

14 False acacias

In the distance, in front of the 1871 school building by the architect Waterhouse, who also designed Reading Town Hall and the Natural History Museum, stands a row of trimmed false acacias.

15 Erleigh Road

As you move along Erleigh Road, take time to pause and appreciate the elegant Victorian and Edwardian houses which have retained their original character to make this a beautiful street.

16 Royal Berkshire Hospital

At the end of the road, turn right and then left at the traffic lights. Walk past the historic front of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, opened in 1839 but bearing the coat of arms of King William IV who died before the building was completed. The columns are ionic.

17 The Museum of English Rural Life

Cross Redlands Road. As you look to the left you will catch sight of the entrance to The Museum of English Rural Life newly refurbished in 2016 and definitely worth a visit at some point to see its special collections and gardens.



18 The Acacias

Going forward on London Road, the house set back on the left is The Acacias, donated to the University of Reading, together with the London Road University site, by Alfred Palmer of Huntley and Palmers.

19 Japanese maple

Moving on, turn left through the iron gates and long porch way into the University's first campus. N.B. Remember to respect this campus as an area of study and heed any notices about examinations or special events. Turn left at the end of the passage and find the Friendship Gates, which commemorate the tenure of the Japanese Gyosei College in the 1990s and 2000s. Nearby is a Japanese maple.

20 Plane tree

Turn right towards a brick cloister, go in, turn right and proceed until you see a large plane tree on the left hand corner. This is a very mature tree. Note the hand-like or "palmate" leaves characteristic of plane trees.

21 Tibetan cherry trees

At the corner of the cloister, turn left and, as you walk down, enjoy the variety of trees planted in between each row of buildings. The final row features Tibetan cherry trees with a warm brown peeling bark. At the end of the cloister you will see an "Eat and Drink" sign on your left pointing to the University cafe open to the public where you can enjoy some rest and refreshment after your walk.

Useful information

How to get there:

By car: Go eastwards out of Reading on the King's Road until you reach Cemetery Junction. Take the Wokingham Road (A329) fork and Palmer Park shortly comes up on your left after the cemetery. There is parking at Palmer Park. At the end of the walk you can take a bus back by turning right out of the University front gate, and crossing London Road at the crossing. Turn right, then left down Eldon Road. At the end of Eldon Road cross over the main King's Road and the bus stop for the 17 is nearby to take you back to Palmer Park.

By bus: Take the 17 bus (direction Wokingham Road) from central Reading at Friar Street or Jackson's Corner, descending at Palmer Park. At the end of the walk you can return to town by turning left out of the University front gate and proceeding until you reach the bus stop for the number 9 bus which will take you back to town.

Further information on trees:

You can find more about these tree species online or in Jon Stokes' *Trees of Britain and Ireland* (2025), Princeton University Press.

All information in this leaflet correct at time of publication.
Updated 2026.

Reading Tree Wardens:

You can find out more about our seven walks and forthcoming events by visiting our website at <http://www.readingtreewardens.org.uk> and our Facebook and Instagram pages (Reading Tree Wardens).

Walking time:

One and a half hours.

Important advisory information:

We are grateful to the University of Reading for their kind permission to include the University grounds in this walk. We note that this is "permitted access" (not a right of way) and request from walkers that the campus is respected as an area of study. Please also follow any requests regarding examinations areas or special events being held at the University.

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Reading Tree Warden Network



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Introduction

This walk, just South East of the town centre, features leafy Victorian suburbs, including the fascinating large Victorian and Edwardian houses of Redlands which have retained their original character.

Many of the trees on our walk were planted in those days.

1 Start

Our walk starts at the Café in Palmer Park. The park was given to the town of Reading in 1889 by George Palmer of the Huntley and Palmers company whose biscuit factory dominated the eastern end of Reading.

2 Wellingtonia

Walk towards the main park gates passing a young Wellingtonia (conical shape) to the right. The tree, named after the Duke of Wellington, actually from California (giant sequoia) will grow to be a strikingly large landmark tree.

3 Large Oak

Turn right into Wokingham Road and, crossing St Bartholomew's Road, proceed. Note the characteristic Reading style of two colour brickwork on the properties to the right. As you approach the cemetery end wall you will see a large oak tree on its corner.

4 Corsican Pine

Across the road on the corner of Bulmershe Road is a tall Corsican Pine which has thinner needles and a brown bark compared with the reddish bark of a Scots Pine.

5 Cedar trees

Continuing forwards, look through the railings of the cemetery to catch sight of the majestic Cedar trees.

Atlas cedars have ascending branches, cedars of Lebanon have level branches, and Deodar Cedars have drooping branches. Look out for more cedars further on in your walk.

6 Junction Arch

At Cemetery Junction stands the Grade 2 listed Victorian Arch. This iconic gateway to the cemetery dates back to 1840. In 2025 inspections discovered substantial cracking in the limestone and weakening requiring maintenance works so that the building was closed.



7 (Optional)

When works are completed, take time to explore the trees in the cemetery: young Limes as well as young Yew and Wellingtonia near the entrance.

8 Further in

Many more mature Limes and a stunning cut leaved Beech deeper in, as well as the outstanding Cedars previously mentioned. Note the Victorian statuary.

9 Threats and challenges to trees

Back outside the cemetery look right to the traffic island. Due to traffic heat effect plus warming drought summers, the original mid- road pleached hornbeams were dying and are replaced by more robust and heat-resistant trees.

10 Copper beech tree

From the Arch, turn left and cross the main road. Walk a few metres and turn right into Eastern Avenue. At number 36, the former home of Sir Lesley Kirkley, the first Director of Oxfam, is a large mature copper beech tree.

11 Monkey puzzle tree

Across the road is a monkey puzzle tree believed to have been planted by a nineteenth century resident of the house who brought it from the tree's native home in South America.



12 Lime trees

Turn right into Junction Road and then bear right into Erleigh Road. This road is lined with beautiful mature lime trees. These trees, once a dominant woodland tree in Britain, bear yellowish white flowers which are used to make lime tea, thought to be an aid to sleep.

13 Scots Pine

Continue, passing the Coop shop, and cross at Alexandra Road. On your left at the corner of the grounds of Reading School stands a tall Scots Pine.

