

**GLA 43: Springfield Park, Potential RIGS**

London Borough of Hackney, TQ 345 873

Ownership: Local Authority. Public open space.

**Springfield Park geology**

Springfield Park is on the west bank of the River Lea, and it is London's only geological nature reserve. The geology of the park is straightforward with a terrace composed of Hackney Gravel lying directly on the London Clay. As the name implies, the primary geological interest is the occurrence of numerous springs where groundwater flowing through the gravel emerges at the surface where it meets the impervious clay below. The springs are sometimes a trickle and at other times a vigorous bubbling flow and the damp ground creates lush vegetation providing a reminder of the relationship between geology and plant life. There are many other aspects of geology that can be demonstrated in the park, from the different types of vegetation that can be seen growing on sandy or clay soils, to the cracks in the tarmac paths that indicate minor landslips as the clay slowly moves downhill. A small pit within the park supplied sufficient brickearth for the building of the 3 villas originally there (now only one remains). All this is contained in an excellent leaflet on the geology, produced by geologist Eric Robinson when the park was designated a geological nature reserve in 1997.

**View**

A steep walk to the top of the park rewards the visitor with a fine view of the Lea valley containing the complex of reservoirs supplying drinking water to north and east London. It is a good place to appreciate the great width of the valley which was created during times of a melting ice sheet, when the vegetation was sparse, the river was swollen with meltwater and debris, and the local wildlife included reindeer and polar bear.

**Access and facilities**

The park has an Information Centre where leaflets can be obtained, as well as downloaded from [here](#). Toilets and a cafe are situated in the same building. Interpretation boards for the geology are placed at several sites within the park. Access can be from the Lea Valley tow path and surrounding roads.

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**View from Springfield Park across the River Lea to the Epping Forest Ridge on the far side**

Source: London's foundations, page 201 (Diana Clements)



Site Map

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Source: London's foundations, page 199

