

Explore Spitalfields On Foot

As you weave through the streets and alleys of Spitalfields, in the heart of the old East End, you're following in the footsteps of many immigrants that have settled here – French Huguenots, Eastern European Jews and most recently the Bengali community. The streets bustle with a rich cultural mix, past and present.



Walking: it's good for mind, body and soul

Mind: discover more about your area, enjoy exploring with family and friends.

Body: reduce the risk of heart disease, arthritis, stroke, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes and other health problems.

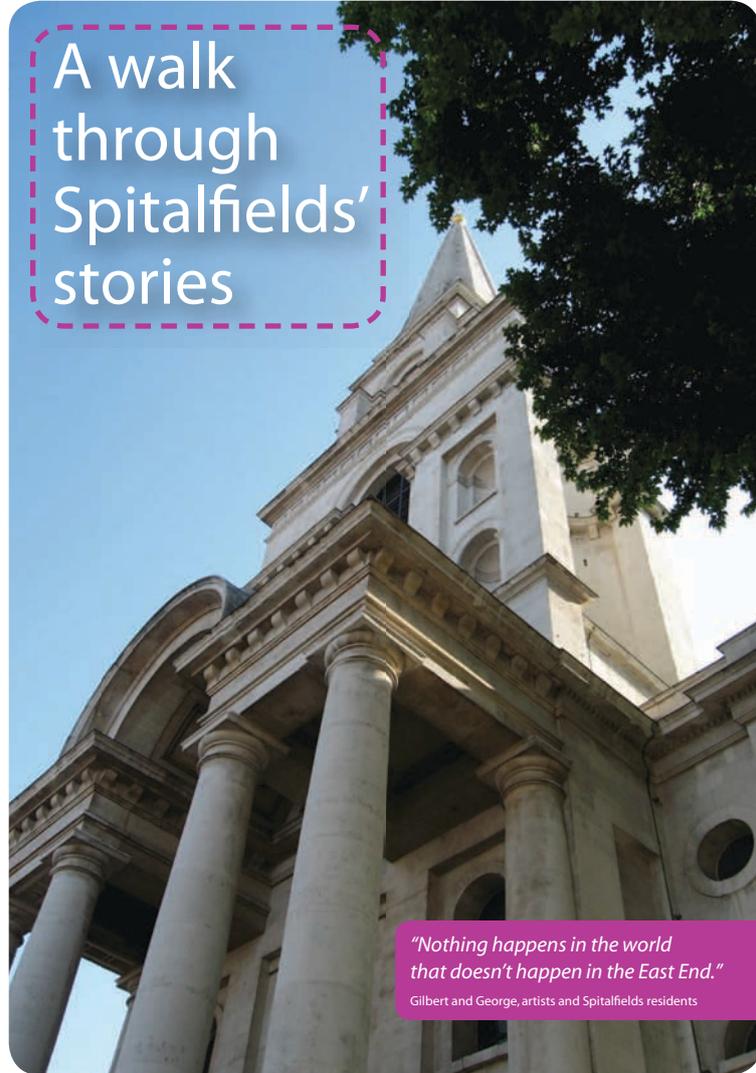
Soul: clear your head and unwind, walking is nature's best free anti-depressant.

Doctors recommend we each take 30 minutes of physical activity – such as a brisk walk – five times a week.

To find out more about Walk Tower Hamlets programmes and routes, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/walking, phone 020 7364 6940 or email walking@towerhamlets.gov.uk



A walk through Spitalfields' stories



"Nothing happens in the world that doesn't happen in the East End."

Gilbert and George, artists and Spitalfields residents

A circular walk from Christ Church

1



"The opening of the soup-kitchen was looked forward to as the dawn of a golden age... The vaguely-remembered smell of the soup threw a poetic fragrance over the coming winter."

Israel Zangwill, *The Children of the Ghetto*, 1892

2

"tenter: c. 1300, a wooden framework for stretching cloth, probably from Latin 'tentorium'; a tent made of stretched skins. The phrase 'on tenterhooks' - meaning 'in painful suspense' - dates from 1748."

www.etymonline.com



"Raven Row – an old name for this stretch of Artillery Lane – had stood empty for at least a decade... The ghosts here have been charmed into submission rather than exorcised."

Jonathan Glancey, *The Guardian*, 2009

3



4

"... streets, lying like narrow black trenches, far below steeples – where sallow, unshorn weavers, who have nothing to do, prowl languidly about, or lean against posts..."

Charles Dickens, *Household Words*, 1851



"Number 19 seemed a most unlikely museum, with no plaque outside, and apparently derelict. Gently I pushed the large wooden doors and, finding them open, stepped inside."

Rachel Lichtenstein & Iain Sinclair, *Rodinsky's Room*, 1999



"The sign screwed to the brickwork was in stiff English capitals and the curlicues beneath were Bengali. No dumping. No parking. No ball games."

Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*, 2003

"Brick-Lane, which is now a long well-pav'd street, was a deep dirty road, frequented by carts fetching bricks that way into White-Chapel from Brick-Kilns in those fields, and had its name on that account."

Daniel Defoe, *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 1727

"Umbra Sumus - We are but shadow"

Sundial on Masjid Mosque, a former Huguenot Church and Synagogue, 1743



"For three weeks he laboured over this wooden prototype and, as by stages he fitted the spire upon the tower, we may imagine the church itself rising in Spitalfields."

Peter Ackroyd, *Hawksmoor*, 1985

13

14

15

16

9



*"May we this life improve,
To mourn for errors past;
And live this short, revolving day
As if it were our last."*

John Wesley's hymn, We Lift Our Heart To Thee, 1741



"To enter its door is to pass through a frame into a painting. Your senses are your guide. 18 Folgate Street is a time capsule – that is sometimes opened up."

www.dennissevershouse.co.uk



"... for the inhabitants of the Liberty of Norton Folgate, in place of those built in 1728, lately taken down for the new street."

Inscription stone, 1860

10



"1682: Charles II grants a Letters Patent to a silk thrower by the name of John Balch, allowing a market for "flesh, fowl and roots" in Spitalfields."

www.oldsitalfieldsmarket.com



11

12

6

"Established in 1854 by a group of Dutch immigrants known as the Society of Loving Kindness, Truth & Comforters of Mourners, this is one of the few surviving synagogues in London's East End."

Esther Rantzen, BBC's Who Do You Think You Are, 2008



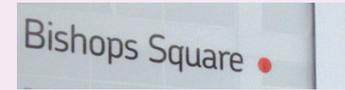
"He, the lover of life, may also be compared to a mirror as vast as a crowd: to a kaleidoscope... which with every one of its movements presents a pattern of life..."

www.davidrhysjones.com



"...we walked to the Old Artillery Ground near the Spitalfields... by Captain Deane's invitation did go to see his new gun tryed, this place being the place where the officers of the Ordnance do try all their great guns."

Diary of Samuel Pepys, 1669



"To ponder the charnel house, below which bodies remain interred, is to confront the beliefs of medieval Londoners. This is a beautiful house of the medieval dead."

Dan Cruickshank, historian and Spitalfields resident, Telegraph, 2005

5

6

7

8

3

"... rich stores of satins, velvets, lutestrings, brocades, damasks, and other silk textures..."

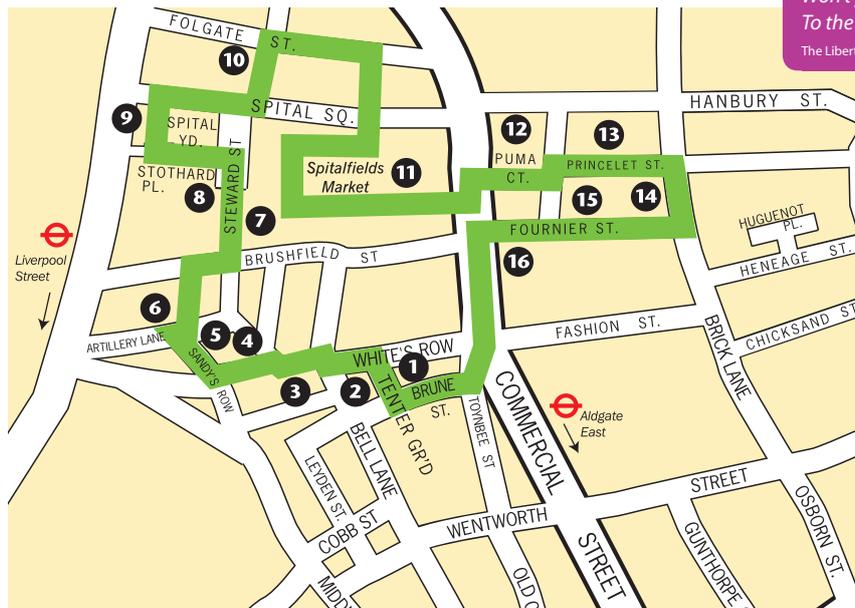
Charles Dickens, Household Words, 1851



"The 4 am start of lorries unloading more fruit than Eden, figs that smelled of camel, bananas in vast King Kong bunches swinging from their hooks."

Jeanette Winterson, author and Spitalfields resident, 2007

A walk through Spitalfields' stories



Spend a moment: pause on benches in Bishops Square, Elder Gardens, inside Christ Church or 'Itchy Park' next door.

Spend a penny: there are free public toilets inside Spitalfields Market.

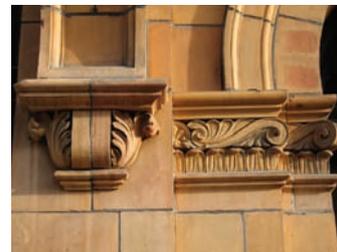
Spend a lunchtime or evening: enjoy the cafes, restaurants and bars in and around the market building or on Brick Lane.

Spend a few pounds: snap up a bargain, or treat yourself, at the local shops and stalls.

"Whether one calls it Spitalfields, Whitechapel, Tower Hamlets or Banglatown, We're all dancing in the moonlight, We're all on borrowed ground, Oh I'm just walking down to, I'm just floating down through, Won't you come with me, To the Liberty of Norton Folgate?"

The Liberty of Norton Folgate, Madness, 2009

As you reach the numbers on the map, take a look at the corresponding 'story' in this booklet.



"Spitalfields: a shortened form of 'hospital fields', from The New Hospital of St Mary without Bishopgate founded here in 1197."

www.oldsitalfieldsmarket.com