



CITY GARDENS



Welcome

to the City gardens

More famous for its landmark buildings such as St. Paul's Cathedral and the Swiss Re tower, the City of London is also home to around 200 areas of open space that provide the City's community with much-needed oases of calm in this densely developed heart of London.

This maze-like array of secret gardens, churchyards, plazas and highway plantings in turn supports 2,800 trees and an annual influx of over 200,000 bedding plants. They are an integral part of the area's unique history: from the tiniest leafy churchyard to the City's largest open space, all have a tale to tell.

Whether you are looking for somewhere to grab a breath of fresh air, some summer sun or just a quiet stroll, we hope that this leaflet helps you to enjoy the unique network of green spaces that are the hidden face of the square mile.

*Secluded haven -
St Dunstan's in the East*



City gardens for People

Gardens and open spaces of the City of London provide an essential resource for the 7,000 residents and 330,000 workers and visitors that enter the square mile every day.

The gardens come alive with the sound of music throughout the summer with concerts and events organised by the City of London Festival. The Barbican Centre is also a cultural highlight, with rest and relaxation to be found at the waterside café overlooking the beautiful lakes and gardens.

Young visitors to the City can explore three new natural play areas opened in 2010 at Tower Hill Gardens, Portsoken Street and West Smithfield Rotunda Garden. The sporting minded may join in a game of tennis at the Golden Lane Leisure centre or simply observe one of the City's netball league games at St. Botolph without Bishopsgate.

Those seeking a peaceful spot for lunch are welcome to explore any of the hidden sites, such as St. Dunstan-in-the-East or the Cleary Garden, which provide respite from the City's busy streets.

To find out more about the varied history and horticulture of the gardens you can join a tour on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the summer with the City Guides.



Festival street pianos

Barbican Lakes



Postmans Park, home to
the Watts Memorial

City gardens
for

History



William Blake's gravestone
in Bunhill Fields

The City is home to the oldest public park in London – Finsbury Circus Garden – which dates back to 1606 and is on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The tradition of green spaces in the City can be traced back to the gardens of the City's many Livery Companies, some of which can still be visited today.

However, the majority of the gardens in the square mile came into being as a result of two key historical events that changed the geography of the City forever: the Great Fire of 1666 and the Blitz. The devastation caused by both events created small pockets of derelict land – including the ruins of former Wren churches – which were then turned into secluded havens for the City's community to enjoy. After the Burial Act of 1855 many churchyards within the City were also made available for public use as gardens.

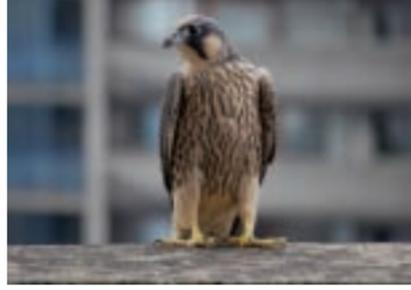
The gardens in turn document the history of the City itself: they hold some of the few-surviving remains of London's Roman Wall, whilst Postmans Park is home to the Watts memorial cloister which records the heroic deeds of everyday Londoners from the late nineteenth century.



One of the City's gardeners busy at work



*Peregrine
Falcon chick*



City gardens for *Wildlife*

Despite the challenges presented by the density of the City's built environment, wildlife has always been encouraged into the City gardens. Unique features within the City, such as remnants of the original City Wall, provide a refuge for unusual species of fern and a habitat for many kinds of invertebrates.

The City is working hard with the Square Miles community to improve garden habitats and encourage species such as the Peregrine Falcon and House Sparrow. A new Biodiversity Action Plan was launched in 2010 and sets out aims and objectives for the City over the next 5 years.

We hope you enjoy the City's wildlife. Please help us keep the gardens flourishing for people and wildlife alike, by taking your litter home with you. The gardens are a wonderful natural source of food for wildlife, so please also avoid feeding the birds as this can attract vermin.

We welcome responsible dog-owners and their dogs, and ask that all dogs are kept on the lead whilst in the gardens. Please clean up after your pet.

Cornfield Wildflower Meadow at Fann Street Wildlife Garden



Peregrine falcon

CITY GARDENS

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. A full list of sites and visitor information can be found on our website at: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/openspaces or by contacting the Open Spaces Directorate on 020 7332 3505.



For further information and opening times please contact:

The City Gardens Office

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Whilst in the City Gardens do not hesitate to approach any of our staff, who will be happy to assist you.

If you require this leaflet in another format please contact 020 7332 3505

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