

Guidance and information

# Dollis Valley Greenwalk

## Route Overview

**The Dollis Valley Green Walk is a walk suitable for a wide range of people, from young families to runners. Most of the route is moderately flat and with hard surface suitable for wheelchair users.**

Sections of the walk are suitable for cycling and are clearly identified by appropriate signage.

Some sections of the path may be muddy, or icy depending on weather conditions.

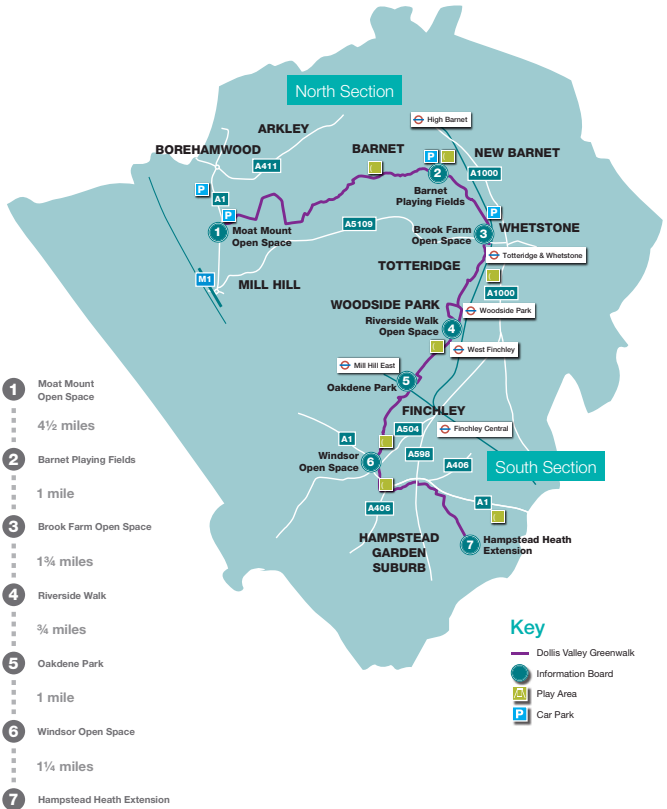
The Green walk is about 10 miles long and can take up to 6 hours to walk.

It links areas of public open space along the Dollis Valley in a green chain, to provide a pleasant and quiet

long distant walk between the Green Belt and Hampstead Heath, right through the heart of Barnet.

This leaflet describes the full route from Moat Mount to Hampstead Heath extension and has been divided into northern and southern sections for ease of use.

The walk was developed and implemented by the London Borough of Barnet in 1992, it now forms part of Walk London's extensive network of walks and provides a link in both the London LOOP and the Capital Ring.



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# How to walk the Greenwalk



The Dollis Valley Greenwalk can be walked either in full or in shorter sections and in either direction. It can be joined at any point and has been designed to link with the public transport system, enabling you to walk the length of the path and use public transport to return home.

Tube stations and major bus routes are indicated on the map in this leaflet. To reach Moat Mount by bus, take the 292 alighting at the bus stop on the north-bound A1 by the Mill Hill golf course underpass. Cross the road via the underpass, turn left and follow the footpath for 500m. A1 southbound, the bus stops outside Moat Mount.

## Follow the Country Code

- be safe, plan ahead and follow signs
- leave gates and property as you find them
- protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- keep dogs under control and clean up after them
- consider other people.

# Dollis Valley Greenwalk: North Section –Points of interest

## Moat Mount Local Nature Reserve (LNR since 1997)

This area of the walk is part of the Moat Mount and Scratchwood Country Park, owned and managed by the London Borough of Barnet. Moat Mount was originally the parkland adjoining Moat Mount House and in 1923 the land was acquired by the old Hendon Borough Council to be used as a public open space. There are opportunities to walk and picnic through the wood off of the initial Dollis Valley Trail.

The open space has a wide variety of fine specimen tree species, some planted during the Victorian era.

Foxes, muntjac deer and squirrels are among the animal species that can be observed in the area.

In 1997 Local Nature Reserve status was achieved for both Moat Mount and Scratchwood.

The Reserve also houses a campsite which specialises in school excursions and camping trips. The site is a popular choice for many of the local schools as an introduction to wildlife and outdoor activities.

## Barnet Gate Wood

This small woodland is public open space, owned and managed by Barnet Council. It is a remnant of the extensive Middlesex Forest which covered most of this area after the last Ice Age.

Take a rest and enjoy the sights and sounds of this ancient woodland or walk through on the woodland paths.

## Totteridge Fields

This site is managed by the London Wildlife Trust as a nature reserve, in partnership with Barnet Council. It has been designated as an area of metropolitan importance for nature conservation.

Look out for the rich mix of unusual grasses and wildflowers and associated insects in this traditional lowland pastoral landscape which is becoming increasingly rare. The meadows attract thousands of butterflies creating a colourful display throughout the summer. The fields are managed under a countryside stewardship and are mown annually as traditional hay meadows to conserve the wildlife.



The old hedgerows include oak, hazel, ash, field maple and wild service tree. They are remnants of the once extensive oak/ hornbeam coppice woodland.

## The Dollis Brook

The Brook forms an important ecological corridor through Barnet, providing habitats for many plants and creatures. Keep a good look-out for kingfishers and herons which can be seen in the area!

The open spaces along the walk offer an abundance of activities; allotments for gardeners, play facilities for children, sports grounds and somewhere unexpectedly quiet and pleasant to walk and picnic.

Rising near Arkley, the Dollis Brook meanders gently southwards. It is eventually joined by the Mutton Brook to form the River Brent, which flows south and west before it meets the Thames at Brentford.

The name Dollis is thought to be derived from the British dylif (a flood) or the Anglo-Saxon dwllice (erratic).

## The Northern Line

Originally built by the Great Northern Railway, the line from Barnet to Finchley Central opened in April 1872. The atmosphere of a country branch line still lingers to the north of the art deco station at East Finchley.

Railways reached out from London to the surrounding country areas and acted as a spur for developers to build.

Green Belt policies prevented further expansion. It is perhaps fitting that these lines, which contributed so much to urbanisation, can now be used by people to travel to the countryside on their doorstep.

## Dollis Valley Greenwalk: North Section directions

**1** Moat Mount to

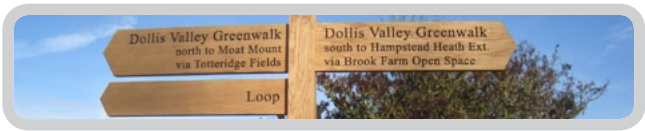
**2** Barnet Playing Fields **4½ miles**

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1. From Moat Mount car park, follow the tarmac path and part way up the slope towards the lake, bear left. Descent the steps and follow the path up the narrow valley to the top, then turn right along the path between the fields.
2. At the farm road, cross to kissing gate to the left and carry straight on through several kissing gates down the field edge. Enjoy panoramic views over the farm but take care not to trespass onto adjacent fields.



3. In the valley bottom, notice the wet hollow, the source of the Dollis Brook. Turn left and follow the path to the corner of Barnet Gate Wood. If you have time, explore and rest awhile. Otherwise carry straight on to Hendon Wood Lane and through the kissing gate.
4. Cross Hendon Wood lane, watching for traffic, turn right and follow the pavement for about 800m to the entrance into Totteridge Fields
5. Follow the path alongside the hedgerow through two fields, bear left through the kissing gate into the sports ground. Turn right and skirt the edge of the playing field.
6. Proceed via steps across the footbridge, turn left and continue along the enclosed path between the old hedgerow and the hay fields.
7. At the brook, ignore the Sleeper Bridge and stile to your left and bear right, following the course of the brook through several fields and kissing gates. These fields are farmed so please keep to the line of the path, created with the agreement and co-operation of local farmers, and keep dogs on a lead.
8. At the edge of Barnet, turn left over the bridge and then right. You are now on the north side of Dollis Brook. Follow the waymarkers and after 800m you will come to a tarmac path.
9. Keep straight on all the way to a main road (Barnet Lane) ignoring paths to the right and left.



## 2 Barnet Playing Fields to

## 3 Brook Farm

1 mile

10. Cross the busy road carefully, and just before the mapboard, turn left to follow the tarmac path beside the playing fields. At the top corner, turn right along the path through Brook Farm Open Space. Notice the nearby cycle path. The Brookside meadows either side are also managed under the countryside stewardship agreement.

## 3 Brook Farm to

## 4 Riverside Walk

1 3/4 miles

11. At Totteridge Lane, turn right past the mapboard down the hill and cross the road carefully by the shops. Enter Whetstone stry by the sign post and follow the surfaced path crossing Laurel view until you reach Tillingham way.
12. Here the route continues but splits into two alternative routes south. One of the routes is by turning right at the gate and then left into Southover until you reach Riverside Walk. The alternative route which passes Woodside Park Station is left at the gate, then right and continue along Holden Road and right into Riverside Walk.



Dollis Valley Greenwalk North Section Map

# Dollis Valley Greenwalk: South Section – Points of interest

## The Dollis Brook

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The open spaces along the walk offer an abundance of activities; allotments for gardeners, play facilities for children, sports grounds and somewhere unexpectedly quiet and pleasant to walk and picnic.

Rising near Arkley, the Dollis Brook meanders gently southwards. It is eventually joined by the Mutton Brook to form the River Brent, which flows south and west before it meets the Thames at Brentford.

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## Mill Hill Viaduct

This striking high-arched brick structure soars high above the Dollis Brook. It was built in the early 1860s for the Great Northern Railway branch to Edgware and has a total of 13 arches. It now carries tube trains on the Northern line to Mill Hill East Station.



## Hampstead Garden Suburb

Hampstead Garden Suburb was founded in 1907 by Dame Henrietta Barnett and was planned by Sir Raymond Unwin, with contributions from many leading architects of the day. Sir Edwyn Lutyens was responsible for the building around Central Square, including St Jude's Church, the Free Church and The Institute.

There are good examples of domestic architecture from the period, ranging from maisonettes and small artisans houses to the large houses bordering the Heath. There are many open spaces, plenty of pedestrian walkways, including 'twittens' (hedge-lined narrow footpaths) and lots of mature trees.

Hampstead Garden suburb also contains Big Wood and Little Wood. Once part of a single larger wood, they had become separate entities by the early 1800s. Big Wood is the more natural of the two, dominated by oak and with a fairly rich understorey including wild service trees. Little Wood is also predominantly oak and has

a small open air theatre, used in the past by pageants and still the venue for a play presented every year around midsummer by the local dramatic society.

## Hampstead Heath

Once a classic heathland habitat, containing plants such as heather and gorse, the heath has been subjected to great changes by human activities over the years. In 1629, Thomas Johnson produced a book, *Iter Plantarum*, recording the plants found on the Hampstead Heath. It is the earliest known record of the flora of a particular part of Britain. Many plants recorded then have since become extinct as their habitat has diminished.

The heath was threatened by development in the early and mid 19th century. In 1871 an Act of Parliament brought it into public ownership, one of the first areas of open spaces purchased for use by everyone. Why not spend time exploring? Parliament Hill offers a panoramic and breathtaking view of London. Today Hampstead Heath remains a popular and unique place, maintained by the Corporation of London's Open spaces department. Contact details in the address section of this leaflet.

# Dollis Valley Greenwalk: South Section directions

**4** Riverside Walk to

**5** Oakdene Park

**¾ mile**

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13. This route description starts at Tillingham Way, Woodside, a few minutes walk from the underground station. Here the route continues but splits into two alternative routes south by turning right and then left into Southover until you reach Riverside Walk. The alternative route which passes Woodside Park Station, turn left, then right and continue along Holden Road and right into Riverside Walk.
14. Go through the gate on your left into Riverside walk past the first small bridge on your left where the alternative route rejoins, and continue crossing the road ahead carefully watching for traffic to the other section of Riverside Walk, until you reach Fursby Avenue. Cross this road and follow the path on to the third bridge, cross and follow the path around to the right. 150m further on, bear right and then turn right again over a fourth bridge. Soon the path emerges onto Dollis Road by a map board.

## **5** Oakdene Park to

## **6** Windsor Open Space

**1 mile**

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15. Cross the road carefully, then turn right passing under the viaduct. After 200m, turn left again over the bridge and then right to rejoin the Brookside path. Continue straight on ignoring side paths until you enter Windsor open Space.
16. Follow the path straight on through the open space, cross a road and you will see a map board at Hendon Lane.

## **6** Windsor Open Space to

## **7** Hampstead Heath Extension

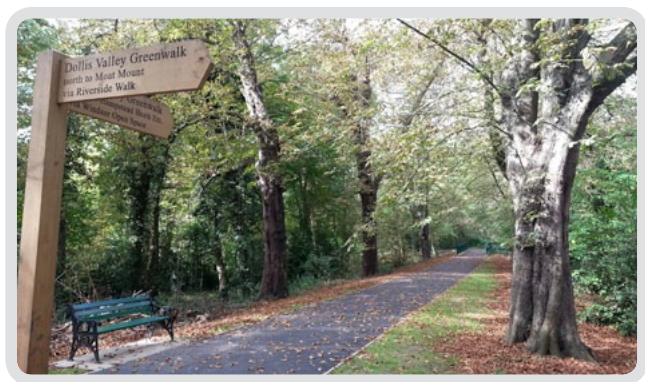
**1¼ miles**

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17. Go through the underpass; follow the path under the A1 bridge until you emerge on an open space with play area. Follow the path straight ahead and bear to your left at the bridge where the Mutton brook joins the Dollis brook and also the Capital Ring Walk.
18. Keep along the brook passing under the north circular road.
19. After about 600m you reach Finchley Road. Here cross the main road at the lights. Turn right and then left to rejoin the path. Cross the bridge ignoring the path to the left. Keep left at the next intersection, following the path. Where the main path bears left over the bridge, keep straight on until you emerge in Addison Way.

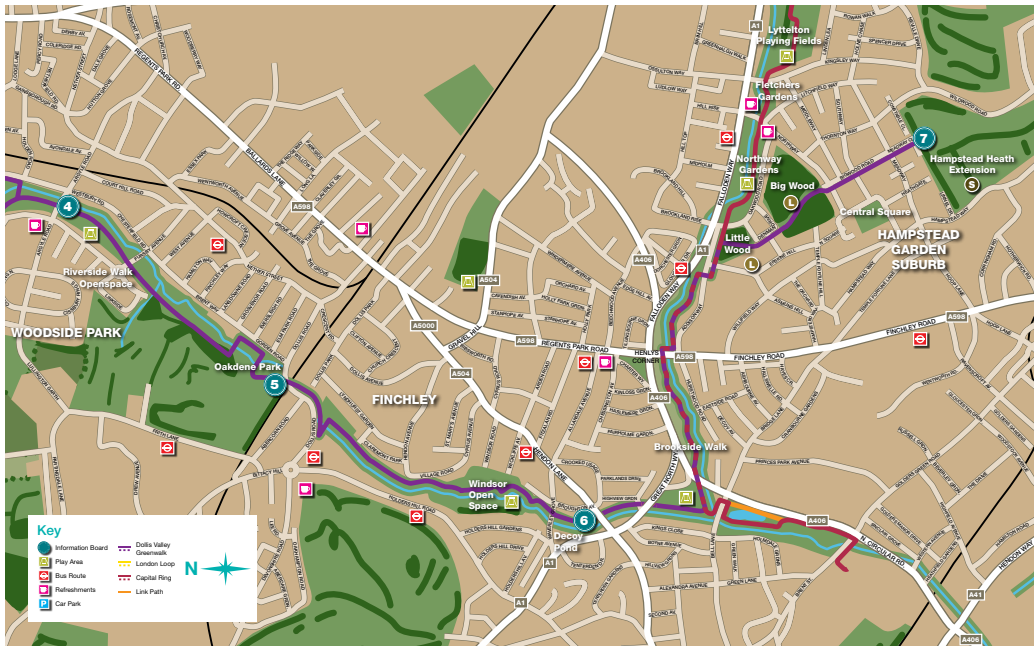


20. Cross over the road, turn left and walk for 130m until you reach a path on the right into Little Wood, passing the small open air theatre. Leave the wood and follow Denham Drive North and South to Big wood. You are now on the last stretch of the Greenwalk.
21. Walk through Big Wood and then make your way to Hampstead Heath Extension via Big Wood Road and finally Meadway Close.
22. To find a bus or tube at Golders Green, retrace your steps up Meadway Close and turn left into Meadway. Keep straight on for 800m until you reach the Finchley road. Turn left for the tube station or catch a bus back to north Finchley.



For more information:

tel: 020 8359 4600 email: [parks@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:parks@barnet.gov.uk)  
or visit [www.barnet.gov.uk/parks](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/parks)



**Key**

- Information Board
- Play Area
- Blue Route
- Refreshments
- Car Park
- Dollis Valley Greenwalk
- London Loop
- Capital Ring
- Link Path

Dollis Valley Greenwalk South Section Map