Using the trails

Please refer to the map with trail options on the other side of this leaflet – we have tried to accommodate everyone with different walks for all abilities and lengths of time. We have also included some fun activities to look out for at some of the stops along the trail.

City walk

The main City walk takes in eleven significant trees found within a two-mile route of St Paul’s Cathedral and also incorporates sites of historical importance such as the London City Wall, the Barbican, Smithfield’s Market, the Old Bailey, Cheapside, Millennium Bridge and St Paul’s Cathedral. This walk should take you roughly one hour, however if you are pushed for time, there is a shorter route of thirty minutes which can be followed on the map. There are plenty of parks and gardens along the way to sit and relax in, enjoy a picnic or have fun on the play equipment. Toilets, play equipment and access information are indicated on the map.

To start the trail, find your way to the south side of St Paul’s Cathedral and follow the trees indicated along the route using the locations on the reverse of the leaflet.

1. Sweet Gum

Found on the south side of St Paul’s, this is the largest Sweet Gum in the City at 26m. Sweet Gum leaves turn beautiful vibrant red and yellow colours in the autumn, creating a showy effect. Look closely and you’ll see that this tree has usually alligator-skin featured back.

2. London Plane

Originally purchased for one-way over 250 years ago, the Southwark Plane is believed to be the oldest Plane tree in the City. This tree is protected by a clause that prevents the surrounding buildings being redeveloped.

Some of its leaves can grow bigger than your head, in autumn see if you can find any on the ground and measure it.

3. Judas Tree

The Judas Tree has beautiful dark pink flowers which, combined with its heart shaped leaves, create a stunning tree during Spring and Summer. The flowers are edible and taste both sweet and acid. This is a very popular tree in the city due to its unusual shape and is great for delherting under it is a rarity.

Across the road Aldermanbury Gardens has lots of historical features. Look for clues to see what you can find out about the gardens.

4. Foxglove Tree

The Foxglove Tree is distinctive because of its large heart-shaped leaves, which can grow to be 60cm in diameter. Its beautiful flower-spikes look like the foxglove plant (hence its name) and bear small egg-shaped fruits. See what medicinal plants you can find in the garden today.

5. Handkerchief Tree

The Handkerchief Tree can be found against the long wall opposite the memorial tiles. This species of tree is very rare in the City, it is particularly stunning in late May when covered in white flowers that resemble handkerchiefs, from which the tree gets its name.

See if you can find the newest addition to the memorial wall.

6. Fig Tree

There are lots of interesting species within the lovely Rollestone gardens including mature London Planes, two Caucasian Walnuts and a very impressive mature fig tree, behind which you can see the beautiful architecture of St Bartholomew’s Hospital. See how many figs you can count on the tree. For children and the young at heart you will find various play equipment around the rotunda.

7. Tulip Tree

The Tulip Tree is a very attractive tree that has unusual shaped leaves and tulip shaped green ‘cup’ flowers which yield large quantities of nectar. This is an example of new tree planting and landscaping within the City and creates a vital living legacy for future generations to enjoy.

Take a seat and enjoy the water feature and view of the Old Bailey over the road.

8. Maidenhair Tree

Ginkgo trees, native to China, can be traced back 270 million years, when dinosaurs walked the planet – some call it a living fossil! Look out for Ginkgo supplements next time you are in a chemist.

See the city in a more rounded view in the mirror balls opposite the Gardens.

9. Elms

The New Horizon Elm species is significant as it was developed to resist the damaging Dutch Elm disease, the disease that wiped out over 25 million Elm trees in England alone.

Try out your detective skills to discover who planted these trees and why.

10. Swamp Cypress

The Swamp Cypress is a native of North America, one of the few deciduous conifer to be found in the UK and is also known as the ‘laid cypress’ because it sheds its deep red leaves in winter. Its wood is water proof and very good for making furniture and wood carvings.

Find out why this is called the Clivey Garden. This tree is somewhere in the garden amongst the plants.

11. Silver Lime

An impressive hedge of pleached Lime trees (both Large leaved Lime and Silver Lime) surround the Festival Garden that was developed on the site of bomb-damaged land. The wood of Lime trees was used by Grinling Gibbons, the Dutch sculptor, in the construction of the Cathedral’s roof – why not head inside and here a look?

Count how many trees make up the Lime hedge.

The City of London Foundation has been running since 1962 and exists to entertain and inspire the City’s workers, residents and visitors with special events and world-class artists in the beautiful surroundings of the City. Since 2009 the Festival has had an environmental focus within its programme. This Tree Trail was commissioned by the City of London Foundation.

coll.org

Trees for Cities is an independent charity that works with communities, residents and schools to transform the urban environment and plant trees in cities where they are most needed. In its 20th birthday year, Trees for Cities joined forces with the City of London Festival to celebrate London’s unique tree heritage.

treesforcities.org

The gardens in the City are part of a network of open spaces, parks and gardens around London, owned and managed by the City of London as part of its commitment to sustaining a world class city. Each open space is a unique resource managed for the use and enjoyment of the public and for the conservation of wildlife and historic landscape.

cityoflondon.gov.uk/openspaces

To feed into the development of the Tree Trail, Trees for Cities and the City of London Festival ran workshops at four primary schools in boroughs surrounding the City. Each group visited the City to study its trees and then undertook further work back in the classroom. The illustrations contained in this guide are by some of the pupils involved in these workshops:

- Michael Faraday Primary School
- Rotherfield Primary School
- Shapla Primary School
- Thomas Fairfield Community School

For further information about the City’s trees, or if you require this leaflet in another format, please contact 020 7332 3500

Tree sponsor

Bloomberg

Supported by
The Barbican Centre Gardens is great for hide and seek or a peaceful sit down because it has so many secret levels and hideaway spots – see how many you can find.

The walk ends here. Take a seat in the gardens and enjoy the bustle of the City. Have a think, how many different species of trees have you seen?

That figs were one of the earliest fruits to be eaten by humans. Fossilized evidence of figs in Hadrosaurus’ village have been found dating back to 9400 BC.

For detail of the River trail see overleaf.