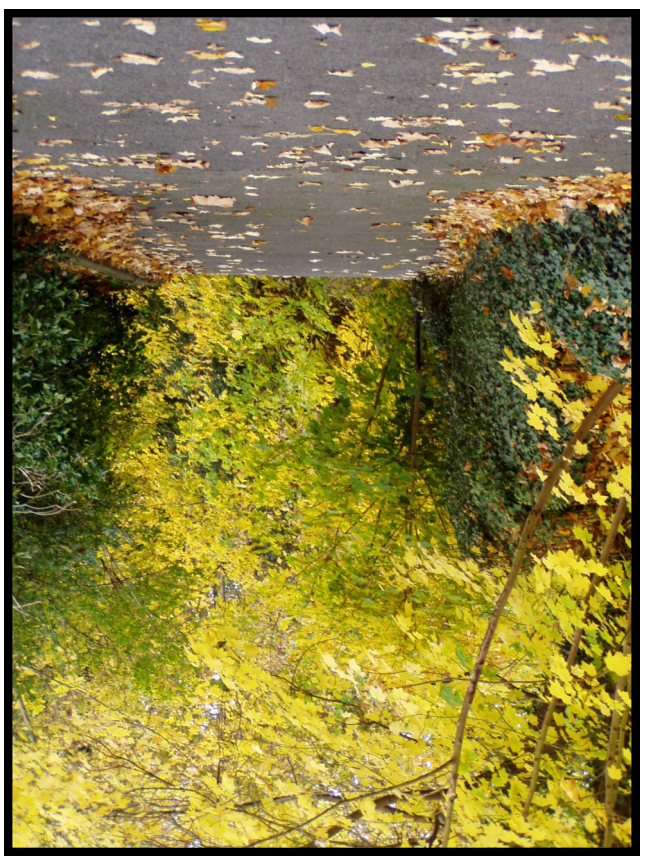
Stapenhill Woodland Walk



East Staffordshire Borough Council

Introduction

Stapenhill Woodland Walk has a wide variety of mature trees. This leaflet will guide you along the woodland walk telling you about the different species of tree and other interesting information about the area.

Identifying the trees

We have used round yellow discs to number the trees so that you are able to use this leaflet to identify them. When the trees are in full leaf it can be more difficult to see the yellow discs.

Parking

There is free parking at Stapenhill Hollows car park on Stapenhill Road (near St Peters church).
If you park there, take the path that leads you past the three black picnic benches and continue along the path parallel with Stapenhill Road. You will pass The Elms pub and the cemetery on your right. At the bus shelter continue along the path that goes behind the shelter until you reach the end of the path. This is the start of Stapenhill Woodland Walk.

Choosing the right walk for you

If you park at Stapenhill Hollows car park then do the Stapenhill Woodland Walk followed by the Riverside Walk then this will bring you back to your car and should take around an hour.
You then have the option of continuing your walk along the river to Stapenhill Gardens and coming back over the footbridge to the car park. You can even extend your walk further and take a look in the arboretum on your way back to the car park.

Clothing and footwear

Although the paths are all surfaced and maintained, path conditions vary with the season. Waterproof footwear is recommended along with waterproof clothing in case the weather turns.

Facilities

There are public toilets in Stapenhill Gardens. Refreshments are available from the kiosk at the Stapenhill Gardens end of the Ferry Bridge (open Easter to Sept).

Contact us

If you have any feedback for us from your walk, please contact the Parks and Countryside team on 01283 508724.

History of the Washlands

Back in the 7th century Saint Modwen built a chapel and a settlement on Andressey Island. These were destroyed in 874AD by the Danes. Later a Saxon Earl named Wulfric Spot established Burton Abbey on the banks of the river and included a shrine to Saint Modwen. There was a bridge over the river by the early 12th century but the Burton Bridge that we see today was built in 1864. This was followed by the Ferry Bridge in 1889 and St Peters bridge in 1985.

Wells on the Washlands

It is said that Saint Modwen had a well on Andressey Island for holy water. The monks of Burton Abbey also used the wells to collect water for brewing ale. The quality of the water in these wells is so good for brewing ale that brewing has become an important industry in Burton and the wells are still used today.

Wildlife on the Washlands

The Washlands provide a variety of habitats for a range of wildlife. As well as the river there is a woodland area, traditionally managed meadows and specially created areas of shallow water for wetland birds and plants.

Stapenhill Gardens

Before the gardens were opened to the public in the 1930s, they were the private gardens of Stapenhill House which was demolished before then.
The gardens are now maintained by East Staffordshire Borough Council and have recently won an award for horticultural excellence from the Heart of England in Bloom judges.

The Arboretum

The hedged arboretum next to St Peters church was planted by Burton Civic Society and demonstrates a range of trees suitable for use in small gardens.
The following trees can be found in the arboretum:

- Persian Iron wood (Parrotia persica)
- Whitebeam (Sorbus aria)
- Red Plum (Prunus pissardii atropurpurea)
- Mulberry (Morus nigra)
- Cherry (Prunus sargentii)
- Cherry (Prunus cerasifolia nigra)
- Acer (Cappadocicum)
- Acer (Griseum)
- Eucryphia (Glutinosa)
- Cherry (Prunus cerrula)
- Sweet Gum (Liquidamber styraciflua)
- Turkish Hazel (Corylus colurna)
- Crap Apple (Malus rosacea)
- Small - leaved Lime (Tilia cordata)
- Maidenhair tree (Ginkgo biloba)
- Hornbeam (Carpinus fastigiata)

Sweet Gum

Maidenhair tree

The following trees can be found at the bottom of the gardens:

- Red Oak (Quercus rubra) - 31 & 36
- Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) - 32
- Cherry (Prunus avium) - 33
- Dawn Redwood (Metaseguoia glyptostroboides) - 34
- Birch (Betula) - 35
- Walnut (Jugians) - 37 & 41
- Box Elder (Acer negundo) - 38
- Whitebeam (Sorbus aria majestica) - 39
- Red - leaved Plum (Prunus pissardii atropurpurea) - 40
- Small - leaved Lime (Tilia cordata) - 42

Stapenhill Woodland Walk

Start at the white sign titled 'Stapenhill Woodland Walk'. The first tree is straight ahead.

1. Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)

This tree is not native to Britain but has naturalised and now spreads quickly by producing lots of seeds.

The second tree is next to it on the left.

2. Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)

Flowers in April and May and these flowers provide food for early flying bees.

The next tree is on the opposite side of the path.

3. Lime (Tilia x europea)

One of the tallest native broadleaf trees reaching up to 40m in height.

Tree number 4 was a Horse Chestnut tree but unfortunately had to be removed due to an advanced infection of phytopthera.

Take the right hand fork of the path and tree 5 is on your right opposite the bench.

5. White Willow (Salix alba)

This very old specimen provides an excellent nesting site for birds.

Look left for the next species which is at its best when it flowers during May and June.

6. Rhododendron (R. ponticum)

The next tree is also on the left hand side.

7. Sweet Chestnut (Castanea sativa)

Not native to Britain but was probably first Transported from the Mediterranean by the Romans.

Ignore the path that branches off to the left and continue along the lower path. Look left for 8.

8. Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris)

A native tree of Scotland identifiable from other pines by its scaly red bark.

Tree 9 is further down the path on the right.

9. Silver Birch (Betula)

Can grow in very poor soils so is often the first to colonise new ground.

Take the path on the left that leads you to the grotto. This is built from the stone of the original Burton Bridge.

Tree 10 is on the left just before the grotto.

10. Holly (Ilex aquifolium)

A native tree giving shelter and food to wildlife.

The next tree is on the left as you re-join the main path.

11. Beech (Fagus sylvatica)

Often called lady of the woods and one of our most beautiful native trees,

Ignore the steps and continue on the lower path where you will find tree 12 on your left.

12. Elm (Ulmus procera)

Few Elms have survived Dutch Elm disease caused by a fungus and spread by a beetle.

Tree 13 is on your right hand side.

13. Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)

A common native tree planted for its timber.

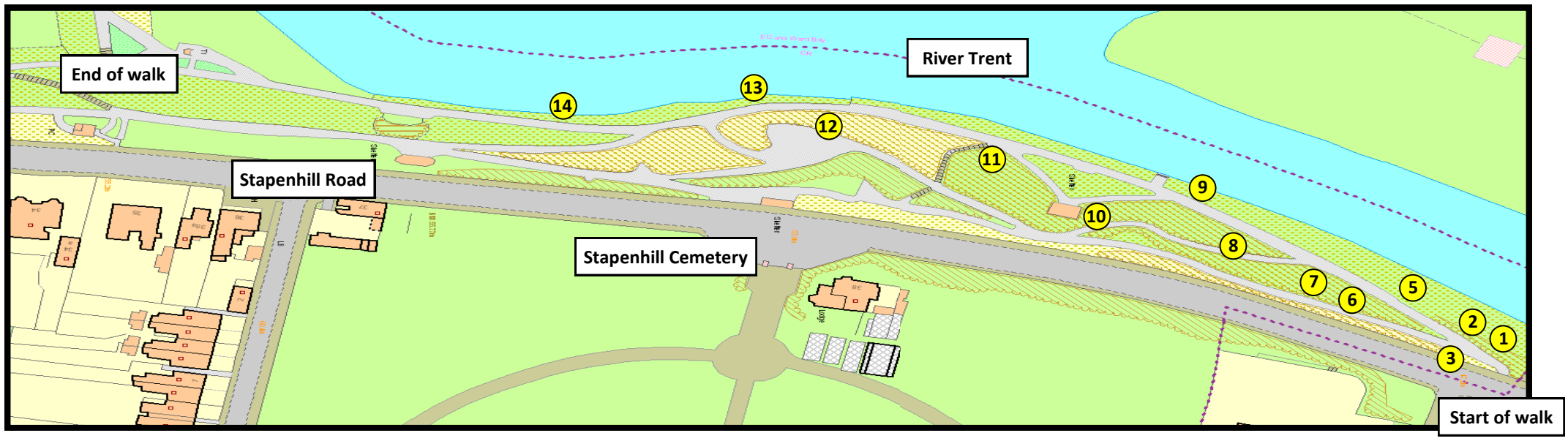
Ignore the next path on the left then take the right hand path at the next fork in the path.

14. Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)

The berries are called haws and provide winter food for the birds.

The marker on tree 15 has been covered by ivy so it is difficult to spot but it is an Alder tree (Alnus glutinosa) and is on the right hand side.

This walk ends at the covered well. Take the right hand path to continue your walk.



Riverside Walk

Start at the covered well and follow the path along the river. The first tree is on your left.

16. Purple-leaved Plum (Prunus pissardii atropurpurea)

Flowers open in early March unless the buds have been eaten by Bullfinches!

The next four trees are also on the left of the path.

17. Birch (Betula)

The bark sheds layers like tissue paper becoming more rugged with darker diamond shaped crevices.

18. Copper Beech (Fagus sylvatica purpurea)

A popular ornamental tree in parks that can reach heights of up to 35m tall with a 3m trunk diameter.

19. Robinia (Pseudoacacia frisia)

The common name is 'false acacia' and the 'Frisia' cultivar has golden yellow leaves in the spring.

20. Small-leaved Lime (Tilia cordata)

From peat-preserved pollen grains we know it to be one of our oldest native trees. It has been used for making rope and for carvings.

The next two trees are on the right hand side of the path next to the river.

21. Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)

This tree belongs to the genus Acer (the maples). In Latin acer means "sharp" as maple wood was good for making spears.

22. Horse chestnut (Aesculus hippocastanum)

First introduced to Britain in the late 16th century, it was not until about 200 years later that the seeds were used to play "conkers". Before that hazels or snail shells were used.

The last four trees of this walk are all on the left hand side of the path as you make your way back to the car park.

23. London Plane (Platanus x hispanica)

Despite its name, this tree isn't native to Britain. It was one of the few trees that survived the soot-laden smog in London 200 years ago as its shiny leaves are easily washed by the rain and it sheds bark regularly.

24. Weeping Ash (Fraxinus excelsior pendula)

This is a cultivated variety of Ash grown as an ornamental.

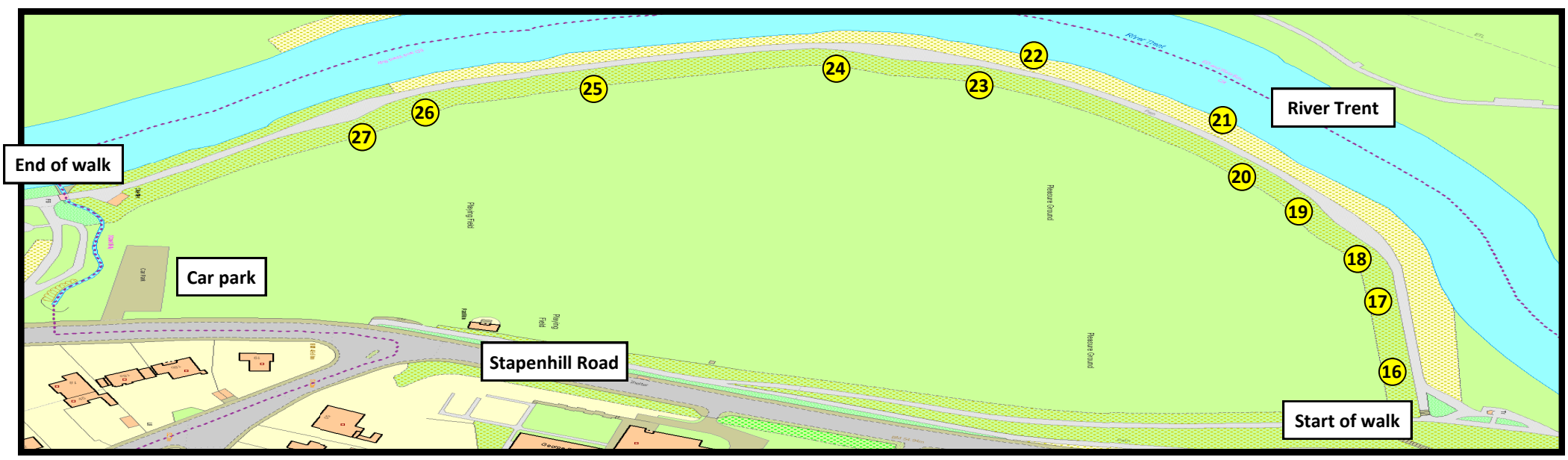
25. Cedar (Cedrus deodora)

The national tree of Pakistan where its fragrantly scented timber is used for construction in temples and palaces.

26. Blue Spruce (Picea glauca)

A natural variant of the Colorado Spruce, its blue tinted needles make it an increasingly popular Christmas tree.

27. False Acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia)

Less common now than it was in the first half of the 19th century when the timber was used for shipbuilding.

You will now find yourself at the car park at Stapenhill Hollows. If you have the time then it is possible to follow the riverside path to Stapenhill Gardens where you will find a variety of mature trees (see the other side of this leaflet). You can then return over the footbridge and go past St Peters church to get back to the car park. If you still haven't seen enough trees then you could stop off at the arboretum behind the church (see the other side of this leaflet).