

## Islington U3A Longer Walks Group

<b>Walk Title</b>	Chigwell to Harold Wood – “the most rural section of the LOOP”.	<b>Walk No.</b>	380
<b>Area</b>	Essex	<b>Type</b>	Linear
<b>Date</b>	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September, 2022		
<b>Distance</b>	11½ mile (18.6km)		
<b>Timing</b>	5 hours walking time + travel + lunch stop. Allow just over 8 hours in total. Therefore should be back in Islington by 5.30 pm.		
<b>Meeting up &amp; travel</b>	<p>It’s about a 60 mins journey to the start of the walk. So we need to meet up by 9.05 latest, at the entrance of Highbury &amp; Islington station. We take the Overground to Stratford and change there to the Central line up to Chigwell.</p> <p>We return from Harold Wood on the Elizabethan line which comes back to Stratford. About a 60min return journey.</p> <p>The Freedom Pass/ 60+ Travel card area extends to Chigwell and on the way back from Harold Wood. So “free” both ways.</p>		
<b>Route</b>	<p>(0km, 10.00) From Chigwell station turn right &amp; go down through the village, joining the LOOP signs shortly across the mini roundabout. Pass the Ye Olde Kings Head (Ref 1). Leave the road, turn to the right opposite Chigwell School, and diagonally across the field. Muddy section across fields but good views over Essex. Down the track to a pond then left &amp; then a right around fields. When the path runs out it’s diagonally left over a field to the fence line. Around the waterworks (3.2km, 10.45) and the turn left passed a reservoir, then right over a stile. Onward over other stiles down Chapel Lane (passing the chapel).</p> <p>Turn left into Chigwell Row then immediately right into the park following the path then left into forest. This is the start of Hainault Forest (Ref 2). Through the kissing gate, we take the middle path, down to the lake, then go left around the water. We get to the Country Park centre (toilets, cafe, Rare Breeds Centre) (6.5km, 11.45).</p> <p>The track takes us passed a golf course and up a hill again. Near the top turn right on to the golf course. Follow the yellow markers. More zigzags around fields and onto a metalled track through a farm. Up the muddy bridleway (or up the parallel overgrown pathway). Turn left on the wider path and at the top look back for stunning views over distant London &amp; the pillars of the Queen Elizabeth bridge. Turning right through a barrier we enter a row of Wellingtonia (Ref 6). This is the 2nd largest plantation of them in England. We are now in Havering Country Park (Ref 3). The track leads us to the hill top village of Havering-atte-Bower (Ref 4 &amp; 5). Great view in both directions (North toward the Roding Valley &amp; the walk of 13th January – or South over Bedford Park and Romford).</p> <p>Lunch at the Orange Tree pub or pack lunch (11.5km, 13.20).</p> <p>Leaving the village (14.10) take the path on the right next to the garage. Through kissing gates, over a footbridge, &amp; through bits of old Pyrgo Park (Ref 8). Over another stile and along the ridge. Another footbridge and another stile leads to Widdrington Farm. But then turn left over a stile along a track over another stile and the track takes us to the main road (&amp; left passed the Bear pub). Buses pass this spot on their way to Harold Wood or Romford stations. Passed the pub we turn</p>		

	<p>right into Tees Drive (14.5km, 15.00). Then after Priory Road we take a path on the left. The stream (Carter's Brook) flows all the way to the Thames. We are now weaving our way through Central Park in the urban surrounds of Harold Hill (Ref 9). This leads to the dual carriage way of the A12 to Colchester. Cross straight over. Tarred paths all the way to the end now.</p> <p>We leave the open stretch turning into Church Road, then Queens Park Rd, Station Road, to Harold Wood station (17.3km,16.15).</p>
<b>Lunch</b>	Lunch stop will be at the Orange Tree (01708 752739), Havering-atte-Bower or bring a packed lunch (no shops!).
<b>Dropping out</b>	Some opt out exits but not that easy: there is one just before lunch (8.6km) [walk down to bus terminus & take the No. 294 to Romford]; or one at Havering-atte-Bower (lunch), after 9.6km [walk down to Chase Cross Rd, 3 km, then No. 103; or at 14.5km [again by bus either to Harolds Wood or Romford]]. Trains from Romford to Stratford.
<b>Suitability</b>	<p>A mixture but mostly tracks and paths across fields. Some may be muddy if we've had rain. Overall a mix of wooded areas and open fields. Some hills.</p> <p>Several stiles to cross.</p> <p>Suitable for any reasonably fit regular walker. There are no particular difficulties.</p> <p>Comfortable waterproof walking shoes/ boots. Check weather forecast for temperature and likelihood of rain. This time of year, worth carrying a waterproof jacket.</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	There are toilet facilities at the Rare Breeds Centre, the lunch stop, & at the end on Harold Wood station (Plt 2/3).
<b>Walk source</b>	TfL and Ramblers websites.
<b>Map &amp; other references</b>	<p>OS Explorer 174 &amp; 175, or OS Landranger 167.</p> <p>The London Loop book – part Section 14 or:</p> <p><a href="https://innerlondonramblers.org.uk/images/RingandLoop/guides/LL20-chigwell-to-havering-atte-bower-May22.pdf">https://innerlondonramblers.org.uk/images/RingandLoop/guides/LL20-chigwell-to-havering-atte-bower-May22.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://innerlondonramblers.org.uk/images/RingandLoop/guides/LL21-havering-atte-bower-to-harold-wood-May22.pdf">https://innerlondonramblers.org.uk/images/RingandLoop/guides/LL21-havering-atte-bower-to-harold-wood-May22.pdf</a></p>
<b>Leader &amp; contact details</b>	<p><u>Walk Leader</u>: Derek Harwood</p> <p><u>Phone</u>: 077 5931 4096</p> <p><u>e-mail</u>: derek.harwood@live.co.uk</p>
<b>Interesting facts</b>	<p>(1) Facing St Mary's church is an ancient timber framed public house named the Kings Head. Ye Olde Kings Head (now also a restaurant) has the title of being the most famous pub in Essex. Its impressive facade inspired Charles Dickens to include it in his novel Barnaby Rudge. It was also the favoured watering hole of the legendary 18th century highwayman, Dick Turpin, who started his criminal career, it is said, poaching deer from the nearby forests of Hainault and Epping.</p> <p>(2) In 1130 when much of Essex was woodland, Henry I, son of William the Conqueror, designated this area The Royal Forest of Essex. It was used exclusively for the kingly sport of hunting. Hainault Forest Country Park is a surviving fragment of that vast verdant landscape as in 1851 Parliament gave its consent to land being drained and fenced and 100,000 trees were felled. Fortunately, Hainault Forest has now been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.</p> <p>(3) Havering Country Park has a rich and varied landscape with splendid views over the woods and meadows of Essex's countryside. The giant sequoia trees that line both sides of the Avenue were planted in the 19th century. Their towering</p>

reddish trunks may look impressive but these American immigrants are small compared to those that grow in its native Californian hills which can grow to 300 feet (90 metres) high, have a trunk diameter of 35 feet (10 metres) and live for 3000 years or more. They are the largest living things on Earth.

(4) Havering-atte-Bower: is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Haueringas. It is an ancient folk name meaning settlement of the followers of a man called Hæfer. The name is recorded as Hauering atte Bower in 1272. The atte Bower suffix means at the royal residence and refers to Havering Palace, which was situated here. Edward the Confessor would have travelled to and from his palaces at both Havering-atte-Bower and Old Windsor. Both villages are situated on high ground and have great views into London.

(5) Nothing now remains of an important royal house that once stood at Havering-atte-Bower. Edward the Confessor started things off nearly a thousand years ago by establishing a holy retreat here. Later William The Conqueror and King John built hunting lodges. Slowly a large Royal Palace grew in a haphazard manner over the next 600 years, with Charles I being the last monarch to stay there. The palace stood where Havering-atte-Bower green is now. A Victorian church stands where the original chapel once stood and stables on the site of the old palace stables.

(6) It may not be the tallest tree in the world but *Sequoiadendron giganteum* is the largest by volume, reaching up to 95 m in height and 12 m in diameter. On its introduction to Britain in 1853, the species was named *Wellingtonia gigantea* after the recently deceased Duke of Wellington. However, this scientific name was not legitimate because the name *Wellingtonia* had been used earlier for another plant (although it is still called *Wellingtonia* as a common name in the UK). Always on the lookout for new and exciting large trees, estate owners jumped at the chance of growing another impressive specimen and having the name *Wellingtonia* worked wonders as a marketing tool. Although planted less frequently now, it is quite common throughout the British Isles, particularly in large gardens and parks. The giant redwood, which can live up to 3,200 years, was formerly put in the swamp cypress family (*Taxodiaceae*), which is now placed in the cypress family (*Cupressaceae*).

(7) You can't fail to notice the strange round building on the right. Called 'Round House', it was once the home of Joseph Hardwick Pemberton (1852-1926), a true giant in the world of rose breeding

(8) Nothing now remains of the house save this one rusting sentinel defying time. In its heyday Pyrgo House was home and playground for King Henry VIII's daughters Mary and Elizabeth who as children grew up happily together here.

Harold Hill and Harold Wood probably derive their names from various connections with King Harold Godwinson (Harold II), who was defeated by William the Conqueror in 1066, at the Battle of Hastings