

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.

Totteridge Walk

This walk is a circuit through the fields that straddle the boundary between Mill Hill and Totteridge, and has four stops. The walk takes in part of Totteridge Valley, one of the most rural areas within the borough of Barnet and is approximately 7 kilometres, 4.35 miles. Please note that the walk goes through areas that can become muddy when wet and may not be suitable for pushchairs or other wheeled vehicles.

The location is easily reached by the 251 bus from Arnos Grove or Edgware and is less than a mile from Totteridge & Whetstone Tube station, which is on the Northern Line. Car parking is available on Totteridge Lane and around the village. Please check for controlled parking zones before you travel and park carefully; please avoid obstructing entrance ways for local residents.

Audiotour part 1 – the Orange Tree, Totteridge Village

Before setting off, enjoy the countryside setting in Totteridge Village, and the much-loved duck pond on the green by the Orange Tree pub and St Andrew's Church of England Primary School. *Begin the walk on the dirt footpath that runs directly behind the pub.*

It is said that the Orange Tree has been in existence since 1668, although records of a pub on this site are more certain from the mid-18th century. Public houses called 'Orange Tree' were named to demonstrate support for the Dutch King William of Orange. He became King William III after the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 that



placed him on this country's throne alongside his wife Mary and they ruled jointly. The present building is early 19th century, with much refurbishment.

Follow the footpath behind the pub, away from the main road. You are crossing Totteridge Green on the historic manor of Totteridge. There are several beautiful period buildings on this path including Green Lodge, a Victorian gothic-style weatherboard cottage, and Dell House (which is Grade II listed). Look out for The Croft, built by the distinguished architect T. E. Collcut (who lived from 1842 to 1924) as his own residence around 1895. Collcut's other notable buildings in London include the Palace Theatre, the Wigmore Hall, the Savoy Theatre and Lloyd's Register of Shipping, as well as several notable houses in this area. He was President of the [Royal Institute of British Architects](#) between 1906 to 1908. These are private residences so please admire them from the path. If the dirt path is too wet, follow the metalled road next to the school, proceeding past the cricket ground towards Laurel Farm pond.

Laurel Farm pond at the end of the path is home to large numbers of geese and mallards that evoke its origins as a working farm. You may spot fish in the pond and other water-loving creatures such as frogs. Laurel Farm and nearby Home Farm have their roots in the area's agricultural economy stretching back at least into the 17th century.

To the right of the pond, make your way through the wooden arch and follow the path down the slope. There are small enamel signs that indicate you are entering Woodridge Nature Reserve, a 5-acre wooded area with grassland set within a larger wildlife habitat. This section of the route is notable for fine oak trees, as well as many species of butterflies and birds. In the autumn, the area may be rich with a wide variety of berries including sloe and blackberries. You may like to see how many different types you can identify along the route – for links to guides to identify trees, flowers and wildlife, please visit our website www.barnet.gov.uk/heritagewalks.

Soon you will come to a small foot bridge over Folly Brook, through wooden posts. This is the ancient boundary not only between the parishes of Totteridge and Hendon, but also the boundary between the counties of Hertfordshire and Middlesex



that predate the creation of today's London boroughs in 1965. Folly Brook is a tributary of [Dollis Brook](#), which flows into the [River Brent](#) and eventually empties out into the [River Thames](#).

Several very old coins have been found on the footpath between Laurel Farm and Mill Hill, the oldest being a silver penny dating from the reign of King Henry III. As Henry reigned from 1216 to 1272, this suggests that this is indeed an ancient footpath. *Continue, passing through the wooden posts and over the foot bridge.*

At this point, there is an optional detour from the main walk through Darland's Lake Nature Reserve which would add roughly 30 minutes onto your walk or 2km. For this additional route, turn right off the main path. For detailed instructions on the route around Darland's Lake, please stop the audiotour and switch to the supplementary audio.

To continue on the main route, follow the path straight on until you reach a gate. Pass through the gate and turn left onto the wide path of Burtonhole Lane. Continue along Burtonhole Lane.

In the 18th century local fields delighted in such names as Mole Hill Field, Coney Borough Field - a reference to rabbits - and the less inspiring Hunger Lands. You will notice on your right a large electricity substation constructed between 1961 and 1962 by the Central Electricity Generating Board, the national electricity authority. This modern source of power invites a comparison with the area's forested history, when wood was the principal fuel and charcoal production was an important part of the local economy, along with hay-making and other forms of agriculture after trees were cleared. Nowadays you may see horses enjoying the surrounding fields, which invites us to recall the days when hard-working horses were put to work as the principal form of freight distribution and personal transportation. Today, there are several local riding schools if you'd like to enjoy more leisurely equestrian activities. Now pause the audiotour until you reach the gate at Partingdale Lane, which is point 2 on your map.



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Audiotour part 2 – Partingdale Lane

Watch out for traffic as you cross over the road and follow the pavement along Partingdale Lane to your right.

A little way along Partingdale Lane is Seafield House but it is almost impossible to see, because it has been built almost entirely underground. Seafield House is a former Regional War Room. The unexpected location of a government command centre here in the Green Belt, jolts us out of the pastoral tranquillity of the area today and back to a darker time not so long ago. After the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb test in 1949, there was a fear that if Britain were attacked by the Russians there might be a break down in the government's ability to maintain its authority. This led to the country being divided into 12 'Home Defence Regions', each controlled by a Regional Commissioner.

London was set up with four similar command centres and in the event of the unthinkable attack ever happening, this is where the region would have been run by a team of 50 people. With increasingly powerful atomic weapons, the 1000 square foot bunker with 5-foot-thick walls was deemed inadequate and by the late 19 50s had been moth-balled. It is believed that 1600 Cold War-era bunkers were built around the UK, with some 600 remaining today. Grade II-listed in 2002, this one was converted in 2010 into a unique private residence and sold off along with 1.5 acres of surrounding land. It is occasionally used as a location for films and TV programmes, so you may even have seen it without realising it is a local feature! Please keep watching out for traffic as you walk along this paved road.

Further along Partingdale Lane you will come to a large pink house called Partingdale Manor. Not a genuine manor house, this is a handsome 18th century mansion much restyled in the early 19th century.

When you reach the main road T-junction, cross to the other side of Partingdale Lane to turn immediately right, and pass through wooden posts onto a woodland path to Burtonhole Lane.



The woods are not as ancient as they look, having been planted sometime in the mid- to late-1930s. The name of the field that they were planted on was Drivers Field, a reference to the drovers who once brought animals from around the country to London and used the nearby Bittacy Hill, then called Drivers Hill, as part of their route to market.

Follow the woodland path until you come out onto a residential road. Turn left onto Eleanor Crescent to join Burtonhole Lane and follow the road down to your right. To see Burton Hole Farm (at point 3 on your map) follow the road round to your right, Burton Hole Farm will be on your left. Look out for the sign with a picture of a cow on it, titled Pleasant Herd, which indicates that the herd is made up of Blonde D'Aquitaine cattle, a breed raised mainly for their meat. Now pause the audiotour until you reach Burton Hole Farm, which is point 3 on your map.



Audiotour part 3 – Burton Hole Farm

Burtonhole Farm House is thought to date from 18th century, according to the architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner (who lived from 1902 to 83), editor of the authoritative 46-volume series of county-by-county guides, *The Buildings of England*. As a place name, Burtonhole was known from the 16th century, and field names like 'Knight's Close' suggest an earlier origin back in the Middle Ages.

Walk back to Burtonhole Lane and continue walking down the road. You will pass Finchley Nurseries garden centre on your left, a name that seems a little incongruous here in Mill Hill. The business started in Woodside Park in 1929, then with development of the western edge of Finchley the company had to relocate, but the name was retained. The garden centre has an outdoor café called The Summer House should you want a short break or refreshments.

Continue to walk along the road, past the cricket ground on your left to the gated house at the end, Folly Farm. There is a small entrance to the foot path along Folly Brook to your right. Follow the path with Folly Brook on your right and fields to your left, passing through a couple of gates. Please remember to close the gates behind you.

Make your way across Totteridge Fields, with an electric fence on your left, until you reach the gate on the other side. You may spot some of the Burton Hole Farm cows on your way. Continue along the fenced woodland footpath as it rises uphill, until you come out at the main road, opposite St Andrew's Church. Now pause the audiotour until you reach St Andrew's Church, which is point 4 on your map.



Audiotour part 4 - Saint Andrew's Church, Totteridge.

The origin of the church is not known, but the records begin in the 13th century. At this time the church was dedicated to St. Etheldreda (also known as Æthelthryth) the much-venerated 7th century abbess of a convent in Ely. At that time, Totteridge formed part of a manor belonging to the Bishop of Ely. 'Etheldreda' was a name corrupted over time to become St. Audrey, until finally the church lost its association with the saintly abbess and was rededicated to St. Andrew during the Reformation in the 16th century. Although the weathervane on the tower is dated 1706, the present church building is from 1790. The building is Grade II Listed. You are welcome inside when the church is open, please check their [website](#) for opening times.

In the graveyard there are a number of ornate 18th century graves, but perhaps best known is the grave of Harry Vardon, the golfer (who lived from 1870 to 1937). Vardon won The Open Championship six times between 1896-1914 and the U.S. Open once in 1900. He is regarded as one of 'the greats' of the game and died in Whetstone. Welsh-born David ('Dai') Rees was the golf professional at nearby South Herts Golf Club from 1946 to 1983. Rees achieved success in several Matchplay Championships and in the Ryder Cup, including as Captain in a famous victory over the U.S. in 1957. Look out for the memorial to architect T. E. Collcutt, whose house you passed at the start of this walk. Another famous parishioner was Henry Manning (who lived from 1808 to 92), son of a Governor and Director of the Bank of England who was also a Churchwarden at St. Andrew's. Henry became a prominent member of the Oxford Movement in the 19th century before converting to Roman Catholicism and being made Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

Standing in front of the church there is an ancient yew tree believed to be more than 1,000 years old – some say nearly 2,000 - the girth of which is approx. 26 feet (8



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metres). It has been designated as one of 'London's Great Trees' and this venerable giant is considered to be the oldest living thing in the capital!

Totteridge War Memorial is to be found in the centre of the crossroads outside the churchyard to the right of the church when you have the building behind you. The memorial commemorates by name those from the area who gave their lives during the First and Second World Wars and is the focus of annual commemorative events around Remembrance Day (11 November). This marks the end of the Totteridge Walk audiotour.

To make your way back to the start of the walk, take care crossing Totteridge Village then continue along the road to the left where you will soon find yourself back at The Orange Tree. For travel details, please refer to the start of the walk.

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.

