

Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks

Welcome to Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks. These walks are designed to provide a gentle stroll of about 5 to 10 kilometres or 3 to 6 miles, approximately 5000 to 10,000 steps, taking in a few buildings and sites of interest, and where possible using green spaces and footpaths.

Hendon to Mill Hill Walk

This walk is from The Burroughs in Hendon to the site of the old Middlesex Regimental Barracks in Mill Hill East, and has six stops. The walk is approximately 6 kilometres or 3.7 miles. Before you set off, there is a newsagent across the road where you can find refreshments; toilets can be found in the library. Start the walk outside Hendon Town Hall, which can be reached by bus arriving at Bus Stop P or O (buses including 143, 183, 326 and 643). It is also a 10-minute walk up along Watford Way from Hendon Central Station, on the Northern Line.

Audiotour part 1 – The Burroughs, Hendon

You are walking along The Burroughs, which was a distinct hamlet until the 1890s. The name is first recorded in 1316 as 'the burrows', which doubtless refers to the keeping of rabbit warrens. In the White Bear, which once stood on the other side of the road, the Lord of the Manor of Hendon held his Court until the 1930s.

In 1894 Hendon became an urban district council, then given the status of a municipal borough in 1932, before being absorbed into the new London Borough of Barnet in 1965. This area was the centre of Hendon Borough and has a number of civic buildings. The Town Hall, designed by T. H. Watson (who lived from 1839 to 1913), was built in 1901 and is now Grade II listed. Over and above its role as the centre of local civic life, it was made internationally famous as the place where local MP Margaret Thatcher made her first speech after being appointed as Prime Minister in 1979.

The library next door was opened in 1929 and the fire station in 1914. As you continue along the Burroughs, you will pass the impressive Neo-Georgian style



buildings of Middlesex University designed by H. W. Burchett, who assisted in the design of several other notable educational and civic buildings in Middlesex.

Constructed between 1937 and 1939, the building originally housed Hendon Technical Institute, later Hendon College, and became part of the newly-created university in 1973. In recent years, the campus has continued to grow and added several structures to provide improved facilities for the growing student population. Note over the archway the coat of arms of the historic county of Middlesex. The name derives from the kingdom of the 'Middle Saxons' (similarly 'Essex' for the East Saxons, 'Sussex' and 'Wessex'), which explains the crown and the three 'seaxes' or small swords, after which the Saxons themselves are named.

After the University, continue to walk along The Burroughs with black railings and a grassed area on your left. As you reach the corner of Church End, you will see the Daniel Almshouses on the other side of The Burroughs. They are named after Robert Daniel, a wealthy merchant who endowed their establishment. The original almshouses were opened in 1729 to provide homes for 6 elderly men and 4 elderly women of Hendon, and were replaced with the current building in the 1820s. A further endowment by Eliza Holm in the 1890's ensured their survival and they are still in use today.

Now turn left on to Church End. Cross the road before you reach the bend (in order to have a clearer view of any oncoming traffic) to explore St Mary's Church, which is point 2 on your map. Pause the audiotour until you reach St Mary's Church.



Audiotour part 2 – Church End, Hendon

Saint Mary's Church is very likely Anglo-Saxon in origin and a priest is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The oldest parts of the present building span a period between the 13th and 16th centuries. The church was further renovated in the 19th century and extended in 1915. Note the weathercock in the form of the lamb and flag, normally associated with St John, not St Mary! Considered to be the oldest building in Hendon still in use today, the inside is worth a look when the church is open, please check opening times on their website.

There is a beautifully carved 12th century font decorated with Romanesque (rounded) arches. Sir Stamford Raffles (who lived from 1781 to 1826), lived at Highwood Hill in Hendon and is buried near the altar. Raffles is notable as the founder of Singapore and a leader of the expanding British presence in Malaya and south-east Asia, as well as being founder and first president of the Zoological Society of London that established London Zoo. It is said that Raffles did not get on with the vicar of Hendon, Theodore Williams, because Raffles was an abolitionist and Williams owned slaves in Jamaica. Williams insisted that Raffles should be buried in an unmarked grave outside of the church. The extensions of 1915 revealed the grave and it was moved to its current location that can now be found inside the church near the altar and with a plaque nearby.

The churchyard also contains the grave of Herbert Chapman (who lived from 1878 to 1934), the highly successful manager of several football clubs during the 1920s and 1930s – most notably Arsenal Football Club. Chapman's grave is located outside the east end of the church, on the left of the path under the large yew tree.

It is said the churchyard has a connection with the novel *Dracula*. Author Bram Stoker may well have had St Mary's graveyard in mind when he created the fictional 'Kingstead', the uneasy resting place of Lucy Westenra; see the large tomb-like structure to the right of Herbert Chapman's grave.



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Head back out to the road. Next door to St Mary's Church, the Greyhound public house functioned as Hendon's first council chamber until the Town Hall was built. Beyond is Church Farmhouse, a 17th century building with a thatched lined, tiled roof. It was the childhood home between 1817 and 1823 of Mark Lemon, later becoming an author and founding editor of *Punch* magazine. Originally named *The London Charivari*, *Punch* was a British magazine famous for its humour, satire and cartoons that was published from 1841 until 1992; it was later revived for a short time before finally ceasing publication in 2002. The house was used as a local museum between 1955 and 2011.

Continue down the hill and enter Sunny Hill Park by a footpath on the right. Walk to the fork in the path, and continue to the left. Turn to walk up the grassy slope on your right to enjoy the panoramic view from a position by the tree with a circular bench around it, which is point 3 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach this viewpoint in Sunny Hill Park.



Audiotour part 3 - Sunny Hill Park and Hendon Aerodrome

From here it is possible to see across the valley to Harrow and Stanmore. To the west, on the hilltop in the distance, you may spot the spire of the chapel of Harrow School whose famous alumni include the statesman and author Sir Winston Churchill and actor Benedict Cumberbatch. Closer to home, in the valley directly in front of where you have stopped lies an important part of our local story.

The development of much of Colindale into Hendon Aerodrome made this view famous in the period before the Great War of 1914 to 1918. Hendon flying ground began when the electrical company Everett, Edgecumbe and Company flew their experimental aircraft from 1908 to 1910. Called "The Grasshopper" the aeroplane failed to get truly airborne but attracted large crowds at the weekends. In 1910 the Daily Mail newspaper's challenge for aviators to fly from London to Manchester for a prize of £10,000 was taken up by French aviation pioneer Louis Paulhan (who lived from 1883 to 1963). Taking off from Hendon, Paulhan had to double back for it to meet one of the competition rules that stated the flight had to begin in London - technically Hendon was still in the countryside beyond London's boundary at that time.

Paulhan's success in that competition encouraged British aviation pioneer Claude Grahame-White and his company to acquire the site. Grahame-White (who lived from 1879 to 1959) bought a further 200 acres, converting them, under the direction of his associate Richard Gates, into a proper airfield, which they promoted as 'London Aerodrome'.

Principally the business was about teaching people to fly and manufacturing a small number of aircraft. It soon became apparent that having crowds of spectators was where real money could be made. Races, stunt flying and other aerial entertainments were organised, with the first Aerial Derby held in 1912. This race round London started and finished at Hendon and was watched by an estimated 500,000 spectators. Thousands would come from London, many choosing to watch from these fields. It was also from this airfield that the first official airmail flight took off in 1911, although the mail was only carried as far as Windsor.



During World War One, Hendon's Royal Naval Air Service fighter planes helped defend London from its earliest air-raids, first by Zeppelin airships in 1915 and, later, by fixed-wing bombers. Pilots trained at Hendon for service in both the Royal Navy Air Service and Royal Flying Corps before these were merged to form the Royal Air Force after the end of the war. Three 'Great War' pilots who trained at Hendon, Mannock, Ball and Warneford, were awarded the Victoria Cross for their bravery in the air.

After the war, Hendon became the home of the R.A.F. and their annual aerial pageants to show off the latest technology and skills of the service are still remembered with affection. It was here in 1936 that an innovative fighter plane was first shown to the public. The Spitfire soon became the iconic workhorse of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain in 1940 and throughout the Second World War. Regular flying ceased in the late 1950s. The R.A.F. still has a presence in the form of the RAF Museum where its world-class collection of planes and aviation memorabilia is open daily to the public (look out for the two large, metallic, trapezoid roofs).

As you look over the valley towards the north-west, note the traffic moving along one of the busiest roads to cut through the borough, the M1 motorway. Originally connecting London and Leeds, it was the first inter-city motorway in this country and opened in phases starting in 1959.

Also visible, with its distinctive yellow roof, is Hendon Police College. It is the training centre for Metropolitan Police cadets and is used as an operational base. Correctly called the Peel Centre (after Sir Robert Peel who created the force), it opened in 1934 on the site of the clubhouse of Hendon Aerodrome.

It will take 10 to 15 minutes until you reach number 4 on your map. Continue along the grassy path in the direction of the fence, passing the tree with the circular bench and take a right turn onto the paved path. This will take you back past the graveyard of Saint Mary's on your right. Proceed until the footpath becomes a road, Church



Terrace. Continue along Church Terrace and take the second footpath on your left. Continue along this footpath, crossing Sunningfield Road and Sunny Gardens Road until you reach Downage, where you will find a main road (Parson Street) on your right.

Parson Street was where some of the grander residences were first constructed as Hendon was developing. At the junction, turn left down Parson Street, passing Hendon Hall Court on your left. Recently closed, the Hendon Hall Hotel was located in a grand neoclassical mansion just behind Hendon Hall Court. The site is remarkable for a connection with the celebrated actor, producer, playwright and theatre manager David Garrick (who lived from 1717 to 1779), who bought the manor of Hendon as a commercial investment in the 1750's and the building contained a fine ceiling painting by the Venetian artist Tiepolo (who lived from 1696 to 1770). But perhaps most famously, being only a short 15-minute drive from Wembley Stadium, the England football team captained by Bobby Moore and managed by Alf Ramsay stayed in this hotel during their successful World Cup campaign in 1966.

Cross over Parson Street at the crossroads towards the Chai Cancer Care Centre on the other side of Parson St. and continue until you meet the Great North Way (the A1), another of the major arterial roads that cut through the borough. Use the pedestrian crossing to cross over the busy Great North Way then, to the left of the crossing, turn right onto Holders Hill Road. Cross the road and walk up on the left side. As you walk up Holders Hill Road, North Hendon Synagogue will be on your right on the opposite side of the street before the Hasmonian High School for Boys, a secondary school for Orthodox Jewish boys. Turn left in to Manor Hall Avenue. Note the interesting variety in architectural styles of residential housing in this area. Walk along to the end of Manor Hall Avenue and turn right on to Ashley Lane, which is number four on your map. Take the woodland path signposted Bridleway. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Ashley Lane, which is point 4 on the map.



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Audiotour part 4 - Ashley Lane

Ashley Lane is an ancient roadway that leads to Mill Hill East. It is said that Cardinal Wolsey used the lane when escaping to York from King Henry VIII's disfavour in the late 1520's, rather than taking a more obvious route north like the Edgware Road. The lane passes through Hendon Golf Club, which was founded in 1903. Local bus company owner Thomas Carter and banker Walter Mull came to an agreement with a farmer to rent 45 acres to lay out a nine-hole course if the members of the club committed to buy milk from the dairy farm. In the early days, the ground was particularly rough and to compensate, the nine-hole course had extra-large holes on the putting greens.

Keep following the woodland path through the Golf Club. You will pass Hendon Park Cemetery & Crematorium on your right. The cemetery was founded by the Abney Park Cemetery Company in 1899 on what had once been Dollis Farm. The crematorium was added in 1922. It was purchased by Hendon Borough Council in 1955. This multi-faith cemetery includes many different sections including areas for Muslim, non-conformist and Greek Orthodox burials, as well as a distinctive burial plot for Japanese residents dating from before World War Two. The popularity of Japanese gardens in the 1920s had led to numerous Japanese gardeners coming to England. This plot is laid out as a traditional Japanese garden with firs and cherry trees (at certain times of year it may be challenging to see this from the path due to surrounding foliage).

Come out from the bridleway, continuing to the left onto a residential street called Ashley Walk, keeping the houses on your right. At the end of Ashley Walk, cross over Devonshire Road into Tavistock Avenue. Walk along Tavistock Avenue and take the footpath on your left called Sanders Lane, at the litter bin. Continue along Sanders Lane until you reach a disused railway bridge at the far end, which is point 5 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach the bridge.



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Audiotour part 5 – Disused railway

You are on a bridge of a now disused railway, once the Edgware, Highgate and London Railway. The railway opened in 1867, originally running from Edgware through Finchley and Highgate to Finsbury Park. The line became a small branch line with the opening of the more important line to High Barnet, then made redundant for passenger traffic with the extension of the Edgware branch of the Northern Line in the 1920s. The passenger service struggled on until 1940 using a steam coach, where the engine and the carriage were a single unit. The line was used for carrying coal and freight until the 1960s.

Come out onto Sanders Lane and turn left up Bittacy Hill, previously Drivers Hill, a reference to the drovers who once brought animals from around the country to London and used this as part of their route to market. Continue up Bittacy Hill past two mini roundabouts, turn right onto Charles Sevrigh Way (named after a Post Office Agent who served the Army in the early 19th century), then walk past Albuhera Mews. Albuera in Spain was the location in 1811 of a battle during the Peninsular War, at which one of the forerunners of the regiment acquired their nickname 'The Die-Hards'. Their commander Colonel Inglis's horse had been killed and as he lay severely wounded and outnumbered by the French he called out to his men "Die hard, 57th. Die hard!" Impending disaster was turned into triumph and 'Albuhera' became the principal battle honour on the Middlesex Regiment's colours (now reformed as the [Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment](#)). The Officers Mess of the Middlesex Regiment will appear on your left, which is point 6 on your map. Now pause the audiotour until you reach the Officers Mess.



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Audiotour part 6 - The Middlesex Regimental Depot, Inglis Barracks.

The building in front of you is all that remains of Inglis Barracks. It is the officers mess, and as shown on the date plaque, was built in 1904. The barracks existed for a century and was the home of the Middlesex Regiment. In 1899 the Ministry of War acquired 100 acres of Bittacy Farm for a new infantry depot. The first units of the Middlesex Regiment moved into the new facility in 1904, and it was officially opened in 1905. The Depot, nicknamed “the garden barracks”, provided soldiers with sporting and other leisure activities as well as military training and quarters. There were even cottages for aged veterans of the regiment on Bittacy Hill. It was at the depot in 1912 that young John Parr from nearby Finchley joined up, later to become the first British soldier to be killed in the Great War of 1914 to 1918.

The Middlesex Regiment left Inglis Barracks in January 19 61 after the regiment was disbanded. But the barracks continued in use even after this date. The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers had workshops from 1943 and Mill Hill was also home to the Army’s overseas postal service until recently. The site is currently being redeveloped as Millbrook Park. This is the end of the audio tour.

To make your way home, go back along Charles Sevrigh Way to Bittacy Hill, turn left and continue down the hill. Near Mill Hill East Tube station at Bus Stop B you can catch the 221 towards Turnpike Lane Station, 240 towards Golders Green and 382 towards Southgate. Mill Hill East station is on your right for Northern Line services through Finchley Central.

We hope you enjoyed this walk. Perhaps you might like to try one of the other walks in the Barnet Healthy Heritage Walks programme? Please visit our website www.barnet.gov.uk/heritagewalks to find out more.

If you would like to give feedback or comments or suggestions on the walk, please do get in touch. Details are on the website.

