



## London Loop

Section 3 of 24

Jubilee Country Park to

Gates Green Road, Wickham Common



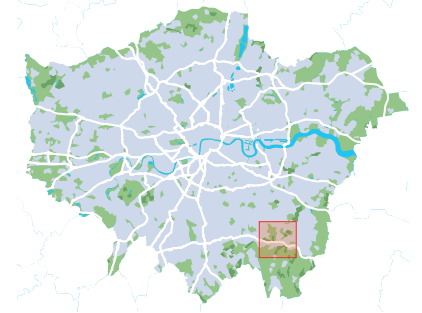
**Section start:** Jubilee Country Park

**Nearest station to start:** Petts Wood

**Section finish:** Gates Green Road, Wickham Common

**Nearest station to finish:** Hayes (Kent)

**Section distance:** 9 miles (14.5 kilometres)



### Introduction

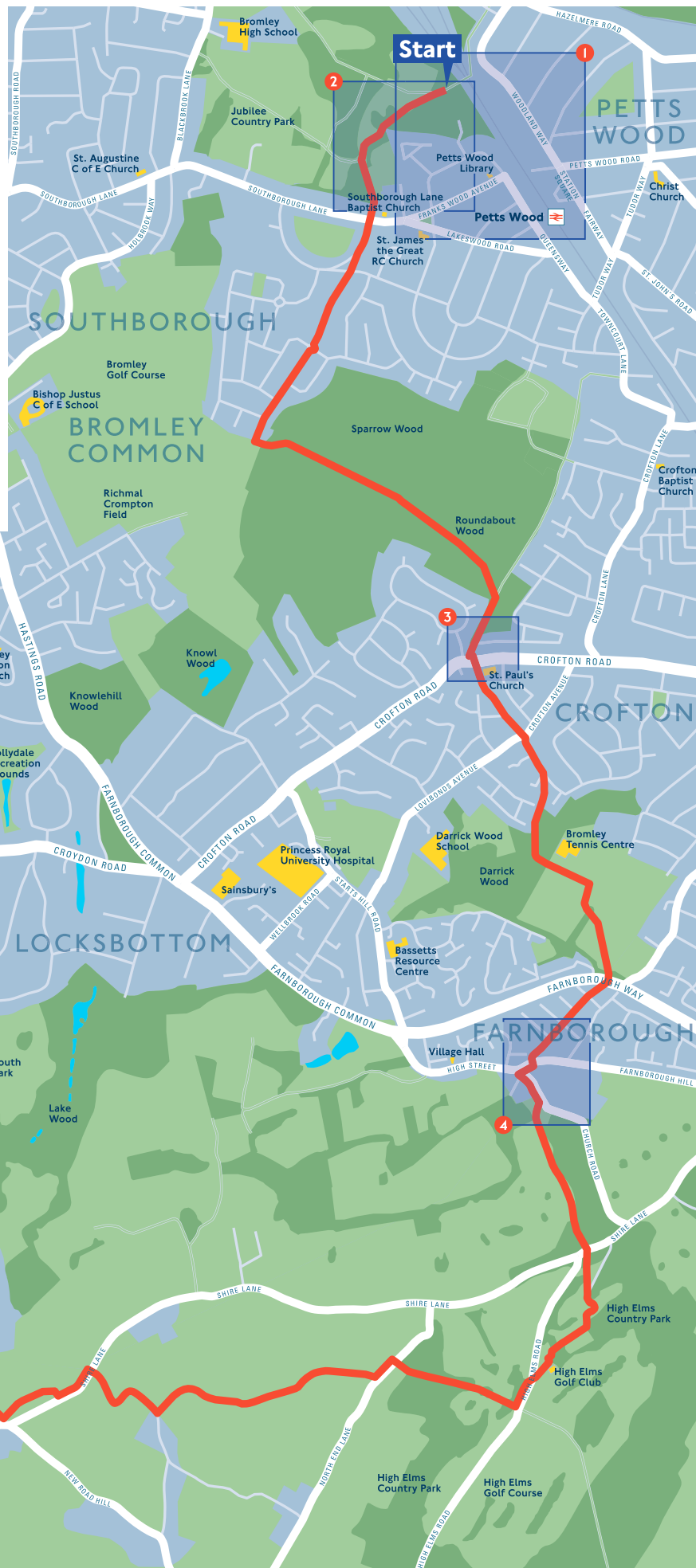
This section of the LOOP passes through attractive countryside with strong links to Charles Darwin who described the countryside around the village of Downe as 'the extreme verge of the world'.



The walking is generally easy, but with a few longish, steep slopes, stiles and kissing gates and some small flights of steps. Much of it is through commons, parks and along tracks.

There are cafes and pubs at many places along the way and you can picnic at High Elms, where there are also public toilets.

The walk starts at Jubilee Country Park and finishes at Hayes station. There are several bus routes along this walk.



**Continues** ▶



## Key

- London Loop
- National Rail station
- 2 See inset map for enhanced detail in this area

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## Directions

**1** To get to the start of this walk from Petts Wood station exit on the West Approach side of the station and turn right at the T-junction with Queensway. Follow the street until it curves round to the left, and carry straight on down Crest View Drive. Take Tent Peg Lane on the right and keep to the footpath through the trees to the left of the car park. After 100 metres enter Jubilee Country Park, and join the LOOP.

From the car park on Tent Peg Lane enter the park and at the junction of several paths and go through the gate on the left and follow the metalled path for about 150 metres, then branch left. Carry on, with the hedge to the left and the open field on the right.



### Did you know?

Jubilee Country Park is so named to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977. The hollows, which form ponds in the spring, are bunkers left over from a golf course which existed here before the Second World War.

**2** Cross the sleeper bridge and keep going. At the end of the path is a kissing gate alongside a field gate; go through and turn right onto the road with St. James' School on the left. At the end cross Southborough Lane, and go down Oxhawth Crescent.

Cross over Chesham Avenue and carry on straight ahead down Faringdon Avenue to its end where it meets a belt of woodland. Turn left up the footpath past the last house and through Sparrow Woods and Crofton Heath.


Follow the main path for 500 metres through the woods and after crossing the stream go straight on for 100 metres and bear right at the fork in the path. Stay on the main path, carrying straight on at the junction after another 300 metres. Continue for 50 metres and bear right at the fork on entering an open glade, then go past a bench. After 20 metres turn right at the next junction.

The route then joins a wider path coming from the left, leading to a track with a hardened surface. Turn right onto this and go straight on, keeping the stream on the left. The track leads to Crofton Road; turn left past the Crofton Village sign.



### Did you know?

The Manor of Crofton was owned by Archbishop Odo, who fought at the Battle of Hastings and commissioned the Bayeux Tapestry. He used a heavy club instead of a sword, as members of the church were not allowed to draw blood.

 **3** There is a bus stop slightly further along the road where bus routes 353 and 61 leave towards Hayes, Bromley, Orpington and Chislehurst.

To carry on, cross Crofton Road at the traffic island and turn right, then left up the metalled path past the Scout and Guide Headquarters. Follow this path through the residential area until reaching Lovibonds Avenue. Cross this road and go straight ahead down Crofton Avenue turn right soon after La Tourne Gardens at a triangle of grass and woodland, into Darrick Common.

At the second major crossroads in the path, take a left passing a wooden fence. At the wooden bollards bear right, keeping the bollards on your left and the playing fields on your right.

Follow the path round to the right to the bench and take the steps which go down to the left. At the bottom there are three mown paths, take the middle one diagonally across the field. In the far corner are some more steps leading down to a bridge with wooden handrails. Cross the bridge and come out onto Farnborough Way. Cross using the pedestrian island.


Continue straight down the public footpath through the residential area. Continue along the path between the two wooden fences and out onto Gladstone Road. Walk down Gladstone Road to reach Hartington Close, then turn left to reach Farnborough Hill / Farnborough High Street.



### Did you know?

Called 'Fearnbioginga' by the Saxons, the name Farnborough is now a lot easier to get your tongue around! The 'village among the ferns' on the hilt flourished due to its location on the old coach road from London to Hastings. Highwaymen were attracted to the area - a £200 reward was offered in 1789 for the 'mugger' of a Post Boy carrying mail from Bromley to Sevenoaks.

There are bus stops here for routes 261, 358, 402 and R1 to Penge, Pratts Bottom, Bromley, Orpington and St. Pauls Cray.

 **4** Turn right after crossing Farnborough Hill / Farnborough High Street and first left down Church Road, keeping on the right-hand side of the road. Continue straight along Church Road joining a raised path alongside it on the right. Go through the gate into the churchyard of St. Giles the Abbott.



### Did you know?

The church itself, St. Giles The Abbot, was partly damaged after a storm in 1639 and rebuilt in flint and red brick. The field just south of it was referred to in 1600 as a - long slyp wher - the Butts were wont to be - a place for archery practice. The St. Giles Fair, granted in 1220, is held there to this day.



Walk through the churchyard to the right of the church to a gate on the far side. Go through it into the open field, keep ahead down the left hand edge then into the woods. Follow the path for about 100 metres to Shire Lane. Take care crossing over to the path on the other side into High Elms Country Park. The path soon opens out into a car park.

### Did you know?

High Elms Country Park covers over 400 acres of woodlands, orchid-rich grassland and a public golf course. High Elms is something of a misnomer - the tallest trees here are the giant redwoods. They are among the fine specimen trees on the former estate of the Lubbock family. Sir John Lubbock, a Member of Parliament, wealthy banker, author and scientist lived at High Elms. From a young age he was a close friend of his neighbour, Charles Darwin. Nearby Down House was Charles Darwin's home from 1842 until his death in 1882, and is open to the public.

Carry on straight across the car park towards the sign to the BEECHE Centre, which offers refreshment and toilet facilities.

At the sign to the Visitors Centre turn right and follow the path round to the left, go through a barrier and then follow the tarmac path - ignore the gravel one. Turn left on reaching the top of the path to the formal gardens, go straight on down the hill through the yew avenue and out through the kissing gate at the bottom.

Cross the car park of High Elms Golf Club. Keeping the course on your left, leave the car park via the path to the left of the barrier leading out onto the road. Go up the path on the opposite side of the road - turn immediately left through an old orchard following the line of the road.

Turn right on to a path opposite High Elms Clockhouse going uphill. Cross an area of chalk grassland, full of pyramidal orchids and chirping with grasshoppers in the summer. Cross the golf fairway with care and go into the woods. Go straight on at the crossroads in the path. On reaching North End Lane, turn left. 50 metres up, turn right into Bogey Lane an ancient hedged greenway.

After 60 metres take the steps on the left, going up to a field. Keeping right, follow the path round the edge of the field. Where the path curves sharp left, take the steps on the right back down to the junction of paths. Take the second path to your left through a corridor of trees which continues along Bogey Lane. You come out onto an idyllic little road called Farthing Street - turn right onto it and carry on down the hill. At the bottom is Shire Lane again. Cross it, then turn sharp left along a path between the hedge and the wire fence which follows the line of the road.

### Did you know?

You might see aircraft overhead on their way to Biggin Hill, the famous Battle of Britain airfield and now a popular airport for private planes.

Follow the path around the farm and through the metal kissing gate on the right and onto the path to the right between two hedges. Carry on uphill. On reaching a tarmac track, carry straight over to a bench.

Continue along the path. At the end of it you come out onto Westerham Road - cross to the path opposite. The bus stop to the left is served by route 320 to Bromley or Biggin Hill and route R2 to Orpington.

Follow the path a few metres until a crossing of paths. Turn right and to a car park with an island of conifers in the middle of it. Walk straight across the car park, keeping the road on your right, and then go down the steps.

Keep following the path with the pond on your right as it curves left between the upper and lower ponds and then take the first right, down the steps. Follow the path to the left of the lower pond to Fishponds Road and cross it.

**5** There are two paths, take the footpath to the left of a large beech tree. This leads to Lakes Road next to a school. Go straight ahead on Lakes Road until reaching the T-junction with Heathfield Road and the heart of Keston village. Buses to Hayes, Biggin Hill, Bromley or Downe can be accessed from here.

Turn right towards the mini-roundabout and cross the road. At the second roundabout turn left into West Common Road and then immediately left down onto the track. Continue along into the woods, following the line of the road. Eventually reaching the old stables at Baston Manor, follow the path on the left beside the road. Follow the path along Baston Manor Road and back into the woods, go straight on at Hast Hill, leading to West Wickham Common.

Keep walking and ignore the path to the left - follow the line of the metal fence to the left. On leaving the wood; cross Hartfield Crescent and carry on up the path past the small car park. At the fork, bear right to take the path through the more open earthworks and heath land. Follow the path downhill ignoring smaller paths on each side then branch left arriving at an information board next to Croydon and Gates Green Roads.

**6** Section three ends near two huge ancient pollarded oaks. To continue to section four cross Gates Green Road and turn left.

To reach Hayes station from the end of this section cross Croydon Road and head right towards Nash College. Turn left away from Croydon Road following the path with the college on your left. Continue along this path until it meets Warren Road and take the left into Station Hill. Follow the road round to the left and just after the roundabout turn right to reach the station.

