



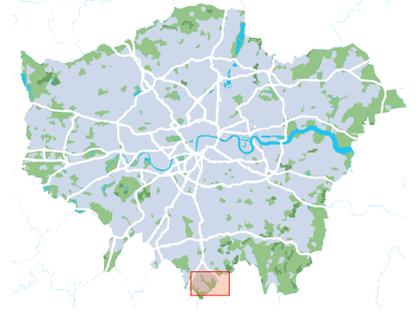
## London Loop

Section 5 of 24

Hamsey Green to Coulsdon South station



<b>Section start:</b>	Hamsey Green
<b>Nearest station to start:</b>	Sanderstead (and then 403 bus to Hamsey Green)
<b>Section finish:</b>	Coulsdon South station
<b>Nearest station to finish:</b>	Coulsdon South
<b>Section distance:</b>	6 miles (9.6 kilometres)



### Introduction

This very attractive section starts just outside Greater London. It features, in 'quick succession', four commons - Riddlesdown, Kenley Common, Coulsdon Common and Farthing Downs - the latter providing a long ridge walk with fine views and grazing cattle.

Other points of interest include Happy Valley with its rare yellow rattle plant and Devilsden Wood.

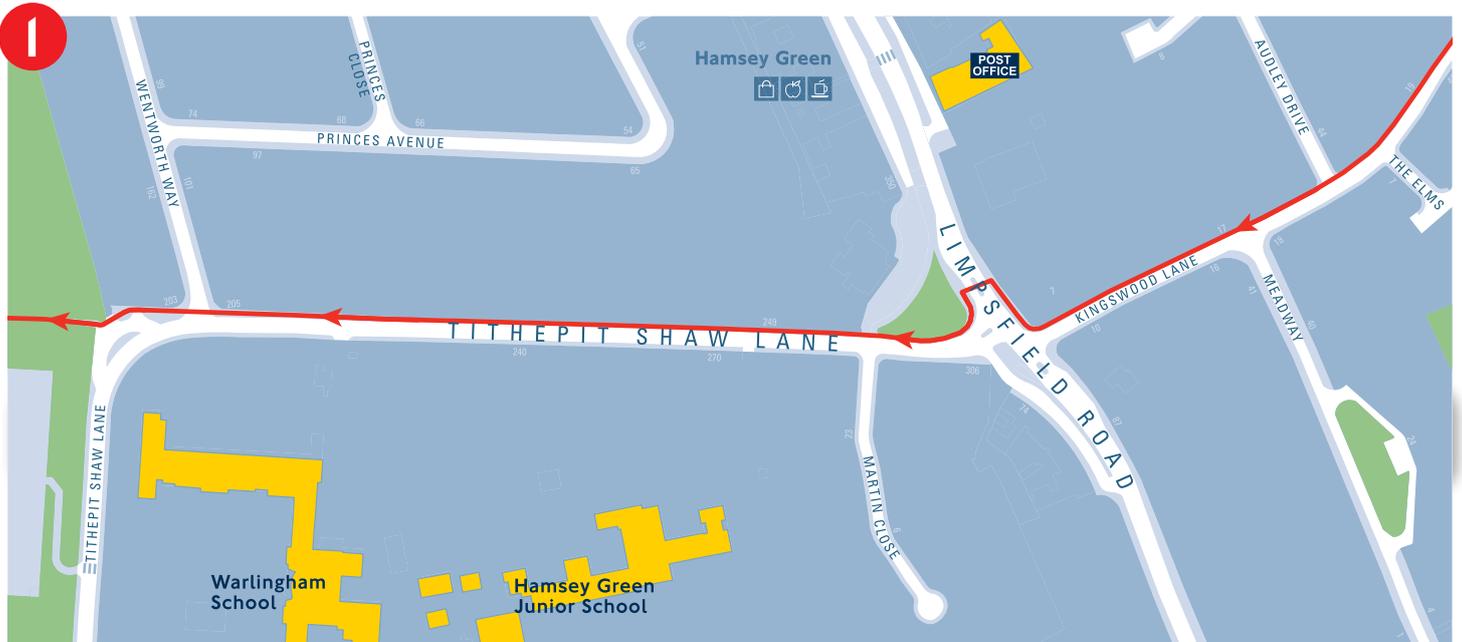
It is mostly on level ground with three long climbs (two of them very steep with steps). The terrain is mainly rough tracks, footpaths and grassy fields.

There are pubs and cafes at Hamsey Green, Godstone Road, Kenley Aerodrome, Coulsdon Common and Coulsdon South and an occasional kiosk at Farthing Downs. There are public toilets at Farthing Downs.





## Directions



**1** If coming by train and bus from Sanderstead, leave the station on the Mayfield Road exit (the same side if coming from the London direction) and find the bus stop opposite at the end of station approach. Take bus route 403 (towards Warlingham) and get off at Hamsey Green - listen for the next-stop announcements. It is about a 25 minute ride on this bus.

From the information board on Hamsey Green, follow Tithepit Shaw Lane for 400 metres. Where the road bends left go through the gate and take the path straight ahead across the fields towards Riddlesdown passing a trig point (a concrete block used for surveying) on the left. About 200 metres later, turn sharp left into the valley, keeping the hedge on the right.

### Did you know?

The steep tree-covered meadow here is home to the rare chalkhill blue butterfly.

Pass through a gate and turn left onto a sloping path which joins an old Roman road. Go over the railway bridge and down onto Godstone Road.

### Did you know?

The Quarry at the foot of Riddlesdown is about 200 years old and was working up until 1967. The impressive railway viaduct over the quarry dates from 1884 when the line from Croydon to East Grinstead and Oxted opened.

Cross the main road, turn left and then turn right into Old Barn Lane. Go over the railway bridge and continue up New Barn Lane and up the stone steps at the end. Turn right up the wooden steps onto Kenley Common.

### Did you know?

In Twelve Acre on Kenley Common, the pyramidal orchid thrives. These commons came into the City of London's care as a result of the 1878 legislation in response to concern at the rapid disappearance of open spaces in Greater London.

Keep going up the hill along the woodland edge. Go straight ahead at the cross track until the path forks. Take the left fork and keep going until you come out onto an open grassy area of the Common.

Cross the grass on a diagonal and enter the wood. After about 30 metres turn right and follow the fence onto the unmade track which is Golf Road. At the end turn right into Hayes Lane.

After about 100 metres take the footpath on the left through the wood. Then turn right into Betts Mead Recreation Ground. Go through a large gap in the trees to the left and turning left follow the field edge passing the corner of the field, before reaching a narrow road.

### Did you know?

Just around the corner to the left is the Wattenden Arms which is full of World War II memorabilia from the adjacent Kenley Aerodrome, including many original photos.

 **2** Cross the road and track, climb over the stile, walk diagonally across the field and head for the domes of the Kenley Observatory.

### Did you know?

The earth banks to the left are blast bays that once protected Spitfires. A short diversion off the route to the airfield will gain you a closer look at the World War 2 blast bays, as well as the RAF monument. You may also see gliders being catapulted skywards, so stay within the fence line!

Cross the stile by the observatory and fork left onto the track. Bear right between two forked trees along the leafy path. Walk between the bollards and down the bridle way to Caterham Drive. Continue up Rydons Lane on to Coulsdon Common. Cross the road and follow the path to Coulsdon Road.

From here bus route 466 can take you to East Croydon station.

Cross the road into Fox Lane and go past the pub to a gate. Follow the tarmac path until it reaches the trees. Continue down the hill into the sloping field. Follow the path across the top part of the field and through some trees to a picnic bench with great views of Happy Valley.

### Did you know?

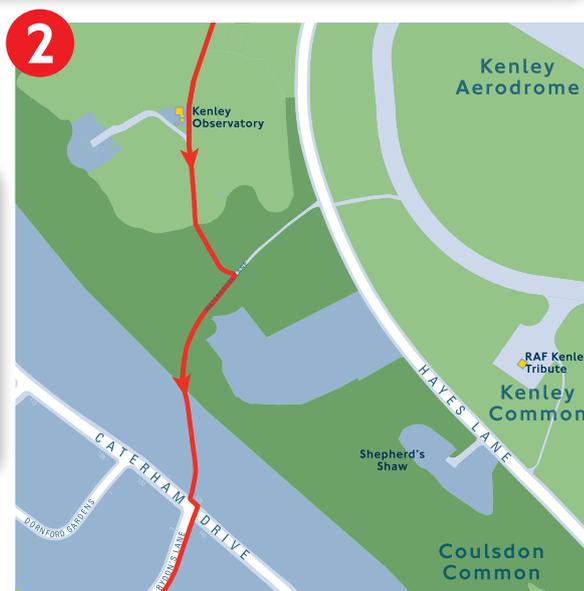
Happy Valley is home to one of Britain's rarest plants - the greater yellow rattle. It's so called because when the plant is ready to set seed, the calyx (a group of sepals) dries out and rattles.

Turn left across Happy Valley, keeping the ancient hedgerow on your left. On the far side of the valley turn right and continue along the edge of the wood bearing left into Devilsden Wood.

### Did you know?

Devilsden Wood appears on the earliest maps and is classified as an ancient woodland. Hazel, ash and cherry dominate the lower path of the wood. Yew and beech can be seen further up the slope. In spring bluebells and wood anemones lay a carpet of blue and white.

Come out of the woods after about 600 metres, onto Farthing Downs, turning left up the steep hill past the cottages (there are toilets next to the car park). Turn right and follow the road along Farthing Downs for about one mile past two cattle grids.



### Did you know?

Farthing Downs is also an unusual site in that English Heritage have designated it an area of archaeological interest due to its ancient Roman landscape and Saxon tumuli.

At this point take a look at the horizon. There's the familiar sight of the London skyline with Canary Wharf and the transmitter masts at Crystal Palace.

 **3** Leave Farthing Downs and continue down the hill to the main road. There is a cafe in the park across the road. Turn left and left again into Reddown Road. After about 100 metres turn right to Coulsdon South station, where section five ends.

To continue on to Section six to Banstead Downs continue past the station.

