Welcome to the Tour of Islington

Welcome to the Tour of Islington, a seven-mile route around the centre of Islington that uses safe cycling routes and has fascinating facts about the borough.

Highbury Fields
Highbury Fields is the largest green space in Islington. For centuries Highbury had been a rural area. With building encroaching on the area in the 19th century local inhabitants sought to have a park created. The 28 acre area was bought by the Vestry and the Metropolitan Board of Works for £60,000, and opened in 1885.

Highbury Clock Tower
This clock tower was erected in celebration of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee (60 years on the throne) in 1897. As its inscription explains, it was paid for by a local resident, Mr Alfred Hutchinson. It was restored to its original red and gold colours in 1997.

Highbury Barn
Highbury Barn started as a tea garden around 1740. However, its popularity was its downfall with tensions running high among local residents and in 1871 the dancing licence for the barn was refused. Some put this down to a risqué name or the presence of a separate entrance, others to a new party of students. Either way, the only reminder of this estate’s past is in the name of the area and a set of pillars on the right hand side of the road as you cycle down Highbury Park.

Aubert Park
Alexander Aubert (1730-1805) was a businessman and astronomer. He moved his observatory from near Greenwhich to Highbury House in 1788. This was said to be one of the finest observatories in Britain containing a telescope designed by James Short; this was known as “Short’s Dumpy”. In 1797 Aubert set up a volunteer corps, the Loyal Islington Volunteers, to protect Islington in the case of a Napoleonic invasion.

Freightliners Farm
Freightliners Farm is an urban farm providing the opportunity for local individuals and groups to learn about the environment, animal care, horticulture and sustainable practices. Its purpose is to provide an educational and recreational resource for the community.

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Tour of Islington

Seven miles

Highbury Fields
Early 1900s

Highbury Clock Tower
1971

Highbury Barn
1775

Pentonville Prison
1840s

New River
About 1800

Canonbury Tower
About 1800

Information about the site is on the reverse