



London LOOP
Section 19
Chingford to Chigwell

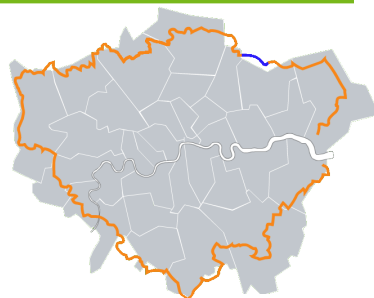


**Transport
for London**

Walk
London

V1 : July 09

Start: Chingford (TQ393947)
Station: Chingford
Finish: Chigwell (TQ438933)
Station: Chigwell
Distance: 4 miles (6.5 km)



Introduction: This section will take you through the open spaces of Epping Forest and the meadows of the Roding Valley Meadows Nature Reserve. It's easy walking but some parts of Epping Forest may be muddy. There is one gentle climb near the start and part of the route is on pavements and tarmac paths.

The highlights are Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and the magnificent ancient oaks in Epping Forest.

There are pubs and cafes at Chingford, Epping New Road, High Road, Woodford Green, Loughton Way and Chigwell. Public toilets are at Chingford, Linder's Field Nature Reserve and Roding Valley Recreation Area. Some parts of Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature area are accessible for the less mobile and pushchairs.

There are underground stations at Buckhurst Hill, Debden and Chigwell and buses along the way.

Directions from Chingford Station: Exit the station onto Station Road and turn right. Cross Beresford Road on the right and then cross left over Rangers Road (the continuation of Station Road) to Bury Road opposite.

Almost immediately, and before the clubhouse of the Royal Epping Forest Golf Course, look out for a metal gate and the London LOOP waymarks. Turn right onto the gravel path which leads onto Chingford Plain. This is the start of London LOOP section 19.

After a short distance the gravel track ends and the path turns sharp left over a small bridge. Do not follow the path, instead turn right and take the wide grass strip straight up the hill to pass between the trees. Through the trees emerge in front of the white timber framed Elizabethan building which is Queen Elizabeth's Royal Hunting Lodge. **A**

Built for King Henry VIII in 1543, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge is the only remaining timber-framed hunting lodge left standing in England. This unique historic building is open free to the public courtesy of the City of London. Check opening times before visiting.

Continue straight on to arrive at the drinking fountain turning right towards the road. Opposite the Butler's Retreat cafe (currently closed for renovation) cross Rangers Road and turn immediately left along the grass verge to follow a path parallel with the road. Walk beneath the magnificent veteran oaks which are at least 450 years old, and continue on the often muddy path to meet a broad gravel track.

Cross the track and bear slightly to the right to cross the bridge over the stream. Follow the path as it bears right through an ill-defined hedge leading to the open grassy space of the Warren. Keep the wood on your left. Continue straight up the hill of the Warren to the trees in the distance. While following the white stakes of the horse ride up the hill, take a moment to glance back for superb views of Chingford Plain.

Near the top of the hill go diagonally right towards the Warren Wood pub. **B** Cross Epping New Road and pick up the path opposite; just to the right of the cottages is a track leading up through the meadow. The path bears right up the hill. When it splits take the right hand path into a short stretch of woods. Emerge beside a cricket ground with flats on the right. Follow the

right edge of the cricket field to reach High Road.

To leave the LOOP here cross directly over High Road and jump on bus No. 20 to reach Debden station, Loughton station and Walthamstow Central station.

To continue cross over High Road and bear left taking to the grass of Roebuck Green between two roads. The green drops downhill with a faint path keeping to the grass. When it ends, cross over the road and take the byway between houses, signed to Buckhurst Hill. Coming very soon to a T-junction, go left and find a well concealed path running just right of a house garage. The path curves right through a kissing gate then reveals itself as a fine old green track, dropping into Roding Valley with a tree line to its left.

The path goes straight with trees on either side and passes Linder's Field Local Nature Reserve **C** on the right before gently descending to a kissing gate.

Half of this 3.6 hectare wildlife site is ancient woodland, and is particularly notable for bluebells and Wild Service Trees while two small ponds host communities of Toads, Common Frog and Smooth Newt.

Go through the wooden kissing gate into a field. Keeping the hedge on your left and descend towards the railway bridge. Go through the metal kissing gate and then over the footbridge crossing the Central line. On the other side of the railway, the route emerges between houses on the corner of Thaxted Road.

To leave the LOOP at this point, follow the road straight ahead. The road curves left then right before meeting up with Loughton Way. Turn right here and keep on past both entrances to Roding View before arriving at Palmerston Road. Cross here and continue down Albert Road to Buckhurst Hill tube station on the right.

To continue on the LOOP turn left along Thaxted Road passing Blackmore Road until you reach an open green area on the right known as Green Walk. Take the pedestrian path to reach the road signed both Valley Hill and Loughton Way. Cross the road and continue down Green Walk to reach

Bradwell Road. Cross it to enter the Roding Recreation Area. Go straight on passing playing fields to reach a T-junction of paths at a large lake.

This lake which was dug to provide the nearby M11 motorway with gravel.

Turn right at the lake and proceed straight on then left as the path skirts around the water's edge. Follow the path as it bears away from the lake and then over an arched concrete footbridge over the River Roding. Over the footbridge turn left on a path beside the Roding, through a kissing gate and into Roding Meadows Nature Reserve. **D**

The Roding Meadows Nature Reserve constitutes the largest surviving area of traditional river flood-plain grassland in Essex. They have probably looked much the same for the last 1000 years. Comprising 56.6 hectares (140 acres) the meadows are home to over 250 wild flowers, grasses and rushes as well as birds such as kingfishers and kestrels and animals like the water vole.

Coming into open grass, the paths divide. Branch right here up the gentle slope to join a track. Here the London LOOP turns right but if you continue left a long link path to Debden Underground Station reveals more of the Roding Meadows.

To continue along the LOOP go through the nature reserve car park and bear left on the road beyond. Coming up to the main road, turn left and cross the M11. Keep on along the road, Chigwell Rise, crossing to the other footway if the opportunity arises for the views it offers across the Roding Valley.

To reach Chigwell Station turn right into Brook Parade just before reaching the junction with Chigwell High Road. Continue past the shops and Chigwell station soon becomes visible across the road. Section 19 ends at the junction of Chigwell Rise and Chigwell High Road where section 20 continues to the left.