



# Explore Kneller Gardens with your senses

A sensory trail around  
Kneller Gardens,  
Twickenham



Investigate Kneller Gardens using your senses.

The sensory trail described here will take between 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on how fast you walk and how long you take over the activities.

The paths are all accessible and suitable for wheelchairs.

There is a disabled toilet available on site.

Kneller  
Gardens,  
Meadway,  
Twickenham  
TW2 6PH

There are five senses that you can explore in Kneller Gardens: **listen, look, smell, feel, touch**. We have not included **taste** but there is a great café on site that you can use, or you could bring a picnic!

The trail starts at the Mereway entrance and follows a walk around the perimeter of the park in a clockwise direction. It ends at the pavilion in the centre of the park and will take between 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on how fast you walk and how long you take over the activities.

At the park entrance

1. **Look and touch** the carved owl named Godfrey after Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), the portrait painter who lived in a house on the site of Kneller Hall, Whitton. The owl was carved from a diseased tree which would otherwise have been removed.
2. Opposite the carving is a London Plane Tree. **Look** at the colours on the bark and **feel** the texture.

### Challenge 1

Think of some words to describe what you see and touch. How does the old tree make you **feel**?

Walk along the river path to the grassed area adjacent to the playground.

**Feel** the difference in temperature due to the tunnel effect of the trees next to the river. If the leaves are on the trees **look** at the dappled light on the river.

1. **Listen** to the leaves rustling in the breeze and the noise that the river makes.
2. What can you **smell**? The river, the trees anything else?
3. **Touch** all the carved woodland animals on the grassed area.



Continue to walk along the river path towards the first (concrete) bridge.

1. **Look** to at the river and the patterns made by the flowing water and river weed. **Look** at the bridge to see how the river responds to it.
2. Stand very still, shut your eyes and **listen** for one minute. How many different sounds can you hear?
3. Stand under the willow tree and **listen** to the noise of the wind blowing through its leaves and branches.
4. **Touch** and **smell** the leaves, branches, and bark. **Look** through the branches at the sky.
5. **Touch** the iron railings and compare the feel with the tree branches.

## Challenge 2

Can you name the different carved animals?



Continue to walk along the river path towards the Kingfisher Bridge. On either side of the bridge in the park are 2 old oak trees.

1. Stand very still under one of the oak trees and **listen** to the noise of the wind blowing through its leaves.
2. **Touch** the bark. How does it compare with the bark of the willow tree?
3. **Look** at the lichen on the bark, how many colours and shapes can you see?



4. **Look** through the branches to see the sky. How is it different to the view through the willow tree? **Feel** the change in temperature under the branches, especially in summer.
5. Can you **smell** anything?

Walk to the bridge to Mereway Nature Park.

1. **Look** at the patterns in the metal work on the bridge. Shut your eyes and explore the pattern with your fingers to **feel** the different shapes that make up the design. How many shapes can you find?



2. Walk across the bridge and listen to your footsteps as you walk. Walk back again stamping your feet as you go. **Listen** to the different sounds that you make. Can you **feel** the vibrations in your legs?
3. **Look** over the bridge into the river.

a. What can you **see**?

Can you see reflections, bubbles, the bottom, different colours, patterns in the water or insects? Can you see anything else?

b. What can you **hear**?

Listen for birds, ducks, insects, the noise of the river, people on the bridge. Can you hear anything else?

### Challenge 3

Look at the patterns in the metal work on the bridge. Shut your eyes and explore the pattern with your fingers to feel the different shapes that make up the design.

How many shapes can you find?

Continue along the path along the river, to a corner where the path turns to run along the railway.



1. **Look** at the view across the park, and the combinations of shapes, textures and colours that make up the landscape. **Look** at the clusters of trees and the horizon.
2. **Feel** the calm and relaxed space away from the more social areas of the park.

Continue along the path next to the railway.

1. **Close** your eyes and listen for a passing train. Can you **hear** it approaching before it arrives? Which direction it is travelling in? Do you **feel** anything as it passes?
2. As you walk down the path **feel** the changes in temperature due to the tunnel effect under the trees.

Continue along the path until it runs parallel with Meadway.

1. **Listen** to the man-made sounds – children playing, tennis games, traffic, aircraft and trains. How many different man-made noises can you hear?
2. What can you **smell**? Perhaps the smells include the traffic on the road, cigarette smoke, people coffee...Did you smell anything else? Do the scents differ from the more natural part of the park?

Walk along the path towards the pavilion and stop at the dead tree trunks

1. **Touch** the bark and the cross sections of the deadwood. Find a stick and tap it against the fallen tree trunk and **listen**

to the sounds they make. Do all the trunks make the same sounds?

2. **Look** at the avenue of ornamental plum trees. Notice the colour and shape of the leaves.



Answer to Challenge 2

HARE, WOODLOUSE, FOX, WOODPECKER,  
OWL

Answer to Challenge 3

CIRCLES, TRIANGLES, RECTANGLES,  
PROPELLER ALMOND. YOU MAY BE ABLE  
TO FIND SOME OTHERS

Thank you for spending time exploring the sensory trail at Kneller Gardens. Try it again in a different season or different weather and compare your experience.

The Friendly Parks for All project aims to improve opportunities for all people in London Borough of Richmond to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment. We aim to work with park users, the environmental sector, and providers of services for the groups that have limited access to the outdoor environments.

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