



London LOOP

Section 21

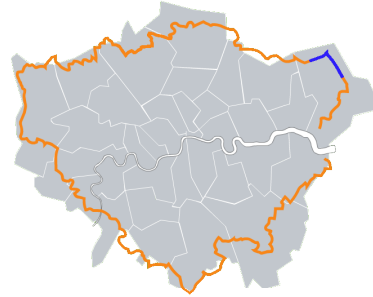
Havering-atte-Bower to Harold Wood



Transport
for London

Walk
London

Start: Havering-atte-Bower (TQ512932)
Station: Buses from Havering-atte-Bower
Finish: Harold Wood (TQ547905)
Station: Harold Wood
Distance: 4.3 miles (6.9km)



Introduction: From the attractive village of Havering-atte-Bower this section first passes through high-lying, undulating farmland, to reach Noak Hill. It then follows a narrow green strip through the suburb of Harold Hill, which lies beside Carter's and Paine's Brooks. These streams flow into the River Ingrebourne, which itself joins the Thames at Rainham Creek.

Generally fairly level walking, mostly on rough paths, tracks and grass and there are five stiles. The section through Central Park is suitable for the less mobile and pushchairs.

There are pubs at Havering-atte-Bower, Noak Hill and Harold Wood and public toilets at Havering-atte-Bower.

There is a station at Harold Wood on National Rail and buses at Havering-atte-Bower, Noak Hill, Harold Hill and Harold Wood.

V1 : July 09

Directions: To reach the start of this section of the Loop, take a bus to Havering-atte-Bower from Romford. Get off the bus at the green in front of the flint Victorian church along the B175.

Take to the LOOP route which goes down the hill of the B175 and past the Royal Oak pub on the left. Just beyond the pub is a sign on the right pointing to Footpath No. 7 to Noak Hill and Paternoster Row, one and a three-quarter miles. Follow the sign along the obscure path that squeezes between a brick garage and a wooden fence.

Casual visitors to Havering-atte Bower may be surprised to discover that this pleasant little village was once the ancient seat of kings and the site of a vast Royal Palace of which not a stone remains. The location of the palace was the site of the present village green.

Follow the path to the open fields keeping to the right-hand edge of the field toward the corner and squeeze through the kissing gate. Follow the fence line on the right as it veers right toward an odd, white roundhouse visible through the trees, Ignore the track in the right hand corner of the field which heads up to the right toward Round House Farm. Instead turn left and continue along the field edge down the hill, keeping the fence line still on the right.

You can't fail to notice the strange round building on the right. Called 'Round House', it was once the home of Joseph Hardwick Pemberton (1852-1926), a true giant in the world of rose breeding.

After about 200 metres down from the corner of the field, turn right to go through a kissing gate and over a footbridge. **A** Go through the bramble and into the open field beyond. Continue straight ahead over the brow of the field to reach its right-hand corner. From here, keep on straight ahead through the next field passing on the left side of an isolated tree to the woodland beyond.

At the woodlands edge stands an iron gatepost. Once it marked the entrance to the grand residence of Pyrgo. Nothing now remains of the house save this one rusting sentinel defying time. In its heyday Pyrgo House was home and playground for King Henry VIII's daughters Mary and Elizabeth who as children grew up happily together here.

Turn right and go up the rise, passing the woodland edge on the left to the end. Turn left here to follow footpath 7 to Church Road along the edge of the trees. Turn left once more with the trees to reach a stile in the far corner going over to the next paddock. Standing on a ridge now, the views are impressive as the meadows drop to the south. Turn right and follow the track along the fence line above on the left, then turn left through the gate into a smaller field. Keep ahead to the left corner and go through the old-style kissing gate.

You are looking over Foxburrow Wood. This ancient woodland, with its massive hornbeams is home to many woodland birds including the increasingly rare mistle thrush and the colourful great spotted woodpecker. Foxburrow Wood is a site of importance for nature conservation.

Turn right in the next field and walk briefly for about 30 metres with the fence to the right before setting off leftwards across the open field toward the left corner of a small wood opposite. Continue straight ahead, keeping the trees to the right along 'footpath no.7' as the signpost in the corner of the wood reassures. At the fields end, turn left then after about 400 metres turn right to go over a small footbridge.

Keep on with the hedge and the ditch to the left, keeping an eye out for pheasants roaming free. At the end of the field go over the stile in the left corner and turn right onto a quiet lane called Paternoster Row. Go past the cottages until about 20 metres before Widdrington Farm at the end. Go over the stile to the left and follow the track. Go through a dip through the trees then past the houses visible through a fence on the right until a gate and stile leads to another lane. Go over the stile and turn left to follow the roadside of Cummings Hall Lane to the main road ahead which is Noak Hill Road.

To leave the LOOP at this point, there is a bus stop opposite the Bear pub. **B**

To continue, turn left into Noak Hill Road, passing the Bear pub to reach Tees Drive, the next road on the right. Cross Noak Hill Road carefully and go down Tees Drive, passing Wincanton Road and Wrexham Road on the right.

Continue past Priory Road with the trees of Carters Brook quietly flowing in

a steep-sided sylvan dell now on the left. As the path heads to the end of Tees Drive cross left to go over the brook and then right to continue following the brook now on the right.

Harold Hill and Harold Wood probably derive their names from various connections with King Harold II, the tragic son of Edward the Confessor. Harold lost his life and his crown at the Battle of Hastings.

Cross the next road and continue straight ahead through the gates into Central Park. Keep on the tarmac path as it turns right then left to rejoin the brook, still flowing on the right. Pass the children's play area on the right and follow the path to the right of the car park to leave Central Park and arrive at another road.

Cross here and continue straight ahead with the brook still on the right to yet another crossing then pass another playground on the left before the path veers left and then turns right through a gate to reach a crossing point of the big dual carriageway of Colchester Road, the A12. If the traffic seems too dangerous to cross here, turn right to reach a pedestrian crossing about 500 metres further down.

Once on the other side of the A12, turn left at the crossing point and then right to enter a field. Once on the other side of the field, follow the track in the left corner. The track becomes enclosed and veers around the Paine's Brook Play Area (the brook has changed its name since we joined it!) before opening out to Church Road.

Turn right onto the footpath of Church Road and cross the brook, continuing straight ahead before turning down Queens Park Road, the next road on the left. Follow the road as it turns right through a car barrier. At the end of Queens Park Road, turn left along Avenue Road and go past the King Harold pub on the right. Keep on past the shops on the right and then turn left at the end of Avenue Road. The entrance to Harold Wood station is just on the left. To continue on to Section 22 to Upminster Bridge, follow the signs past Harold Wood Station.