



Broxbourne Circular via Waltham Abbey Walk

River Lee Country Park and Waltham Abbey.

Length	<p>Main Walk: 19¾ km (12.3 miles). Four hours 15 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9 hours.</p> <p>Short Walk 1, finishing at Cheshunt: 15½ km (9.6 miles). Three hours 15 minutes walking time.</p> <p>Short Walk 2, with shorter afternoon: 14 km (8.7 miles). Two hours 55 minutes walking time.</p>
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OS Map	Explorer 174. Broxbourne, map reference TL372072, is in Hertfordshire, 7 km SE of Hertford. Waltham Abbey is in Essex.
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Toughness	2 out of 10 (1 for the Short Walks).
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Features	<p>The Lea Valley is a wide floodplain which has long been both an important transport corridor and a natural boundary (eg. between the Saxons and the Danes in the Dark Ages). Its rivers provided water and power for many mills and factories, although nowadays the journey out of London seems to offer an unbroken line of light industrial estates, warehouses and retail parks. This does not exactly lift the spirits when seen from the train, but on the Herts/Essex border between Cheshunt and Broxbourne the view abruptly changes to the tree-lined lakes and water meadows of River Lee Country Park.</p>
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After a brief look at the misleadingly-named **New River** (an aqueduct) there are stretches through water meadows, along the towpath of the **River Lea** and past large filled-in gravel pits. Many of these lakes are used for fishing but one of the largest is a nature reserve where you could pause for some bird-watching from a new **Wildlife Discovery Centre**. A short stretch through farmland outside the Country Park and a pleasant grassy path along the edge of **Cornmill Meadows Dragonfly Sanctuary** leads directly into **Waltham Abbey**.

In about 1030 a black crucifix was brought to this market town and one of the pilgrims attracted by this 'Holy Cross' was **Harold Godwinson**, then Earl of Essex and later (briefly) King Harold II in 1066. He built a larger stone church on the site and this in turn was rebuilt in Norman style after the Conquest. It was extended again in the 12thC when **Waltham Abbey** was built by Henry II as part of his penance after the murder of Thomas Becket. It was the last monastic house to be closed by Henry VIII in the Dissolution of the Monasteries and most of the abbey was demolished in 1540. Fortunately, part of its medieval nave survived to become the

present **Church of the Holy Cross**: reminiscent of a scaled-down Durham Cathedral, it is well worth a visit.

After lunch the walk loops around the **Abbey Gardens** and leaves the town along Highbridge Street, where you could divert to the historic **Royal Gunpowder Mills** site, which is open on some summer Sundays; admission is £15 (2024). A more recent attraction on the afternoon leg is the **Lee Valley White Water Centre**, where you can watch canoeists and rafters tackling the slalom course constructed for the 2012 Olympic Games. The route back to Broxbourne is mainly on different woodland and lakeside paths, although you have to retrace your outward route for a stretch along the River Lea's towpath where there is no convenient alternative. The walk ends through the **Broxbourne Waterside** area, a centre for boating and canoeing with a café and a pub for refreshment before the journey home.

Walk Options

The afternoon route goes quite near Cheshunt station and two different link routes are described for a choice of **Short Walks** finishing there. You could shorten the walk at lunchtime by doing a shorter loop around the Abbey Gardens, or indeed skipping this section altogether. If you want to curtail the walk after Waltham Abbey you could head for the station at Waltham Cross. This is 1½ km away along a busy main road but there are regular buses, some of which also go to places with underground stations (eg. Loughton).

Additional Notes

A modified version of the Main Walk was originally the Long Circular Walk option of the Cheshunt to Broxbourne walk (#311), which consists of some slightly shorter walks in this area. There is a fair amount of duplication between these two walks but some of the stretches are done in the opposite direction. In contrast there is hardly any overlap with the other Broxbourne Circular walk (#168), which explores the Broxbourne Woods National Nature Reserve to the west of the railway line.

Transport





Broxbourne and Cheshunt are served by Greater Anglia trains from Liverpool Street and Stratford on the lines to Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford and Hertford East. The normal off-peak service is six trains per hour (four on Sundays), with a journey time of 25-32 minutes to Broxbourne. All trains call at Tottenham Hale, on the Victoria line. There is also a (slower) half-hourly London Overground service between Liverpool Street and Cheshunt, via Seven Sisters.

Oyster PAYG and contactless can be used at both stations but a simple **return to Broxbourne** might be better value. Cheshunt is in TfL Zone 8 but Broxbourne is outside the numbered zones.

A London Freedom Pass is only valid for travel to Cheshunt on the London Overground service from Liverpool Street, not on Greater Anglia trains.

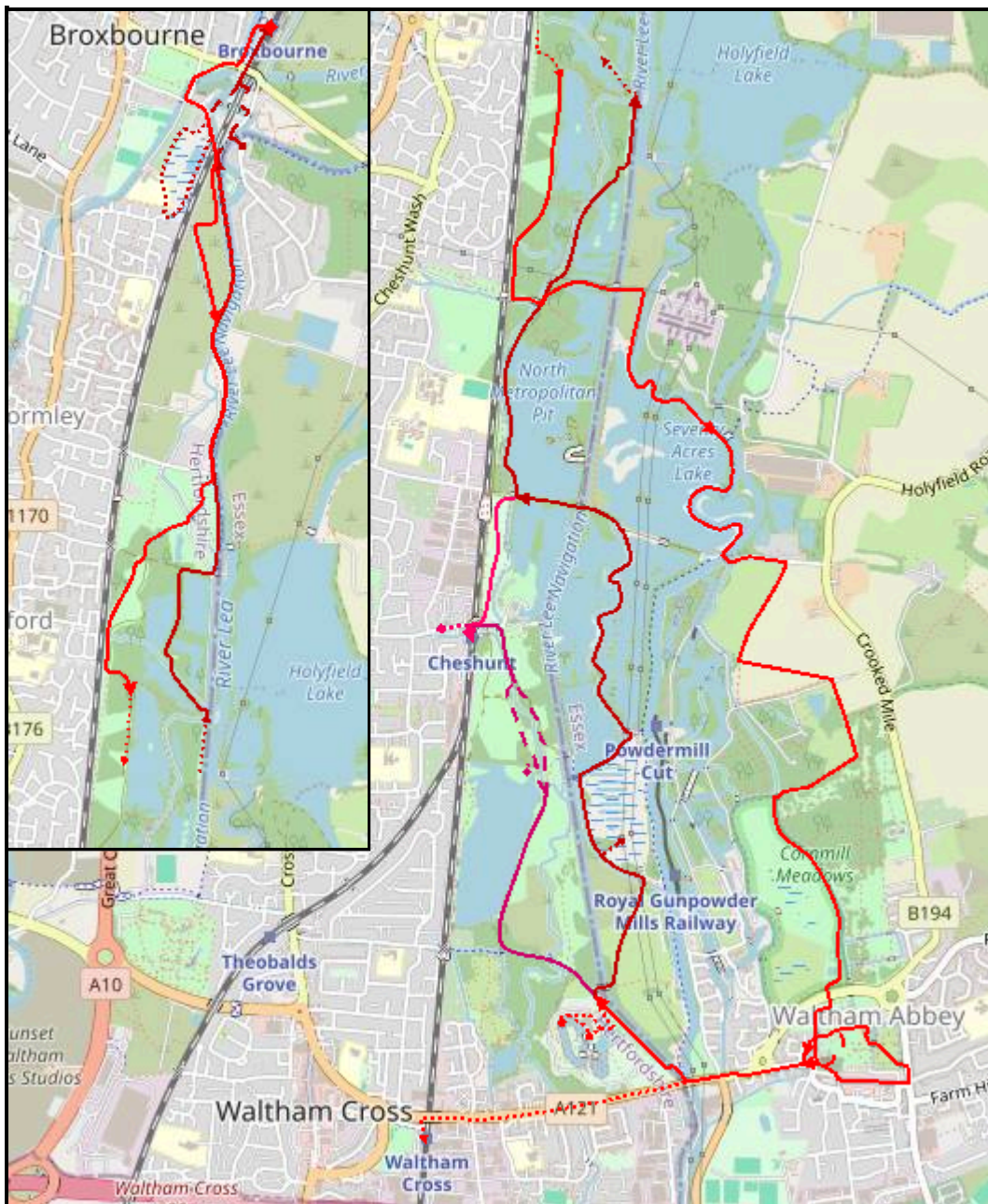
Suggested Train

Take the train nearest to **10:30** from **Liverpool Street** (or **Stratford**) to **Broxbourne**.

Lunch	<p>There are plenty of refreshment places in Waltham Abbey (after 9½–10 km), but the pandemic took its toll on the town's pubs and several have closed or significantly changed in character.</p> <p>The suggested lunch pub was originally the Crown (01992-732590) in Romeland; this closed for a few years but reopened in 2023 as a Red Oak Tavern and would be worth trying again. The Crown's former owners took over the Welsh Harp (01992-848368) in Market Square, but this closed suddenly in early 2025 and its fate is uncertain. Two other pubs on Sun Street are the refurbished Sun Inn (01992-914249) and the Angel (01992-718671), but neither have been tried.</p> <p>As an alternative you might be tempted by Bake You Happy (01992-916560; closed Mon), a 'Tearoom and Cake Shop' alongside Highbridge Roundabout. There are more cafés and fast food places in and around Market Square and Sun Street.</p>
Tea	<p>For the Main Walk there are two places at Broxbourne Waterside, a pleasant spot on the way to the station. The Old Mill Retreat Café (01992-460960; open daily to 4pm winter, 5.30pm summer) serves home-made cakes, while for stronger stuff the nearby Crown (01992-462244) is part of the Vintage Inns chain. There are also some snack bars on the covered walkway to the station platforms, but for other places you would have to detour to the town's High Street, 400m off the walk route.</p> <p>For the Short Walks there are two cafés and two pubs just past Cheshunt station on Windmill Lane: Hackberries Cafe & Bistro (01992-910057; open daily to 5pm) and the small Rose Cafe, plus the Red Cow (01992-623509) and the Maltsters (01992-631369) pubs. An earlier refreshment stop is possible at the Brew Street Kitchen and Bar in the Lee Valley White Water Centre (03000-030616). Although primarily serving visitors taking part in the activities, this modern food outlet declares that it is "open to everyone, from rafters to ramblers". It has plenty of indoor and outdoor seating and is open daily to at least 4pm weekdays, 4.30pm weekends.</p>
Help Us!	<p>After the walk, please leave a comment, it really helps. Thanks!</p> <p>You can also upload photos to the   SWC Group on Flickr (upload your photos) and videos to  Youtube. This walk's tags are:</p>
By Car	Start
Help	National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234
Version	Apr-25 
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Walk Directions

Walk Maps



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Walk Options (Short)

M. Main Walk (19¾ km)

- a. Short Walk 1, finishing at Cheshunt (15½ km)
- b. Short Walk 2, with shorter afternoon (14 km)

Walk Directions

A. Broxbourne Station to Silvermeade (exit) (1½ km)

1. Outside the station go through a gate on the right and climb a flight of steps up an embankment. At the top **turn left** onto a path alongside the **New River**¹, passing the station car park down on your left. At the far end go through a kissing gate and turn right onto Station Road, crossing the river.

2. Cross the road carefully and in 50m **turn half-left** onto a path across a corner of Broxbourne Recreation Ground, with a churchyard beyond the river on your left. At the end turn left onto a lane (Churchfields) to go back across the river and past **St Augustine's** church². At a junction follow the road down to the left, away from the river.
3. The road (now Mill Lane) curves to the right. Keep right at junctions, entering **River Lee Country Park**³. The lane goes alongside the **River Lea**⁴, passing a Canoe & Cycle Hire shed and the **Old Mill Retreat Café**, with a signposted path for a "Wetlands and Woodlands" trail between them.
The café is the suggested tea place at the end of the Main Walk, with the trail an optional extension.
4. Follow the riverside path under a low railway bridge. Before reaching a footbridge over the river there is a wooden kissing gate on the right into **Silvermeade**⁵. If conditions permit, the suggested route is to go through this water meadow.
 - If the meadow looks waterlogged you can simply continue along the towpath for 650m and resume the directions at §B, where the main route rejoins from the second of two more gates into the meadow.
5. Inside the water meadow the grassy path curves gently to the left. You will be leaving this triangular part of the meadow at its far right-hand end, but the path stays close to the towpath before swinging right in front of a belt of trees. Cross a stream in these trees on a wide bridge and go through a wooden kissing gate into the main part of the meadow.
6. Ignore a footbridge across the reed-covered stream on the right and bear slightly left to follow a faint grassy path parallel to the stream for 400m. The path passes several small fenced-off areas and another footbridge on the right as it makes its way back towards the river. At the far end leave the meadow through another kissing gate and turn right onto the towpath.

B. Silvermeade to Ashley Lake (1¾ km)

7. After the exit from Silvermeade head **S** on the towpath alongside the River Lea, which is navigable on this stretch. In 650m, just after passing a car park at the end of Wharf Road, **veer right** off the towpath onto a path across a grassy picnic area, dotted with trees. This swings left and merges with a path from the car park, then bears right to head away from the river.
8. After crossing a ditch on a footbridge you go past a vehicle barrier onto a lane. Turn left briefly onto the lane, then almost immediately **veer right** through another barrier onto the continuation of the footpath. In 200m bear left at a path junction to join a cycleway, heading **S** again.
9. In 50m go straight ahead at a major path crossing, then **immediately veer right** onto a grassy path. In 50m this merges with another path from the right, climbs a small slope and continues across a semi-open area. The path gradually approaches the railway line off to the right and in 250m rejoins the cycleway (which took a longer route past a fishing lake, Railway Pit).
10. You will now be following this cycleway for 1¾ km, to Turnford Brook. After staying close to the tracks for 175m it swings sharply left to head away from them, through a more wooded area. Follow the path as it curves gently round to the right and continues alongside a large fishing lake, **Ashley Lake**.

C. Ashley Lake to the Wildlife Discovery Centre (2½ km)

11. The path goes alongside the lake for 500m, then turns half-right and heads back towards the railway. After a final stretch of 200m near the tracks you come to a path T-junction in front of a stream, **Turnford Brook**. **Turn left** to head **E**, away from a bridge over the railway.
12. In 100m the path crosses the **Small River Lea** and you **fork left**, briefly heading back towards Broxbourne. Keep to the main path as it veers right and goes between the tree-lined edges of two lakes. Go up to and straight across the **River Lee Navigation**⁶ on a high bridge and continue across **Holyfield Marsh** towards a large electricity substation.
13. At a path T-junction flanked by a pair of **Wildlife Bench** sculptures **turn right** to head **S** alongside the **Old River Lea**. In 250m **keep left** at a triangular path junction. The path follows a meandering course between the river and **Seventy Acres Lake** and eventually comes to a new building on the right with a bird hide which you could visit, the **Wildlife Discovery Centre**⁷.

D. The Discovery Centre to Waltham Abbey (Romeland) (3¾ km)

14. Continue on the perimeter path around the lake, passing a viewing platform down on the shore and a footbridge across the river on the left. The path makes a wide loop alongside a meander of the river (Horsemill Stream) and eventually leads into a small car park. **Turn left** to cross the wide **Flood Relief Channel** on **Fishers Green Bridge**, joining the **Greenwich Meridian Trail**⁸ (GMT).
The car park might be closed while construction work is taking place, but the bridge should remain open to pedestrians.
15. In 250m **turn right** off Fishers Green Lane onto a signposted footpath, crossing a (possibly temporary) works access road flanked by gates into the bottom corner of a large farm field. Keep ahead along the field margin, with **Hooks Marsh** beyond the hedge on your right. In 400m – about two-thirds of the way along the field edge – **turn left** as indicated by a footpath waymarker post to go up across the field, heading **ESE**.
The next 400m might be a quagmire in wet weather. OpenStreetMap actually shows the path as going around the field edge (which is not the right of way), but there is no field margin on this stretch so it is unlikely to be any better.
16. If the right of way is not marked out, aim for the left-hand end of the tree boundary on the far side. At that point **turn half-right** as indicated by another waymarker post to go along the right-hand edge of a smaller part of the field, with a high chainlink fence on your right around part of the extensive gunpowder works site.
17. In the field corner go through a wooden gate to enter another part of the Country Park and continue alongside the fence, leaving the GMT (which turns left and then heads due south through woodland into Waltham Abbey). At the fence corner **turn right** to go gently downhill on a broad grassy path between the fence and a closely-packed line of tall conifers.
18. At the bottom of the slope follow this potentially muddy path round to the left and cross a wooden footbridge on the right over the **Cornmill Stream**. **Turn left** onto the grassy path alongside the stream and follow it all the way along the eastern edge of **Cornmill Meadows Dragonfly Sanctuary**⁹.

19. As you approach the south-eastern corner of these water meadows there is an information panel about the three small **Abbey Fish Ponds** off to the right. Leave the meadows through a wooden gate in the perimeter fence ahead and turn right onto a broad grassy path, away from a bridge over the stream. In 50m follow the path round to the left, through a subway under Waltham Abbey's ring road (Abbey View) and up to a footbridge across the stream.

The Abbey Gardens across the bridge are a good place for a picnic, so if you do not want a pub lunch you could stop there and pick up the route again before or after its loop around the town and gardens.

20. For the suggested route **turn right** in front of the bridge. Follow a grassy path alongside the stream, soon curving round to the left. Shortly after passing the **Abbey Gateway**¹⁰ entrance into the gardens **veer right** through a gap into a residential square (Romeland). Bear left and go along the row of houses to come to the first of the town's possible lunch pubs, the **Crown**.

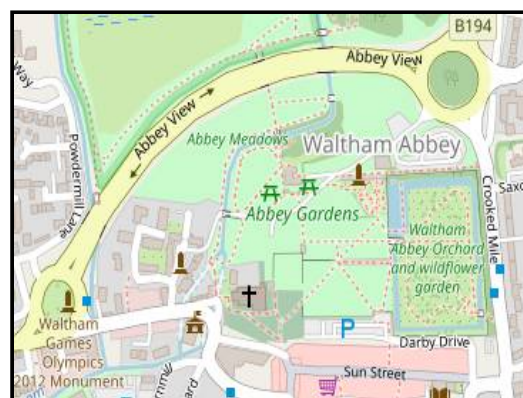
E. A loop around Waltham Abbey (1¼ km • 600m)

21. If you have been to the Crown, turn left out of the pub and then left again onto Highbridge Street. At the end of this street you pass the **Town Hall**¹¹ on the right and come to the west door of the **Church of the Holy Cross and St Lawrence**¹², which is well worth a visit.

The walk now loops around the town before leaving it along Highbridge Street, so you could postpone visiting the church until later. The main route goes out along Sun Street and loops back through the full length of the Abbey Gardens. If you are not planning to visit one of the town's other refreshment places you could take the short cut in [23] through a different part of the gardens, or indeed skip the rest of this section altogether.

22. Main route (1¼ km)

- Take the tree-lined path on the southern side of the church, passing a statue of **King Harold**¹³ high up on its south wall. Where the path splits **keep right** to stay on the main path.
- The path leads out to Market Square via a short passage beside the (possibly closed) **Welsh Harp**. Bear left across the square into the pedestrianised Sun Street.
- About halfway along this street you go over a pavement mosaic marking the **Greenwich Meridian**¹⁴ and pass the **Sun Inn** on the right.
- At the end of the street the **Epping Forest District Museum**¹⁵ is in an attractive half-timbered building on the right and the **Angel** pub is on the left, just before the junction with Quaker Lane.
- Join Quaker Lane and turn left at the traffic lights ahead onto a residential street (Crooked Mile). In 75m **turn left** through a gate into **Waltham Abbey Gardens**¹⁶. Cross a moat on a wooden footbridge into the old **Abbey Orchard** (and wildflower garden).
- Turn half-right** to cut across the orchard to the middle of its western side. Cross another footbridge into the main part of the gardens and **fork right** onto a path leading to the enclosed **Rose Garden**.
- If you exit on its northern side you will come out opposite the site of the medieval **Bloomery Forge**¹⁷, in which case turn left onto the path alongside the garden, soon passing another pavement mosaic marking the **Meridian**.



- h. Follow the path up to the building ahead (the **Church Centre**), where there is an information panel about the **Infirmary and Chapel**.
 - If instead you exit the Rose Garden through the **Sun & Moon** gateway on its western side, the Church Centre is straight ahead.

23. Short cut (600m)

- a. Take the tree-lined path on the southern side of the church, passing a statue of **King Harold**¹³ high up on its south wall. Where the path splits **fork left** to stay alongside the church.
 - b. Veer left around the back of the church to come to a stone slab **memorial** marking the king's possible burial site.
 - c. With the church behind you, go diagonally across the patch of grass to the left towards an iron grille in the stone wall. Go through a gap in the wall to its right.
 - d. Turn left and go alongside the wall to the other end of this medieval **Slype**¹⁸, where there is a **Cloister Passage** information panel (and a slightly better view through the grille at this end).
 - e. Follow the path up to the building ahead (the **Church Centre**), where there is an information panel about the **Infirmary and Chapel**.
24. Take the path heading **SW** away from the Church Centre, passing a tall wooden sculpture on the grass off to the right, the **Ancestor**¹⁹. The path merges with another from the left and leaves the gardens through the main gateway. Cross the **Cornmill Stream** on a wide bridge and turn left onto the path you were on earlier.
25. You will be leaving Waltham Abbey along Highbridge Street. For variety the suggested route is to continue alongside the stream to the Abbey Church, passing the **Mill site** and the **Rectory**, but you could repeat your earlier route and cut through Romeland.

F. Romeland to the White Water Centre (1 • 1½ km)

26. Head **W** along Highbridge Street, away from the church. Keep to the left-hand side of the large roundabout (with the **2012 Olympic Shield**²⁰ in its centre), passing the **Bake You Happy** tearoom and now on the B194. Use the pedestrian crossing to switch to its right-hand side before reaching the traffic lights ahead.
27. Unless you want to make a long out-and-back detour along Beaulieu Drive to the museum at the former **Royal Gunpowder Mills**²¹ (500m away), keep ahead at this junction. You are now on the A121 and in 150m you reach the town bridge across both the Flood Relief Channel and the Lee Navigation.
 - If you want to curtail the walk by finishing at **Waltham Cross** station, simply continue along the A121 for a further 1 km, crossing to its left-hand side at some point. On the railway bridge go down a flight of steps to the station forecourt and cross the footbridge to Platform 1 for trains to London.
28. To continue the walk, **turn right** off the road onto the broad path between the two river channels. After passing a **Viking Ship** sculpture **veer left** across the grass and cross the navigation at **Waltham Town Lock**. Turn right and go along the towpath for 400m. There is a bridge over the navigation ahead and a pedestrian entrance into the **Lee Valley White Water Centre** on your left.
- If you want to visit the centre before continuing the walk, follow the directions below.*

29. Detour into the White Water Centre (+~½ km)

- a. Go through the pedestrian entrance onto an enclosed path and skirt around a lake to reach the main building. There are steps from the Reception area up to the **Brew Street Kitchen and Bar** on the first floor.

- b. There are paths from the large Terrace behind the café and around the side of the building to the Olympic course. If it is operating you can watch canoeists and rafters tackling it from a footbridge.
- c. To resume the walk retrace your steps out of the centre.

If you are finishing at Cheshunt via the shorter afternoon route, go to §L.

G. The White Water Centre to Cadmore Lane (3 km)

30. Go across the Lee Navigation on the Canal Bridge into a large open area, the **Showground**. **Veer left** off the main path onto a grassy path heading **NNE** for 450m, passing under pylons near the far side.
31. Go through a gate, cross **Horsemill Stream** on a wide bridge and turn left onto a surfaced path. Follow this path alongside the stream for 500m, initially heading **NE** and gradually curving round to the right.
 - After 200m you could make an out-and-back detour to **Snipe Hide**, overlooking the floodplain grassland of **Hall Marsh Scrape** on your right. Old information panels show another viewing point on this stretch but Teal Hide has disappeared.
32. At a path T-junction turn right onto another surfaced path, now alongside another stream (**Powdermill Cut**). On this stretch the steel **Phoenix Hide** offers an unusual viewing point across Hall Marsh Scrape. As the path nears the Flood Relief Channel **turn left** by a small grassy area containing a **Banded Demoiselle** sculpture, crossing Powdermill Cut on a footbridge.
33. Ignore a boardwalk off to the left and simply follow this unsurfaced path for just over 1 km as it meanders along a strip of land. **Hooks Marsh Lake** is on your right throughout and there is a stream on your left, with **Friday Lake** and later **Police Pit** beyond it. The path ends at a T-junction where you turn left onto the perimeter path around **Seventy Acres Lake**.
34. After the path swerves right and left **fork left** at a **Viking Sign Post** sculpture in a triangular path junction. Go back across the Lee Navigation and keep ahead on a broad track (Cadmore Lane), with a large fishing lake on the right (**North Metropolitan Pit**). At the corner of this lake there is a narrow path off to the right just before the track crosses the **Small River Lea**.

If you are doing the Short Walk (to Cheshunt), go to §K.

H. Cadmore Lane to Aqueduct Lock (1¾ km)

35. For the longer ending in Broxbourne, **turn right** in front of the bridge onto the lakeside path. In 250m you might be able to glimpse a **Play Boulders** sculpture on a small open space across the Small River Lea. In a further 200m the path goes up a small slope and merges with a cycleway coming from a brick bridge over the stream.
36. Keep ahead on the cycleway, still between the Small River Lea and the northern end of the lake. In 350m **keep right** at a major path junction, where the stream is joined by **Turnford Brook**. In a further 50m **keep ahead** on an unsurfaced path, leaving the cycleway which veers right.
37. This woodland path goes alongside the stream for 500m, with glimpses of more fishing lakes on both sides. Eventually it swings right and meanders through the trees before coming out in front of the Lee Navigation. Turn left and go along its towpath for 250m to **Aqueduct Lock**.

I. Aqueduct Lock to Broxbourne Waterside (2½ km)

38. At the far end of the lock you could simply remain on the towpath, but for variety the suggested route is to **turn left** down steps onto a path signposted to Ashley Lake. **Turn right** at a path junction and follow the woodland path over a low rise on a shallow flight of steps with some new wooden fencing, heading **NW**.
39. In 200m the narrow path turns half-right, crosses a ditch and goes through a patch of scrubland to a small car park. Ignore a path opposite and **turn left** to go out along its unsurfaced access road, which immediately bends right to head **N**. You pass **Railway Pit** on the left, **Boot Pit** and then **Lee Pit** on the right. At the end of the access road turn right onto a lane to go back towards the Lee Navigation.
40. After skirting around a metal fieldgate ignore a sharp left turn onto a lane, but **turn left** onto the towpath in front of a bridge. You soon pass **King's Weir** where the navigation merges with the main **River Lea**, which is navigable on this stretch. In 200m, shortly before passing a car park, you pass the path on the left which you took earlier and now have to retrace your outward route for 650m.
41. When you reach the information panel for **Silvermeade**⁵ the suggested route is to carry on along the towpath. In 700m, near the exit from Silvermeade, there is a footbridge ahead over the River Lea where it splits from the Lee Navigation.
 - If you want to return through the water meadow, go through the gate and follow a faint grassy path parallel to a stream on the left. At the far end go through a wooden kissing gate, cross a tree-lined stream on a wide bridge and turn right to go around two sides of a smaller part of the meadow before rejoining the towpath.

J. Broxbourne Waterside to the Station (¾ • 1½ km)

There is a choice of routes to the station, with the café route in [42] including an optional circuit around some wetlands on a long boardwalk. If the café has closed or you need something stronger, either take the pub route in [43] or detour to the town's High Street via Mill Lane or the Recreation Ground (see map).

42. Old Mill Café route (¾ • 1½ km)

- a. Ignore the footbridge and follow the path alongside the River Lea, going under a low railway bridge and past the car park for the **Old Mill Retreat Café**.

In the marshy area behind the car park there is a horseshoe-shaped "Wetlands and Woodlands" trail, although at the time of writing it was fenced off for repairs. Even when open it should not be attempted if the back of the car park is under water, since part of the boardwalk through the wetlands area will be flooded too.

b. Optional Wetlands & Woodlands extension (+¾ km)

- If conditions permit you could do this extension in either direction. The wetlands section is a long boardwalk which starts from the back of the car park; the woodlands section starts between the café and a Canoe & Cycle Hire shed. Whichever direction you take, ignore steps up to an exit at the far end and return on the other path.

- c. To head for the station, go past the Canoe & Cycle Hire shed and **turn right** to cross the river. **Veer left** through the ruins of **Broxbourne Mill**²² and follow a tarmac path running alongside the river. Just before this goes under the railway, **turn left** up steps onto a metal footbridge.



43. The Crown route (¾ km)

- a. Cross the River Lea on the footbridge to go alongside the Lee Navigation. At the next bridge go up steps to a narrow lane and cross the navigation to come to the **Crown**.
- b. After visiting the pub, retrace your steps over the road bridge and follow the lane round to the right. Go past a small car park opposite the **Lee Valley Boat Centre** and across another waterway.
 - A short out-and-back detour up the steps on the right would reveal the site of **Broxbourne Lido**²³.
- c. To head for the station, go into the car park opposite the steps up to the lido and **veer right** to go diagonally across it. In the far corner turn left onto a tarmac path going under the railway and **immediately turn right** up steps onto a metal footbridge.

44. To complete the walk, cross the River Lea and follow the path up a slope and under Station Road. The station²⁴ is at the far end of its long car park, with the entrance on the left. All the platforms are accessed via an overhead walkway, with trains to London leaving from Platforms 1 or 2.

K. Cadmore Lane to Cheshunt Station (¾ km)

45. Keep ahead on Cadmore Lane, crossing the Small River Lea. The most direct route is along the surfaced path beside the stream, but the suggested route is to carry on briefly along the main track and then **veer left** to go past a large **Stag Beetles** sculpture on the grass. Either way, take any route along the full length of the broad grassy strip between the stream and the railway line (or one of the paths along its edges).
46. In 500m all routes converge on a small car park. Go through this and turn right to come to the level crossing in front of Cheshunt station.
 - There is a direct entrance onto Platform 1 on this side of the crossing if you want to go straight back on a Greater Anglia train.
47. There are several refreshment places less than 150m away on Windmill Lane, on the other side of the crossing: the **Red Cow** pub and **Hackberries Cafe & Bistro** on the left; **Rose Cafe** and the **Maltsters** pub on the right.
48. Return along Windmill Lane to the main station entrance. London Overground trains leave from Platform 3, on this side; cross to Platform 1 via the station footbridge for Greater Anglia trains to Liverpool Street or Stratford.

L. The White Water Centre to Cheshunt Station *direct* (2¼ km)

49. Take the path heading **NW** away from the canal bridge for 400m, passing a sign for a **Disc Golf Course** and crossing the Small River Lea. At a triangular path junction **fork right** and keep right at further junctions to head **N** alongside a large lake, **Bowyers Water**. In its north-eastern corner the path forks and you can take either route: both go past a large wooden sculpture.

50. Giant's Chair route

- a. Fork left at the path junction. In 75m the route continues ahead at the next path junction (but a short out-and-back detour to the left would bring you to a viewing platform over an **Orchid Area** in front of the lake).
- b. Continuing on the main route, the path merges with another from the left and goes along the right-hand side of a meadow (**Thistly Marsh**), soon passing the **Giant's Chair** sculpture on the right.
- c. In a further 150m **fork right** onto a path through some trees. Cross the Small River Lea on a footbridge and **turn left** onto a cycleway, rejoining the other route.

51. Green Man route

- a. Fork right at the path junction to cross the Small River Lea on a wooden footbridge. Where the path splits again in front of the **Shrine** sculpture (of a 'Green Man'), **fork left**.
 - b. In 150m the path merges with a cycleway coming from **Waltham Common Lock**. In a further 300m the other route rejoins from a footbridge on the left.
52. Follow this cycleway for 250m, passing a group of wooden sculptures in a clearing on the right along the way (which you could detour around if you are not pressed for time). At the end turn left onto Pindar car park's access road to come to the level crossing in front of Cheshunt station.
 - There is a direct entrance onto Platform 1 on this side of the crossing if you want to go straight back on a Greater Anglia train.
 53. There are several refreshment places less than 150m away on Windmill Lane, on the other side of the crossing: the **Red Cow** pub and **Hackberries Cafe & Bistro** on the left; **Rose Cafe** and the **Maltsters** pub on the right.
 54. Return along Windmill Lane to the main station entrance. London Overground trains leave from Platform 3, on this side; cross to Platform 1 via the station footbridge for Greater Anglia trains to Liverpool Street or Stratford.

Walk Notes

1. The misleadingly-named **New River** is an aqueduct, constructed in the early 17thC to increase the supply of clean water to London.
2. **St Augustine, Broxbourne** dates from the 15thC and contains several interesting memorials, including a tomb with effigies of Sir Henry Cock and his wife surrounded by their kneeling children.
3. **River Lee Country Park** is a large open space between Broxbourne and Waltham Abbey. It is part of the linear Lee Valley Regional Park, which follows the course of the **River Lea** for 42 km from Ware to the Thames. [By convention the spelling *Lee* is used for constructed features such as the Navigation and the Country Park, whereas the natural river and place names derived from it are spelt *Lea*.]
4. The **River Lea** runs for 68 km from its source in the Chilterns near Luton to the Thames in east London. It splits into several waterways (Old River Lea, Small River Lea, etc) as well as the constructed channels.
5. **Silvermeade** is an area of wet grassland dissected by a network of ditches. The fences along their sides are to protect the banks and provide a habitat for water voles.
6. The **River Lee Navigation** was constructed alongside long stretches of the River Lea in the 18thC to improve navigation, which had become more difficult with the increased extraction of water into the New River.
7. The **Wildlife Discovery Centre** opened in December 2020, replacing the Bittern Information Point. It contains a large bird hide overlooking Seventy Acres Lake and a 5m-high viewing tower with 360° views.
8. The **Greenwich Meridian Trail** is a long-distance coast-to-coast route which runs for 439 km, from Peacehaven in East Sussex to Sand le Mere in East Yorkshire. It was inaugurated in 2009 to mark the 125th anniversary of the Meridian.
9. **Cornmill Meadows Dragonfly Sanctuary** is an area of partly-flooded rough grassland surrounded by slow-flowing rivers which together support many species of dragonflies and damselflies. It has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
10. The **Abbey Gateway** was the main entrance to the monastic area, with separate arches for horse-drawn vehicles and pedestrians. The interior wall is one of the earliest brick walls in the country, partly built with large medieval red bricks known as 'Waltham Great Bricks'.
11. **Waltham Abbey Town Hall** was built in 1904 in a Continental Art Nouveau style.

12. The **Church of the Holy Cross and St Lawrence, Waltham Abbey** was rebuilt in Norman style between 1090 and 1150, the fourth church on the site. When construction of the abbey started in 1177 it was greatly lengthened eastwards but the extended nave, transepts and chancel were all demolished in 1540. The west tower was added in 1556 after the old (east) tower collapsed.
13. **King Harold (Godwinson)** is said to have been cured of paralysis while praying before the Holy Cross when Earl of Essex. After his death at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 legend has it that his body was brought to Waltham, but some historians have speculated that he is buried in Bosham church, in West Sussex.
14. The **Greenwich Meridian** was established as the universal baseline of 0° longitude at an international conference in 1884. It runs through Waltham Abbey where it is marked by pavement mosaics in Sun Street and the Abbey Gardens, as well as the 'Sun & Moon' gateway (1995) in the Rose Garden.
15. The **Epping Forest District Museum** of local history is contained in two historic houses which have been skilfully combined into a single building.
16. **Waltham Abbey Gardens** were laid out by the Denny family, who built Abbey House on the site of the former abbey at the end of the 16thC. The house was demolished in 1770.
17. The **Bloomery Forge** smelted iron ore and provided metalwork for the abbey and its farm (a bloom is an iron or steel bar in an intermediate stage of manufacture).
18. The **Slype** is a stone passageway with a vaulted ceiling leading into the cloisters, a remnant of the 12thC abbey.
19. The **Ancestor** sculpture (1992) was carved by artist Helena Stykianides from a single oak tree cut from Epping Forest. It represents an Augustinian canon and has a series of enigmatic images on the back.
20. The **2012 Olympic Shield** commemorates the building of the Lee Valley White Water Centre, which was constructed to hold the canoe slalom events. It depicts King Harold surrounded by King Henry VIII and various civic and Olympic plaques.
21. The **Royal Gunpowder Mills** were acquired by the Crown in 1787, taking over a private business which had been operating for over a century. Production continued until 1945 when the site became a research centre for rocket propellants, but this closed in 1991. A heritage centre has been open to the public since 2001.
22. **Broxbourne Mill** is mentioned in the Domesday Book and produced flour until the late 19thC. In the 20thC the mill wheel powered a small engineering works, but the three-storey building burned down in 1949. It has been partially restored by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.
23. **Broxbourne Lido** was built by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority in 1978, but demolished only 30 years later because it did not meet contemporary health & safety standards.
24. **Broxbourne Station** was relocated from its original Station Road site in 1959, hence the distinctively modern building (which is Grade II listed) on a railway line which opened in 1840.

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