



Highgate to Hampstead walk

A varied walk through the green spaces of London's 'Northern Heights', with some panoramic views of the city.



Length	<p>Main Walk: 15¼ km (9.5 miles). Three hours 40 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 hours.</p> <p>Short Walk, starting from East Finchley: 13 km (8.1 miles). Three hours 10 minutes walking time.</p> <p>Extended Walk, with Finsbury Park 'preamble': 19 km (11.8 miles). Four hours 40 minutes walking time.</p>
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OS Map	Explorer 173. Highgate is in north London, 8 km NW of the City.
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Toughness	4 out of 10 (3 for the Short Walk, 5 for the Extended Walk).
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Features	<p>This is an urban stroll through the green spaces of London's 'Northern Heights', starting with a succession of woods, parks and playing fields on the way to an early 20thC example of town planning, Hampstead Garden Suburb. A group of like-minded Hampstead residents led by Henrietta Barnett wanted to prevent development in their neighbourhood by extending Hampstead Heath northwards and the plan for a model 'garden suburb for all classes' grew out of this. The first houses were built in 1907 to an overall design by Raymond Unwin, but their broader social ambitions were never realised: there was too much incentive to build large houses for the rich and the humbler 'artisan's dwellings' soon attracted young professionals. Its Central Square is dominated by two imposing churches, both designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens: the interdenominational Free Church and the Anglican parish church of St Jude-on-the-Hill. The churches are</p>
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often closed but St Jude's is open to visitors on summer Sunday afternoons.

The remainder of the walk is now almost entirely on **Hampstead Heath**, 800 acres of woods and parkland. In the late 19thC the Lord of the Manor (Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson) wanted to develop the land but was resisted by a fierce and ultimately successful campaign from local residents. There was piecemeal development in the Vale of Health and below Parliament Hill, but most of the land was eventually acquired for public ownership. Its many ponds are mostly former reservoirs constructed around 1700 to meet London's growing water needs; these are now famously used for swimming and other leisure activities.

After a break for lunch (and a brief excursion into **Golders Hill Park**) the walk route takes you to a fascinating survival from one of the grand properties built around the edge of Hampstead Heath. **The Pergola** was part of an Italianate garden built in the early 20thC for Lord Leverhulme at his house called The Hill; it fell into disrepair but was restored by the Corporation of London and opened to the public in 1995.

The walk now heads north-east to the Kenwood Estate, where you have the opportunity to visit **Kenwood House**. The seat of the Earl of Mansfield, the house dates from 1767; it was designed by Robert Adam and the surrounding parkland landscaped by Humphry Repton. It was given to the nation in 1927 and contains a fine collection of paintings (including Vermeer's *Guitar Player* and a Rembrandt self-portrait). The house is managed by English Heritage and is open daily to around 5pm (earlier in winter; free entry).

The full walk ends with a short exploration of Hampstead's old streets, taking in some of its many historic buildings. Two which are open to the public are **Burgh House** (with the **Hampstead Museum** on its first floor), open Wed–Fri & Sun to 4pm (free entry); and **Fenton House and Garden** (NT), open Fri, Sun & BH Mon to 5pm from March to October; admission (2023) is £11. The parish church of **St John-at-Hampstead** is also worth visiting; its churchyard contains several famous tombs, notably those of John Constable and John Harrison.

Hampstead Heath is open at all times but the parks and gardens listed above all close around dusk.

Walk Options

You can do a **Short Walk** by starting from East Finchley (the station after Highgate) as the walk route goes through this station after 2¼ km.

Conversely, you could do a **pre-walk extension** (or 'preamble') from Finsbury Park. Most of the additional 3¾ km to Highgate is along the **Parkland Walk**, a linear nature reserve created along the trackbed of a disused branch line off the East Coast main line. Parts of this line (which extended to Edgware, High Barnet and Alexandra Palace) were incorporated into the Underground network in the 1930s, but passenger services on this section ceased in 1954.

There are many ways to shorten the walk. The afternoon leg is essentially a clockwise circuit around Hampstead Heath and several short cuts are mentioned in the directions, eg. omitting the loop through the Kenwood

Estate. The most drastic short cut would be to continue southwards from Whitestone Pond, down Hampstead Grove directly to the underground station. You could also skip the final section through Hampstead's streets described above, or take an alternative ending to Hampstead Heath overground station.

There are plenty of local bus services if you want to abandon the walk at any stage.

Transport Highgate and East Finchley (both in TfL Zone 3) are adjacent stations on the High Barnet branch of the Northern line. Finsbury Park (Zone 2) is on the suburban lines from Moorgate and King's Cross, plus the Victoria and Piccadilly lines.

Hampstead (Zones 2/3) is on the Edgware branch of the Northern line. For the alternative ending, Hampstead Heath (Zone 2) is on the London Overground line from Stratford to Richmond and Clapham Junction.

Suggested Train The suggested starting time for this walk is around **10.45am** from Highgate, or **10am** from Finsbury Park. In summer you could start up to an hour later and still have time for a brief visit to Kenwood House.

Lunch There are two possible lunch places after about 7 km on the Main Walk (11 km on the Extended Walk). If you want a pub lunch the **Old Bull & Bush** (020-8905 5456) is in North End Road, just off Sandy Heath; it has plenty of seating (including a large patio area) and serves a good selection of food all day. The alternative is 200m further on, the **Refreshment House** café inside Golders Hill Park.

Earlier in the morning there are several pubs in the Highgate area but none on the long stretch after East Finchley. You could get a mid-morning snack or an early lunch in the parks and gardens along the way (eg. at **Cafe Toulouse** in Northway Gardens), but on fine days these cafés are likely to be popular with family groups.

Tea There are many appealing tea places towards the end of the walk. In mid-afternoon you pass the **Brew House Café** at Kenwood House, which has a large outside terrace and seating area (if it is too busy, note that the walk route passes a refreshment kiosk a few minutes after the house). In Hampstead itself the **Burgh House Café** (020-7794 3943; open to 5pm Wed-Fri, 5.30pm Sat & Sun, closed Mon & Tue) has an attractive garden terrace.

There are many other cafés, coffee shops and pubs nearby. Just before reaching the station you could indulge yourself at **Louis Patisserie and Tea Room** (020-7435 9908; open to 6pm daily) in Heath Street, which offers a rather different experience from the chain coffee shops in the High Street. The main walk route also passes by or close to five pubs: the **Wells Tavern**, the **Duke of Hamilton**, the **Holly Bush**, the **Horseshoe** and the **Flask**.

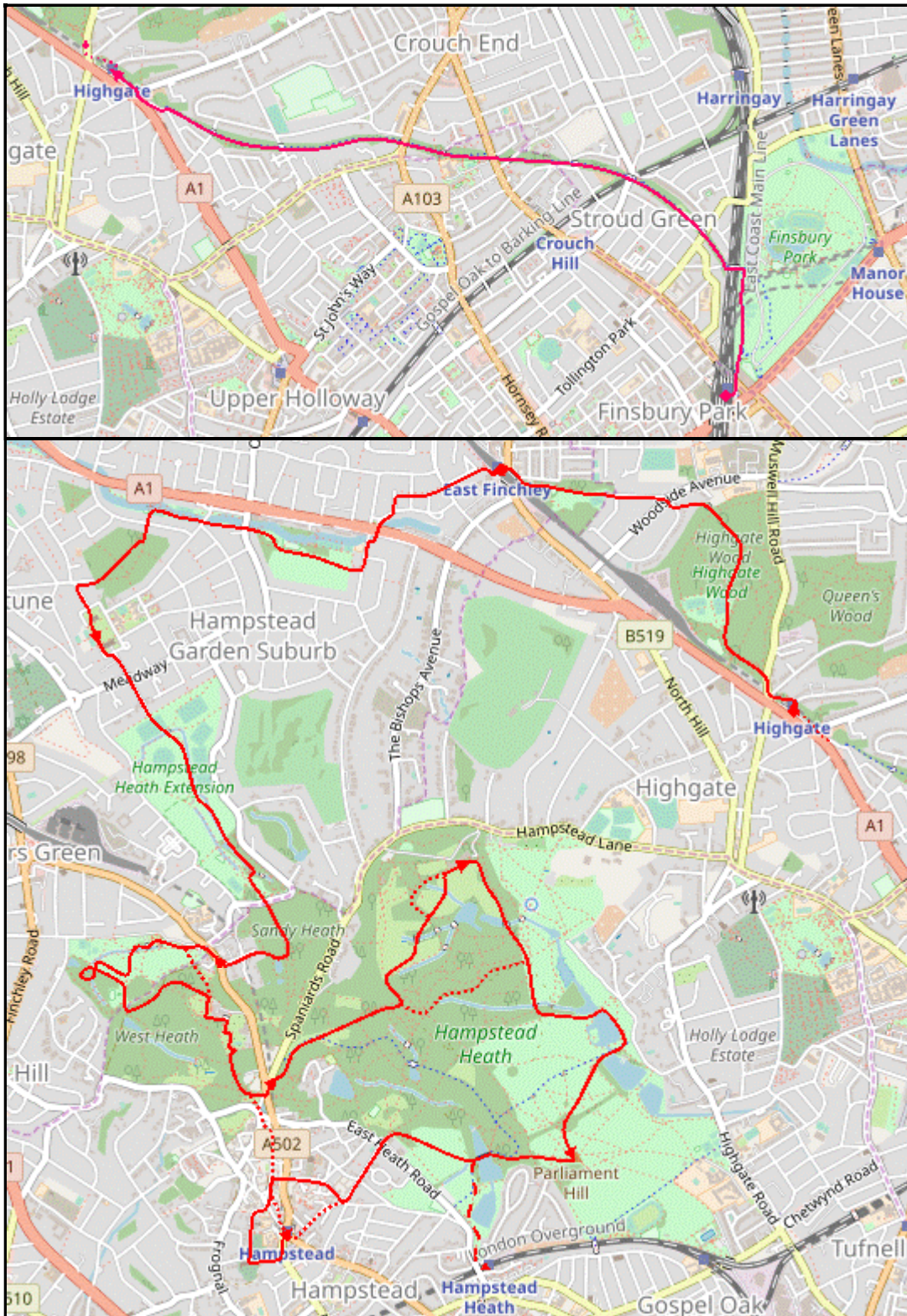
Help Us! After the walk, please leave a comment, it really helps. Thanks!

You can also upload photos to the   SWC Group on Flickr (upload your photos) and videos to  Youtube. This walk's tags are:

By Car	Start Archway Rd, London, N6	Finish NW3 1QG
Help	National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234	
Version	Feb-23 Sean	
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Walk Directions

Walk Maps



All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors

Walk Options

M. Main Walk (15¼ km)

a. Short Walk, starting from East Finchley (13 km)

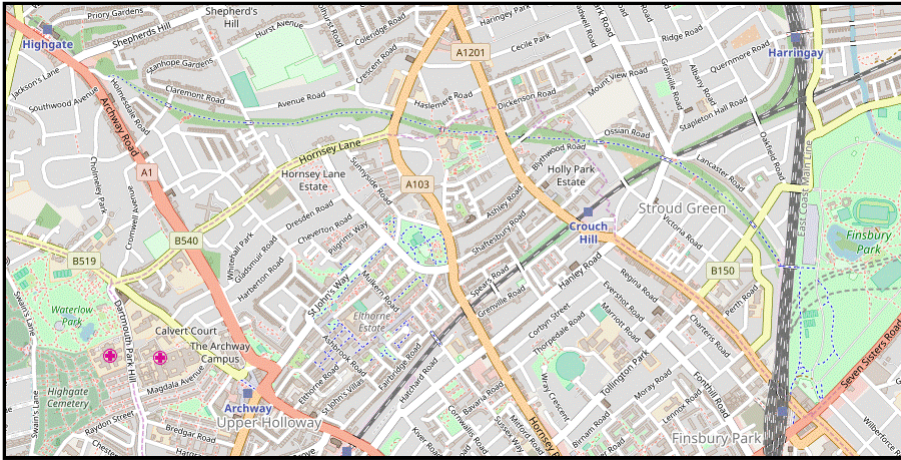
x. Extended Walk, with Finsbury Park 'preamble' (19 km)

Walk Directions

If you are doing the Main Walk (from Highgate), start at [7] in §A.

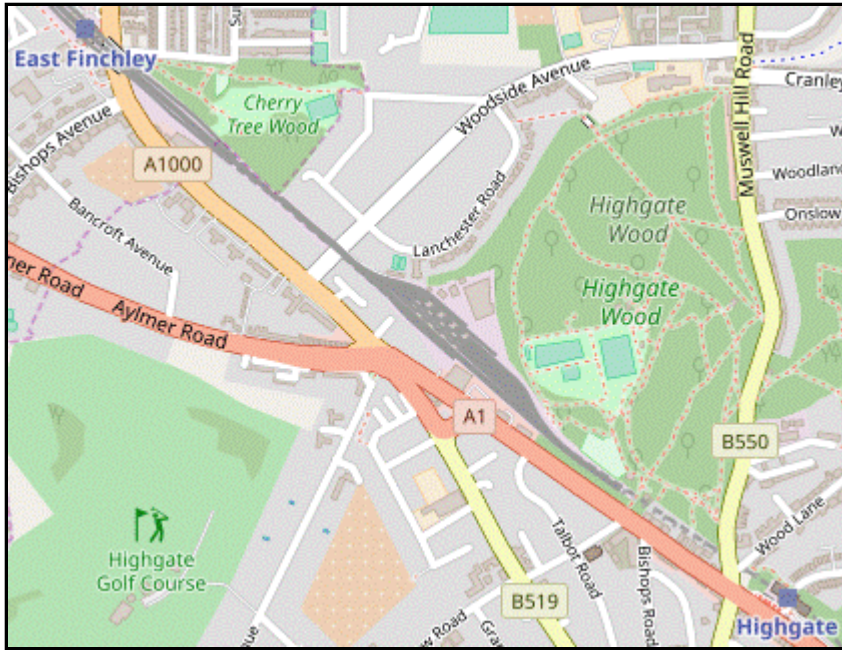
If you are doing the Short Walk (from East Finchley), start at [15] in §B.

0. Finsbury Park Station to Highgate Station (3¾ km)



1. Leave by the Station Place exit and **turn left** in front of the bus station. Cross the A1201 at the pedestrian lights and go along a pedestrian walkway into Finsbury Park.
2. Go along the left-hand side of the park for 400m. After going through a grove of young trees **turn left** at a footpath signpost, joining the **Capital Ring**.
This circular walking route around inner London was completed in 2005. You will be (more or less) following its route for the next 7 km.
3. Go across a long footbridge over the East Coast main line and then **veer right** onto the start of the **Parkland Walk**.
There are several information panels along the way showing your location, and others about the fauna and flora to be seen.
4. Simply follow the railway trackbed for 2¾ km. You soon pass the site of Stroud Green station at Stapleton Hall Road bridge (where you also cross over the Gospel Oak-Barking line) and later the platforms of Crouch End station.
*In the graffiti-covered arches just before these platforms you will see the figure of a **spriggan** (a kind of goblin) emerging from the brickwork.*
5. 150m after crossing over Northwood Road **veer left** in front of a vehicle-blocking barrier and go up a slope to Holmesdale Road. Continue uphill on this road and turn right at the top onto the A1 (Archway Road), coming to a junction with Shepherd's Hill.
6. Go across Shepherd's Hill and take the road signposted to Highgate station's car park. At the bottom go down steps and through the ticket hall to leave by the Priory Gardens exit.
 - Alternatively you could simply continue up the main road and turn right at the next set of traffic lights into Muswell Hill Road.
 - You could also follow the waymarked Capital Ring on a loop through Queen's Wood and into Highgate Wood at New Gate, but this extended route is not described here.

A. Highgate Station to East Finchley Station (2¼ km)

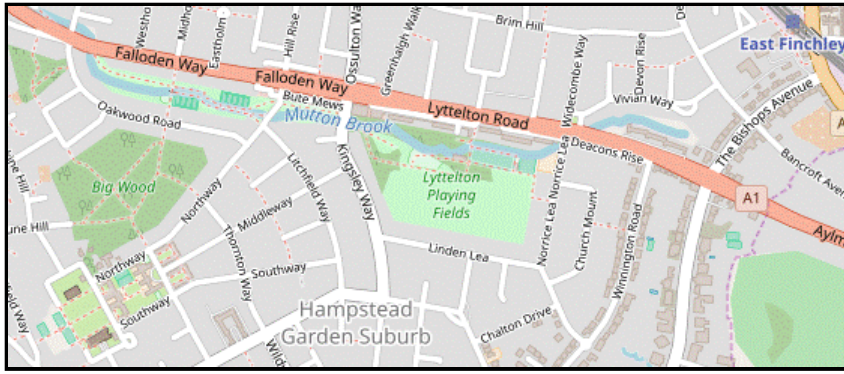


7. Starting from Highgate Station

After going through the ticket barriers **turn left** to leave by the Priory Gardens exit, with Café Noir outside being the suggested meeting point for a group walk.

8. At the start of Priory Gardens **turn sharp left** onto a path going steeply uphill. This comes out onto Wood Lane where it joins the B550 (Muswell Hill Road), near its junction with the A1 (Archway Road). Cross over Muswell Hill Road and turn right to go down this road.
9. After passing a bus stop **turn left** through Gypsy Gate into **Highgate Wood**. Go directly away from the main road and keep ahead at a path crossing to pass a children's playground on your left.
10. Where the path comes out into an open area, bear right across the grass towards the **Pavilion Café** (a possible coffee stop). Take the surfaced path behind the café back into the trees, heading **N**.
11. In 75m keep ahead at a path crossing, rejoining the **Capital Ring**. In a further 100m **turn left** in front of a fountain onto a broad path heading **NW**. In 200m leave the wood through Bridge Gate. Follow the tarmac path round to the left and gently downhill to Lanchester Road.
12. Turn right onto this road, cross over Woodside Road at the roundabout and bear left onto a residential street (Fordington Road) heading **W**. Where the road turns left **keep ahead** on a tarmac path leading into **Cherry Tree Wood**.
13. Follow the main path along the right-hand side of this public park, passing the **Cherry Tree Café**. On the far side keep ahead through a copse to come out onto the A1000 (High Road), with East Finchley station opposite.
*The station was rebuilt in Art Deco style when it became part of the Underground network in the mid-1930s. At the top of the building, Eric Aumonier's 3m-high statue of **The Archer** (1940) recalls the era when this land was the Bishop of London's deer park.*
14. Cross the main road at the pedestrian lights and go through the station, passing to the left of the ticket barriers to the Causeway exit on the other side.
 - In the unlikely event that the station is closed, go under the railway bridge on the main road and then turn right onto a footpath, signposted as an alternative route for the Capital Ring.

B. East Finchley Station to Central Square (2¾ km)



15. Starting from East Finchley Station

After going through the ticket barriers **turn right** to leave by the Causeway exit on the south side.

16. Outside the station turn right into a fenced alleyway, The Causeway. In 50m **turn left** into another alley, which leads into the end of a cul-de-sac (Edmunds Walk) with attractive houses around a triangular green. Go down to the end of the road.
17. You could follow the Capital Ring waymarker and turn left here, then take the first right into Vivian Way. A slightly shorter route is to continue in the same direction along a series of narrow alleyways, crossing several short streets; at the last of these (or indeed any of them) turn left to go down to Vivian Way and turn right at the bottom.
18. Follow Vivian Way round to the left. Cross over the A1 at the pedestrian lights and continue on Norrice Lea, just off to the right. Go along this street for 100m, passing **Hampstead Garden Suburb United Synagogue** on your right.
19. At a footpath sign **turn right** into an alleyway leading into Lyttelton Playing Fields. The tarmac path continues round to the right but you can simply keep ahead across the grass, aiming for the continuation of the path to the left of a hedge. Along the way you pass yet another café off to the right.
20. At the end of the hedge (bordering a children's playground) **veer right** across a patch of grass and then turn half-left to go through a small tree-lined meadow. On the far side rejoin the tarmac path, go out to a road (Kingsley Way) and cross over.
21. The continuation of the Capital Ring through **Northway Gardens** is a path just off to the right on the far side of **Mutton Brook**, but a nice alternative is to go down the steps in front of you and continue along its left-hand side; there is a footbridge at the far end where you could switch between these parallel routes.
22. At the next road (Northway) the Capital Ring follows a path on the right-hand side of the brook, starting at the side of **Cafe Toulouse**. Once again there are alternatives, although for the left-hand side of the brook you have to go up to the first house on the left to find a less conspicuous entrance into the gardens.
23. Either way, you pass a block of tennis courts on the right and then another on the left. At the end of this second block **turn left** onto a tarmac path heading **S**, finally leaving the Capital Ring. Go straight across Oakwood Road into **Big Wood**.
24. Inside the wood there is an information panel where the most direct continuation is to **turn right**. The path immediately swings left and heads straight through the middle of the wood, climbing steadily and crossing another path in the centre. At the top **turn right** at a T-junction and follow the path out of the wood and along Temple Fortune Hill. *The estate to the west of what is now Hampstead Garden Suburb was once assigned to the Knights Templar, a medieval Christian military order.*

25. At the first crossroads **turn left** to go up Erskine Hill. Go across North Square towards the **Free Church**.

The interdenominational Free Church was built in 1911 to a design by Sir Edwin Lutyens, shortly after the residents of Hampstead Garden Suburb had decided that there should be separate churches for the Anglican and Non-Conformist communities (previously they had all worshipped together).

26. Make your way around the right-hand side of the church and continue across Central Square, with the **Henrietta Barnett School** off to your left.

Henrietta Barnett was an energetic social reformer who spent many years working to alleviate poverty in the East End before instigating her major project, to create a model garden suburb to the north of Hampstead Heath. She was a pioneer of female education and established the girl's grammar school which bears her name in 1912.

C. Central Square to the Old Bull and Bush (2 km)



← North (map rotated 90°)

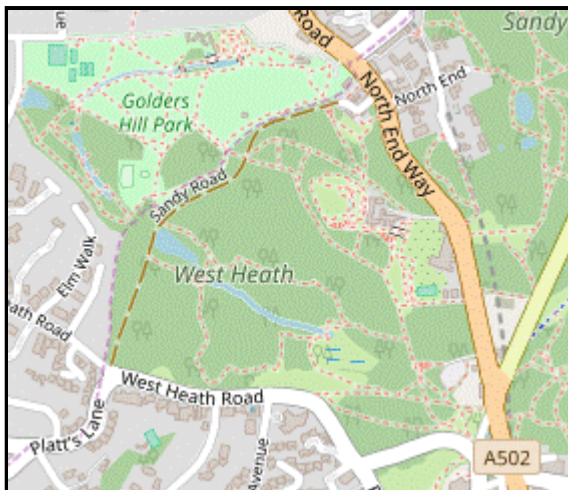
27. Go up to and around the right-hand side of **St Jude-on-the-Hill**, the parish church of Hampstead Garden Suburb.
Like its counterpart on the other side of Central Square, St Jude's was designed by Lutyens and consecrated in 1911. It was decorated with murals and paintings by Walter Starmer in the 1920s and also contains an unusual memorial to the horses killed in WWI. The novelist Evelyn Waugh described the sermons of its flamboyant first vicar (Basil Bourchier) as "dramatic, topical, irrational and quite without theological content".
28. On the far side of the church go straight across South Square into Heathgate. At the end of this attractive residential street go down steps and through the **Great Wall** onto the **Hampstead Heath Extension** (with a fine vista back along Heathgate to St Jude's).
Part of the garden suburb's design was a clear separation of town and country, in the manner of medieval Bavarian hilltop towns. However, the boundary wall's construction was interrupted by the start of WWI and never completed.
29. Bear left across the grass towards a gap in the hedge 100m away and go over a ditch into a large open space, Barn Field. Go uphill towards its far left-hand corner, not the obvious gap nearer the centre. In this corner go past some cricket nets (possibly summer only) into the trees, across a bridleway and into a long narrow meadow.
30. Follow a grassy path along the left-hand side of this tree-lined meadow for 50m, then **veer left** through a wide gap to continue on a bridleway on the other side of the trees.
31. Where the bridleway enters a wood keep ahead at a path crossing, then almost immediately **fork right** onto a narrow path running parallel to the bridleway. Behind the wire fence on your right is one of a series of reed-covered ponds.
The ponds are fed by one of the many springs on Hampstead Heath and the tree-lined stream you have been walking alongside eventually flows into Mutton Brook. Most of the Heath Extension was originally farmland and the ponds were dug out by labourers in the early 20th C.

32. In 150m **turn right** at a path crossing to go across a wooden footbridge between two of these ponds. Go up to a T-junction with a surfaced path and turn left onto it. In 50m, where this main path passes a fountain on the left and swings right, **bear left** onto a grassy path.

The fountain is a memorial to a local artist, Walter Field. He lived on the other side of Hampstead Heath but his sister was instrumental in acquiring the Heath Extension and had the fountain erected in 1907 before anyone could object.

33. Follow the path across the middle of a strip of grassland and out to a road (Wildwood Road). Cross over and go into the woodland opposite, **Sandy Heath**.
34. Take any convenient path heading directly away from the road (or slightly to the right) for 200m, to come to a horse ride (Sandy Road) running along the top of a low ridge. **Turn right** onto this ride, passing a large pond on your left.
Most of the dips and hollows in Sandy Heath are the result of sand workings in the 1860s when the Lord of the Manor was being thwarted in his plans for development and resorted to despoilation.
35. Follow the ride as it curves down to the right past some mature beech trees, then bends left and comes out onto the end of a cul-de-sac (North End).
36. Follow this road down to a T-junction and **turn right** onto the A502 (North End Road). The first of the suggested lunch places is immediately on the right, the **Old Bull and Bush**.

D. The Old Bull and Bush to Jack Straw's Castle (2½ km)



37. Turn right out of the pub and cross the main road at the pedestrian crossing. In a further 100m **turn left** into **Golders Hill Park**. The alternative lunch place is ahead on the right, the **Refreshment House** café.
Golders Hill Park was opened to the public in 1898 and is now managed by the City of London. The grounds contain some formal gardens, a deer enclosure and a free zoo.

- If you want to skip the tour of the park take the path heading up the slope to the left, signposted to Hill Garden and Pergola. Leave the park through a gate and go up a flight of steps into the wooded **West Heath**. Take any path straight ahead to come to the entrance to Hill Garden in around 150m and resume the directions at [39].

38. Suggested tour of the Park

- a. Take the main path past the café, then veer right onto a new path through the small **Pinetum**.

This newly-created area contains various cedars, pines and spruces.

- b. At the end bear right into the ornamental **Walled Garden** and take any route through it to the exit in its left-hand corner.

The garden has a Mediterranean flavour with clipped 'cubes' of evergreen oak trees on box platforms.

- c. Leave through a brick archway, passing the **Butterfly House** on the right.
This is open daily on summer afternoons.

- d. Go over a humpback bridge onto a path through the **Stumpery**.

This artistically arranged area of tree stumps, ferns and woodland plants is a re-creation of a feature popular in Victorian gardens.

- e. At the far end go across the grass to the left-hand end of the open-air cages comprising the **Zoo**. Go down any of the paths alongside the cages and turn left onto the path at the bottom.

The Zoo contains lemurs, coatis and a selection of exotic birds.

- f. Before returning up another path, bear left through a wooden gate and make a brief clockwise circuit through the **Water Garden**, returning to this point.

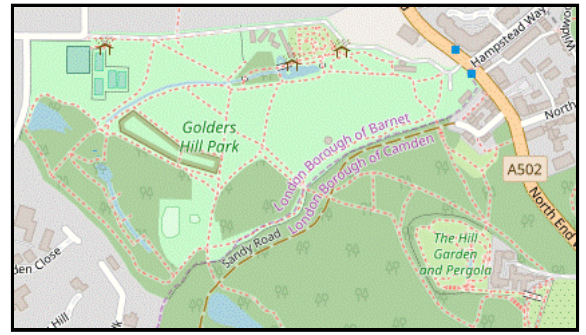
- g. Go back up any of the paths alongside the cages and bear right at the top to come to the **Deer Enclosure**.

This contains a small herd of fallow deer.

- h. Turn right and leave the park through a gate to enter **West Heath**. With **Leg of Mutton Pond** ahead on the right, turn left onto a broad track (Sandy Road) which stays close to the park boundary.

- i. At the next exit from the park go past a maintenance area and keep ahead at a major path crossing. Immediately afterwards **fork right** onto a path climbing through the wooded heathland.

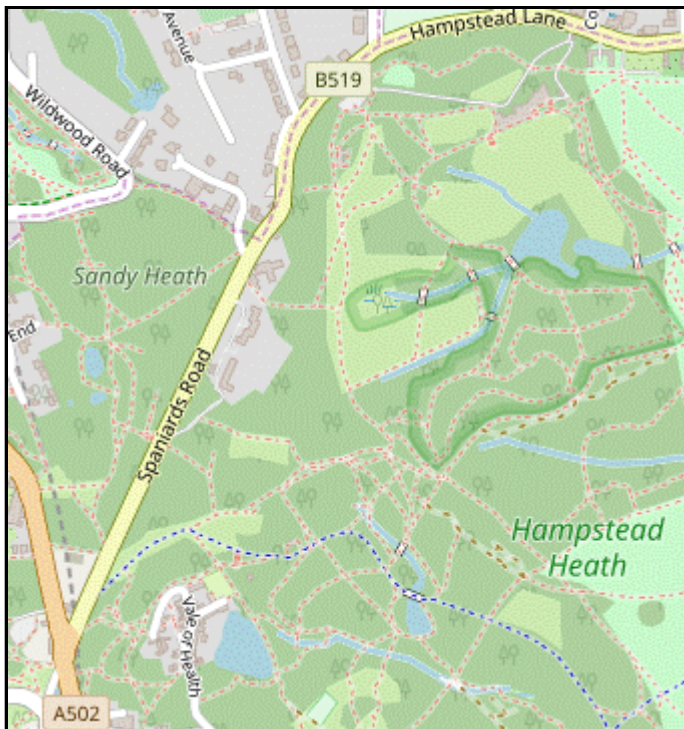
- j. After a level stretch the path goes through a small dip and merges with a broader path coming up from the right. Follow this round a bend to the left and go alongside the boundary wall and railings of Hill Garden to its entrance, where the short cut from Golders Hill Park comes in from the left.



39. Go through the gate into **Hill Garden** and turn right. Follow the path sharply round to the left to come to some steps leading down to a rectangular pond, with the **Pergola** beyond it. Go past the pond, round to the right and up a flight of steps to the **Belvedere** at the start of the upper walkway.
The view from the Belvedere is towards Harrow-on-the-Hill (with its tall church spire), 10 km to the west.
- If this walkway is closed for a private function, go through the lower garden instead (you might like to backtrack through it anyway before continuing the walk).
40. Turn round from the viewpoint to go along the upper walkway, through the 'domed temple' and round to the right at the 'tented temple' in front of the landscaped grounds of **Inverforth House**.
This large house (originally called The Hill), its gardens and the 800-foot pergola were constructed between 1905 and 1925 for the soap magnate William Lever, later Lord Leverhulme. After his death the house was acquired by Lord Inverforth and renamed. It subsequently became a convalescent home before finally being converted into luxury apartments.
41. The route continues along a broad path in the same direction as the last section of the Pergola, heading **S**. At the far end of the walkway, go down a spiral staircase and along a short path heading **E** to an exit from the garden, then double back down a track and turn left onto the broad path.

42. Go along the broad woodland path for about 150m. You could follow it to a T-junction and turn left uphill, but for the most direct route out of the Heath **bear left** up the second of two paths with a shallow flight of steps to emerge into an open area containing a tall **Flagstaff**, with **Whitestone Pond** ahead on your right.
The flagstaff marks the site of one of the fire beacons erected to provide warning of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The pond gets its name from a milestone which can be found at the top of Hampstead Grove.
- If you want to curtail the walk by heading directly for **Hampstead** underground station, make your way to the far end of the pond and go down Hampstead Grove, the side road parallel to the main A502. After passing Fenton House you can pick up the directions for the rest of the walk at [64] in §G.
43. For the main route **keep left** to come to the A502. Cross the main road at the pedestrian crossing and turn left to go along it for a short distance, to the sign for Spaniards Road. The prominent building off to the left (on North End Road) is **Jack Straw's Castle**.
This was a famous pub which closed in around 2000. It was named after one of the leaders of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt, the story being that he addressed groups of rebels on the Heath from a hay wagon (his 'castle'). At 135m, this is the highest point in the old County of London.

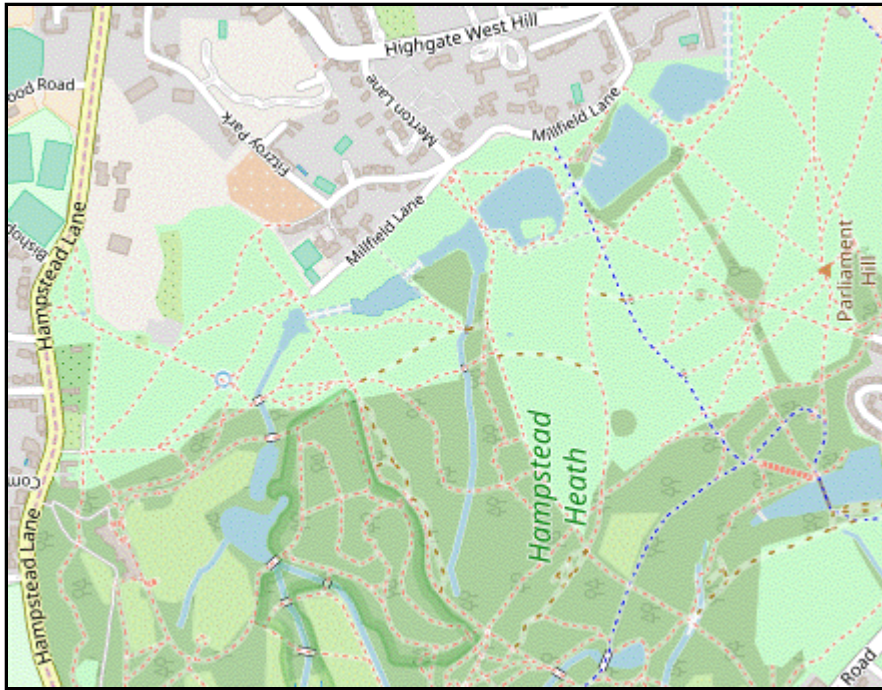
E. Jack Straw's Castle to Kenwood House (1½ km)



44. At the road sign **turn right** down some steps onto another part of the Heath. In 50m fork left to come to a view of London over a cluster of houses in the **Vale of Health**.
The area below was originally a malarial swamp called Hatches Bottom. It acquired its more salubrious name after it was drained in the late 18thC and developed in the 19thC.
45. Continue along the path and bear left to join a broad sandy track heading **NE**, gradually moving away from Spaniards Road. In 100m **keep left** to go past a small open area, where the main track veers down to the right. On the far side follow the path down into the trees.

46. ***The next turning is slightly tricky to spot.*** After about 300m you should be able to see metal railings off to the left, the boundary of the Kenwood Estate. You need to find a gate in these railings, so move towards them if necessary to keep them in sight.
- If the gates into Kenwood have been locked for the night, the suggested detour is to continue around its southern boundary for 750m, passing several more gates; where it turns sharply left by the last of these gates, turn right and resume the directions at [54] in §F. Alternatively, you could make your own way across the Heath to Parliament Hill and finish the walk at §G.
47. For the main route, go through the gate (shown on maps as Westfield Gate) and past an information panel for **Kenwood**. The path heads **NW** through a wooded area and soon emerges into a corner of West Meadow.
- Continuing along the main path (heading north for 300m, then forking right to head north-east) would bring you to Kenwood House on a fairly level route, but the suggested route gives a better view of the house in its setting.
48. For the suggested route, ***veer right*** to go diagonally across the meadow. Follow a grassy path down through a belt of trees on its left-hand side and continue across another part of the meadow. On the far side cross a muddy stretch on a plank bridge in another belt of trees. You come to a gravel path running around the perimeter of a large open area, the Pasture Ground.
- The direct route to Kenwood House crosses a seasonal stream and in wet conditions it is better to turn left and follow the path round to the house in a wide loop.
*This detour goes past a large **Henry Moore** bronze sculpture "Two piece reclining figure No.5" (1963-64).*
49. For the direct route go straight ahead across the Pasture Ground, with **Kenwood House** gradually coming into view at the top of the slope ahead. There is a fence running along the slope and you need to aim for a gate to the left of the house. Go through this and up a flight of steps to the terrace.
*At the far end of the lawn on the left is a **Barbara Hepworth** limestone sculpture "Monolith-Empyrean" (1953).*
50. If you want to visit the house, make your way round to the far side to find its main entrance. Otherwise, turn right to walk along the terrace.
Viewed from the house, the landscaping was designed to create the illusion of a broad river flowing towards London, an impression reinforced by the bridge on the far left-hand side of the lake (which you will discover is not what it seems).
51. After passing the house turn left through a gap in the hedge if you want to visit the **Brew House café**, located in the old servants' block.

F. Kenwood House to Parliament Hill (2 km)



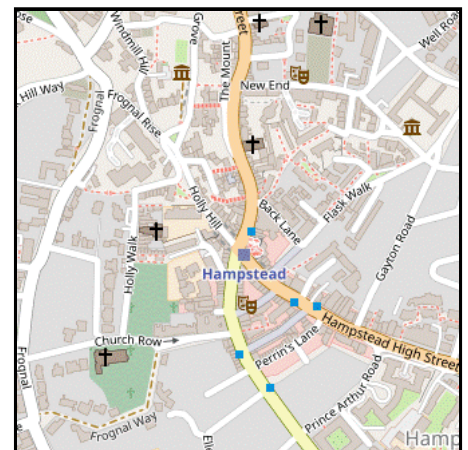
← *North (map rotated 90°)*

52. If you have been visiting the café, return to the terrace and turn left, away from the house. Follow the path round to the right, passing some fine old trees. Go past an exit onto the Heath (where there is a Tea Hut) and follow the path down the slope. As you go past the left-hand end of the lake, peek through the trees at the appropriately-named **Sham Bridge**.
This is just a painted wooden façade. It was not part of Repton's design and he considered it "a deception unworthy of Kenwood".
53. Follow the main path gently uphill, heading **SSE**. At the top leave the Kenwood Estate through Highgate Gate and maintain direction across the Heath.
54. Where the main path curves right, **bear left** onto a sandy path going down the slope, still heading **SSE**. The chain of **Highgate Ponds** are in the valley on your left, with the **Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond** behind the tree boundary in this meadow.
55. At the bottom of the slope make your way across a potentially muddy area around a wide plank bridge and go up to a T-junction. **Turn left** onto a broad path which later goes between the **Bird Sanctuary Pond** (on your left) and the large **Model Boating Pond**.
This deviation around the Boating Pond used to be necessary because a more direct route to Parliament Hill (straight ahead where you turned left) was blocked by a controversial restoration project, but this slightly longer route is in any case worth the detour.
56. Follow the path round to the right to go alongside the Boating Pond. At the far end **turn right** again to go between it and the **Highgate Men's Bathing Pond**.
57. At the end of the ponds **turn half-left** onto a path going uphill across the grass. In 200m you pass a clump of pine trees on a small mound on the right called the **Tumulus**.
In 1725 the antiquarian William Stukeley speculated that this was an ancient burial ground dating from the Roman invasion of Britain, but no evidence of this was found and its purpose is still unknown. It might have been a feature to be seen from Kenwood House, but is probably something mundane like an 18thC rubbish tip.
58. Go through a copse and follow the path as it bends slightly to the left. Go straight up the slope ahead for the famous view across London from **Parliament Hill**.
Guy Fawkes's fellow conspirators supposedly met here on the evening of 5 November 1605 to watch the blowing up of Parliament (one of the city's historic buildings now dwarfed by the modern skyscrapers).

G. Parliament Hill to Hampstead Station (up to 2¼ km)



59. Take the surfaced path heading **W** from Parliament Hill, down the slope and into a wood. On the other side of the wood the path bends left and passes between the **Mixed Bathing Pond** (on the right) and **Hampstead No.2 Pond**.
- To skip the rest of the walk and finish at **Hampstead Heath** (overground) station **veer left** to go alongside the left-hand pond and then **Hampstead No.1 Pond**. Continue through an avenue of plane trees which leads to South End Road, with the station opposite.
60. For the main route **fork right** up a slope beyond the ponds and take a grassy path across the heath towards a prominent mansion block (The Pryors), about half-right from your direction between the ponds. On the far side stay on the main path as it bears right and enters a wooded area. Keep left at path junctions to go alongside The Pryors and cross East Heath Road into Well Walk.
Hampstead became a fashionable health spa in the early 18thC. Spa water was bottled in Flask Walk (on the site of the Flask tavern).
61. Keep ahead at the crossroads with Christchurch Hill, passing the **Wells Tavern** on your left. At the next junction (with the Well Walk Pottery straight ahead) **turn right** into New End Square. The **Burgh House Café** on the right is a pleasant tea place.
This Queen Anne house was built in 1704. After being unoccupied in WW II it was restored by the local council and used as a community centre. It was taken over by a charitable trust in 1979 and now houses art exhibitions and a small museum of local history.
- If you want to skip the final 1 km past some more of Hampstead's interesting buildings, return to the junction below Burgh House and turn right onto the raised pavement to the right of Flask Walk. Where the road turns sharply right by the **Flask** pub, keep ahead along a walkway with quirky old shops. At the end **turn right** onto the High Street for the underground station.
62. To complete the full walk **turn right** out of Burgh House. Keep ahead along New End, passing the **Duke of Hamilton** pub on the right. At the top cross the A502 at the pedestrian crossing.
63. Go up the steps opposite New End, across The Mount and along an alleyway. At the top turn left into Hampstead Grove, with **Fenton House** opposite (its entrance is just off to the right).
This is a 17thC merchant's house with a large walled garden, bequeathed to the National Trust in 1952.



64. Go down Hampstead Grove, passing **Romney's House** (built for the portrait artist George Romney) on the left. You soon come to a jumble of roads around a small triangular green, with the former Mount Vernon Hospital on the right.
- Your final opportunity to curtail the walk is to keep ahead down Holly Hill, perhaps diverting into Holly Mount for the **Holly Bush** pub.
65. For the main route **veer right** by the pub sign onto a tarmac path, climbing away from Holly Hill. At the top zig-zag right and left to continue along a narrow street (Mount Vernon) for 50m.
66. At Abernethy House (with a plaque to the author RL Stevenson) **turn left** into Holly Walk, downhill. On the left you pass the Watch House (used by the Hampstead police force in the 1830s) and then **St Mary's Catholic church**.
Many escapees from the French Revolution settled in this street and this church was built for them in 1816. The bell tower was added soon after an 1852 law allowed bells to be rung from Catholic churches for the first time since the Reformation.
67. At the bottom of the street the route continues to the left along Church Row, but **St John's church** opposite is well worth a visit.
The present church (dedicated to the Evangelist) dates from 1745; 19thC extensions westwards realigned the high altar from the usual east end to the west. Its churchyard contains some famous tombs, with signs directing you to those of the artist John Constable (alongside the wall at the bottom of the churchyard) and John Harrison, inventor of the marine chronometer (on the south side of the church).
68. To complete the walk head **E** along Church Row, with its handsome Georgian houses. At the end turn left into Heath Street, passing the **Horseshoe** pub and **Louis Patisserie and Tea Room** on the right. The station is on the far side of the road junction at the end of this street.

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