

TREC Section 3: Perivale Station to Acton Town Station/Gunnersbury Park. Distance: 9.3 km (5.5 miles). Optional 1.2 km (0.75mile) extension for Brentham Garden Suburb tour.

Public Transport: Section 3 starts at Perivale Underground Station (West Ruislip branch of the Central line), which is also served by the 297 bus route (Willesden Bus Garage to Ealing Broadway). The walk ends at Acton Town Underground Station (District and Piccadilly lines). Linking options for Hanger Lane, North Ealing and Ealing Common Stations are given along the route.

Surface and Terrain: The majority of the route is on firm ground, initially pavement walking, then after crossing the A40, through Pitshanger Park and revisiting the Brent River Park route which we left in Section 2. There is a gradual ascent and descent of Hanger Hill, again mostly using park footpaths with some pavement walking around the area of North Ealing Station. The second half of the route takes you across Ealing Common, and a further short section of pavement walking to get to Gunnersbury Park where you can explore its recently restored Mansion, local history museum and landscaped grounds. Finally there is a short pavement section to Acton Town Station.

Refreshments: Perivale Station (shop, limited opening); Pitshanger Park (seasonal/variable hours); North Ealing Station (pub, cafe and shops on Queens Drive); Gunnersbury Park. **Covid-19 restrictions: Check availability of refreshments and toilets before your walk.**

Public Toilets: Perivale Station; North Ealing Station (charge); Gunnersbury Park; Acton Town Station (charge).

Perivale is the smallest of the seven towns of the London Borough of Ealing, cut through by the Paddington Branch of the Grand Union Canal (see Section 2) and the A40 Western Avenue, crossed during this walk. The name of Perivale was first used in 1508, when it was spelt "Pyryvale". The word seems to be a compound of perie (pear tree) and vale.

Leaving Perivale Station cross at the pedestrian crossing and turn left heading south on Horsenden Lane, with a sports ground on your right. At the traffic lights turn right to find the upward slope of the walkway for the footbridge over the busy A40 Western Avenue. At the far side follow Old Church Lane (past the Myllet Arms pub) to the junction with Perivale Lane; cross the road bearing slightly left towards the wooden lych gate, to the right of which is an entrance to a shared use foot and cycle pathway. Follow the tarmac path as it descends past the medieval St Mary the Virgin Church, with its white clapper board tower, to a wooden bridge over the River Brent.

St Mary's Church: *One of London's oldest churches, the Grade 1 listed 12th or 13th century church was closed in 1972 having been separated from most of its Parish population following the development of the A40. It is now an arts centre and venue for performances of classical music.*

After crossing the bridge keep to the left hand fork and continue straight on between fences, either side is the Ealing Golf Club. You emerge at the end into Pitshanger Park (to your right

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are bowling greens), where you turn left keeping the golf course on the left towards the Tennis Courts. Keep them on your right as you continue along the path with the River Brent on your left. The small café at the Tennis Courts may be open for drinks and snacks.

Pitshanger Park: *The name Pitshanger comes from the Anglo-Saxon meaning 'wooded slope frequented by kites'. Once part of Pitshanger Manor Farm, Ealing Town Council acquired land for the park in 1905, adding more land in 1913. The park became part of the linear Brent River Park in 1976.*

When the path reaches the children's play area bear right keeping on the tarmac towards the path leading to the park gates. At the gates turn left to walk along Meadvale Road, after approx. 100 m (nos 71 and 90) you will notice the architectural style (style and pattern of houses and road alignments) changes as you enter the conservation area which is Brentham Garden Suburb. Where Holyoake Walk joins from the right you reach a small green, named in honour of Henry Vivian founder of the Suburb (Not 'this house is mine' but 'this estate is ours'). On your left is the distinctive arts and crafts style tower and building of the Brentham Club and Institute. **Optional extension tour of the Brentham Garden Suburb starts from Vivian Green – see route details at the end of this guide.*

Brentham Garden Suburb: *The first garden suburb built, mostly between 1901 and 1915, on co-partnership principles to provide improved housing for working people. A number of the roads are named after 19th-century reformers – Holyoake, Ludlow, Ruskin, Neville. It predates Hampstead Garden Suburb by some years and, due to its historical interest, was designated a conservation area in 1969. The estate's garden aspect was created through low hedges and trees as well as playing fields and recreation grounds, particularly north of the Institute. A major feature was the provision of allotment gardens behind some of the larger groups of houses. Fred Perry, the Tennis Champion, played at Brentham Club between 1919 and 1935 and lived on nearby Brunner Road.*

Continue to the end of Meadvale Road, cross and turn right up Neville Road, following the waymark for Brent River Park Path. (To the left Neville Road ends at the Recreation Ground deliberately left open to provide a vista across the Brent to Harrow). After 25m, where the road meets Brunner Road, turn left onto Brunswick Road and almost immediately left between two houses onto a narrow paved, fenced and waymarked footpath. **The extension tour of the Suburb rejoins here.*

Follow the narrow footpath as it turns right behind the houses; on your left is a gate to Brentham Meadows maintained as hay meadow. Continue on the tarmac path with meadows and then Brentham allotments on your left. The remnants of oak trees remind you this was an old field path, known as 'China Alley', which was for a time a route to Brentham Halt Station (opened 1911, closed 1947). At the entrance to the allotments continue ahead on the short access road between garages to reach Lynwood Road; cross and turn right and after about 25m turn left along another stretch of access road. Reaching bollards at the end turn right up a tarmac footpath to meet and carefully cross Brunswick Road. Ahead you will see

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the parallel lanes of Clarendon Road on either side of a green strip of land, enclosed by hooped railings, where you can see a mass of daffodils in Spring. Water pipes, from the (filled in) Fox reservoir further up the hill, run under this strip of land to the River Brent. Walk up the right hand lane of Clarendon Road to reach and cross Sandall Road and continue uphill on the shared use tarmac path to the right of the iron gates labelled Fox Wood.

Hanger Hill Park & Fox Wood Nature Reserve: *In early times Hanger Hill was covered in trees and by 1393, the hill was called 'le hangrewode' ('steep sloped wood' in Old English). Hanger Hill was formed by outwash gravel deposits left by advancing glaciers during the last ice age. It marks the change in the geology of this part of the country, where the chalk hills of the Chiltern Hills to the west meet the clay basin of London. The park, established by Ealing Borough Council by 1907, has one of the highest points in Ealing with dramatic views north (depending on season) stretching from the Wembley Arch in the east to Harrow-on-the-Hill in the west. The nature reserve preserves a remnant of ancient oak woodland, around the remains of Fox Reservoir, which was opened in 1888, drained in 1943 to prevent it being used as a navigational aid by nocturnal bombers in WWII and filled in between 1969-72 to create the plateau for playing fields.*

For an optional alternative route uphill through woods (involving steps and may be muddy if wet), shortly after joining the tarmac footpath and after passing a red brick substation building, find the wooden kissing gate entrance to Fox Wood Local Nature reserve on the right, then turn left up the earthen path and series of steps to wind through the trees which grew up naturally on the banks of the old Fox Reservoir. At the top emerge out of the woods onto the platform of the filled in reservoir, bear left across the playing fields towards the water tower and find the exit via a barrier into a small carpark and then through a kissing gate out onto Hillcrest Road. Turn left, passing the end of Fox Lane, then left into Hanger Hill Park and right onto the path which runs parallel with Hillcrest Road.

Remaining on the main route keep on the tarmac path with open meadow on your left and trees of Fox Wood on the right, passing Greystoke Cottage, to reach the top of Fox Lane and emerge on Hillcrest Road opposite the Water Tower. Turn left into Hanger Hill Park and then right on the path running parallel to Hillcrest Road.

Having enjoyed the view, follow the park's perimeter path as it turns left away from Hillcrest Road, dips downhill and curves right (passing a small bandstand on the left) then gently uphill to a wooden barrier and exit to the busy Hanger Lane, North Circular Road. *To leave the route at this point, turn left to walk downhill to Hanger Lane Underground station (Central Line).*

To continue on the route turn right uphill, cross Hillcrest Road, then use the pedestrian crossing to get across Hanger Lane and to your left find the gravel cycle/footpath into Hanger Hill Wood, another remnant of oak woodland. Following the earthen path into the wood, after approximately 75m (after the third lamp post) turn right to walk downhill through the 'pocket woods', a tranquil alternative to walking alongside the North Circular Road. Continue to follow the green corridor route downhill as it takes you across side roads, Chatsworth,

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Beaufort and Audley Roads. At Corringway you need to rejoin the pavement beside Hanger Lane, North Circular for approximately 180m (200 yards) until you can turn left along a short footpath into Hanger Vale Lane, by a tall block of flats (Gilbert Court). Follow the lane, then turn at first right to walk downhill on Golf Road and right again on Boileau Road as it curves to reach Station Road.

To leave the route, turn left to reach the North Ealing Station (Piccadilly Line). To continue on the route cross the road and go up a short set of steps onto Queen's Drive. Cross and go right past the pub and shops. To avoid the steps, turn right on Station Road to its junction with Queen's Drive, go right to the traffic light, cross Queen's Drive and continue past the petrol station. On your right is the gated entrance to Ealing Village estate (*Built in 1934-36, in Dutch Colonial style, the intent was to create a mini-Hollywood to attract film stars from Ealing Studios*). Cross the two railway bridges, after the second bridge (notice the large locomotive sculpture), the small green on the left, known as New Common, was designated in 2008 as exchange land for the common that was taken to permit the replacement of the bridge. Cross Hanger Lane using the pedestrian crossing and turn left to join an earthen footpath among trees which provides a quieter route running parallel to Hanger Lane. At the end, having reached the busy Uxbridge Road junction with Hanger Lane, negotiate the various crossings to get across Uxbridge Road onto Ealing Common.

Ealing Common: *From Norman times commoners had rights to graze cattle and fowl on Ealing Common. By the 1840s much of the other common land in the region had been enclosed. In 1878, as a result of the 1866 Metropolitan Commons Act, Ealing Local Board purchased about 47 acres of Ealing Common from the landowner, the Bishop of London.*

Continue walking south on the grass of the Common with the line of mature trees bordering the main Hanger Lane road on your left until you reach and cross tree lined Warwick Road, which cuts across the common. Turn right either to continue on the pavement then the grass path (keeping parallel to Warwick Road) to reach the junction with The Common road. On your left is a small park, called Warwick Dene, enclosed in 1905 by Ealing Council to create a fragrant rest garden for the elderly and blind (see the History panel near the garden gate for more information). Cross the road and turn left on Warwick Dene road to reach the junction with Elm Grove Road, on the corner of which is All Saints Church, completed in 1905. *Spencer Perceval's youngest daughter, Frederica, bequeathed money for the Church to be built in his memory and Leopold de Rothschild gave the site, where Elm Grove House had formerly stood. Former Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval had bought Elm Grove House in 1808, his family lived there after his assassination until 1860. Just past the church, on the right hand side, there is a house with a blue plaque where Dame Margot Fonteyn, the Prima Ballerina, lived.* Walk along Elm Grove Road to the T-junction, then left into Ascott Avenue, which runs into Elderberry Road as you cross the railway bridge. Eventually at the T-junction with the busy Pope's Lane cross at the crossing to your right and then turn left through the gateway for Gunnersbury Park (between houses 177 and 179). *To leave the route to get to Acton Town underground station turn left on Pope's Lane, heading east for about 1.2 km, crossing the dual*

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carriageway North Circular Road, to continue on Gunnersbury Lane to the station on your right.

Gunnersbury Park: *A 70 hectare estate, home to Georgian Grade II listed Gunnersbury House and Museum as well as other listed buildings. Amongst various owners, the grounds were developed in the late 18th century for Princess Amelia (daughter of George II) and extended in the mid 19th century by Baron Lionel de Rothschild. Purchased for the nation from the Rothschild family and then opened to the public in 1926, it is now jointly managed by Hounslow and Ealing Borough Councils.*

Having entered the Park, to get to the café and museum, turn left on the perimeter footpath which skirts the playing fields to reach a park access road and car park. Turn right on the roadway keeping the walls of Capel Manor College (London's environmental college) on your left until at the T-junction, with the large building of the new Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub on your right, turn left and eventually you reach the circular boating pond overlooked by a temple folly. Beyond the pond is the café, children's play area and public toilets; behind them is the main drive and entrance to Gunnersbury House, now a free local history museum.

Having enjoyed your visit to the Park, to reach Acton Town Station (District and Piccadilly lines) leave via the main drive, turn right onto Pope's Lane, continue ahead for 0.5 km before crossing the dual carriageway North Circular Road and walk along Gunnersbury Lane to reach the station and the end of this section of TREC. (The first part of TREC 4 takes you through the Park exploring the grounds).

***Optional 1km (0.5mile) Tour of Brentham Garden Suburb:** Details to be provided as separate page; route starts from Vivian Green and finishes at end of Brentham Way, joining footpath at Brunswick Rd to the allotments.

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