Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common
Registered Charity

2019 Guide and events diary

This is one of 14 green spaces managed by the City of London at little cost to the general public.
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Welcome to Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

The City of London Corporation welcomes you to two wonderful open spaces in South Buckinghamshire. Covering hundreds of acres of beautiful countryside, both are nature reserves and home to rare and interesting wildlife. Whatever the time of year, and whether you explore on your own or join one of our walks or events, there’s always something to see and do.

The two sites are a registered charitable trust and most funding comes from private sources. Please see page 24 to find out how you can help look after these fantastic sites.

Opening hours

In normal circumstances, both sites are open to pedestrians at all times. Gates to the car parks at Burnham Beeches are opened from 8am and are closed at dusk (varies from 4.30pm in the winter to 9pm at the latest in summer). There are no formal parking areas at Stoke Common.

The Beeches Café, toilets and Information Point
are open every day (except Christmas Day) from approximately 10am to 5pm (seasonal variations apply). The café offers outdoor seating, including a dog free area, and serves hot and cold food and drinks.

Ranger service
Rangers are on site every day of the year. Their work includes looking after the woods, wildlife and livestock, providing visitor services and making sure the sites are safe. Please talk to a Ranger if you have any questions or problems - they are here to help!

Further information
Leaflets and fact sheets about the Beeches are available in the Information Point and from our website.

Tel: 01753 647358
burnham.beeches@cityoflondon.gov.uk
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
How to get here

Why not come on foot or by bike? It’s green and it’s free! If you live further away, try these alternatives:

By train to either site
The nearest stations on London lines are at Gerrards Cross and Slough.

Full public transport bus and train timetables can be obtained from www.traveline.info - telephone: 0871 200 22 33.

By bus to Burnham Beeches
Buses stop in Farnham Common. From the bus stop it is a 10 minute walk north past the shops, turning left into Beeches Road. You will see the entrance to the reserve at the end of Beeches Road.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
By car to Burnham Beeches
Follow the A355 north from the M4 (junction 6) or south from the M40 (junction 2). At Farnham Common: turn into Beeches Road, drive to the end and go straight ahead at this crossroad into Lord Mayors Drive. Parking is available in several large bays on your left.

There is no postcode for the main common/visitor facilities but SL2 3PS will get you to the end of Beeches Road.

Parking conditions apply to all areas of Burnham Beeches: pay and display applies in car parks at weekends and bank holidays (see website for current daily charge). Cars displaying a valid blue badge can park for free. Burnham Beeches has a People’s Parking Award for the quality of its disabled parking provision.

By bus to Stoke Common
Buses stop at Vine Road and Windmill Road for access to Stoke Common.

By car to Stoke Common
Limited parking (3-4 cars) is available in the lay-by on Stoke Common Road.
Enjoying Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

Access for all at Burnham Beeches
The Easy Access Path, Sensory Trail and many of the closed internal roads are ideally suited to wheelchairs or buggies.

Monday – Friday 10am to 4pm: Car Free Zone access and mobility scooter available. Prior booking for both is required - call 01753 647358.

Cycling and horse riding
Cyclists and horse riders may use the tarmac roads at Burnham Beeches but, to prevent damage to the site and protect other visitors, off-road use is not permitted.

Cyclists and horse riders are able to enjoy the network of bridleways at Stoke Common.
Barbeques and fires

**Fires are not allowed at either site.** BBQs are normally allowed* at Burnham Beeches subject to the following conditions:

- BBQs only permitted in the large grass area on Lord Mayors Drive, adjacent to the car parks.
- BBQs should be on legs or held off the ground with bricks or similar, so that no hot surfaces come into contact with the ground.
- BBQs must not be placed on benches.
- Never light a BBQ under a tree canopy.
- You must bring with you sufficient water to fully extinguish any coals.
- All charcoal and associated BBQ waste must be taken away by visitors and disposed of at home. Do not use bins on site.

* BBQs may be banned in periods of hot, dry weather; check our website for updates.

BBQs are not allowed at Stoke Common.
Enjoying the ponds

The ponds at both sites are important for wildlife and are easily disturbed. Bodies of water can also be dangerous. Take a moment to stand or sit and watch the toads and frogs spawning in spring, dragonflies hunting in the summer and early autumn or ducks paddling all year round. Please remember:

- Bread is bad for the health of ducks and encourages rats.

- Frozen ponds can be very dangerous; don’t walk on the ice or throw sticks/stones onto it.

- Please don’t take/add frogspawn, frogs, fish, plants or any organism from/to any pond. This can spread disease and damage the ecosystem. It is illegal to release non-native species into the wild.
Photography and filming

The Beeches is a wonderful place for taking a snap shot of a memorable family day out and is especially stunning in the autumn. If you’ve taken a great picture and you’d like to share it with us, please email it to the office - we would love to see it. Any professional photography and filming requires a license; student and amateur films may be permitted but you must contact the office to seek permission. Call 01753 647358 for details.

Take your litter with you

It is best if you take your litter away and recycle it - alternatively please use one of our bins.
Dog walking

Responsible dog walkers and their dogs are welcome at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common. When visiting either nature reserve, please ensure that your dog is kept under effective control at all times and do not allow it to disturb other visitors, wildlife or livestock. Please ensure that your dog is wearing a collar and a tag and ALWAYS bring a lead with you. During bird nesting season (April - September inclusive) please keep your dog under especially close control, and preferably on footpaths at all times.
Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) at Burnham Beeches

To maintain a balance between the needs of all site users, PSPOs apply at all times at Burnham Beeches. Please take a look at our dog walking leaflet, signs on site and website to familiarise yourself with the details and maps (see p14) of the areas.

You may walk your dog across the whole site (with the exception of the small exclusion area at the café) but in some areas you will need to keep it on a lead. Under the PSPOs the following orders apply:

- **Fouling:** you must always clear up after your dog and ensure that you dispose of it properly.
- **Dogs on leads:** if you are in an area marked 2 on the map you must keep your dog on a lead no longer than 5m.
- **Dogs on lead by direction:** if your dog is off lead in an area marked 3 on the map and an authorised officer judges that it is not under effective control, they will ask you to put it on a lead.
- **Dog exclusion area at the Beeches Café:** you must not allow your dog to enter the 'no dogs area'. If you use a recognised assistance dog because of a disability you are exempt.
- **Maximum number of dogs:** each dog walker can bring a maximum of four dogs onto Burnham Beeches at any one time.

Under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, anyone failing to comply with the above will be liable to a fixed penalty notice of £80 or prosecution with a fine of up to £1000. If paid within 10 days the fixed penalty is reduced to £50.

There is more information about dog walking on our website.
Fungi picking

Look, photograph, admire

Both nature reserves are home to a great variety of fungi but picking is not allowed.

- Some are very rare and removing them could threaten them further.
- Fungi provide habitats for many creatures, including some rare or threatened species.
- If removed, they cannot produce spores: the next generation is put at risk.
- With nearly 600,000 visits per year at the Beeches alone, if people collected fungi there would soon be none left for future visitors to enjoy.

There is more information about fungi in our fact sheet.
Pollards and deadwood

Much of Burnham Beeches was once ‘wood pasture’ – grazed, open woodland with pollarded trees. This attractive landscape is very good for wildlife.

What is a pollard?

Pollards are trees that are cut just above head height, encouraging them to send up multiple new shoots – it also extends the lives of the trees. By cutting the trees at this height, the livestock grazing beneath cannot eat the tender new shoots. The ancient pollards at the Beeches were once cut every 15 years or so, mainly for firewood. Many are over 400 years old.

As lifestyles changed, the practice of pollarding declined and the pollards were left uncut; this left them top heavy and vulnerable to collapse. At the Beeches we are re-establishing the ancient techniques, restoring the old pollards and creating new ones.
Climbing trees
The pollards are great shapes and may look ideal for climbing, but please don’t; their age, rarity and the species they support make them very vulnerable to damage. If climbing is your thing, there are lots of younger trees.

Dead or alive?
Deadwood is incredibly important at the Beeches for many of our rare species. It provides them with food and shelter and includes fallen branches or trees, log piles and standing dead trees.

Some wood is stacked in specially designed piles to create habitat for invertebrates, reptiles and other creatures. Please do take time to look out for some of the bugs and beasties making use of the dead wood on the site but don’t disturb or move it - lots of these creatures are very sensitive to disturbance.

There is more information about pollards and deadwood and how you can help us to look after them on our website and in our fact sheets.
Cows in the woods?

Livestock such as cows, ponies and pigs are very much part of the history of both sites - William the Conqueror’s Domesday book records the area as having enough woodland to feed 600 swine! When people stopped putting their animals on the land around 100 years ago, scrub and young woodland began to grow and the open areas began to disappear. This meant that the old trees and heathland habitats rich in wildlife started to decline.

Bringing back the livestock

We have re-introduced grazing animals to help restore and conserve the different habitats on the sites, making them better for people and wildlife.

The way the livestock graze creates habitats that are great for wildlife and much better than those made by machinery. They can also reach areas where machinery is impractical (e.g. uneven ground or near dead wood).

British white cattle and Exmoor ponies are traditional breeds that are suited to conditions at the Beeches. We have also used Berkshire pigs to graze and forage under the trees. At Stoke Common, Sussex cattle graze the heathland.

Livestock are put in the grazing areas for six to eight months from around May.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Fences and ‘invisible fences’
Traditional fences or stock-proof hedges keep the livestock in but require gates to allow access. At the Beeches we use a combination of traditional and ‘invisible’ fences, enabling us to graze about three quarters of the site. The invisible system uses buried cables with collars worn by the animals to keep them within a ‘virtual paddock’ (see website).

Help us with the grazing project
• Tell the Rangers about damage to fences or gates.
• Keep your dog under effective control.
• Do not approach or feed the livestock.
• Leave any ‘dead hedges’ or barriers in place.

There is more information about grazing on our website, and in our grazing fact sheet.
Burnham Beeches

Use this map to explore this fantastic nature reserve but please leave all natural things - flowers, fungi, wood etc - where you find them, and please use the bins provided or take your rubbish home.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Heathland restoration

What is heathland?

Heathland is one of the rarest habitats in Britain, characterised by plants such as heather, gorse and fine grasses and occurring on low nutrient soils. Lowland heath (found at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common) supports a variety of specialised plants, animals and insects and is an internationally rare and unique habitat.

Agricultural improvements, declining management, road building and development have all contributed to heathland loss. In England, 84% has been lost since 1800 (Natural England 2002). About 80% of Buckinghamshire’s remaining lowland heath is at Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches.

Restoring heathland

Without management, heathland quickly returns to scrub and young woodland, and the habitat value declines. We have been restoring our heathlands by felling young trees and bringing back grazing animals. This helps to keep them open and encourages a greater diversity of species.

There is more information about heathland on our website and in a fact sheet.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Help keep the reserves special

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common is a registered charitable trust, funded almost exclusively from private sources. Looking after the ancient trees, habitats, livestock, footpath networks, ponds, providing and emptying litter and dog waste bins all requires considerable financial resources.

Donate

All the money from parking charges, donations or legacies in wills funds work on the reserves. Donations can be made via our website or through the parking machines and donations boxes at Burnham Beeches.

Volunteers

Volunteers help with practical projects, providing information, office work or ecological monitoring as well as acting as ‘eyes and ears’ on the ground.

Our weekday volunteers carry out practical work every Thursday from 9am - 4pm. Weekend tasks at the Beeches and Stoke Common usually run from 10am - 3pm. For more information about the Friends of Stoke Common contact friendsofstokecommon@gmail.com or visit www.friendsofstokecommon.org.uk.

We provide all tools, work gloves and the all-important tea/coffee and biscuits.

See the events programme pages 25-37 for details.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Events
Guide to events

The following pages list our walks, events and volunteer tasks for 2019. **Bookings will only be taken four weeks before an event; full details of meeting points and times are given when booking. Bookings taken at www.eventbrite.co.uk** All events are free but any donations received will directly help support work on the reserve.

In some circumstances, e.g. poor weather, we may cancel events. We will give as much notice as possible – check the website, Twitter, Facebook or call 01753 647358. We are sorry, but if an event is cancelled we are unable to return any donations made. However, we will make every effort to reschedule.

When booking one of our children’s events please only book for your own child(ren) and note that only adults accompanying children on the event may join the event. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Simply Walk is organised in association with Buckinghamshire County Council and the one-hour walks start from the café; Wednesday walks start at 11am and Sunday walks at 2.30pm. Walkers should arrive 15 minutes beforehand to register. Contact the Burnham Beeches office or Fiona Broadbent (01494 475637). www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
January

Friends of Stoke Common
Saturday 5 January, 10am - 3pm

Simply Walk
Wednesday 9 January, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

Burnham Beeches volunteers
Sunday 20 January, 10am - 3pm

Simply Walk
Sunday 20 January, 2.30 - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

February

Friends of Stoke Common
Saturday 2 February, 10am - 3pm

Winter Tree I.D.
Sunday 13, morning
Find out how to identify the trees in the Beeches when they don’t have their leaves, on this 2 hour gentle stroll. Booking required

Simply Walk
Wednesday 13 February, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45pm.

Woodland Wonders trail
Sunday 16 to Sunday 24 February
Have a wonderful woodland adventure on our popular half term trail. Aimed at children up to 12. Pick up a leaflet from the Information Point and guide yourself along the route. Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil!
**Burnham Beeches volunteers**
Sunday 17 February, 10am - 3pm

**Simply Walk**
Sunday 17 February, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

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**March**

**Friends of Stoke Common**
Saturday 2 March, 10am - 3pm

**Simply Walk**
Wednesday 13 March, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

**Simply Walk**
Sunday 17 March, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

**Burnham Beeches volunteers**
Sunday 24 March, 10am - 3pm

**Friends of Stoke Common**
Saturday 30 March, 10am - 3pm

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**April**

**Woodland Wonders - Easter trail**
Saturday 6 to Monday 22 April
Have some family fun in the woods this Easter. Our trail is aimed at children from 5 - 95. Just pick up a leaflet from the Information Point and guide yourself along the route. Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil!
Meet the Ranger
Sunday 7 April, 2pm - 3.30pm
One of the Rangers will be near the café to answer your questions about Burnham Beeches.

Simply Walk
Wednesday 10 April, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

Meet the Ranger and his reptiles
Sunday 14 April, 2pm - 3.30pm
One of the Rangers will be near the café with some of the reptiles and amphibians that can be found on site.

Simply Walk
Sunday 21 April, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

May
Meet the Ranger and his reptiles
Saturday 5 May, 2pm - 3.30pm
One of the Rangers will be near the café with some of the reptiles and amphibians that can be found on site.

Simply Walk
Wednesday 8 May, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

Friends of Stoke Common
Saturday 11 May, 10am - 3pm
Ancient trees of Burnham Beeches

Saturday 12 May, afternoon

Our old trees have some fantastic tales to tell, as do the Rangers! Join this 2 hour walk to discover how and why the ancient pollards were created and what we are doing to keep them alive. Bring a pencil! Booking required.

Meet the Conservation Officer

Sunday 12 May, 2pm - 4pm

Our Conservation Officer, Helen Read, will be on-site to talk to visitors about our ancient trees. Further details posted on-site and on-line closer to the time.

Burnham Beeches volunteers

Sunday 19 May, 10am - 3pm

Simply Walk

Sunday 19 May, 2.30pm - 3.30pm

Meet at the café at 2.15pm.
Woodland Wonders trail
Saturday 25 May - Sunday 2 June
Have a wonderful woodland adventure on our popular half term trail, aimed at children up to 12. Pick up a leaflet from the Information Point and guide yourself along the route. Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil!

Creatures of the Night
Wednesday 29 May - evening
A two hour walk to track down things that go bump, squeak and squawk in the night. Even if the wildlife is elusive, exploring their habitat in the dark should make this a memorable night. This event is weather dependent. Remember to bring a torch! Booking required.

June
Friends of Stoke Common
Saturday 1 June, 10am - 3pm

Meet the Ranger: On location
Sunday 2 June, 2pm - 3.30pm
From Harry Potter to Robin Hood, one of the Rangers will be near the café to talk about some films that have been shot here.
Simply Walk  
*Wednesday 12 June, 11am -12noon*  
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

Simply Walk  
*Sunday 16 June, 2.30pm - 3.30pm*  
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

**Burnham Beeches volunteers**  
*Sunday 23 June, 10am - 3pm*

**Woodland Wonders - Family wildlife walk**  
*Sunday 30 June, morning*  

**July**

Meet the Ranger - and the bugs and beasties!  
*Monday 1 July, 10.45am - 12.30pm*  
One of the Rangers will be at the Information Point, showing off some of the fabulous creepy crawlies that live in the woodland.

**Friends of Stoke Common**  
*Saturday 6 July, 10am - 3pm*

Simply Walk  
*Wednesday 10 July, 11am - 12noon*  
Meet at the café at 10.45am.
Woodland Wonders -
Summer trail
Saturday 20 July to Tuesday 3 September

Something fun for the holidays - a summer trail, aimed at children up to 12. Just pick up a leaflet from the Information Point and guide yourself along the route. Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil.

Burnham Beeches volunteers
Sunday 21 July, 10am - 3pm

Simply Walk
Sunday 21 July, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm

Woodland Wonders activities
Wednesday 24 July, 10.45am - 12.45pm

Woodland Wonders activities
Wednesday 31 July, 10.45am - 12.45pm

August

On location
Sunday 4 August, afternoon
Join us on a two-hour guided tour of one of the most popular film locations in the country to see where Harry Potter, Robin Hood and James Bond were filmed. Booking required.

Woodland Wonders activities
Wednesday 7 August, 10.45am - 12.45pm
Simply Walk
Wednesday 14 August, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am

The plants of Burnham Beeches
Sunday 18 August, afternoon
Learn to recognise some of the plants in the Beeches and find out what they were once used for on this 2 hour, gentle stroll. Booking required.

Simply Walk
Sunday 18 August, 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

Woodland Wonders - Family wildlife walk
Wednesday 21 August, morning

September

The History of Burnham Beeches
Sunday 1 September, afternoon
Ancient monuments, poets, musicians and World War II artefacts are an unexpected mix for a walk around an ancient woodland. Join us on a 2 and a half walk to learn more. Booking required.

Friends of Stoke Common
Saturday 7 September, 10am - 3pm

Simply Walk
Wednesday 11 September, 11am - 12noon
Meet at the café at 10.45am.
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simply Walk</td>
<td>Sunday 15 September</td>
<td>2.30pm - 3.30pm</td>
<td>Meet at the café at 2.15pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnham Beeches volunteers</td>
<td>Sunday 22 September</td>
<td>10am - 3pm</td>
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<td><strong>October</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Stoke Common</td>
<td>Saturday 5 October</td>
<td>10am - 3pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simply Walk</td>
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<td>Burnham Beeches Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAMILY FUN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodland Wonders - Autumn trail</td>
<td>Saturday 26 October to Sunday 3 November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have a wonderful woodland adventure on our popular half term trail. Aimed at children up to 12. Pick up a leaflet from the Information Point and guide yourself along the route. Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Fabulous autumnal photography</td>
<td>Sunday 27 October, morning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Join professional photographer Paul Mitchell on this 3 hour stroll to discover some of the secrets of great photography. There will also be the chance to get tips and advice about editing images. Suggested donation £10 (all money raised goes to Burnham Beeches. Booking required.</td>
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<th>VOLUNTEER</th>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Stoke Common</td>
<td>Saturday 2 November, 10am - 3pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet the Ranger</td>
<td>Sunday 3 November, 2pm - 3.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>One of the Rangers will be near the café to answer your questions about Burnham Beeches.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn colours walk</td>
<td>Tuesday 5 November, morning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnham Beeches is fabulous in autumn and we are hoping for another brilliant display of greens, golds and coppers on this 1 and a half hour walk. Booking required.</td>
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<td>Burnham Beeches Volunteers</td>
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www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Simply Walk  
Sunday 17 November, 2.30pm - 3.30pm  
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

Woodland Wonders festive trail  
Saturday 30 November to Wednesday 1 January  
Get yourself in the festive mood by collecting one of our leaflets from the Information Point and guiding yourself along our seasonal trail. Fun for all ages! Suggested donation £2. Bring a pencil!

December

Simply Walk  
Wednesday 11 December, 11am - 12noon  
Meet at the café at 10.45am.

Friends of Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches volunteers  
Saturday 14 December, 10am - 3pm  
Escape the Christmas shopping mayhem - join the volunteers building our Christmas tree at Stoke Common.

Carols at the Café  
Sunday 15 December, 12.30pm - 3pm  
It wouldn’t be Christmas without our annual festive sing-song. There will be carols at 1pm and 2pm and craft activities for the children. Merry Christmas!

Simply Walk  
Sunday 15 December, 2.30pm - 3.30pm  
Meet at the café at 2.15pm.

January

Friends of Stoke Common  
Saturday 4 January 2019, 10am - 3pm
Contact us

City of London
Burnham Beeches office
Hawthorn Lane
Farnham Common
Slough
SL2 3TE

Tel. 01753 647358

24 hour number: 01372 279488

burnham.beeches@cityoflondon.gov.uk

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches

www.facebook/burnhambeeches

www.twitter.com/CoLBBSC

Police non-emergency line: 101

In an emergency, ring: 999

For general enquiries about the City of London’s Green Spaces Tel: 020 7332 3505

The information contained in this booklet is correct at the time of going to print (December 2018). The City of London reserves the right to vary the events, withdraw facilities or change opening times or prices without prior notice.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/burnhambeeches
Help keep Burnham Beeches special

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common is a registered charitable trust and most of our funding comes from private sources. The money from parking charges, donations or legacies in wills funds work on the reserves. Donations can be made via our website or through the parking machines and donation boxes at Burnham Beeches.

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