



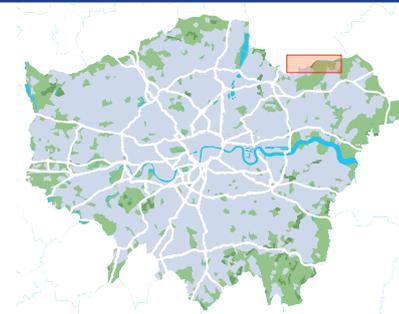
London Loop

Section 20 of 24

Chigwell to Havering-atte-Bower



Section start:	Chigwell
Nearest station to start:	Chigwell
Section finish:	Havering-atte-Bower
Nearest station to finish:	Buses from Havering-atte-Bower to Romford station
Section distance:	6 miles (9.7 kilometres)



Introduction

This section is one of the most rural sections of the whole LOOP, being almost entirely in open country, woodland or undulating farmland.

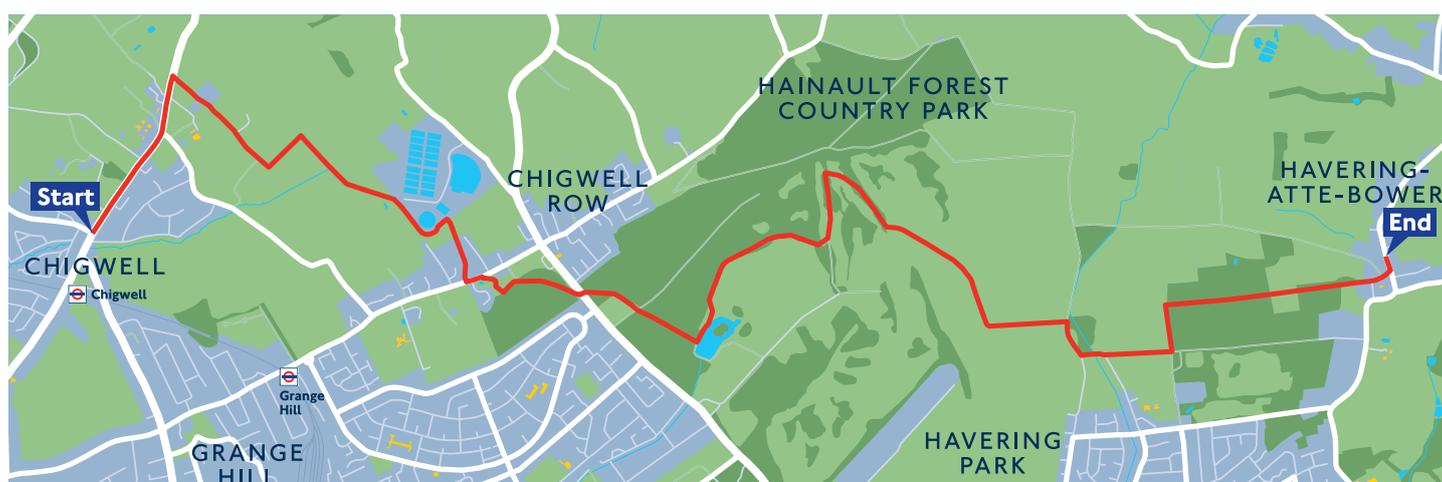
Points of interest are the country parks at Hainault with its lake and Havering Country Park with the pleasant village of Havering-atte-Bower, from which the London borough takes its name, at the end.

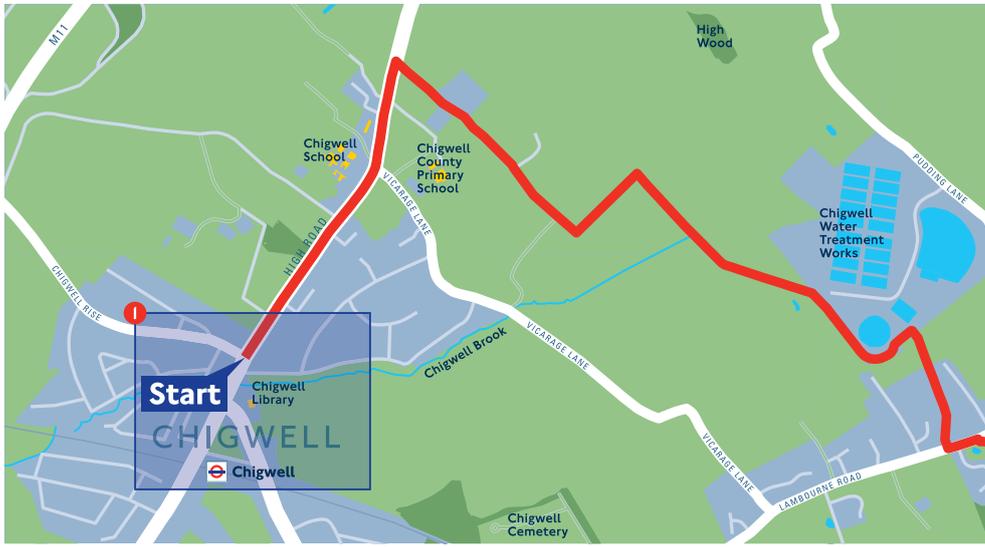
The terrain is generally level with some gentle slopes and six stiles. It is mostly on rough paths or tracks and on grass; some fields may be ploughed.

There are pubs and cafes at Chigwell, Chigwell Row, Havering-atte-Bower, and public toilets at Hainault Forest Country Park and Havering-atte-Bower.

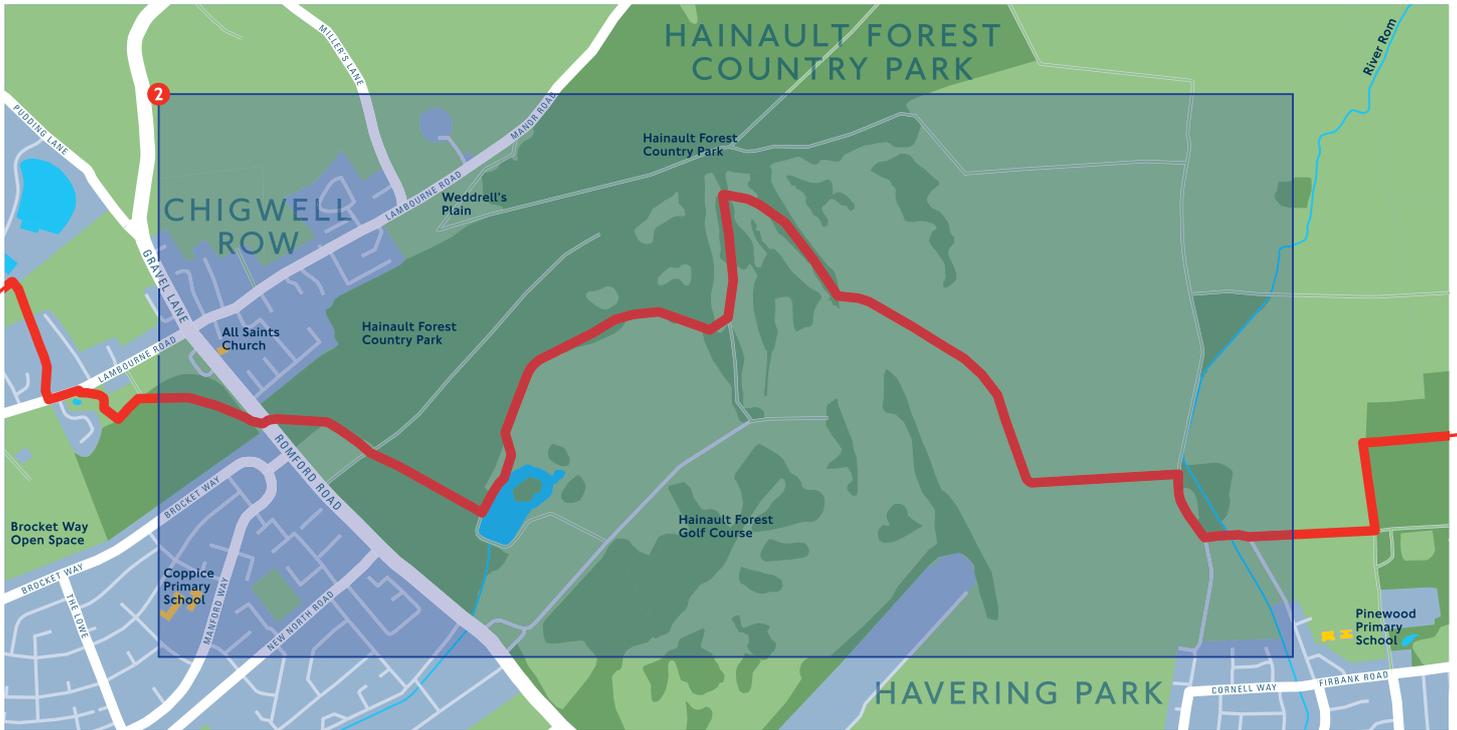
There are tube stations at Chigwell and Grange Hill and buses along the route.

The bus service to and from Havering-atte-Bower is infrequent and doesn't run on Sundays - please check the timetable before travelling. Other buses are available 1 ¼ miles from the end of this section of the LOOP.





◀ Continues



◀ Continues



Directions

 **1** Leave Chigwell station and turn right onto High Road. Go through the village past the Chigwell shops on the left and the park on the right. Cross Hainault Road, then go over the aptly named Chigwell Brook and over Courtland Drive.

Join the main LOOP route as it comes down the hill from the left on Chigwell Rise to meet the mini roundabout. Continue straight ahead, up the hill passing the Chigwell Sports Club and St. Mary's Church on the left and Ye Olde Kings Head on the right.



Did you know?

Facing St. Mary's church is an ancient timber-framed public house named the Kings Head. Ye Olde Kings Head (now also a restaurant) has the title of being the most famous pub in Essex. Its impressive facade inspired Charles Dickens to include it in his novel Barnaby Rudge. It was also the favoured watering hole of the legendary 18th century highwayman, Dick Turpin, who started his criminal career, it is said, poaching deer from the nearby forests of Hainault and Epping.

Just past the pub and restaurant are pedestrian crossing lights. Turn right here to follow the Epping Forest Country Care walk. Go through the gate and into a meadow. Avoiding the brambles, go straight ahead through the open field to the road opposite.

Go over the stile and turn right along the road for a few paces. Cross Vicarage Lane and go through the gap in the hedge to carry on straight ahead through a smaller opening in the brambles to an open field beyond.

Follow the field edge around to the left and through another gap in the hedge. Follow the permissive path and head around to the left along the edge of the paddock. Ahead is a farm house just visible through the trees.

As the path crosses a meeting of ways just before the house, turn hard right to follow the wide track down the hill. Shortly after, turn left onto a charming green lane, with enough width between its hedges to have been a drove way.

Follow the track as it begins to climb the rise ahead and, at another crossing of ways, turn right to hike along the left edge of a paddock. Keep the hedge to the left until it and the track ends. Veer left into the paddock diagonally opposite and if there isn't a path clearly made diagonally through the crop, turn left to follow the paddocks edge along the bottom, then turn right and head up the hill towards the top left corner.

About 50 metres before the edge of the paddock turn left through a small gap in the hedge to follow a path right between the hedge and a fence. The steady humming sound of machines in the distance is the Chigwell Water Treatment Works, situated on the other side of the fence.

The path comes out at the gates and entrance drive to the waterworks. Cross the drive and continue on the path around the fence line to the left until it ends. On the right is a stile. Go over it and through the meadow, keeping the hedge close on the left to reach another stile.

Continue past a house on the left, then over a further stile to a smaller meadow, following the left side to the last stile in the corner.

Follow the path between a quaint fence line on the left with a beloved vegetable garden behind, and a hedge on the right to the foot of a small lane called Chapel Lane. To see the chapel, go straight ahead to the main road at Chigwell Row and it is the charming yellow-brick Victorian building on the right.

Turn left along the main road here, which is Lambourne Road, and cross carefully after about 20 metres to follow the concrete path to the open space through the wooden kissing gate. Keep on the path straight ahead past the playing courts to the crossing of paths and continue right to the line of trees beyond.

Did you know?

Chigwell Row Wood owes its survival to the far-sighted Victorian inhabitants of Chigwell. Concerned that tree clearance in the area would deprive them of a place to walk and exercise, they set up a charity to ensure its survival. It's now managed by the staff and volunteers at Epping Forest Country Care.

Turn left to follow the path with the trees on the right and when the path ends continue over the grass towards the road and the Victorian church beyond. Turn right along the grassed strip just before the Romford Road and about 30 metres before the grass ends, turn left to go through the kissing gate. Once on the road side cross carefully.

To leave the LOOP at this point, turn left once across the road to reach the bus stop. Bus 150 from here goes to Gants Hill, Hainault and Ilford stations.



 **2** To continue, pass through a squeeze stile then through another kissing gate to enter Hainault Forest Country Park. Take the middle of the three faint paths through wild growth to another kissing gate beyond. Follow the path through a short section of trees to open out in a field. Turn left and then right to follow the edge of the field to the bottom left corner.

Pass through the kissing gate and continue to go over a major gravel track. Continue straight ahead along the track which is also a horse ride. As the track drops through young birch woodland, ignore the paths that go left or right, to end up at a lake.

Did you know?

In 1130 when much of Essex was woodland, Henry I, son of William the Conqueror, designated this area The Royal Forest of Essex. It was used exclusively for the kingly sport of hunting. Hainault Forest Country Park is a surviving fragment of that vast verdant landscape, as in 1851 Parliament gave its consent to land being drained and fenced, and 100,000 trees were felled. Fortunately, Hainault Forest has now been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Turn left along the track by the waterside, which soon turns up leftward. Once around the bend, an opening on the right leads to an expanse of open grass. Take this opening to reach Foxburrows Rare Breeds Farm.

To continue, step away from the track here and keep left along the woodland edge. Keep by the trees until the ground begins to drop again. Now a track on the left enters the wood, soon leading to the main track along the park boundary, with a golf course beyond it.

Turn left onto the surfaced track and climb with the golf course visible through the fence on the right. When the track levels out at the top of the incline, turn right and enter the Hainault Forest Golf Course through the kissing gate. Cross the fairway and walk just left of a tiny grove of trees to enter a long tree belt called the Mile Plantation.

Follow the rough path and keep right at the next junction, then bear left onto a less formal path and cross a ditch. The path goes through another tiny grove, drops down over a fairway with a green just to its right, and ahead there is a hedge which marks the edge of the golf course. Walk to the hedge and on reaching it, turn left following the hedge for 50 metres to find the stile hidden away in the foliage.

Go over the stile and strike out across the paddock diagonally, aiming for the corner. At the corner bear right through the gap then left so that the boundary ditch is on the left. Keeping the ditch on your left, turn left at the edge of the field into another field.

The field ends with a stile and gate leading to a metalled drive, turn right here and follow the drive (Lodge Lane) past the farm and bungalow to where the paths divide.



Turn left here to shortly join the bridleway 227 to Havering Country Park. Where several paths meet on the edge of the country park, turn hard left up the rise (Clockhouse Lane) to enjoy expansive panoramic views.

About 20 metres after the wooden seat on the right, turn right through the wooden barrier into the forest which is Havering Country Park. Follow the slowly rising path (Wellingtonia Avenue) straight ahead through the forest, crossing a horse ride and passing through two kissing gates.

Did you know?

Havering Country Park has a rich and varied landscape with splendid views over the woods and meadows of Essex's countryside. The giant sequoia trees that line both sides of the Avenue were planted in the 19th century. Their towering reddish trunks may look impressive, but these American immigrants are small compared to those that grow in its native Californian hills which can grow to 300 feet (90 metres) high, have a trunk diameter of 35 feet (10 metres) and live for 3,000 years or more. They are the largest living things on Earth.



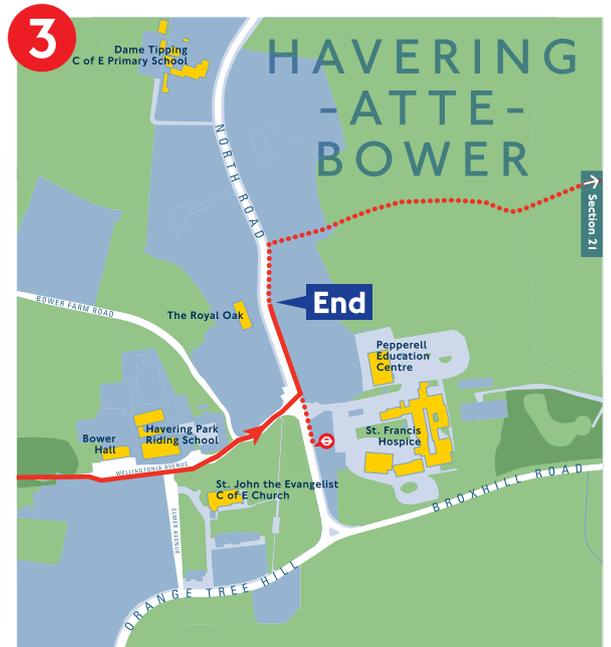
Continue along the path and once through the wooden gate and at the five way path, carry on straight, following the sign to the village. Enjoy the distinct smell of the pine trees where tiny goldcrest and firecrest birds feed and nest before exiting Havering Country Park beside the metal gate. Here on the right is an information board about the park, and on the left is an amazing view over miles of Roding Valley countryside.

 **3** Go past the houses and between the riding school and church to the green of Havering-atte-Bower.

Did you know?

Nothing remains of an important royal house that once stood at Havering-atte-Bower. Edward the Confessor started things off nearly a thousand years ago by establishing a holy retreat here. Later, William The Conqueror and King John built hunting lodges.

Slowly, a large Royal Palace grew in a haphazard manner over the next 600 years, with Charles I being the last monarch to stay there. The palace stood where Havering-atte-Bower green is now. A Victorian church stands where the original chapel once stood and stables are on the site of the old palace stables.



Turn left on North Road to The Royal Oak pub where this section ends, or turn right where there is a bus stop for route 375 to Romford (buses run about every 1 ½ hours and do not run on Sundays).

If you want to walk to get other buses, continue past the bus stop and follow Orange Tree Hill and Havering Road south for 1 ½ miles to Chase Cross. At the major traffic-light controlled junction turn right onto Chase Cross Road and you will soon see the bus stop for route 103 which provides regular and daily buses to Romford station.