



London LOOP

Section 10

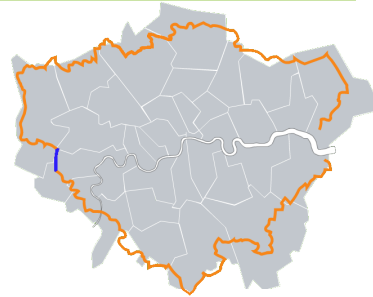
Hatton Cross to Hayes and Harlington



Transport
for London

Walk
London

Start: Hatton Cross (TQ098754)
Station: Hatton Cross
Finish: Hayes & Harlington (TQ098795)
Station: Hayes & Harlington
Distance: 3.5miles (6 km)



Introduction: Despite the heavy traffic in this area and the flight paths of Heathrow, this section includes much pleasant walking.

It is entirely on level ground, except for a spiral ramp onto the firm canal towpath. There is a narrow rough path beside the River Crane.

Much of the route goes alongside the River Crane and along a canal towpath taking in the former grounds of the Earl of Berkeley's mansion and the lush meadows of Cranford Park

There are pubs and cafes at Hayes and public toilets at Cranford Park Information Centre.

V1 : July 09

Directions: From Hatton Cross tube station, leave by the exit on the right leading to the Great South West Road, A30. Once at the road side of this busy dual carriageway turn left and cross at the pedestrian lights to join the LOOP.

Continue straight ahead. The impressive British Airways hangers soon come into view on the left at Heathrow, one of the world's busiest airports.

Continue to the left of the large concrete wall and follow the service road. Once at the small roundabout continue straight ahead, ignoring the road to the left. Walk through the red and white barriers and continue over the small bridge which goes over the quietly flowing River Crane. After a few metres turn left to enter the Crane Bank Park.

Crane Bank water meadows provide an important habitat for wildlife and the area is managed to maintain the sites diversity. Nesting, roosting and hibernating sites have been provided for birds, bats, amphibian and reptiles. Despite the low-flying aircraft overhead there is a chance that you will catch a glimpse of a kingfisher or a green woodpecker.

Continue straight ahead through the barriers and past the Crane Bank information sign on the left. Following the reed-filled River Crane on the left, keep to the gravel path as it veers around to the left and then to the right passing occasional benches along the way. Go through the second barrier before turning left onto the gravel path in the open space.

The path soon veers right around trees to meet a third metal barrier on the left. Go through this barrier and leave the Crane Bank between the houses. At the suburban road which is called Waye Avenue, turn left and follow the road around.

Notice that all these houses have double glazed windows because they are right under the exceedingly noisy flight path of Heathrow Airport. For these home owners at least there is a complete ban on flights at Heathrow between 11:30pm and 6am.

Turn left at the small three way junction **A** to meet the A4, Bath Road. Buses on Bath Road run to Hounslow West and Hounslow East tube

stations, Southall station and Greenford tube station.

To continue, cross Bath Road via the pedestrian light. Once on the other side, turn left and keep straight ahead. Cross straight over High Street and continue over Cranford Bridge.

The lands of the former parish of Cranford once surrounded this area on both sides of the River Crane. There was a bridge at this particular crossing of Bath Road before 1274 and it was considered a 'principal highway' in 1593. This lovely brick three-arched bridge was built in 1776.

As the green railings end before the slip road on the other side of the bridge, turn right and enter under the arches into the Berkeley Meadows. **B** Strike out across the open field past the children's play area. On the right is the Crane River again under a single arch brick bridge.

At the end of the grass strip go through the green kissing gate. Cross the road carefully on the tight bend then turn right to follow the road. At the concrete road barrier a few metres along turn left into the trees. Follow the small path which ambles through the trees and over a small sleeper bridge. Veer left at the crossing of paths to continue following the Crane flowing on the right. Soon the path widens into a broad grassy strip and then opens into a large open field of Cranford Park.

Cranford Park was where the Berkeley family had their ancestral home from 1618-1918, in Cranford Manor House. In 1945 the decrepit house was demolished and the 180 acre park came under the management of Hounslow Council.

Follow the grass edge along to the right, following close to the river's edge. Soon there is a footbridge on the right which goes over the Crane. Do not go over it; instead bear diagonally left across the open field towards the left of the children's playground.

To the left of the children's playground is the 18th Century ha-ha, a sunken wall and ditch that separated the gardens of the Earl of Berkeley's mansion from his 1000-acre park. These types of 'walls' were created to give the impression from the main house of a continuous strip of land beyond the

boundary.

Go through the gate and across the car park. Straight ahead is the ancient 16th century church of St Dunstan's **C** with beautiful Georgian brickwork and interesting graves.

A church has stood here since the Saxon times and was once the chapel of the Knights Templar. The Berkeley family claimed ownership of this church by placing the Berkeley arms in stone on the east end. The tower of flint is topped by brick and the whole nave was rebuilt in brick by the Dowager Duchess of Berkeley after a fire in 1710. Nearby is all that remains of a curved 17th century crinkle crinkle wall (also known as a serpentine wall). These walls were built only one brick thick to save materials but because of its shape they were very strong and durable.

Turn left in front of the church and go straight ahead through the kissing gate. Immediately on the left is the information centre for Cranford Countryside Park.

The beautifully restored 18th century stable blocks here are a reminder of what once was the headquarters of the Berkeley Hunt. This is the most impressive and complete part of the remaining buildings of Cranford Park House and gives some idea of the scale of the property.

Go through the further archway of the stables and continue straight ahead to pass under the M4 via the St Dunstan's subway.

In 1960 plans were made to route the M4 through the Parish, severing St Dunstan's Church from the north of the Parish. Failed campaigning by the church to have the M4 re-routed ended in this pedestrian sub-way being built to enable parishioners to attend church.

On the other side of the subway, turn immediately right and follow the path which passes through a pleasant area of young woodland known as Dog

Kennel Covert. Take the fork leftward to veer away from the M4. Keep following the gravel path straight ahead, ignoring all other grass paths. Leave the park through the kissing gate and head straight up the small Watersplash Lane **D** to the Crane Pub on the left.

Turn right at the main road, North Hyde Road and follow it to the large roundabout. At the first set of traffic lights cross North Hyde Road by the pedestrian crossing then follow the footpath and cycle path as it bears straight up the hill beside the dual carriageway.

This canal opened in 1805 and began as the Grand Junction Canal, flowing to join the Thames at Brentford on the right and towards Birmingham on the left.

Turn left after crossing the Grand Union Canal to follow the ramp as it winds down to the canal towpath.

To the left, further along the towpath is the gleaming whiteness of Bull's Bridge. **E** In 1794, long before the main line of the Grand Junction Canal was complete, a branch from this point to Paddington was agreed to be created so London could join directly with the national canal network.

Turn right at the bottom of the ramp and go under the A312 to follow the canal towards Birmingham. Go under the railway bridge and through the kissing gate. Continue as the path veers up over an orange brick bridge and then back down onto the towpath.

The smell of burnt coffee lingers in the air - not surprisingly as the Nestlé Coffee Factory is on the left here. This factory opened in 1938, one year after the world's first instant coffee was invented by Nestlé.

This section ends at the road bridge that crosses the canal. To leave the LOOP, take the steps up to the road to meet the Old Crown Pub. Turn left and go over the canal via the bridge and continue straight ahead through the roundabout. The train station is on the left.

Section 11 to Uxbridge continues along the towpath.