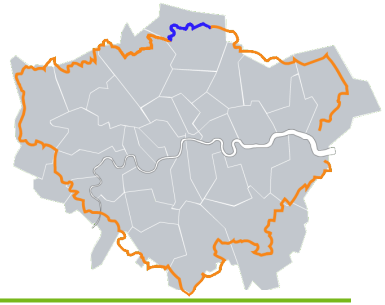
London LOOP
Section 17
Cockfosters to Enfield Lock

Transport for London

Walk London

V1 : July 09

Start: Cockfosters (TQ280963)
Station: Cockfosters
Finish: Enfield Lock* (TQ364984)
Station: Enfield Lock
Distance: 9.5 miles (15 km)



Introduction: A very long and rural section through an area alive with history. It goes by Trent Park, once the home of the Sassoon family, whose mansion across the lake is now part of Middlesex University, through the farmland of Enfield Chase and Hilly Fields Park and the Forty Hall Estate.

There are several gentle up and downs and two high stepped footbridges. The walk is mostly on rough paths, tracks and grassland; there are five stiles. Some sections are suitable for the less mobile and for pushchairs including Trent Park, Forty Hall and Albany Park.

There are pubs and cafes at Trent Park, Forty Hall, Clay Hill, Turkey Street and Enfield Lock and public toilets at both ends of Trent Park and at Forty Hall.

There is National Rail at Turkey Street and buses along the way.

* Please note: this section ends at the footbridge over the Brook near Enfield Lock Station - not Enfield Lock itself. The lock itself can be found in Section 18 of the LOOP.

Directions: Leave Cockfosters station by the main entrance, turn right then immediately right again and go through the green metal gate. Follow the narrow grass strip between the car park and the cemetery. Go through the gap in the bushes, then after about 25 metres, turn left and cross the ditch. Go across the top of the fields to enter Church Wood on the other side. Soon there is a T junction in the paths, turn left here and follow the path out of the wood and cross the field, keeping to the right hand edge to the road ahead.

This area was once Enfield Chase, a 12th century royal hunting forest. Enfield's woodland was described in the Domesday Book as providing food for four thousand swine! This was a measure of the woodland's great size.

Turn right at the road, then fork left past the little obelisk. A Enter the car park where there are toilets and a café. Straight ahead is the LOOP information board.

To visit the Trent Country Park, go straight ahead down the attractive Lime Tree Avenue, instead of left at the obelisk. The park has country walks, bird watching and nature study.

At the LOOP information board take the path to the left into the pleasant Oak Wood — an odd name for a wood that's mostly birch! Follow the path to the edge of the wood and then take the right fork. Continue following the broader path straight ahead to a park map, then turn left. Follow the path past a lake on the right, and after a few hundred metres the red bricks of Trent House can be seen through the trees on the right.

Keep following the track up the hill and into the woods. After about 100 metres, fork left at the waymarker. As the path curves to the left, the enclosed area on the right become visible.

This is Camlet Moat, a small moated island and Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is thought to have been the seat of Geoffrey de Mandeville during the reign of William the Conqueror. Excavations, carried out by Sir Philip Sassoon in the 1920s discovered stone foundations, oak beams thought to be from the drawbridge and Roman shoes and daggers.

Follow the path to the edge of the wood and then take the right fork. Go through the kissing gate about 20 metres along.

Look left along the woodland edge from the kissing gate to see a tall obelisk erected in 1702.

Turn left at the road and walk for about 100 metres. Cross at the lay-by and go through the kissing gate, then head off down the hill to the Jubilee Path. B

This rural area is a working farm estate, much of it is owned by the London Borough of Enfield. Please remember to follow the country code at all times. This path is known locally as the Jubilee Path, because it was opened in the Queen's Jubilee year, 1977.

At the bottom of the hill turn right and follow Salmon's Brook. Keep following the path until you come to a bridge. Cross over Salmon's Brook then turn immediately right and go over the stile. Keep following the field edge with the brook close by on the right. The path leads over two more stiles and through several fields before it bears round to the left to follow the tree line up the hill.

The hill straight ahead is called Cuckold's Hill. C A 'Cuckold' was a man whose wife had been unfaithful. It is an Elizabethan word for a Cuckoo — which lays her eggs in other bird's nests.

Head towards newly planted woodland known as Brooke Wood, and go through the kissing gate just before the brow of the hill. Follow the path through young trees towards the road, cross a stile and walk straight ahead, keeping parallel with the hedge for about 150 metres until another stile. Cross the A1005 road here and turn right.

A few hundred metres further on is a bus stop which goes to Enfield or Potters Bar.

Turn left down Rectory Farm drive just beyond the Royal Chase Hotel. Follow the drive to the sheds, bear right behind them and continue, crossing the bridge over Turkey Brook. Follow the track up the hill, pass under the railway bridge and turn right at the 'T' junction. After some glass houses on the right, take a woodland path on the right into Hilly Fields Park.

This part of London was once a mass of glass houses that produced huge quantities of tomatoes and cucumbers for all the country. These are the few left. They now produce water plants for gardens.

Follow the path into the woods, keeping the cricket ground on the left. At a tiny clearing where several paths meet, fork left and then left again on to a path that soon emerges at the top of an open field on the right. Walk along the top then turn right onto a metalled path on the far side. Go down the hill and cross Turkey Brook D at its most charming part. Fork left to follow the brook through Hilly Fields. The LOOP turns right up the hill opposite a bridge over the brook. At the top where several paths meet, turn left to meet Clay Hill Road and the welcome sight of the Rose & Crown Pub opposite. Cross the road, and take the path ahead just right of the pub, keeping open grass on the right and the Turkey Brook close on the left. Follow the sign saying Mile & a Quarter Footpath, leading to Forty Hall down a small slope.

To leave the walk at this point, turn right into Gough Park instead of going straight on, and this will lead you to Forty Hill Roundabout, from here you can catch a bus to Enfield Town.

To continue keep straight ahead and use Turkey Brook on the left as a guide. Passing a barrier and finger post, keep ahead towards Forty Hall. Fork left to follow a long fishing pond E on the right and the rhododendrons lining the path.

Just beyond the ponds, up to the right is the 17th century Forty Hall, now a museum; the house and gardens are worth a visit. There is also a café and toilets. Reach it by turning right at the end of the fish ponds and following the lime tree avenue. The ponds are next to the site of the Elsynge Palace. A favourite haunt of Queen Elizabeth I when she wanted to be out of the city! The ponds you have walked past may well have kept the palace supplied with fish.

The LOOP continues beside the brook until you come to a post on the right in the field, just before a small footbridge on the left. Bear right here and head to the roadside.

Local legend says that at this spot, Maidens Bridge, Sir Walter Raleigh spread his cloak over a puddle so the Queen could cross without getting her feet wet. This dramatic act of gallantry suggested that he had completely lost his head over her; unfortunately for Raleigh he later did - he was beheaded!

Go over the stile, cross the road and turn left towards the bridge. On the road bridge on the left is a sign warning not to use it with 'A Traction Engine, Locomotive or Heavily Laden Carriage.' Turn right just after the school car park and go up the tarmac path and through the metal kissing gate. Carry on following the tarmac path to leave rural tranquillity behind for a while.

Once at the main road, use the metal footbridge to cross. Turn left on the other side, then right after a few metres to follow the tarmac path that runs parallel to the cemetery. At the road go under the metal railway bridge, then turn left at a 'T' junction into Winnington Road which leads to Turkey Street.

To leave the walk at this point turn left to make your way to Turkey Street Station.

Turn right into Turkey Street and follow it past the Turkey Pub to meet Hertford Road at the end. On the left are toilets and a seating area overlooking a pleasant stretch of Turkey Brook. Cross Turkey Street at the pedestrian crossing, then cross over Hertford Road at the island a few metres along. Turn right, and then take the first left down St Stephens Road which curves around to the right. Turn left through bollards onto the Prince of Wales path. F

Once again the LOOP follows Turkey Brook, which may have mute swans swimming on it.

There is an ancient belief that swans mate for life and it is said that if one of the pair dies the other will die of a broken heart, singing as it does so. That is why a 'Swan Song' is a performer's last performance.

Keep following the brook through Albany Park.

If there's a flash of blue and orange it's a Kingfisher whizzing by! They certainly live the high life - home is a burrow in the riverbank, where the smelly remains of their fishy snacks are to be found.

At the other side of the park cross the steep railway bridge, then on the other side, after a few metres cross the brook via another bridge. This is the end of section 17.

To get to Enfield Lock Station walk to the end of Bradley Road, turn left and the station on the left will be in sight.