



Homestead Park

Homestead Park began life as the gardens of Homestead House, built in 1904 for the English socialist researcher, social reformer and industrialist Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree. Benjamin Seebohm was the son of Joseph Rowntree, the owner of Rowntree's and Co Ltd.

As soon as Homestead House was first occupied, Rowntree placed an advert in the Yorkshire Gazette. He opened the field behind the house from the 18 July 1904 as a playground for children attending local elementary schools, providing them with donkey rides, swings, a merry-go-round, see-saws, sand heaps and games.

Homestead Park has seen many changes over the years. Local firm Backhouse and Son Ltd designed and constructed the pond and rock garden between 1911 and 1913; in 1936 the children's playground was relocated from the main lawn to its current position and in 1954 the rocking horse was purchased.

The park now covers 14 acres and is owned, managed and maintained by the charity organisation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It includes a children's playground, formal bedding displays, a pond and rock garden, woodland area, wildflower meadow, herbaceous borders, mediaeval garden and tree-lined avenue.

Why not stop by our Reading Cafe and gazebo and experience it for yourself?

Did you know?



The stone plinths next to the Blue Bridge were originally to display cannons captured at the Battle of Sebastopol in 1855.

The Kings Arms on King's Staith is more commonly referred to as 'The Pub that Floods', given how close it is to the River Ouse.



St Peter's School, near Homestead Park, is the fourth-oldest school in the world, and was founded in 627AD.

Skeldergate Bridge was the last of the three city-centre bridges across the Ouse to be built, and was opened to the public in 1881.



St Martin Coney Street church was largely destroyed during a Second World War bombing raid on 29th April 1942. A church has existed on that site since the 11th century.

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Park to Park walking trail:

Homestead Park | Rowntree Park

Homestead Park



Rowntree Park



Rowntree Park

Rowntree Park was designed by Fred Rowntree and formally opened to the public on 16 July 1921. It was built as a memorial to the 200 men of the York chocolate firm Rowntree & Company who had been killed in the First World War. The original memorial plaques are still visible underneath the park's dovecot.

The park was specifically designed as a public park and recreation ground. The pond was installed to provide immediate interest whilst the trees grew to maturity, and overall the park realised the dream of the Rowntree family to provide space to promote the health and wellbeing of the residents of York.

The substantial iron gates onto Terry Avenue were added in 1954, as a memorial to those killed during the Second World War. The park remains open to the public and is now managed by City of York Council. Today it features a children's playground, tennis courts, bowling greens, basketball court and skateboarding area. It also features a large lake and water cascade.

Our Reading Cafe is housed in the original tearoom building, so why not stop by for coffee or lunch and experience this beautiful park for yourself?



We anticipate that this walk will take around 1-1½ hours to complete. Please note the last section of the walk is not suitable for wheelchairs or large buggies. If you are travelling with a wheelchair or large buggy you may wish to use the alternative route marked above.