

## Hornchurch Heritage Walk - Places of Interest

### A • St Andrews Church & Cemetery

The Grade I listed medieval church of St Andrews was extensively rebuilt in the 15th century when the tower and north porch were added. The cemetery contains a large memorial to Colonel Henry Holmes, former owner of Langtons and Grey Towers.

### B • The Dell / Mill Field

Renowned for bare-knuckle fighting and wrestling matches, the Dell's most famous confrontation came in April 1795 when Daniel Mendoza and John Jackson fought in a contest attended by 3000 spectators. The fight lasted just over 10 minutes when the odds-on favourite, Mendoza, gave up exhausted.

### C • Lodge Court

This development of early 20th century housing stands on the site of the 16th century Hornchurch Lodge. Their architectural style refers to the utopian Garden Cities movement.

### D • Hornchurch Library

Originally built in the 1960s as an example of utopian social architecture, the library has been remodelled in recent years and now features a new lift tower,

glass frontage and classrooms.

### E • Grey Towers

Built for Colonel Henry Holmes in 1876, Grey Towers was a neo Gothic mansion. During the First World War it was the headquarters of the First Sportsman Battalion and later became the convalescent home for the New Zealand forces in England. It was demolished in 1931.

### I • The Green

Originally the site of the Wedlakes Iron Works, famous for the manufacture of "modern farming implements", the green is now used as a venue for cultural events and a place for quiet contemplation. The green was also used by Hornchurch Cricket Club for home matches from 1925 to 1939.

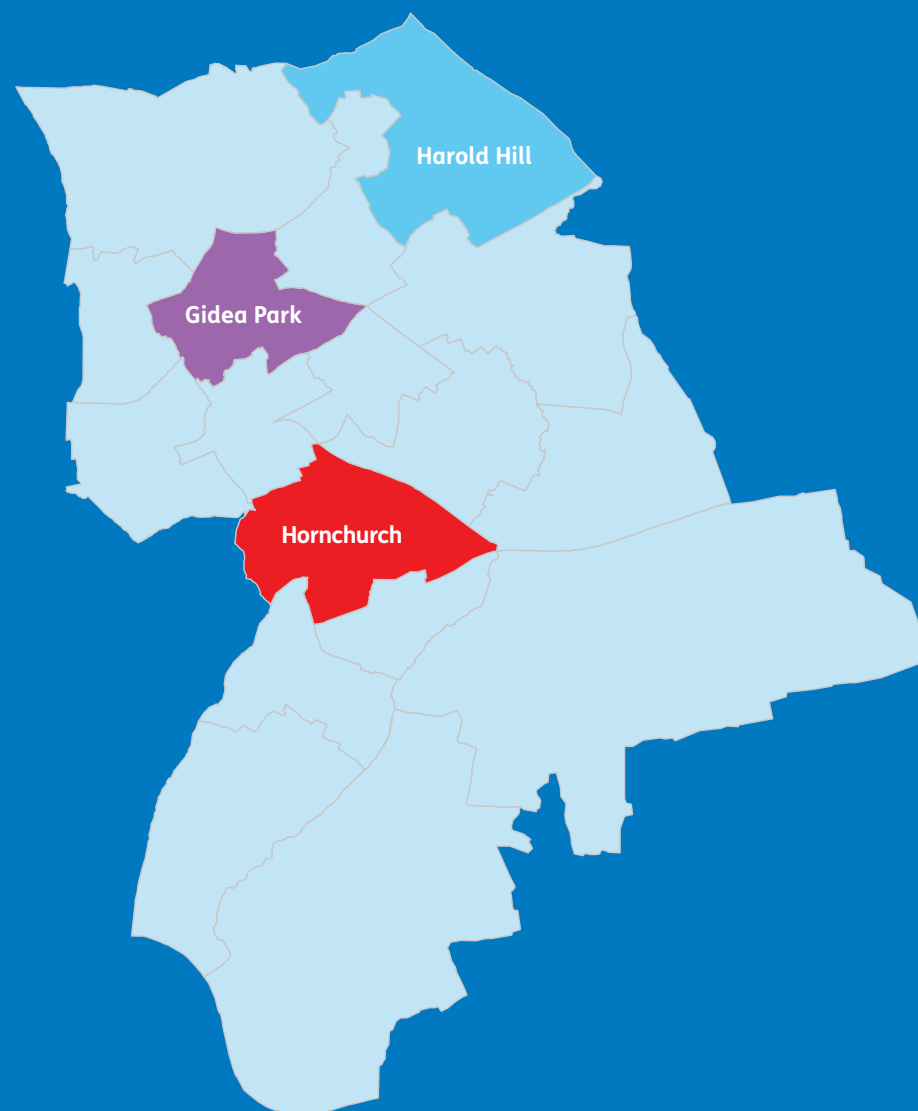
### Did you know?

The spire on St Andrews church was used as a navigational landmark for pilots

Peter Sellers, the actor best known for playing Inspector Clouseau in the 'Pink Panther' was an ancestor of Daniel Mendoza

The writer, Jilly Cooper, was born in Hornchurch

# London Borough of Havering



For more information visit:

[www.havering.gov.uk](http://www.havering.gov.uk)

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# 'havering walks'



## Arts & Culture

## Hornchurch





## Quench your creative thirst...



From its Saxon beginnings as the original Royal Manor of Havering, Hornchurch enjoys a long and varied history. It established itself in the Middle Ages as a centre of trade and was known for its leather industry, quickly developing a strong relationship with Romford and its market. As the centuries passed, Hornchurch came to rely more on agricultural trade and as the village grew into the town we recognise today, it has established itself as the cultural tenet of the borough.

This walk will look at how the historic buildings and history have helped shape the area into Havering's cultural hub, bursting with richness and artistic merit.

This linear walk will take approximately one hour taken at a leisurely pace.



**5**  
Continue along the High Street and cross at the pedestrian crossing before the junction with North Street. At the junction of the High Street and North Street stands a 1930s Art Deco building. Further up North Street on your right is **Hornchurch Library (D)**. Continue along the High Street and pass the Fatling & Firkin pub, previously the Bull Inn.

**4**  
Continue down the High Street and turn left into Station Lane, then right onto the pedestrian crossing before the road diverges, and back into the High Street. The parade of shops at no's 20-32 Station Lane is a group of early twentieth buildings in the arts and crafts style.

**3**  
**The Dell or Mill Field (B)** is the sunken space on your left. Follow the path and continue until you reach the War Memorial. Turn left out of the church onto the High Street and pause at **Lodge Court (C)**. Look down the street at the group of timber frame buildings, on the right, typical of the buildings which once formed the old village of Hornchurch.

**2**  
Turn right into the main drive of Hornchurch cemetery. On your left you will see the war memorial dedicated to members of the armed forces. Continue along the main path and turn right where the drive crosses the narrow path between the railings, into the Dell.

**6**  
Continue along the High Street, crossing at the junction with Billet Lane, passing the Bingo Hall, originally the site of the Towers Picture Palace. Turn right into **Grey Towers Avenue (E)** and continue, turning right into Keswick Avenue, then take the footpath left into Langtons Gardens.

**7**  
Follow the path round until you reach **Langtons House (F)**. After exploring Langtons, leave by the lane behind the house and turn right onto Billet Lane. **Fairkytes Arts Centre (G)** is on your right and on the opposite side of the road is the **Queens Theatre (H)** and **The Green (I)**. **FINISH**

**1**  
**START** at the Grade I listed **St Andrew's Church (A)**. Move towards the cemetery at the east end of the church and note the carved head of the Highland Bull. Go past the willow tree, turn left and leave the churchyard

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## F • Langtons



Langtons is a Grade II listed 18th century house set in picturesque landscaped gardens that include a lake, an orangery, a bath house and a gazebo dating from the same period. The house once belonged to the Massu family, Huguenot refugees from France, who became wealthy silk merchants in London. The layout of the landscaped gardens are attributed to Humphry Repton c.1805. In 1891 Langtons was owned by Colonel Henry Holmes of Grey Towers and in 1899 the property was purchased by Varco Williams JP, a leading figure in local politics. It was his daughter, Mrs Elizabeth Parkes who formally gifted Langtons to the council in 1929 with the proviso that the building must be used for council purposes and that the six acres of grounds be open to the public.

## G • Fairkytes

There has been a house on this site since the early 16th century but the present building



dates from the late 17th century with later alterations and additions. Thomas Wedlake owned and resided at Fairkytes in 1784 after establishing the Wedlake Iron Foundry which was situated opposite on what is now The Green. Fairkytes is best known as the home of Joseph Fry, son of the prison reformer Elizabeth Fry, who lived here until his death in 1896, and by all accounts continued the family tradition of good works being well known in the village for his charitable work and benevolent nature. In 1953 Fairkytes housed Hornchurch Library and since 1972 has been the Arts Centre for Havering.

## H • Queens Theatre



The original Queens Theatre was situated in Station Lane and opened in 1953 following the refurbishment of a former cinema building. Following a successful twenty year period where more than 400 plays were presented, the need for a purpose built theatre became essential. Designed by Norman Brooks, the second Queens Theatre in Hornchurch was officially opened in 1975 by Sir Peter Hall. It is one of a diminishing number of 'producing' theatres, meaning that everything is developed, built, costumed, rehearsed and presented in-house by the staff employed by the theatre. It also houses *cut to the chase*, the country's only resident company of actor-musicians who present a diverse programme of eight in-house productions each year.