



London LOOP

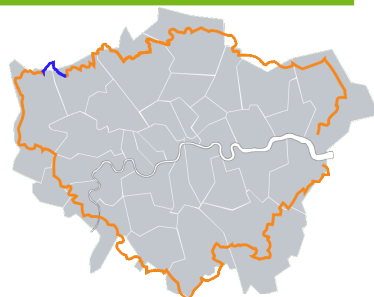
Section 14

Moor Park To Hatch End



Transport
for London

walk
London



Start: Moor Park (TQ089928)

Station: Moor Park

Finish: Hatch End (TQ121913)

Station: Hatch End

Distance: 3.8 miles (6.1 km)

Introduction: This is an easy walking, very green section through woodland with little road-walking. It crosses farmland around the community of Pinnerwood, where you walk between charming cottages with well-kept ponds and lawns.

It's mainly on rough paths, tracks and grass, which may be muddy at times. There are two stiles and four kissing gates and some short steep slopes, but generally gently undulating.

The walk starts at Moor Park Station on the Metropolitan Line and ends at Hatch End Station with trains from Euston, Harrow and Wealdstone.

The highlights of this walk are the Old Furze Wood, the 97 hectare Oxhey Wood nature reserve and Pinnerwood House, home of the famous Victorian author Bulwer-Lytton. On clear days there are some great views.

There are public toilets at the start at Moor Park and pubs and cafes at Moor Park and Hatch End.

V2 : June 10

Directions from Moor Park Station: Leave Moor Park tube station through the turnstiles but don't take the obvious exit straight ahead, instead turn immediately right to retrace your steps back past the platforms. Leave the back of the station by the stairs and once outside at the end of a small road a sign will be visible for a public footpath through the trees on the right.

Take this gravel track through the leafy trees while keeping close to the railway line. Coming into open grass, keep ahead to meet the metal barrier by the houses. Don't go through, but turn sharp left to join the London LOOP.

Section 14 Directions: Follow the broad grass track leading towards the electricity pylons in the distance. The track goes just to the left of the first electricity pylon and then divides. Take the path veering slightly left and follow it next to Sandy Lodge Golf Course.

The track shortly turns right onto a rich sandy terracotta track. Follow it up the short rise and continue straight on before entering a short section of trees on the other side. Once you emerge from the trees, keep straight ahead and slightly to the right over another section of the course to meet another footpath post.

The route soon enters another stretch of trees and then emerges onto Sandy Lodge Lane.

Lord Leverhulme, the soap magnate, who once owned Moor Park Estate, undertook development in 1922 of 288 acres which spread to this exclusive area of Moor Park. It is now a designated Conservation Area.

Cross the road here and take a moment to admire the views north across the Colne Valley. This area has distinct sloping and undulating landforms that tumble down to the River Colne. It has been suggested that this river was named by the Celts who were here before the Romans, but the name Colne may well have originated from Colonia, meaning a Roman Settlement.

Turn right to follow the footpath down to the main road which is the A4125, Hampermill Lane. Cross straight over the main road where Hampermill

Lane meets Sandy Lane. Turn left and then after only a few steps turn right into a very obscure footpath among the trees.

Follow the small track through lush ferns up the hill, passing a house on the left to meet a crossing of paths a short way in. Turn right and follow the path to reach fields which open out on the left. Veer left at the first turning here to follow the tree line on the left. When the trees sweep leftward in a curve, strike out straight ahead across this public land toward the houses in the distance.

As a children's playground **A** comes into view on the left, bear right to find a metal kissing gate. Exit the grounds through the space between houses to meet Ashburnham Drive. Turn right at the roadside and continue to reach a T-junction at the end, which is Hayling Road.

To leave the LOOP catch a bus at this point to South Oxhey and Bushey stations and Watford Junction station.

To continue, cross Hayling Road and turn left and then right onto Nairn Green. Continue to the end of this road to meet the trees.

This section of trees is called Old Furze Field. Furze, also known as gorse, is a very spiny and dense evergreen shrub with fragrant golden-yellow flowers and the name suggests its former condition. It flowers all the year, hence the expression, 'when gorse is out of blossom, kissing's out of fashion'.

Follow the footpath into the woods. At the T-junction of paths: turn left here and keep on the path along the bottom of the woods. The track soon veers right over a small footbridge and up the hill.

Near the top of the hill is a tree in the middle of a small clearing and paths leading off left and right, ignore them and keep on ahead. Eventually road traffic can be heard in the distance off to the right and a wooden post with an arrow pointing left comes into view. Turn left here away from the traffic noise and soon a house emerges ahead. Follow the path rightwards beside the house to come out to the road side of Oxhey Drive.

Cross directly over the road and continue through the metal barriers back into the woods. Keep straight ahead on this track and carry on over a crossing track. Soon there is a wider crossing track to go over, before keeping on through the trees of Oxhey Woods.

Oxhey Woods is a 97-hectare Nature Reserve. It separates South Oxhey and Northwood these days but it was almost certainly once part of a great expanse of Ancient Woodland that lay between the river Colne and the Thames in prehistoric times.

As the path forks with a small circular ditch between them, veer along the left fork and soon traffic can be heard in the distance. The path shortly opens out to Prestwick Road.

To leave the LOOP at this point jump on a bus along this road, they go to Carpenders Park station, Bushey station and Watford High Street station.

To continue, cross the road at the traffic island and head straight back into the trees. Go down the short group of steps and follow the leftward turning path.

Keep going along the path until it opens out into a clearing. Large tree trunks lie across here and over to the right are curious small tables and seats made out of tree trunks.

Continue straight ahead and soon the path widens out to a broad track. Follow this track while it keeps straight ahead, going over a small wooden footbridge. Continue up the incline and when the path takes a sweeping curve around to the right turn left onto a smaller path through the trees of Nanscot Woods. Follow the path across two ditches on through the woods then left at the T junction of paths.

The picketed metal fence line seen to the right through the trees is the border to Pinner Hill Golf Club. Keep straight ahead along the path ignoring

all other side paths and keeping the fence on your right.

A short stretch of houses soon appear through the trees on the left and then the woods abruptly stop and the path passes through a kissing gate and opens out onto a field. Keep left here to follow the footpath sign along the top of the field keeping close to the hedge on the left. Continue through the next field to meet a wooden kissing gate. Exit the field here and then turn immediately right to follow the right edge of another field down to the farm buildings.

This farm has 120 acres of grass devoted to grazing and hay making. Known as Pinnerwood Arabian Stud, **B** it was founded in the 1960s for horse breeding.

Close to the farm building pass through a wooden gate on the right. Go through it into the farm area then right to find a footpath sign turning left to skirt around a small fenced off area.

Exit the farm through another kissing gate to reach the bottom of a paved drive way. Continue along the driveway as it veers slightly around to the right and soon the early 18th century Pinnerwood House comes into view on the right. Continue along the drive to get another view of the house over its pond and then still further along is the entrance drive with the sign to confirm its name.

The early 18th century Pinnerwood House was the home to the famous author Edward Bulwer-Lytton in the 1830s. This popular novelist was best known for *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *Zanoni*. He was also a politician who achieved cabinet office and when he died, in 1873, he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Follow the paved drive leftward to leave the fields on the right and less than 100 metres along turn left to follow the footpath beside the metal gate. Go over the stile and continue left along the top field edge. At the far corner turn right and continue to meet a kissing gate. Go through the kissing gate and then over the little wooden footbridge turning right on the other side. Turn leftward at the next footpath sign to follow along the field edge beside the back gardens of houses.

To continue on to Section 15 to Elstree, keep ahead along the field edge. To leave the LOOP go over the stile.

Less than 100 metres from the edge of this field is a stile leading through a gap in the houses to reach Hatch End station.

Follow the path as it goes straight over the top of a small suburban road and then shortly turn left through another gap in the houses to reach Grimsdyke Road. Follow this road around leftward and continue along to reach the main road which is Uxbridge Road. Turn left here to go through Hatch End town centre, passing The Moon and Sixpence pub along the way. Go over Westfield Park to reach a bus stop and a short way along on the left is Hatch End station.