

Our Tree Trail – a walk in two halves

The trail can be done in one, with the opportunity for a halfway tea stop at WOCA, and takes about 40 minutes, walking at a reasonable pace. Alternatively, it can be done in two parts:

Tree Trail South – starts at **1** finishes at **12** (WOCA); entirely wheelchair/buggy friendly. Approx 20 minutes.

Tree Trail North – starts and finishes at **12** (WOCA); less accessible for buggies and wheelchairs due to being over grass and passing through Kingfisher Corner. Approx 20 minutes.

Activities for our younger tree trailers - lots of fun to be had

Why not play Pooh sticks and look out for Kingfishers on the bridge at **8**; collect conkers and spot a tree stump which has ‘eaten’ the chain fence by **10**; look out for Flycatcher birds at Tumbling Bay **19**; spot butterflies and beetles at Kingfisher Corner **22**, and have a picnic whilst you’re here...

Want to know how old a tree is? Here is an easy trick: Find a tree which is at least as tall as a grown up. Wrap a measuring tape around the biggest bit of its trunk, to find out the distance around - its ‘circumference’. This measurement in inches is approximately its age in years!

How to make a ‘journey stick’: collect small bits and pieces (leaves, feathers, twigs, anything on the ground and no longer living – no need to pick things) along your walk and as you find them, tie them to a stick or stick them to a bookmark-size piece of card with double-sided sticky tape. Full instructions on the website.

Trees in books: trees pop up in lots of books, as well as making the paper on which they are printed. Can you think of a few? How about the Ents, talking tree-like creatures and guardians of the forest in JRR Tolkein’s books? And the mischievous and mighty Whomping Willow at Hogwarts – not one to have a cuddle with! See if you can think of some others on your walk...

“I speak for the trees, as the trees have no tongues” – The Lorax, by Dr Seuss

When you have done the walk, don’t forget to download your certificate from the website!

Planting trees in West Oxford

Over the last decade, LCWO has planted over 1600 trees in the local area. These have been planted to support biodiversity, but also because trees play a very important part in the battle to mitigate CO₂: our trees save around 25 tonnes of CO₂ emissions every year.

Our trees on this map: alders planted on Willow Walk, visible from **4**; fruit trees in Botley Park, **14** – **15**; willows by **18**; those at Kingfisher Corner **22**, and running down the West side of Botley Park back to WOCA; plus many planted at Hogacre Common Eco Park, not shown on this map.

Many of these trees were planted in partnership with John Thompson, who until his recent death, ran ‘The Forest of Oxford’, an organisation focused on encouraging and enabling people to plant trees across the city. John Thompson made a huge contribution to LCWO, and this map is dedicated to his memory.

Kingfisher corner – an old play park turned biodiversity hotspot

Planted by LCWO volunteers in 2009, Kingfisher Corner was created as a wildlife wetland area with help from the Forest of Oxford and Oxford City Council. Two ‘scrapes’ have been excavated to provide different habits for plants and animals. The 2013 Oxford Festival of Science BioBlitz found 394 species in Botley Park, 101 of which were in Kingfisher Corner. This included the picture-wing fly, the rarest fly recorded during the BioBlitz.

As well as being a very special place for minibeasts, it is a great spot for hide and seek and a summer picnic!

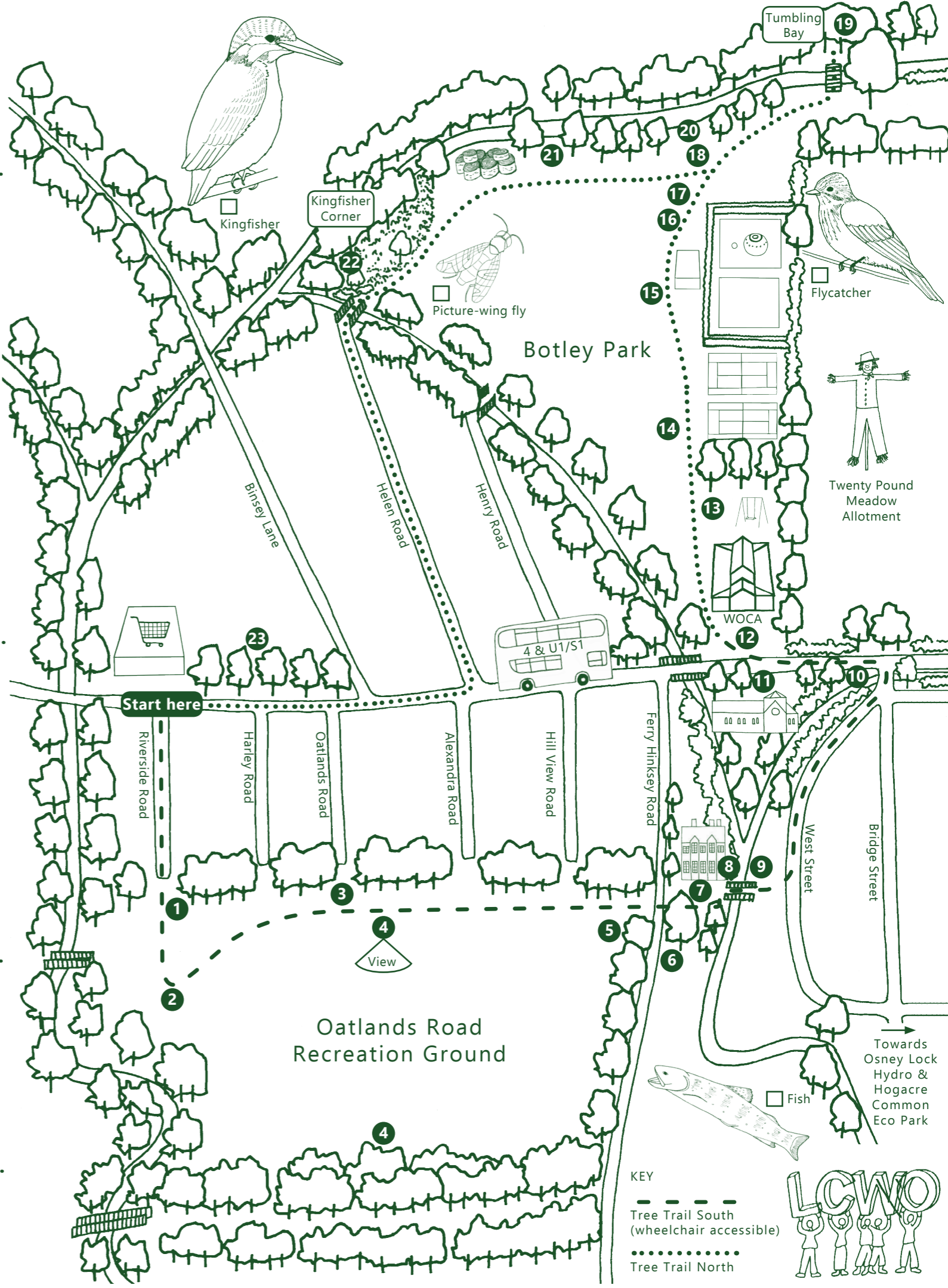
Please note: this map is produced and researched by local volunteers - any comments or help with future versions will be gratefully received. The map is designed by Lydia Morley - lydiamorley.com

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Low Carbon West Oxford Tree Trail





1 Hawthorn

Member of the rose family, known as the 'may', home of fairy trysts. A sprig in the hatband protects against lightening, but beware, to sleep in a room with may blossom attracts deep misfortune!

In Ireland, a railway and road have been altered to avoid cutting down a hawthorn.

2 & 18 Birch

One of the first trees to come into leaf, so associated with the arrival of spring.

Uses: maypoles; witches' broomsticks.

3 & 4 Alder

Water-loving, strong and damp-resistant.

Uses: clogs; Fender guitars, including the one loved by Jimi Hendrix.

5 Crack willow

One of Britain's largest native trees; named after the noise its branches and twigs make when they fall.

Uses: kids play and swing here on the way home from school; thought to be protective.

6 Oak

Many Oaks live for more than 1000 years!

Uses: Viking ships; whiskey barrels

7 Apple

This apple tree is possibly the remnant of a very old orchard, here before the school.

There are over 700 types of apple in the UK, and some like to visit them to 'wassail' or sing to them, in exchange for a bumper crop the next year.

Uses: an apple a day...; pies, apple bobbing and cider.

8 Yew

The Fortingall yew in Scotland is one of Europe's oldest trees, aged between 2000 – 9000 years old! Symbol of immortality, often found in churchyards.

Uses: anti-cancer medication.

NB very poisonous.

9 Sycamore

Very tolerant of wind and pollution, so useful in cities. Use its winged seeds as helicopters or break in half to stick on your nose as a rhino horn.

10 Horse chestnut

Conkers are not tasty like sweet chestnuts – the 'horse' bit of their name means 'not as good', not a reference to the animal.

Make sure you smell the flowers if its 'candles' are blooming!

11 Beech

The queen of British trees, to the oak king.

Uses: good for burning; hedging; forked beech twigs are traditionally used for divining.

12 Pine

A symbol of vitality/immortality, due to its needles staying green through the winter months.

Uses: Christmas trees; furniture; timber for construction.

13 Weeping willow

Often associated with death in folklore, with its sad drooping appearance, though with renewal in China, as is incredibly fast growing when cut.

Uses: pain alleviation; baskets and weaving; guarding hidden passageways at schools of witchcraft and wizardry.

14 Fruit trees

Planted with John Thompson, from Forest of Oxford.

15 Cherry

If you want a good crop of cherries, ask a woman who has just had her first child to eat the first ripe cherry – according to Danish folklore.

Uses: furniture; fruit; soothing coughs.

16 Aspen

One of the most widely distributed trees in the world, able to tolerate wide range of soil types and climatic conditions. Aspen leaves tremble and shimmer in the slightest breeze – keep an ear out for their soft whispering sound.

Uses: toothpicks; Celtic shields.

17 Pear

Some say: don't look at a pear tree before breakfast – it will die!

Uses: grown for its sweet fruit since prehistoric times.

19 Ash

Currently under serious threat from Ash Dieback. Traditionally associated with protective and healing properties, as well as being Yggdrasil, the World Tree in Viking mythology, under which the gods met.

Kids used to take a twig to school on Ash Wednesday – and if they forgot, other kids could stamp on their feet.

Uses: firewood; weaponry; chariot axels due to strength and elasticity.

20 Dead tree

Trees continue to play an important role even when they are dead – providing microhabitats for fungi, beetles, birds; slowly releasing nitrogen and storing carbon. 40% of woodland wildlife relies on dead wood. So this tree is important too!

21 Poplar

The most endangered native timber tree – though this is probably a cross.

A nearby row of poplar trees inspired Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem 'Binsey Poplars', written in 1879.

Uses: pallets; plywood; carts as it is resistant to shock.

22 Rowan

Said to protect against witchcraft and enchantment – see if you can spot the pentagram on the berries, opposite the stalk end.

Uses: spindles; walking sticks; bark used by druids to dye garments.

23 Lime

Called Linden in US; wonderfully perfumed flowers in summer; edible leaves in early spring. Considered sacred in many cultures.

Uses: leaves and flowers dried to make calming linden tea; popular in love spells; makes great honey when planted near hives!