

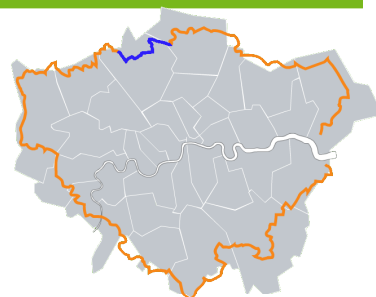


**London LOOP**  
Section 16  
Elstree to Cockfosters



**Transport  
for London**

*walk*  
**London**



**Start:** Elstree (TQ189962)  
**Station:** Elstree & Borehamwood  
**Finish:** Cockfosters (TQ280963)  
**Station:** Cockfosters  
**Distance:** 10 miles (17 km)

**Introduction:** This is the longest section of the London Loop and is very pleasant walking despite a high proportion of road walking, taking in some attractive open spaces and commons in North London.

Points of interest are Dollis Brook, Moat Mount - site of the 1471 battle of Barnet during the Wars of the Roses and Livingstone Cottage where the famous explorer of that name lived in the 1850s.

It's mainly level walking on rough paths, tracks and grass. There is one longish steep ascent and several fairly gentle ascents and descents. There are two stiles.

There are pubs and cafes at Borehamwood, Barnet, Hadley and Cockfosters and public toilets at Barnet and Trent Park,

Public transport can be found at Elstree on National Rail and at High Barnet and Cockfosters on the Tube, as well as buses along the way.

V1 : July 09

**Directions from Elstree and Borehamwood station:** Leave the car park using the steps on the left by the taxi rank. Turn left to go over the railway bridge then left again at the petrol station into Deacon's Hill Road to join the LOOP.

**Section 16 directions:** After a steep climb to the top of Deacon's Hill Road, turn left at the T junction on to Barnet Lane, the A411.

After about 500 metres on the left are two brick built breather vents where the railway runs right under the field.

Enjoy the views northward while climbing the hill to eventually reach a small red post box on the other side of the road. Cross here and take the path on the right just past the post box, immediately before Bay's Hill Cottage. Continue along the path and just past the enormous log barrier are the old oak woodlands of Scratchwood.

Incredibly this oak woodland has been here since the last Ice Age. Notice the hornbeams and hazel beneath the oak, and the invasive rhododendron and sycamore. The wood is now being actively managed, mostly by volunteers.

Turn left at the waymarker and follow the path close to the woodland. Cross the stream and take the right fork out of the wood and into the open area used for flying model aircraft. Go into more scrubby woodland then through the kissing gate at the end of the wood and out on to an open grassy field.

To leave the LOOP here turn left for the bus stop on the A1 that serves Elstree and Borehamwood.

To continue, turn right down the edge of the open space and take the right-hand of the two paths into scrub woodland at the second of two stand alone oak trees. The path dips and rises to emerge in an open meadow that reaches the A1. Turn right and cross under the A1 using the pedestrian underpass. Then turn left to return back up beside the A1. Buses to Edgware can be caught here.

To continue, walk straight on and take the next right after the golf course

into Moat Mount Open Space. Follow the broad path straight ahead, ignoring the track that turns left. A short way into the wood fork left to find some steps. Once down the steps follow the path along a little stream up through the woods.

Follow the steep sided valley uphill and turn right through the kissing gate at the top to join a fenced way over open fields. Go through the two sets of kissing gates to follow the farm track down the hill, enjoying the open views across Mote End Farm along the way. Climb the hill again to the corner of Barnet Gate Wood. **A**

At the sharp bend keep right and carry straight on to meet Hendon Wood Lane via another kissing gate. Cross the road and turn right along the pavement. Follow the right-hand bend and at the top of the rise, after passing the houses and just beyond the black metal gates, turn left through a kissing gate into Totteridge Fields.

The Totteridge Fields Nature Reserve is managed by the London Wildlife Trust for Barnet Council, and is special for its rich variety of flowers, grasses, insects and traditional hay meadows of a bygone age. Six-spot burnet moths, which live here are bright red and fly in broad daylight.

Follow the left-hand hedge through two fields and turn left at the corner of the second field. Follow the edge of the playing fields round to the right and halfway round go over a footbridge and through the kissing gate into meadows again. Keep the hedge and the Dollis Brook to the left.

These fields are managed under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme by a tenant farmer. Please keep to the path and respect the grazing livestock.

The path goes over two small footbridges and a series of kissing gates until reaching a big three-way signpost pointing over the Dollis Brook via a gate and modern metal footbridge.

Cross the footbridge and turn right to join the houses of Barnet just a field away. Follow the grass strip straight ahead with the houses on the left and join a tarmac path just above the brook. Continue ahead and slightly right to cross more grassland arriving at a gap in the hedge and a horse ride. Turn

right then almost immediately left through the gap in the fence and carry on straight ahead. Pass the next metal gate and head left towards the bollards to reach a tarmac path. Keep straight ahead with houses to the left and fields to the right until reaching Barnet Lane. **B**

Cross Barnet Lane and turn in to the left of the Table Tennis Centre. Beyond the car park, go through the gap in the hedge and turn left through the middle of the playing fields. Turn right at the T junction to meet Grasvenor Avenue at the top and then turn left.

The football stadium straight ahead is home to the “Bees” - Barnet FC.

Continue along Grasvenor Avenue to join Fairfield Way and carry on to Barnet Hill, the A1000 main road - the old Great North Road. A welcome sight is the Old Red Lion pub **C** on the left, with a LOOP information board in front of it.

This pub was once a coaching inn for travellers on the Great North Road. Barnet Hill was very steep, and the Red Lion would provide coaches with an extra pair of horses – sometimes called a Hercules pair. In the 1820s the road was rebuilt and the gradient lessened.

To leave the LOOP here turn left in front of the pub and head up the hill and over a pedestrian crossing to High Barnet station, or alternatively catch one of the nearby buses.

To continue, turn right under the railway bridge, cross the main road at the pedestrian lights and turn sharply left up Potters Lane. Just before the houses start on the left, turn left down a bank using the steps and follow the faint path across the right edge of the meadow. Go through a gap in the hedge, turn right and walk down Meadow.

Buses leave here for High Barnet station, New Barnet or North Finchley.

Cross the road and turn left into Burnside Close. Follow the path around the back of the houses, then at the bottom of another road go left via a kissing gate into King George's Fields.

This refreshing hillside of open fields was acquired as public open space in the 1930s to celebrate the reign of King George V. Before the railway extended suburbia to these parts of North London, the grassy fields surrounded by thick old hedgerows seen here was typical.

After about 300 metres go right through the gap in the hedge and follow the path right up the hill. Go through the kissing gate by the LOOP information board and cross to Hadley Green. Turn right along the path and enjoy wandering past the beautifully kept 18th century houses.

A bit further along is Livingstone Cottage where the famous explorer lived in the 1850s after returning from his first African trip. Dr Livingstone vanished whilst exploring Africa and an expedition had to be sent to find him.

As the green ends, follow the road as it bears right past a low run of mellow brick Almshouse, founded here in 1612 and The Church of St Mary the Virgin **D** which dates back to the 12th century.

Go through the white gates to enter into Chase Country and Monken Hadley Common.

This historic area was once a great royal hunting forest with some 3,000 deer Queen Elizabeth and other sovereigns hunted here, but now it is a gateway to the new Watling Chase Community Forest.

Follow the path beside the road past two huge cedar trees. Just beyond a big mansion, Hadley Hurst, cross and enter the woods. Very soon, go right along a woodland path that eventually rejoins the road, now the quieter Bakers Hill. At the bottom of the hill is the information board for the Pymmes Brook Trail. Cross the railway bridge then fork right to follow the path downhill through beech woods. Keep following the track until it crosses a stream via a little four-pillared bridge. **E**

It is well worth diverting left here over a plank footbridge for a surprise view

over Beech Hill Lake. This was created around 1880 by Charles Jack, as a feature in the grounds of his home. The locals still call it 'Jack's Lake'.

Keep straight ahead on the track and to the edge of the common at Games Road.

One of the first large buildings on the right is a conference centre and was once a Prisoner of War camp and a place for interrogation during World War II.

Keep going straight ahead and leave the common by the white gates. Turn right into Chalk Lane just beyond the pub then immediately fork left. Turn left at the church to follow the lane to Cockfosters Road. Cockfosters station is almost opposite and buses are also here.

Section 17, to Enfield Lock, continues past the station.