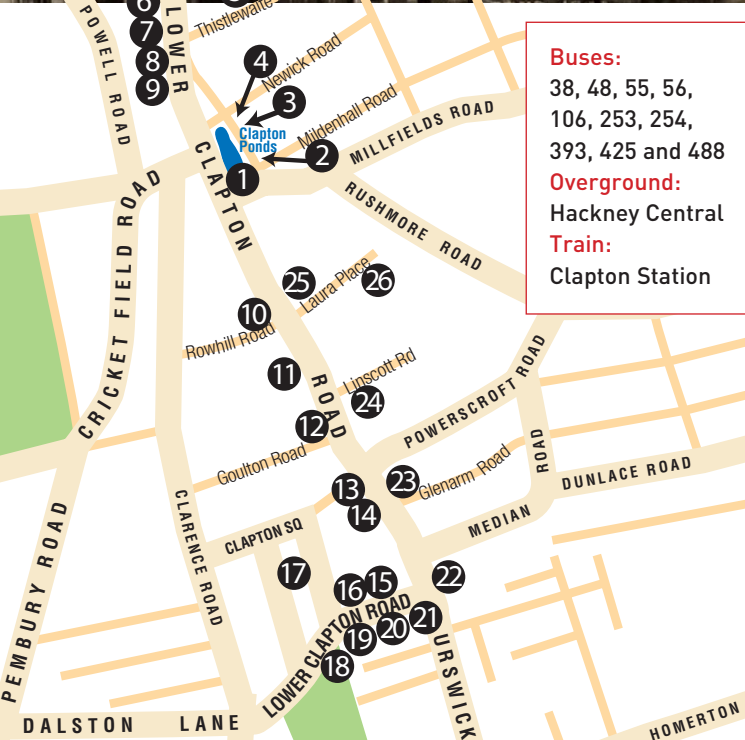
THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

Hackney Walks No 10

A Hackney Society Publication

From Clapton Pond to Clapton Square – and back

Duration 1 hour
Distance 1 mile



This walk covers Lower Clapton.

Clapton – farm on the hill – is derived from ‘clop’, a lump or hill, and ‘ton’, farm. It was normally rendered Clopton until the 18th century. Until the second half of the 19th century, the area was largely agricultural with a few grand houses. Following the opening of Clapton Station in 1872 and the introduction of the horse omnibus and tram into the City, the area became desirable to commuters, leading developers to create new streets.

1 Clapton Pond

Clapton Pond was first dug in the early 17th century. During the 18th century it was a reservoir. In 1898 a public park was created and railings put up. It was improved by Clapton Pond Neighbourhood Action Group with a new bridge, fountain and play area.

2 Former St James Terrace

Once part of St James Terrace, 158 and 160 Lower Clapton Road date from the early 19th century. Four houses were demolished to make way for Millfields Road.

3 Pond House

Pond House, 162 Lower Clapton Road, was built for Benjamin Walsh, a stockbroker, soon after 1800. It was used as a home until the 1880s, a school until 1904, then a clothing factory. From 1939 to 2001 it was occupied by the Hackney Volunteers Social Club. It is now being converted into flats.



Fig 1: Clapton Pond (with Pond House and former St James Terrace in the background) c.1884 © Hackney Archives



Fig 2: 158 and 160 Lower Clapton Road 2013

4 Bishop Wood's Almshouses

Bishop Wood's Almshouses were founded in 1665 by Thomas Wood, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry and restored in 1888 and 1930. The chapel added in the 19th century had pews only for the ten resident widows. The tall chimneys are part of the 1888 restoration.

5 Thistlewaite Road

The writer Harold Pinter grew up at 19 Thistlewaite Road. In 2012 Lady Antonia Fraser Pinter, his widow, unveiled a plaque that had been sponsored by Clapton



Fig 3: Pond House 2006 © Malcolm Smith



Fig 4: Bishop Wood's Almshouses

Pond Neighbourhood Action Group. A plaque on number 25 records that the first synagogue in the present-day London Borough of Hackney, built 1779-80 (5539-5540), stood to the rear of this building in the grounds of Clapton House.

6 The Clapton Hart

There has been a pub at 231 Lower Clapton Road since 1733. The White Hart burnt down in the 1830s, was rebuilt and in turn rebuilt again in the early 1890s. It was called The Pegasus before 2001 when it was renamed Chimes. In 2004 it closed following the death of an 18 year old who was stabbed at an end-of-term school party. After restoration, the pub reopened in 2012 as the Clapton Hart.

7 229 Lower Clapton Road

Designed by George Duckworth, the building at 229 Lower Clapton Road was opened in 1910 as the Clapton Cinematograph Theatre. It was renamed Kenning Hall cinema in 1919, and converted for sound pictures in 1929. In the late 1930s, it was taken over by Odeon and the frontage was modified. It closed in 1979. The nightclub Dougie's was opened in 1983 by Irvine Douglas. In 2000 the club was sold to Admiral Ken and renamed the Palace Pavilion. It closed in 2006 after a murder. The building was bought by St Mary of Zion in 2011.

8 Church of St James The Great

The nave of this Gothic Revival church was built in 1840-41 by Edward Charles Hakewill. The red brick chancel



Fig. 5: The Clapton Hart 2013

was added in 1902 by W D Caröe, who also designed the organ case, cross and candlesticks. The church is a Grade II listed building.

9 The Fountain

The Fountain PH, 211 Lower Clapton Road, has been on the site since 1814. It closed in October 2006 and has been converted into flats.

10 Rowhill Road

Rowhill Mansions and Kinnoul Mansions in Rowhill Road and St Andrews Mansions, 157-163 Lower Clapton Road, were built in 1901-1904 by W Andrews of Wood Green. The architect was A Bedborough. A brown plaque on St Andrews Mansions commemorates the prison reformer John Howard (1726-90), who was born near here.

Fig 6: 229 Lower Clapton Road 2008



Fig 7: Church of St James the Great 2013

11 Former Mothers' Hospital

The buildings at 145-153 (odd) Lower Clapton Road date from about 1824. Behind them was the Salvation Army Mothers' Hospital, built c.1840, and demolished in 1987. The site of the hospital is now occupied by Mothers' Square, a housing development opened by the Prince of Wales in 1990.

12 Windsor Castle

There has been a pub at 135 Lower Clapton Road since 1832. The Windsor Castle was rebuilt in the early 1890s.

13 Clapton Pavement

A brown plaque on Clapton Pavement (1880), at the corner of Lower Clapton Road and Clapton Passage, commemorates the philanthropist, educationalist and

Fig 8: The Fountain 2013





Fig 9: Rowhill Mansions 2012 © Ulrike Wahl

prominent lay churchman, Joshua Watson, who lived in a house on this site (117 Lower Clapton Road) from 1811 until 1823 and from 1841 until 1855.

14 113 Lower Clapton Road

At 113 Lower Clapton Road is a plaque for Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), scientist and theologian, who lived at a house on the site from 1792 until 1794. After being hounded out of his house and laboratory in Birmingham by a mob that opposed his support for the French Revolution, he was invited to come to Hackney to take up the post of Unitarian Minister at the Old Gravel Pit Chapel where he had many friends amongst the Hackney Dissenters. He emigrated to America in 1794 fearing a repeat of his family's persecution.

15 43 Lower Clapton Road

In the 1890s, the Elephant's Head was built as a replacement for the old Portland Arms, which in 1849 was at Portland Place Yard and was demolished between 1884 and 1897. The pub was renamed Fitzgerald's by the Unique Pub Property Ltd in 2005. It closed in 2012.

16 Kings Hall Leisure Centre

The Kings Hall Leisure Centre at 39 Lower Clapton Road opened as Hackney Baths in 1897. It was built by Edward Harnor and Frederick Pinches, following Hackney's adoption of the 1846 Public Baths and Wash Houses Act in 1891.



Fig. 10: Windsor Castle c. 1880 © Hackney Archives

17 Clapton Square

Clapton Square was laid out on Clapton Field in 1816. Original houses remain on the north and west sides. Others were replaced by a mansion block in 1900. Two sides of the square were demolished in the late 19th century. The gardens were originally private, but in 1924 they were acquired by London County Council and transferred to Hackney Council.

18 St John-at-Hackney

St John-at-Hackney was built in 1791-94 by James Spiller to replace St Augustine's Church from 1292 of which the tower remains. A semicircular porch was added 1810-11. Fire damage in 1955 was repaired by N F Cachemaille-Day and William C Lock. The churchyard contains the tombs of the Loddiges family and Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, who developed the Beaufort wind scale. A walled garden was added in 1963.

19 K2 telephone kiosks

The K2 telephone kiosks on the corner of Churchwell Path and Lower Clapton Road date from 1927. They were designed by Giles Gilbert Scott.

20 Former Hackney Police Station

Hackney Police Station at 2 Lower Clapton Road was designed by John Dixon-Butler and built in 1904 for the Metropolitan Police. It includes offices, cells and section house. It closed in 2013.



Fig 11: Kings Hall and Baths 1905 © Hackney Archives



Fig 12: Kings Hall Leisure Centre and 43 Lower Clapton Road 2013

21 Strand Building

Built as 'Hackney Electricity Demonstration Halls & Offices' in 1925, the Art Deco Strand Building at 18-24 Lower Clapton Road was designed by J A Bowden. The original building included a model home featuring a suite of rooms equipped with the latest domestic appliances. The upper floors have been converted into flats.

22 The Lord Cecil

There has been a pub on the site of 42 Lower Clapton Road since 1868. The Lord Cecil closed in March 2005.

23 The Round Chapel

The Round Chapel was built by Henry Fuller in 1869-71 to replace the Old Gravel Pit Chapel in Morning Lane. For its first two decades, the Clapton Park Chapel, as it was then known, was one of the most important non-conformist centres in East London, but the church congregation decreased as the composition of the neighbourhood changed. In 1991, Hackney Historic Buildings Trust (HHBT) was given the United Reform Church in a derelict condition. The Trust raised almost £1 million to repair and conserve the whole complex, including the Old School Rooms which were retained by the Church. The refurbishment of the Round Chapel received a Civic Trust Award in 1998. HHBT now runs the Round Chapel as an arts and community venue.

24 Clapton Portico

The Clapton Portico in Linscott Road is all that remains of a building (1823-25) designed by William Southcote Inman to house the London Orphan Asylum. Following the asylum's move in 1871, the building was occupied by a number of organisations, and was bought by the Salvation Army in 1882. In 1969 it became the property of Clapton Girls' School, and the main building was demolished in the 1970s. The Grade II listed Portico was restored in 2005 by Brady Mallalieu Architects.

Fig 13: Clapton Square 2013



Fig 15: Churchwell Path phone Kiosks



25 Biddle Bros

In 1902-3 the property at 88 Lower Clapton Road was listed as Glover Bros., upholsterers; in 1911 as Glover Bros., cabinet makers. By 1960 it was occupied by Mr Biddle, building contractors. The bar Biddle Bros was opened in 2004 by Ptang Ltd.

26 Clapton Girls' Academy

This school opened in Cassland Road in 1906 as County Secondary School for Girls, South Hackney. It moved to Laura Place in 1916. Following several changes of name, it became Clapton Girls' Academy in 2011. The Laura Place site was extended in 1975. In 2010 it was updated by Jestico & Whites with 40% new buildings and 60% refurbished buildings. This refurbishment was a winner of the Hackney Design Awards 2010.

Fig 14: St John at Hackney 2013



Fig 17: The Round Chapel 2012 © Richard Allen



Fig 18: London Orphan Asylum, colour lithograph, George Hawkins, c.1830 © Hackney Archives

Text by Monica Blake

Photographs courtesy of Richard Allen, Monica Blake, Hackney Archives, Malcolm Smith and Ulrike Wahl

Graphic Design by Design@GloryHall.com

The Hackney Society is the borough's civic and amenity society. For further information log on to www.hackneysociety.org, email info@hackneysociety.org, or write to us at The Round Chapel, 1d Glenarm Road, London E5 0LY.

Other walks are available in the series: **8. Clapton Common and its environs** and **9. Highlights of Haggerston**.

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