

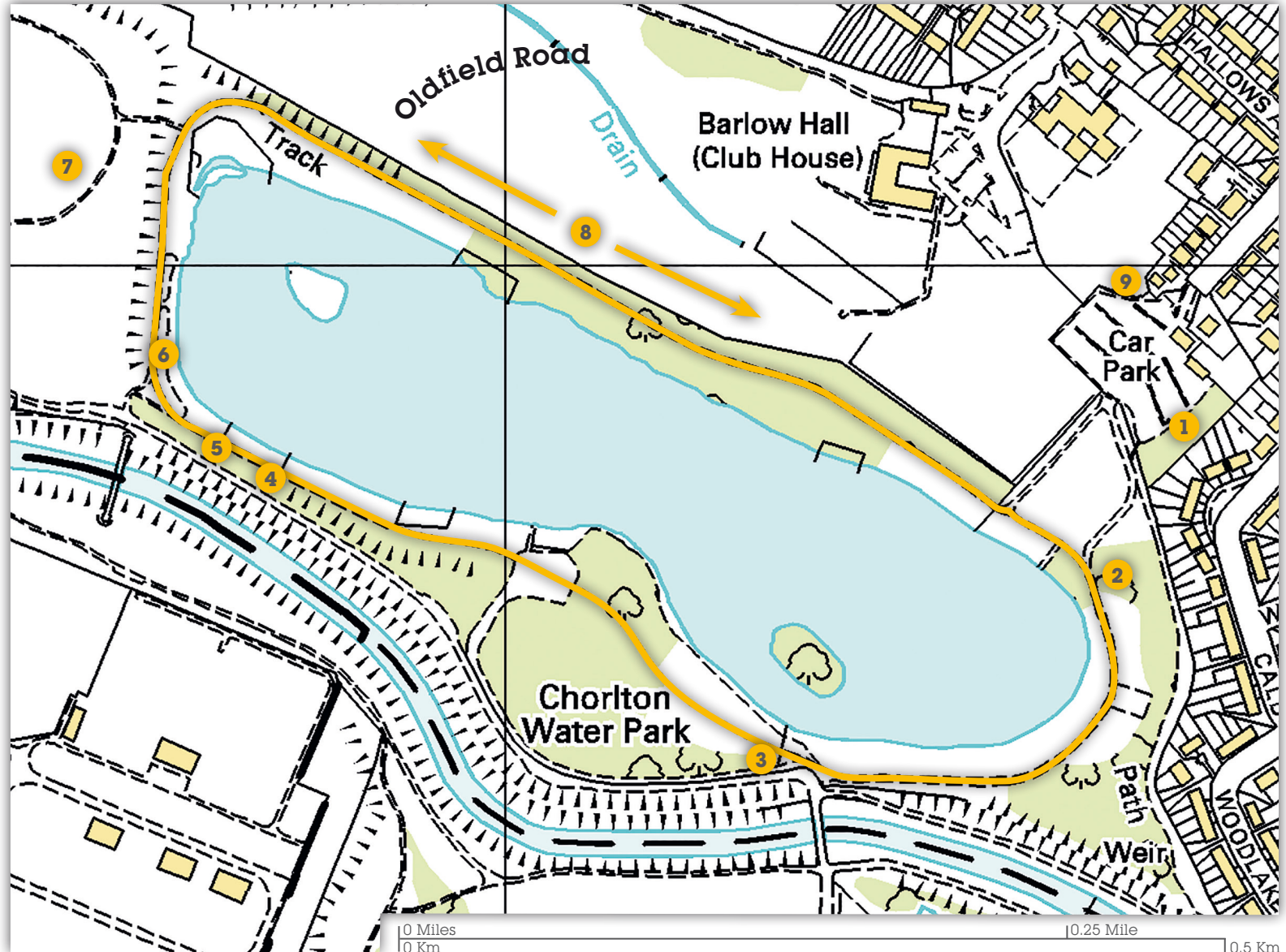
# CHORLTON WATER PARK TREE TRAIL

Distance: approx. 1 mile circular walk  Allow 40 mins

Produced as part of the Heritage Trees project

Chorlton Water Park is a Local Nature Reserve comprising of a lake surrounded by grasslands and woodlands. There is a car park, small playground, picnic benches and a network of accessible paths.

The park stands on the site of Barlow Hall Farm. During the construction of the M60 motorway in the 1970s gravel was excavated from the site. The gravel pit was subsequently flooded creating the lake that is central to the Water Park today.



This circular walk takes you around the lake, and points out some trees of note around the park.

## TREES OF INTEREST



### 1 Beautiful Beech:

From the main car park, face the lake and turn left, past the Green Corridor sign and into a little grove.

Here stands a tall, beautiful beech. These trees have smooth grey bark which is sometimes compared to an elephant's leg!



### 2 Huge Horse Chestnut:

Now turn right and walk down the slope towards the water.

At the bottom on the left there is wonderful horse chestnut. Introduced from southern Europe in the 17th Century, these trees have become one of the most popular and easily recognised trees in Britain. Folklore regarding how these trees got their name include the ground up conkers being used in horse medicine and the small horse shoe shaped marking left behind when the leaf stem breaks away from the bark.



### 3 Majestic Oak:

Follow the path round the play area and where it forks walk upwards to the left, to see the oak. By far the

most numerous and popular tree in Britain, around the world there are over 450 different species but only two are native to Britain – pedunculate and the sessile. These two species look very similar and the easiest way to tell them apart is the pedunculate's acorns have stems whilst the sessile do not.



### 4 Shimmering Silver Birch:

Continuing past the Access for All garden you will see some birch trees on your right. The

birch was one of the first trees to colonise Britain after the last Ice Age, spreading across the land bridge from continental Europe.



### 5 'Thorny thickets' aka Hawthorn:

Continue up the path and you will see hawthorns on your right. The hawthorn's

blossom, also known as the May flower, attracts pollinating insects. The Hawthorn was

regarded as the favourite tree of the faerie folk who could whisk you away to the otherworld, or swap your baby for a changeling!



### 6 Amazing Alder:

Near the bend, down by the water is an alder. This tree is one of the few species that actually likes

to have wet roots and seeks out marshy areas or river edges. Its wood is only durable in water and it is believed that much of Venice is built upon alder piles.



### 7 'Black-budded' Ash:

With birch trees on your right and brambles on your left, continue along the path and as you reach

the next bend there is an ash in a dip in the ground on your left. Ash is a native tree with black buds shaped like a hoof.



### 8 'Good luck' Holly:

As you start back toward the car park, amongst all the birch there is a single holly bush – can you spot it?

The Celts believed that the oak controlled the light and the holly controlled the dark. It was believed that if you brought holly into your home it would bring good luck through the winter months.



### 9 Weeping Willow:

Back in the car park, walk towards the exit gate and to the left there is a large willow. These trees

like moist soil and can often be found growing on riverbanks. Willow is extremely flexible and is used to make baskets, wicker and cricket bats. It is also from the willow that we get the compound salicin that has been used to make aspirin. Texts from both Ancient Egypt and Greece reference it's medicinal use.



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