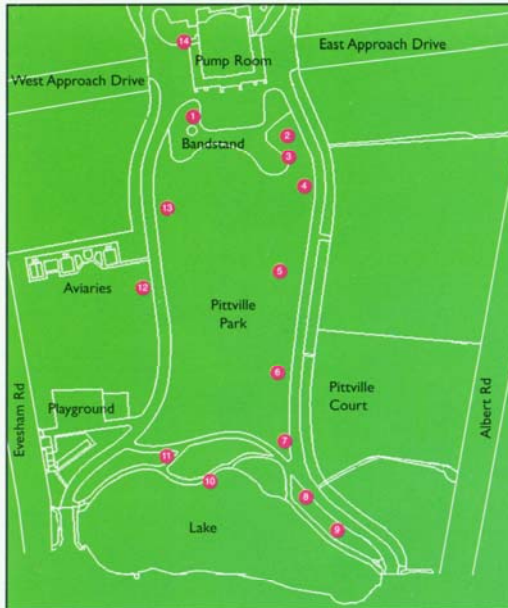


Pittville Park

Self guided tree walk



Tree Section: 01242 264262
 General Park Enquiries: 01242 250019
 Tourist Information Centre: 01242 522878

Website at www.cheltenham.gov.uk

All information contained in this leaflet was correct at time of printing.

Cheltenham Borough Council reserves the right to make any changes it deems necessary.

Photography courtesy of the Tree Section, Cheltenham Borough Council.



Stop 1: Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

These trees are some of the oldest in the park. They are as old as the park itself and grow very slowly!

Unlike most trees, each tree is either male or female. The female trees have red berries whilst the males have pollen sacks in the spring. Virtually all parts of this tree are poisonous. They can live for several thousand years and are some of the oldest living plants on the planet. They are used in the treatment of breast cancer, which is just one reason for conserving plant diversity.

Stop 2: Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*)

An evergreen oak, the word "Holm" derives from Holly whose leaves it resembles. This tree is also likely to be as old as the park. This species is very good at withstanding harsh city environments though the dense shade it casts makes it less popular with urban designers.

Stop 3: Pencil Cedar

(*Juniperus virginiana*)

This tree is officially the largest of its kind in the country! As the name suggests it comes from eastern United States. The juvenile foliage is prickly so that it is not eaten by browsing animals. In maturity this prickly foliage reverts back to the scaly type foliage.



Stop 4: Caucasian Wing Nut (*Pterocarya fraxinifolia*)

This species of tree comes from Iran and the Caucasus and is a member of the walnut family. The seeds hang down in strings up to 50cms and appear to look like wing nuts!

Stop 5: Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*)

This is a quick growing species of oak which originally comes from southern Europe. There is a species of wood wasp which lives on this tree and lays eggs in the acorns of common oaks making them infertile.

Stop 6: Common Oak (*Quercus robur*)

This is one of two oaks which are native to this country and are often regarded as the 'kings of the wood'. It is said that oak trees will spend 300 years growing, 300 years maturing and 300 years declining!



England has 80% of Europe's veteran trees, many of these are growing in Windsor Great Park. Up to 800 species of animal/insect are reliant on oak trees.

Stop 7: Red Flowering Chestnut (*Aesculus X carnea*)

Carnea meaning 'meat-coloured' describes the colour of their spring flowers. This tree is crossed between a horse chestnut and a red buck eye and it has spineless conkers in the autumn, which are small and infertile. It is hoped that this species of chestnut will be immune from bacterial canker. However, as can be seen on this tree, it does suffer from other forms of canker.

Stop 8: Persian Ironwood (*Parrotia persica*)

This tree is originally from Iran and the Caucasus. Its wood is so dense that it sinks in water! It is one of the first trees to flower in February before it has leaves and the flowers appear as tiny maroon, velvet like tufts on the end of branches – this brings a splash of colour to an otherwise pallid time of year.



Stop 9: Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

This tree is originally from a region stretching from Nova Scotia to Florida. Its flowers are creamy white and resemble tulip flowers. Many of these trees have been planted as street trees throughout the borough. They can grow up to 80-90ft and have a fine upright form.



Stop 10: Common Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

The natural range of this tree covers all of Europe, Russia, Western Asia and North Africa. It grows very well in damp boggy areas and is used for many forms of waterside management. It is also good at growing in poor soil and as such is one of the first species of tree to colonise land.

Stop 11: London Plane (*Platanus X hispanica*)

There are many of these trees around Cheltenham's roadside footpaths. This tree is often planted as it is very tolerant of atmospheric pollution and seems to grow in poor soil conditions. Its branches rarely break and it rarely falls over: It can grow to huge proportions and can be seen in two fine examples behind the Municipal Offices in Royal Well bus station.

Stop 12: Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)

A tree most school children are familiar with! Unfortunately many of the country's chestnuts, including those in Cheltenham, are becoming infected with a bacteria commonly referred to as bleeding canker. The symptoms are black exudates coming from the trunk, and cracks in the trunk and lower branches which can make the tree structurally unsound. There is also a newly introduced species of moth which lays its eggs in leaves which in turn become brown and crispy in the summer.



Stop 13: Himalayan Birch (*Betula utilis var.jacquemontii*)

This species is from Northern India and Nepal. Its most attractive feature is the white bark which peels off in strips. However don't attempt to peel it off yourself as this can damage the tree. The horizontal stripes in the bark are corky cells through which the tree breathes and controls evaporation.



Stop 14: Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*)

This evergreen tree is native to the southern Mediterranean and South East Ireland where it survived the last ice age! Its edible red fruits ripen at the same time as the current year's flowers. It is highly prized as veneer with orange coloured wood.

Further Information

Opened in 1825, Pittville Park is the largest ornamental park in Cheltenham and features the magnificent Pump Room and lakes. This park is given a grade 2 listing under the English Heritage register of Historic Parks and Gardens, with the Pump Room as a grade 1 historic building.

This walk can be viewed on the Friends of Pittville website www.friendsofpittville.org

Funding supported by Pittville Area Residents Association www.parazone.net