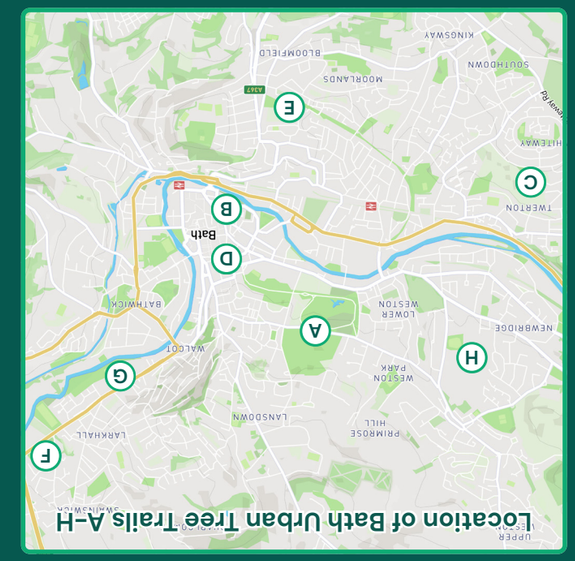
Start / Finish (W3W): Morrisons Supermarket, London Road, BA1 6AN (chair.chair.trees)
Distance: 2 miles
Accessibility: 1st loop: pavement with some steps, 2nd loop: pavement and riverside path – may be muddy. Flooding possible in winter.
Bus: London Road outside Morrisons
Parking: Free parking at Morrisons (check permitted time)
Public Toilets and Refreshments: Morrisons
Rest Points: Benches throughout Kensington Meadows
Features: Play area in Kensington Meadows, river, view of Cleveland Pools

Thank you to all of those who have produced this tree trail:

Lucy Bartlett, Fiona Bell, Antonia Johnson, Joseph Lavington, Helen Schofield, Hugh Williamson with support from:

Bathscape Landscape Partnership, the World Heritage Advisory Group, Grant Associates, Street Nameplate Co., Bath BID, St John's Foundation, the APEX City of Bath Hotel, B&NES Parks & Greenspaces, B&NES Public Health.

Map and website designed by Joseph Lavington.



BATH URBAN TREESCAPE

Tree Trail G: London Road Loops

Bath is a UNESCO World Heritage City with six attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, including the green setting of the city. There are many significant trees—in the parks and in the streets—which contribute indirectly to the World Heritage status and the wellbeing of the community.

Here is one of our Urban Treescape trails in digital and map form, where we share a selection of trees in the centre of the city. We invite you to follow our trail and enjoy the shapes and colours of each tree—their flowers, fruits, seeds, leaves and bark—and learn something about each one, while seeing the city from a different perspective.

A digital map is available at:
bathurbantreescape.com

Made possible with Heritage Fund
grant associates
BATHSCAPE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

1 GINKGO
Ginkgo biloba
London Road

New planting in 2023, these replaced the lime trees that were struggling in the conditions of the busy London Road. Ginkgos are remarkable for their ability to thrive in harsh urban environments.

2 CALLERY PEAR
Pyrus calleryana
Snow Hill

The Callery or 'Chanticleer' pear originates in China and Vietnam. Its upright shape and tiny fruit suit it perfectly for street planting. The hard, fine-grained wood is used for marquetry, musical and drawing instruments and other luxury items.

3 FIELD MAPLE
Acer campestre
Snow Hill

When the Snow Hill development was built in the 1950s and 60s, much thought was given to landscaping and planting, including these two native trees. They enhance their environment in many ways—providing cool shade in summer and breaking up the straight lines of roofs and walls.

4 CABBAGE PALM
Cordyline australis
Snow Hill

The cabbage palm or cabbage tree comes from New Zealand, where it can grow up to 20m tall. The Maori boiled the fleshy, sugary stems and roots for food and medicine. The strong, water-resistant leaves can also be woven into anchor ropes, cooking baskets and sandals.

5 MANNA ASH
Fraxinus ornus
Snow Hill

Sometimes called the 'flowering ash', this tree produces dense masses of feathery white flowers in May. This example has been grafted onto a common ash root-stock. Notice how the craggy bark near the ground (typical of the common ash) changes at the graft line to the smooth bark typical of the manna ash.

6 SCOTS PINE
Pinus sylvestris
Snow Hill

The salmon-coloured upper bark of the Scots pine is very distinctive. The species was typical of the ancient Caledonian forest, but is native right across Europe despite its common name. It isn't often seen on the streets of Bath.

7 SWEETGUM
Liquidambar styraciflua
Snow Hill

The sweetgum (try saying the lovely botanical name out loud) is native to South Eastern US. The star-shaped leaves emerge late, but persist on the tree until late autumn, by which time they have turned a dark red. Watch out too for the spiky seed pods.

8 BROAD-LEAVED LIME
Tilia platyphyllos
Snow Hill

Next to birches, limes in all their varieties are probably the commonest street tree in Bath. The abundant foliage provides good shade and shelter from wind, and unlike London plane, the leaves rot down quickly. The small-leaved and broad-leaved limes are the two parents of the hybrid common lime.

9 SILVER MAPLE
Acer saccharinum
Snow Hill

So-called from the short hairs on the undersides of the leaves, giving them a silvery look. The leaves are typical of maples—with five lobes like the fingers of a hand—deeply cut and with a complex outline reminiscent of a snowflake. It grows quickly—if a bit untidily—so has been popular, but is not tough enough for streetside planting.

10 ROWAN
Sorbus aucuparia
Snow Hill

The rowan is also known, confusingly, as the 'mountain ash' from its ash-like pinnate leaves and ability to survive in harsh environments. Branches were hung in houses to ward off evil, it being believed that the cross of the crucifixion was made from rowan. Like ash, the wood is strong and flexible and is a substitute for yew in making bows.

11 NORWAY MAPLE
Acer platanoides
London Road

The Latin species names of Norway maple and sycamore—platanoides and pseudoplatanus—mean the same thing: resembling the plane tree. The leaves of the two trees are similar, but only that of the Norway maple exudes a white sap from the veins when torn. The vertical ridges on the bark gradually get deeper with age, but unlike sycamore, it doesn't split into plates.

12 CRACK WILLOW
Salix fragilis
Riverside

This veteran tree is literally falling apart—which is part of its survival strategy. Twigs and branches which fall into the river will float downstream. Some will grow into new trees when they stick in the bank, maybe several miles away. Side twigs break easily from branches, sometimes with an audible crack, which gives the tree its name.

13 COMMON ALDER
Alnus glutinosa
Riverside

Alder likes to grow with its roots in water—by rivers or in a 'carr'; a waterlogged woodland. The timber also survives well in water and was chosen for the foundations of the Rialto bridge in Venice. Alder charcoal can be used in the manufacture of gunpowder.

14 CRACK WILLOW
Salix fragilis
Kensington Meadows

Willow branches take root readily in moist ground. This makes the tree ideal for creating living structures such as this tunnel. The young leaves are covered in tiny white hairs on their undersides.

15 SYCAMORE
Acer pseudoplatanus
Riverside

Two separate stems of this tree have joined together about 1.5m from the ground. This natural process is called 'inosculation', from the Latin for kissing! Don't be tempted to take a closer look—the river here is deep and can be fast-flowing.

16 ENGLISH ELM
Ulmus procera
Riverside

This is a group of young trees, all genetic clones, having grown from suckers. Some are apparently healthy, but some are sickly and some dead. They are suffering from Dutch Elm Disease, a fungal infection spread by elm bark beetle. As the bark flakes off dead trees, you may be able to see the radiating tracks of the beetle larvae on the wood underneath. There are very few mature English elms left, but small trees of a few inches diameter are still common, especially in hedges.

17 COMMON ASH
Fraxinus excelsior
Grosvenor Footbridge

The roots and bole of this old tree have pushed over the stone pier by which it grows. Like all ash trees in Britain it is under threat from ash die-back, a fungal disease first identified in 2006 and found in Britain in 2012. A few trees have natural resistance and are being propagated in an attempt to preserve the ash as part of our landscape.

18 COAST REDWOOD
Sequoia sempervirens
Grosvenor Bridge Road

These trees are native to the coast of California, where they grow to be the tallest trees in the world—up to 115m! Recognise them from their vertical shape and rather messy outline. Coast redwood forests have the greatest biomass per hectare of any natural environment on Earth.

19 HANDKERCHIEF TREE
Davidia involucrata
Beaufort Gardens

This is probably the biggest and most spectacular Davidia on public show in Bath. In late April and early May, the white bracts look like hundreds of handkerchiefs hanging from the tree's branches.

20 JUDAS TREE
Cercis siliquastrum
Beaufort Gardens

This small tree is best known for its magenta flowers, which appear on bare branches and twigs, before the leaves, in April or May. These are followed by reddish seed pods in July. It is a long-lived tree—the celebrated example next to the church of St Mary Magdalene on Holloway may be more than 300 years old. The name may derive from a belief that Judas Iscariot hanged himself from this tree after betraying Jesus.

21 BLACK WALNUT
Juglans nigra
Beaufort Gardens

This walnut from the Eastern US is an unusual tree for Bath. Its bark is darker and more fissured than that of its relative the common walnut, and its leaves are longer with smaller leaflets—they turn a striking yellow in autumn. The wood is highly attractive and much used for fine furniture.

22 GROSVENOR PLACE PLANTING
London Road

Grosvenor Place dates from 1791 and the long row of trees screening it from London Road is probably of the same date. The huge holm oak next to the central entrance may be part of the original planting. An old horse chestnut and tall Lombardy poplar mark the end of the row.