

SECTION 2

Welcome to all of you . . . can everybody see and hear me? . . . Good . . . I'm Sally, your guide for this tour of the Bicentennial Park . . . I hope that you're all wearing your most comfortable shoes and that you can keep up the pace. So let's get under way on our tour around this wonderful park. Q11

I'll start today with some general background information. There used to be a lot of factories in this area until the 1960s. Creating the park required the demolition of lots of derelict buildings on the site, so most of the exciting park space all around you was originally warehouses and storehouses. Q12

The idea of building a public park here was first discussed when a property developer proposed a high-rise housing development, but the local community wasn't happy. If the land was to be cleaned up, they wanted to use the site for recreation. Residents wanted open space for outdoor activities, rather than housing or even an indoor sports complex. Q13

Now to the Bicentennial Park itself. It has two areas, a nature reserve and a formal park with man-made features and gardens. The tall blue-and-white building in front of us is called The Tower and is the centre point for the formal gardens. It stands twelve metres high, so follow me up the stairs to where we can take advantage of the fantastic views. Q14

Well, here we are at the top of The Tower, and we're going to look at the view from each direction. Out to the east, the large buildings about a kilometre away are on the Olympic site. There's an indoor arena for gymnastics, a stadium for track and field and a swimming pool for races and synchronised swimming and also diving. If you look carefully down there, you can see the train lines. The Olympic site has its own station to encourage the use of public transport. There is also a car park, but it only holds a limited number of cars. Q15

The formal park has some specially-created water features. If you look out here to the south, you can see a circular ornamental pond.

And around to the west, you can relax and sit on a bench to smell the flowers in the rose garden, and finally up to the north, if you look in front of you now, there's a lake with a small island in the centre, you can hire rowing boats at the boat shed, which you can't see from here, but if you look through the trees, you can see the café, which has lovely views across the water. OK, let's climb down now. We will go now and have a look at the nature reserve section of the park, which has opened up natural wetland to the public. Q16

The Mangroves have been made more accessible to visitors by the boardwalk built during the park's upgrade. You'd think that people would come here to look at the unusual plant life of the area, but in fact it's more often used for cycling and is very popular with the local clubs. Q17