

TREC Section 1: Ealing Broadway to Brent Lodge Park/Hanwell Station. Distance: 8 km (5 miles).

Public Transport: Section 1 starts at Ealing Broadway served by Central and District Underground and Rail stations and plentiful buses. Along the route there are plentiful transport links using local buses or at Northfields (Piccadilly Line) and Boston Manor (Piccadilly Line) Underground stations. The finish is at Hanwell Rail Station / Brent Lodge Park.

Surface and Terrain: The majority of the route is along level paths through parks and alongside the Grand Union Canal with some pavement walking. No steps, but some minor descents and ascents when joining or leaving the waterway paths; suitable for buggies.

Refreshments: Ealing Broadway; Pitzhanger Manor & Walpole Park; Northfields; Brent Lodge Park. **Covid-19 restrictions: Check availability of refreshments and toilets before your walk.**

Public Toilets: Ealing Broadway station (on platform) and nearby Shopping Centre; Walpole Park, Boston Manor & Northfields stations (charge) and Brent Lodge Park.

In 1901 Ealing became the first municipal borough in Middlesex; by then it had become known as 'Queen of the Suburbs' due to its greenery, and because it was halfway between city and country. Ealing sits on ground that rises from the Thames towards a ridge of modest hills including Hanger Hill to the East (section 3) and then falls away to the valley of the River Brent. Although the area is heavily built up there are remnants of common land including Haven Green and Ealing Green and many parks created through Council purchase of fields in late C19th and early C20th thus preserving the green spaces to enjoy during this walk.

With your back to Ealing Broadway station exit, cross the road towards Haven Green road passing the Taxi rank on your right. Join the path on your left which skirts the edge of Haven Green, keeping the Green on your right and walking parallel to the rail tracks.

Haven Green: *Remnant of common land (Ealing Haven), which was an Uxbridge Road drover's route stopping place. Ealing Local Board purchased Haven Green with other common land in 1878 to preserve it as a public open space when London's rapid spread threatened to cover all before it, after the opening of Ealing Broadway station for the Great Western Railway in 1838.*

At the end of the path turn left on to Spring Bridge Road to cross over the rail track and head towards the junction with The Broadway/New Broadway with Christ the Saviour church on your right. Using the crossing, go straight ahead to join the High Street on the right hand pavement. Carry on down the High Street and when you reach a small triangle of green (remnant of Ealing Green, where Ealing had its medieval origins) turn right along the path between some buildings on your right and the Green on your left. Cross the road at the crossing to continue along the path bordering another part of the Green.

Ealing Green: *The common land of Ealing Green was the site of the 3-day Ealing Fair each June until 1880. Ealing Local Board acquired the Green in 1878, along with other common land in the parish.*

When the path reaches Mattock Lane cross to enter through the arched entrance gateway onto the driveway to Pitzhanger Manor & Gallery. Walking in front of the Manor's grand

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portico entrance on your right, find the path leading around the side of the building to turn left through a gateway into the original walled kitchen garden.

Pitzhanger Manor: *Originally owned by the Gurnell family, the Manor was bought and remodelled by neo-classical architect John Soane in 1800-1810 for his country house and in the hope of creating a showcase for his collection and his talents. The house was later owned by Spencer Walpole, MP and occupied by the unmarried daughters of Prime Minister Spencer Perceval, assassinated in 1812. Following the death of his longest lived daughter the house and grounds were bought by Ealing District Council in 1900 for a public library and park, with a new building, now the Pitzhanger Gallery, built on the site of Soane's kitchen block in 1939. A major conservation project completed in 2019 has restored the Manor to Soane's original designs and upgraded the contemporary Gallery. It is open to the public (small charge) and is worth a visit if you have time.*

Turning right enjoy a walk through the kitchen gardens to reach the back gate of the walled garden into Walpole Park. Walk straight ahead to cross the bridge over the ornamental serpentine lake which borders the Manor's rear lawn.

Walpole Park: *Pitzhanger Manor still sits in its beautifully landscaped original 28 acres of parkland, which became Walpole Park in 1901. In 2013 its historic features and landscapes were restored to how they had been in Soane's time, on completion of a major Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project.*

To the left the path takes you to the park facilities including a playground, kiosk and accessible toilets. To continue the route keep straight ahead along the tarmac path passing the formal fish pond with fountains on your right. At the end turn left onto the path skirting the park edge to reach the Park's southern exit; pass through the gate turning right onto Lammas Park Gardens road.

Carefully cross Culmington Road into Elers Road. After a few yards turn left through a gate into Lammas Park. Turn right onto the path and follow it around the park edge, passing the play centre on the right to reach the lodge house and exit gate onto Northfields Avenue.

Lammas Park: *Lammas land was used to graze cattle on stubble left after harvest, Lammas Day being the 1st August; the 25 acres were bought by Ealing Local Board and opened in 1883.*

Turn left to walk towards Northfields Station to use the pedestrian crossing and continue in the same direction south passing (over the road on the left-hand side) Bramley Gardens.

Bramley Gardens: *Created on top of a Victorian landfill site the romantic name is a reference to the surrounding area's history of market gardens and orchards.*

Turn right into Blondin Avenue to enter Blondin Park, turning right and then shortly afterwards left onto the tarmac path to pass through the park, passing sports pitches on either side. Towards the end of the path, near the allotments on the right, take a short detour left through the Nature Area and follow the grass path to your right through the Community

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Orchard to find the exit through a kissing gate back to the tarmac path you left. Turn left to walk past the allotments to reach the main Boston Manor road.

Blondin Park: *Market gardens and a nursery specialising in fruit trees covered this land until it was acquired by Ealing Town Council in 1926 and opened as Northfields Recreation Ground. The Park was renamed in 1957 after the French acrobat and tightrope walker Charles Blondin, famed for his dare-devil feat of crossing Niagara Falls. He retired to the area and lived in Niagara House, where he died in 1897.*

Turning right, walk uphill towards Boston Manor Underground Station to use the road crossing and continue along the road to turn first left into Wellmeadow Road, then right into Southdown Avenue and then left into Wyke Gardens, which runs into a driveway and then through a gap in the fence into a green space which is the southern extension for Elthorne Park. Keep ahead on the path edging the green space, then at the far side head left and then almost immediately right along an earth and gravel path downhill through trees to eventually reach the Grand Union Canal and join the routes of both the Capital Ring and Brent River Path Walk. Turn right onto the tow path heading north; to your right the River Brent parts company with the canal flowing over a weir.

The canal snakes between an industrial estate to the left and, to the right, Elthorne waterside, another grassed-over landfill site which is now a nature conservation area. Passing under a bridge (Trumpers Way) you eventually reach houses marking the start of Hanwell. The towpath soon crosses a bridge over the River Brent; ahead is the start of the Hanwell flight of six locks created in 1794 which raises the canal 53 feet in 600 yards. Between the first and second lock, leave the towpath to your right, by the Capital Ring sign, to follow a rolled gravel path (Fitzherbert Walk) through trees beside the River. In 400 metres you reach Hanwell Bridge and the Uxbridge Road. You should be able to pass under the bridge via a subway, but if this is underwater continue up to the road to use the crossing at the traffic lights to your right. Having got across the road, continue on the grass path by the River with the Brent Meadow open space on your left. Ahead is the striking Grade 1 listed Wharncliffe Viaduct carrying the London to Bristol railway line.

Wharncliffe Viaduct: *It was named after Lord Wharncliffe who steered the Great Western Railway bill through the House of Lords and whose coat of arms adorns the centre. Designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and built in 1837, it was used to carry trains from London to Bristol across the Brent Valley. The huge semi-elliptical arches each span 21 metres. The two endmost are hollow, and home to what is thought to be London's largest colony of Pipistrelle and Daubenton's bats. The line opened originally with two tracks. The 1870s saw the doubling of the tracks to accommodate use for a suburban service.*

Look for signs of the widening of the viaduct (an extra row of piers and arches on the north side) as at the end of the field you bear right to cross a footbridge over the river and reach the viaduct. Do not pass under the viaduct, instead leave the Capital Ring path by bearing right uphill along an earth and gravel path through The Hobbayne Half Acre Woodland - part of a parcel of land gifted to Hanwell's St Mary's Church in 1484 by William Hobbayne to be

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used for the poor and needy of the Parish. When the path reaches a T-junction with iron park railings ahead, turn right on the footpath to reach a gateway at the corner, the entrance to the small Connolly Dell Rest Garden. (If wanting to get back to the Uxbridge Road for local buses continue straight ahead along Half Acre Road). Choose your route to walk up through the sloping garden with its series of ponds, rockery garden and fine trees to reach the gate onto Station Road.

Connolly Dell: *Formerly part of the grounds of The Lawn, the home and private asylum of Dr John Connolly after his retirement as Superintendent of Hanwell Asylum where he worked from 1839-44. He pioneered humane treatment and non-restraint of the mentally ill. Named in his memory, with a memorial surmounted by a winged figure, the Dell was given as a public open space in 1911. The park is designated as a rest area for the elderly and disabled.*

To reach the end of Section 1 turn right and then (having crossed the road) go left up Station Approach to the underpass to get to the entrance of Hanwell Rail station. To continue on Section 2 and/or to reach Brent Lodge Park Café turn left on Station Road under the Railway Bridge, left into Alwyne Road and immediately left onto a footpath beside a fenced Rose Garden. Continue on the tarmac path which marks the border between Brent Lodge Park (left) and Churchfields (right). On reaching the Parish Church of St Mary's, Hanwell turn left and follow the drive to the left, past a stable block and other outbuildings to reach Brent Lodge Park and Animal Centre where there is a small café and public toilets.

To provide feedback on The Round Ealing Circuit (TREC) route contact West London Ramblers via website: www.westlondonramblers.org.uk.