

Bees, berries and beans

A self guided walk in the London Borough of Hackney



Discover the urban spaces people are using to grow food
See vegetables, fruit and herbs outside houses and in communal areas
Explore the potential for increasing urban food production
Find out how we can create a more sustainable way of living in cities

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**the stories of our landscapes
discovered through walks**





This booklet is to be used alongside the audio commentary for this walk

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An edible walk through the London Borough of Hackney

Introduction

Picture a city. Are you thinking of skyscrapers, office blocks, housing estates, shopping malls and superstores? Or are you thinking of flower gardens, allotments, orchards, vineyards and bee hives? This walk explores a rather unexpected aspect of city life – growing food in urban spaces.

By meandering through the residential areas of the London Borough of Hackney, you will discover a surprising amount of vegetables, fruit and herbs being grown in marginal spaces. You'll also find out about some of the people who have taken the initiative to transform unused land where they live.

Looking at other urban spaces – grass embankments, car parks, rooftops and derelict sites – you will be able to think about the potential for increasing food production and creating a more sustainable way of living in cities. This walk is best in the late spring, summer and early autumn.

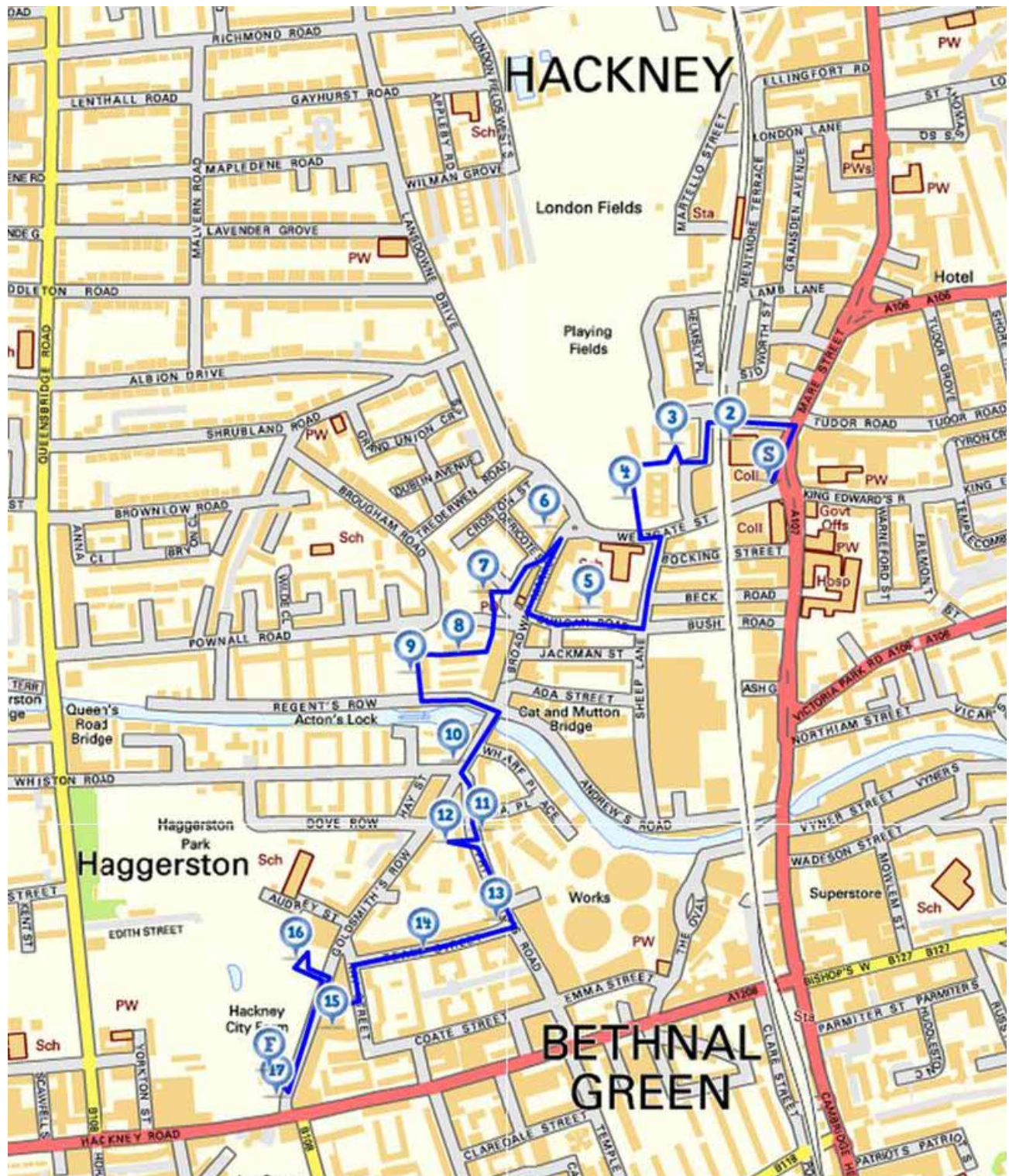


Warburton and Darcy Community Garden
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain



Indian bean tree, London Fields
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Route overview

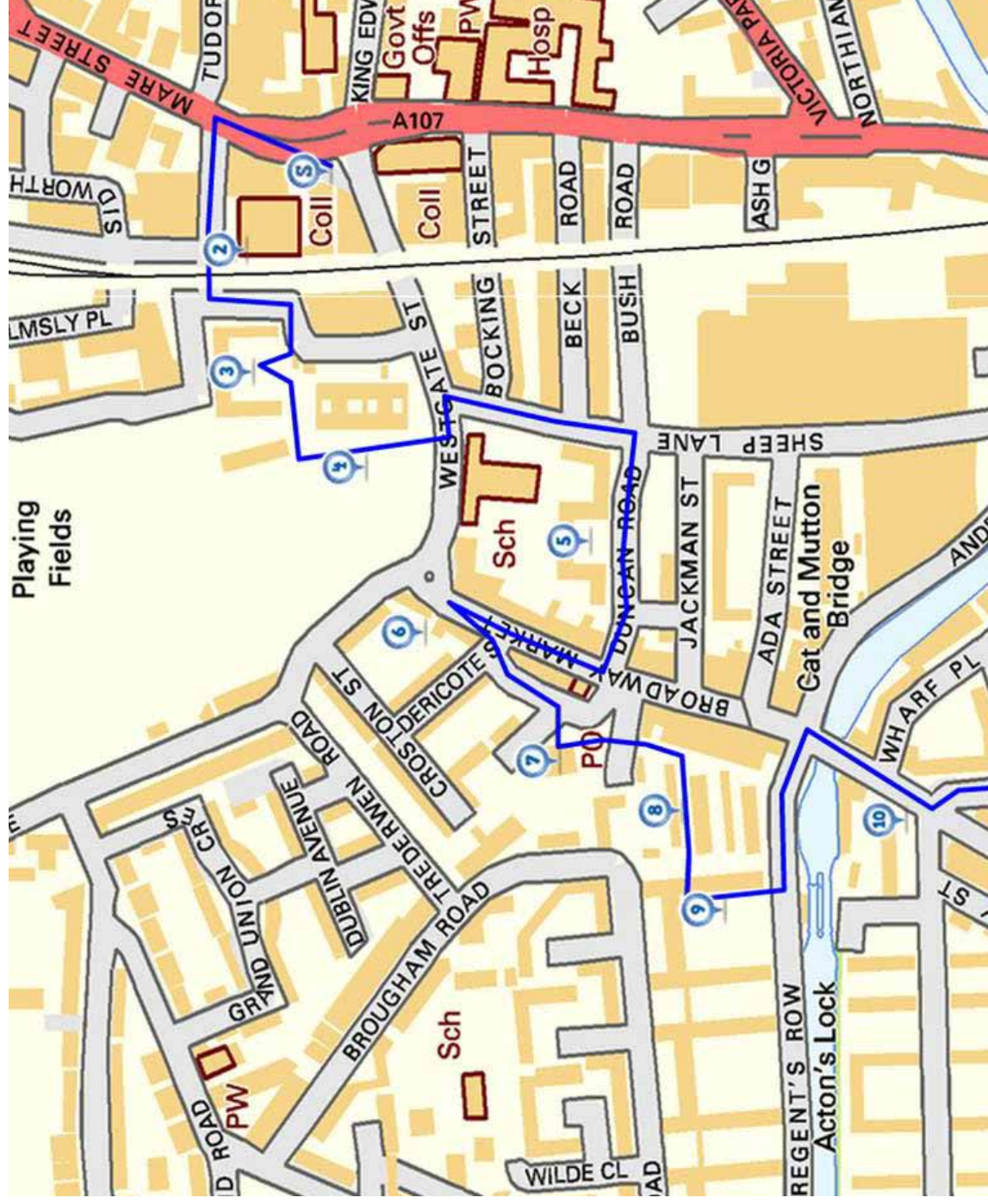


Practical information

Location	Hackney, East London
Getting there	<p>Train - the nearest mainline stations are London Fields and Cambridge Heath</p> <p>Underground - nearest station is Bethnal Green (a 20 minute walk to the start of the route)</p> <p>Bus - routes that pass the walk start include 48 (London Bridge to Walthamstow), 55 (Oxford Circus to Leyton), 106 (Finsbury Park to Whitechapel) and 254 (Aldgate to Holloway)</p>
Start point & postcode	The Triangle (junction of Mare Street and Westgate Street), E8 3RH
Directions from railway station to start	<p><i>From London Fields Overground station</i> - from the front exit turn right into Mentmore Terrace. Keep the railway line on your right. At the end turn left into Warburton Road, then right into Mare Street. The Triangle is on the right by the horse trough.</p> <p>The Triangle is 10 minutes walk from Cambridge Heath Overground station and 20 minutes walk from Bethnal Green Underground station. Please use local maps.</p>
Finish point	Hackney City Farm, E2 8QA
Onward journey	<p><i>To return to The Triangle</i> - turn left into Goldsmith's Row, continue into Broadway Market then turn right into Westgate Street</p> <p><i>For Overground train services from Cambridge Heath</i> - turn right and at the end of Goldsmith's Row then turn left into Hackney Road. Continue to the end; Cambridge Heath station is on the right after the railway bridge</p>

Distance	1½ miles
Level	Gentle – A flat urban route on pavements and in city parks
Conditions	Due to the seasonal subject, this walk is best tried between May and September while fruit and vegetables are growing from late spring to early autumn
Suitable for	Families – lots of plants for children to spot Wheelchairs / pushchairs – an entirely step-free route
Refreshments	There are plenty of cafes and restaurants along the route
Facilities	Public toilets in London Fields (Stop 4), Haggerston Park (near Stop 16) and Hackney City Farm (Stop 17)
Family friendly activities	<p>Hackney City Farm is home to many animals, plus the garden, cafe and shop. Open Tue-Sun, 10am-4.30pm. Closed Mondays. No onsite parking (Tel: 020 7729 6381)</p> <p>The Geffyre Museum features furniture, textiles and paintings from the 17th century onward plus a herb garden of period plants. Free entry, open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm and Sun midday-5pm (Tel: 020 7739 9893)</p> <p>St Mary's Secret Garden features food growing, herb and sensory gardens. At 50 Pearson Street behind the Geffyre Museum. Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm (Tel: 020 7739 2965)</p> <p>V&A Museum of Childhood is nearby at Cambridge Heath Road. Open daily 10am-5.45pm. Free entry, cafe, toilets and baby changing facilities (Tel: 020 8983 5200)</p>

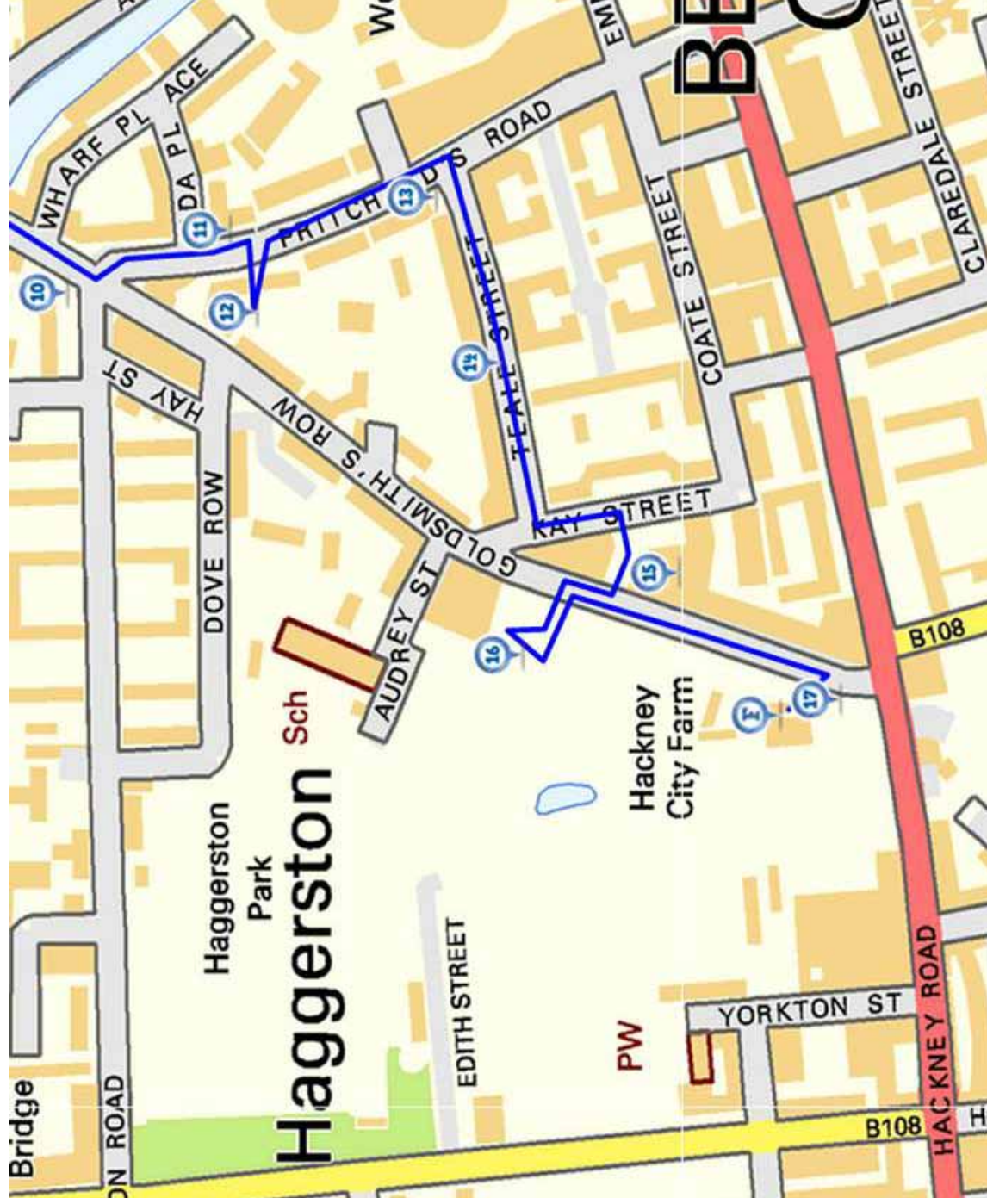
Detail of the first part of the route



Stopping points

1. The Triangle, junction of Mare Street and Westgate Street
2. The Triangle Studios, Warburton Road
3. Warburton & Darcy Community Garden
4. London Fields
5. Alden House, Duncan Road
6. Cat and Mutton pub, Broadway Market
7. Welshpool House
8. Suffolk Estate Garages
9. Orwell Court
10. Debdale House, corner of Whiston Road

Detail of the second part of the route



Stopping points

10. Debdale House, corner of Whiston Road
11. Ada House and Pritchard House
12. Goldsmith's Triangle
13. Pritchard's Road
14. Teale Street
15. Former Queen's Hospital for Children
16. Haggerston Community Orchard
17. Hackney City Farm
18. Hackney City Farm

Directions

These directions are for use with the London Hackney audio commentary. Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

1. Welcome to Hackney

The Triangle, junction of Mare St and Westgate St

Directions 1

From The Triangle, walk along Mare Street towards London Fields Station and take the first left, which is Warburton Road. Before the railway bridge, stop by the metal fence of The Triangle Studios on the left and listen to Track 2.

2. City of Nectar

The Triangle Studios, Warburton Road

Directions 2

Continue along Warburton Road under the railway bridge. At the end, turn left with the railway on your left and Warburton House on your right. Follow Warburton Road round to the right and go through the railings on the right. In front of you is an archway into Warburton and Darcy Community Garden. Go inside the garden and listen to Track 3.

3. A natural harbour

Warburton & Darcy Community Garden

Directions 3

When you are ready, leave the garden through the gate. Remember to look at the vegetable beds in the nursery school opposite. With the nursery on your left and Darcy House on your right, go through the gateway into London Fields and listen to Track 4.

4. Urban orchard

London Fields

Directions 4

With the nursery on your left, leave London Fields at the corner of the park. Remember to look up at the roof of London Fields School and the potential for growing food there. Cross the road using the pedestrian crossing and head straight along Sheep Lane. Take the first right into Duncan Road with Alden House on your right. Stop by the railings where there is a grassed area surrounded on three sides by Alden House and listen to Track 5.

5. To grow or not to grow?

Alden House, Duncan Road

Directions 5

Continue to the end of Duncan Road where it meets Broadway Market. Turn right and walk up to the Cat and Mutton pub where you can listen to Track 6.

6. Local produce

Cat and Mutton pub, Broadway Market

Directions 6

Turn back along Broadway Market the way you came. After a short distance, turn right into Dericote Street and immediately left into Welshpool Street. Continue to the tower block – Welshpool House and listen to Track 7.

7. Wasted potential

Welshpool House

Directions 7

Leave Welshpool House and cross Benjamin Close cul-de-sac. Go through the bollards and into the area of garages, where you can listen to Track 8.

8. From stables to garages

Suffolk Estate Garages

Directions 8

Go down the row of garages starting with numbers 11 and 48. At the end, go up the steps to Orwell Court. Pass through the archway and into the grassy square where you can listen to Track 9.

9. Pioneer gardeners

Orwell Court

Directions 9

Leave Orwell Court at the corner by the canal and turn left along Regent's Row with the canal on your right. Note the Solche Cilician cafe on the left hand side which has vines growing in the patio area outside and the plum trees opposite. Turn right onto the bridge over the canal. Stop at the corner of Whiston Road outside Debdale House and listen to Track 10.

10. Footprints

Debdale House, corner of Whiston Rd

Directions 10

Cross over the road at the pedestrian crossing towards the Perseverance pub. Turn right down Pritchard's Road. Listen to Track 11 as you pass Ada House and Pritchard House on the left hand side.

11. Second use

Ada House & Pritchard House, Pritchard's Road

Directions 11

At Pritchard's House, cross the road and enter Goldsmith's Estate directly opposite between Atkinson House and Courtauld House. In the central garden, listen to Track 12.

12. Production and pleasure

Goldsmith's Triangle

Directions 12

Leave Goldsmith's Estate the way you came. Look out for bees on the lavender outside Atkinson House. Turn right onto Pritchard's Road and stay on the right hand side. Listen to Track 13 as you walk.

13. Strawberry corner

Pritchard's Road

Directions 13

Turn right into Teale Street. Stay on the right side of the road and listen to Track 14 as you walk.

14. What a contrast!

Teale Street

Directions 14

At the end of Teale Street, turn left into Kay Street. Stop at the derelict site on the right hand side and listen to Track 15.

15. Derelict but not useless

Former Queen's Hospital for Children

Directions 15

Walk along the footpath between the derelict hospital and the block of housing. When you reach Goldsmith's Row, cross over, go through the gate into Haggerston Park and immediately right into an open space with picnic tables. Take a rest there and listen to Track 16.

16. A community space

Haggerston Community Orchard

Directions 16

Go back out of the park gates onto Goldsmith's Row. Turn right with the railings and BMX track on your right. Just before the end of the road, Hackney City Farm is on the right hand side. The farm is open every day except Monday. Go inside the farmyard and listen to Track 17.

17. A farm in the city

Hackney City Farm

Directions 17

Remain at the farm and listen to Track 18.

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Discovering Britain walk:

- **Mikey Tomkins** for creating the walk and providing photographs
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