

Islington U3A Longer Walking Group

Walk Title	Epping Forest	Walk No.	338
Area	Essex	Type	Linear
Date	Friday, 26 th November, 2021		
Distance	8 miles (13 km)		
Timing	3.5 hours walking time + travel + lunch stop. Allow approx 6 hours in total. Therefore expect to be back in Islington before 16.00 pm		
Meeting up & travel	<p>Meet at 10.20 latest, at the entrance of Highbury & Islington, ready to catch the Victoria line to Walthamstow central (or meet there – please indicate this on sign up form). Then we catch the 10.48 Overground train to Chingford (or meet there – please indicate this on sign up form).</p> <p>Overall it's about a 35 mins journey.</p> <p>We return from Epping tube station on the Central line toward Liverpool Street station. But we can change at Stratford to the Overground and hence get back to H&I.</p> <p>The Freedom Pass/ 60+ Travel card area extends to Chingford and Epping is on the tube system, so no extra tickets required.</p> <p>For any younger members – you'll need a single ticket to Chingford from Walthamstow.</p>		
Route	<p>(0km, 11.00) From Chingford station we just cross the road and are into Epping Forest (following London Loop sign). From there we take a grassy path onto the 'Green Ride'. After 1km we veer left (black arrow) on to the gravel 'Centenary Walk'. Ignore side branches, always keeping straight ahead. On reaching the 'Cross Roads' road, we cross straight over (5km, 11.45). After about another couple of kilometres instead of turning right at the Y junction (blue arrow), we take a slight detour to the left to the Conservation Centre where we take a break for an early lunch (6.5km, 12.15).</p> <p>After lunch (13.15) we back track to the main path then turn East (following a blue arrow) still heading along the Centenary Walk. This takes us straight across the A104. When we meet the Green Ride we turn left (not following the blue arrow) and follow this through 'dingly den' heading North now. We cross over the A121 (8km, 13.45) and then over the B172. Shortly after watch out for (slightly to the left) Ambresbury Banks Fort (9km, 14.15) – IF2.</p> <p>Eventually this leads us (over the M25 tunnel) into the out skirts of Epping (at the Forest Gate Inn). We follow the Centenary Walk into Epping – keep to the muddy path through trees (not into the open on the right or left). The track comes out on to a road. Turn left and this leads to Centre Drive and Bell Common. Take the grassy path veering right. Then follow the narrow path between bushes. At the end of the path, when you come to a quiet residential street, turn left, then left again. Follow this road for about a kilometre then take the cut through on the right to Epping Tube station (13km, 15.00).</p>		
Lunch	Lunch stop will be near the Epping Conservation Centre. Food is available all day at the pub (the King's Oak) or there is an open air cafe (neither that great frankly) or have a picnic on the benches.		

Dropping out	It would be possible to opt out and head for Loughton tube station after 3 mls.
Suitability	Terrain: Suitable for any reasonably fit regular walker. There are no particular difficulties. Forest paths all the way. Good gravel bridlepaths most of the way. One muddy stretch toward the end. Some minor rolling hills at times but nothing severe. Possible obstacles: None (no styles). Comfortable waterproof walking shoes/ boots. Waterproof jacket.
Facilities	There are toilet facilities: at Chingford station at the beginning, at the Conservation Centre & Pub at lunchtime, & at the end at Epping station.
Walk source	Leaders creation.
Map & other references	OS Explorer mostly 174 or OS Landranger 167. Links: http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/visitor-information/Pages/queen-elizabeths-hunting-lodge.aspx http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/visitor-information/Pages/High-Beach-visitor-centre.aspx
Leader & contact details	<u>Walk Leader:</u> Derek Harwood <u>Beforehand</u> phone: (020) 7226 6522 (leave message if necessary) e-mail: derek.harwood@live.co.uk <u>On the day</u> mobile: 077 5931 4096
Interesting facts	IF1: Epping Forest is an area of ancient woodland in south-east England, straddling the border between north-east Greater London and Essex. It is a former royal forest, and is managed by the City of London Corporation. It covers 2,476 hectares (6,118.32 acres) and contains areas of woodland, grassland, heath, rivers, bogs and ponds and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Stretching between Forest Gate in the south and Epping in the north, Epping Forest is approximately 19 kilometres (12 ml) long in the north-south direction, but no more than 4 kilometres (2.5 ml) from east to west at its widest point, and in most places considerably narrower. The forest lies on a ridge between the valleys of the rivers Lea and Roding; its elevation and thin gravelly soil (the result of glaciation) historically made it unsuitable for agriculture. IF2: Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge is a unique example of a surviving timber-framed lodge, still standing and still surrounded by its medieval royal hunting lands. It was built on the orders of Henry VIII in 1543 with a first floor viewing gallery of the hunting fields. IF3: Ambresbury Banks is the name given to the remains of an Iron Age hill fort in Epping Forest, Essex, England. According to legend, it is the site of the last stand by Boudica against the Romans in the year 61. Nevertheless, Ambresbury Banks forms, along with Loughton Camp, Wallbury Camp, Little Hadham, Barkway and Littlebury, a line of hill-forts that arguably delineate the disputed territories of the warring Trinovantes and Catuvellauni. The fort encircles an area of 4.5 hectares (11 acres) and is surrounded by a single bank of 2 m (6 ft) in height, together with a ditch. There is a small counterscarp bank on the outside lip of the ditch. The defences now have 6 major breaks in their circumference; only one appears to be original. This is approached from the north west by a trapezoidal causeway. The ends of the bank at this point were revetted with coursed puddingstone blocks. The width of the passageway was sufficient to suggest double gates, but no central postholes were found. Finds at the site have included shards of red, grey and black pottery, flints and flint arrow heads, and lumps of baked clay. These suggest a construction date of around 700 BC and occupation until 42 AD.