

Laindon Circular		
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## Laindon Circular

**Start:** Laindon Station

**Finish:** Laindon Station

Laindon Station, map reference TQ 680 881, is 39 km east of Charing X, 44m above sea level and in **Essex**.

**Length:** 20.8 km (12.9 mi), of which 1.5 km (0.9 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

**Cumulative ascent/descent:** 336m.

For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk options**.

**Toughness:** 5 out of 10

**Time:** 4 hours 45 minutes walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 7 hours.

**Transport:** Laindon station is on the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway line from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness in eastern Essex, with four trains an hour Mon-Sat and two on Sundays, journey time is between 30 and 34 minutes. All trains stop at one or more of the following DLR, Overground or Underground Stations: Limehouse, West Ham, Barking, Upminster.

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** Take the train closest to 9.30 hours.

**OS Landranger Map:** 177 (East London)

**OS Explorer Map:** 175 (Southend-on-Sea & Basildon)

### Walk Notes:

This is an energetic and varied figure-of-eight walk through some tranquil, hilly parts of Essex, mostly through woods, both ancient and modern, and through flower-rich meadows and some farmland, which are all parts of Langdon Hills Country Park and the neighbouring Langdon Nature Reserve (which itself consists of five separate reserves). The hills form a crescent shaped ridge running West-to-East, giving panoramic views over the Thames Estuary from many points: out to Canvey Island and Fobbing Marshes in the East, across to Kent and to London's Skyline in the West. The lunch destination Horndon-on-the-Hill is a conservation area and features several noteworthy buildings as well as a multi-award winning pub. On the return you walk through more beautiful, undulating woods and then through the Dunton Plotlands part of the Nature Reserve, an interesting area formerly full of bungalows and chalets for Londoners, now with a brand-new large visitor centre and café.

This walk contains some arable field crossings around lunch (about 1000m in total), where it is also afflicted by some road noise from the nearby A13 for a while.

**Walk options:**

A **Shortcut** in the morning cuts out 2.4 km and 28m ascent,

A **Shortcut** in the afternoon cuts out 2.6 km and 43m ascent.

**Cutting out the outer loop** to Horndon-on-the-Hill reduces the walk by 5.5 km.

**Bus Line 11** (Mon-Fri) takes you from Horndon-on-the-Hill to Purfleet or Basildon stations (every 2 hours).

**Lunch** (details last updated 08/04/2021)

**The Bell Inn** High Road, *Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 8LD (01375 642 463, <http://www.bell-inn.co.uk/>)* Open all day. Food served all day. The Bell Inn is located 10.4 km into the full walk. It is a 15<sup>th</sup> Century Coaching Inn run by the same family for over 75 years and features two busy bars, an open fire, numerous ales on hand pump and a top-class wine-by-the-glass list. The menu changes daily, using seasonal and local produce where possible.

The Bell is featured in all the 'serious' guides and has won numerous industry awards. Consequently, the restaurant area is **often fully booked well in advance**. The bar area operates on a first-come-first-serve basis though, but serves a different menu. For Sunday lunch time the restaurant menu is also served at their next door Ostlers Bar & Restaurant.

**The Swan** 121 High Road, *Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, SS17 8LD (01375 673 707)*.

Open all day. The Swan is located 10.4 km (6.5 mi) into the full walk and now a freehouse.

**Tea** (details last updated 08/04/2021)

**Langdon Visitor Centre** Dunton Plotlands, Lower Dunton Road, *Basildon, Essex, SS16 6EB (01268 419 103, <http://www.essexwt.org.uk/reserves/langdon>)*. Langdon Visitor Centre is located 3.1 km from the end of the full walk. After a complete rebuild, the new centre will open in summer 2021. Check details and opening hours on the website.

## Notes:

### Laindon

Laindon is an Ancient Parish in Essex, England. The oldest known name for it is Ligeandune, probably meaning 'hill settlement by a stream called Lea' (Celtic, meaning 'light river'). It was based on the (probably smaller) Manor of the same name and now lies mostly within the urban area of Basildon. It is north of Laindon railway station on the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway. South of the railway station and line is Langdon Hills.

### Marks Hill Nature Reserve

Ancient and secondary woodland, much of it restored to the coppice cycle, part of Langdon Nature Reserve.

### Willow Park Nature Reserve

At 90 hectares, the largest part of Langdon Nature Reserve with the greatest variety of habitats. An ancient hedge is part of the boundary of a former deer park.

### One Tree Hill

Now a part of Langdon Hills Country Park, in 1886 the Tilbury brickfield company had developed One Tree Hill, with two tile kilns and a light railway to take the brick earth down to the brickworks at the foot of the hill. The industry is last mentioned in 1906 and all that remains today is the large enclosed sand pit together with ponds and spoil heaps.

### Langdon Hills Country Park

Langdon is of Saxon origin, meaning 'Long Hill'. The Country Park and the adjoining Nature Reserve sit on a crescent shaped hilly ridge extending from Dunton in the West to Vange in the East, giving panoramic views over the Thames Estuary and across to Kent and London. The hills were saved from major housing development when they were bought by the County Council in the 1930s under the 'Greenbelt scheme'. In 1949 the decision to build Basildon New Town was to lead to an ever increasing number of local visitors to the park. The needs of 150,000 local residents for peaceful countryside make the hills more important than ever. In 1973 the Langdon Hills Open Spaces were declared as a Country Park. It now consists of a mixture of meadows, farmland and modern and ancient woodland and is split into two sections known as Westley Heights and One Tree Hill.

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/langdon-hills-country-park/overview>

### Horndon-on-the-Hill

Horndon-on-the-Hill appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Horninduna, meaning 'horn-shaped hill'. A woolmarket was established in the village in the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the building later became a shelter for the poor people of the area and still exists. Several other old buildings line High Road. Horndon-on-the-Hill is one of the seven conservation areas of Thurrock Unitary Authority and was the first of the seven to be designated, in September 1969.

### St. Peter & St. Paul, Horndon-on-the-Hill

The church dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and is Grade I listed, although a proportion of the flint, rubble & Kentish ragstone construction material are from the Roman area. An interesting detail is the timber-and-peg jointed structure of the belfry. The church is open most Saturday mornings for visitors.

### Langdon Nature Reserve

This is Essex Wildlife Trust's largest inland reserve, having more than 200 hectares of flower-rich meadows, ponds, ancient and secondary woodland, and hundreds of former plotland gardens and was bought in 1989 thanks to a generous endowment in memory of Herbert Langdon Dowsett. Its land lies to the north east and the north west of Langdon Hills Country Park. The original reserve consisted of four sections: from west to east these are Dunton Plotlands, Lincewood, Marks Hill and Willow Park. In 2007 the reserve was extended to include a large lake and some meadows immediately north of Dunton called (unsurprisingly) 'Langdon Lake & Meadows'. In Dunton there is a visitor centre, a picnic area and an original plotland house preserved as a museum. Leaflets with themed walks through the Nature Reserve are available here.

### Dunton Plotlands

The Dunton section of the Langdon Nature Reserve once had hundreds of bungalows and chalets in an area known as "Plotlands". They were built between 1900 and 1940 by Londoners, utilising farmland that became redundant after the agricultural depression of the 1890s (a result of a series of poor harvests and cheap imports from America). The last residents left in the 1980s. One remaining house, the 'Haven' is now a museum with original 1930s/1940s memorabilia, exhibiting the natural and social history of the area.

<https://www.laindonhistory.org.uk/>

## WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train in **Laindon** on platform 3 and leave the station through the exit near the middle of it into the station forecourt (i.e.: ignore the footbridge over to the other platforms). *Turn left* and in 20m **[!]** *turn left* up a footbridge signposted 'Platforms 1 & 2'. The bridge continues past those platforms and joins a road bridge, where you *turn left* along its pavement. **[!]** *Turn left* down some steps immediately on the far side of the road bridge to *turn right* at the bottom along a tarmac path and in 10m *fork right* along a signposted bridleway screened from the main road on your left by trees.

Ignore all ways off and in 340m follow the bridleway round to the right away from the road (in 15m ignore a horse-blocking barrier on the left into trees) and into **Marks Hill Nature Reserve**. In 60m you *turn left* and in 45m emerge into a clearing in a wood. Follow a clear path through the clearing (170°) and in 165m you reach a four-way junction with a track running left-to-right. Cross the track and go through a horse-blocking barrier with a red-topped pole (numbered 26) to the left of a barrier and continue broadly in the same direction (190°) uphill into the wood. In 135m you come to a staggered four-way junction of forest paths.

You now have two equally good routes through the wood to choose from:

- either *turn right* (signed 'Albemarle Crescent') and follow the path around to the left, then past a pond and further uphill, until near the top of the rise you *turn right* at a T-junction and walk through a wooden squeeze gate;
- or you can continue in the same direction through a few clearings and eventually curve right uphill with the path until in 440m you walk through a wooden squeeze gate, where another path joins from the right.

In 50m you *turn left* at a T-junction with a wider forest path. In 40m pass the fenced and covered **Laindon Reservoir** on the left, where the path levels out. In 80m you emerge from the wood and continue in the same direction on a tarmac drive and in 40m cross a road by a 'Bridleway 247 Langdon Nature Reserve'-signpost pointing backwards. Continue along a narrow gravel path between hedges and in 65m *turn left* down a quiet residential lane. In 200m – just past a small car park on your left and just before some metal field gates – *fork right* through a wooden horse-blocking barrier to the right of a metal field gate. In a further 15m **[!]** *turn right*, along an unmarked indistinct footpath (initially) through a wood (170°). In 50m go over a stile and into a pasture and continue along its left-hand side. [The **right-of-way** runs along the left-hand boundary, but some large areas of bramble mean you inevitably have to veer into the pasture.]

In 175m, and 20m before a fenced horse exercise area in front of some farm buildings, *turn hard left* to an easily-missed dilapidated stile under an overhanging tree 40m away, and awkwardly climb over the stile to continue along a fenced footpath. In 60m you emerge onto a tarmac lane at a bend by a signpost 'FP 175 Lee Chapel'.

[*This path has been wildly overgrown and impassable at times.* In that scenario, leave the field to the right of the farm buildings of **Westley Hall Farm** over a stile to the right of a wooden gate and *turn left* along a lane for 90m (with splendid views on the left), where you *turn left* with the lane for 100m. Note: this is **not a right-of-way.**]

### Here you have a choice:

**For a Shortcut** you *turn right* along the lane (for details see the end of the main walk directions under **Shortcut I**).

**For the main walk** you *turn left* along the lane and in 15m *fork left* off the lane to go through a gap to the left of a metal field gate by a signpost 'FP 176 Lee Chapel Lane' into **Willow Park Nature Reserve** (60°). In 30m pass a bench at the **Kingston**

**Ridge**-viewpoint just before the path descends. In 80m the path veers left, in 40m you ignore a left turning path and in 25m *veer left* with the path (10°), ignoring a right fork through a horse-blocking barrier to the right of a metal field gate. In 30m *veer right* and in 100m continue in the same direction at a three-way junction of paths with a footpath marker post on the right (35°). In 70m you can see a clearing on the left some 40m away. In 20m you *bear right* (due E), in 50m with a high wire mesh fence on your left (with a sign 'Private Land – Please stay on the path').

In 130m you walk through a barrier and *turn right* at a T-junction with a broad tarmac, later gravel path. This is a joint cycle- and footpath, part of **Route 13** of the **National Cycle Network**. Follow this undulating path through the wood for 620m, ignoring all ways off, until – with a road visible through the trees 50m ahead – you *turn left* with a NCN 13-marker at a four-way junction of paths. In 150m *turn right* at a T-junction of paths and in 40m walk through a metal squeeze gate to the left of a horse-compatible gate to leave the **Willow Park Nature Reserve**.

Cross **Dry Street** and continue in the same direction along a bridle path shielded from **One Tree Hill** road by a line of trees. You pass **Providence Orchard** on the right and in 50m you have a field on the right and in 20m you can see **Dry Street Memorial Church** on the left through the trees. In 35m the path *turns left* to cross the road and you walk through a small car park, and in 20m through a wooden gate to *turn right* between a fence on the left with a meadow behind, and a hedge on the right. In 40m ignore a stile in the fence on the left and in 115m *turn left* at a four-way junction by a red-topped pole (numbered 19) on the left, now with a wood on the right.

In 210m ignore a stile on the right into a pasture, where the path veers left and up. In 200m *turn down right* at a three-way junction along a gravel track with views into the **Thames Valley** and to **Kent** beyond. In 120m *turn right* with the gravel track, ignoring a stile on the left into a pasture. In 110m **[!]** continue in the same direction through a wooden fence gap into a pasture, where the gravel track turns down left, by a red-topped pole (numbered 17), and continue along its left-hand side. In 65m you continue in the same direction into **Martinhole Wood** and cross a wooden two-railed plank bridge over a stream. Walk uphill through the wood all the way to the top, ignoring all ways off and then continue in the same direction with large meadows visible behind trees on the left and then also on the right.

In another 80m emerge from the trees in an open area with splendid views across a small valley on the right and panoramic views on the left – **over the Thames Valley** across **Fobbing Marshes to Canvey Island**, via the **ex-refineries**, now Oil Terminals, at Coryton and Shellhaven and the new **London Gateway** deep water container port. You are on **One Tree Hill**, part of **Langdon Hills Country Park**. In 50m walk through a gap next to a wooden field gate and cross One Tree Hill road to walk up some steps and through a car park to an **Information Room**. Continue to the left of the Information Room past or through some **Recycled Shelters** by a **Picnic Area** to then *veer left* (just to the right of a hedge, 210°) into an open area, again with (partial) **views** to both sides of a clump of trees, **westerly into the Thames Valley**.

In 40m you walk to the left of a small clump of birches with an extra-wide bench in front of it and continue across the sloping meadow on a bearing of 225°, along a usually clear path. In 120m you **[!]** *turn left* at the fringe of **Northlands Wood**, ignoring a path into the wood, but in 20m you **[!]** *turn right* along another path into the wood (when level with the centre of a large clump of trees in the field). In 50m emerge in another sloping clearing and continue along its upper right-hand side with Northlands Wood on your right. In 110m you *veer left* towards a protruding corner of the wood 80m away and there *bear left* towards the bottom left corner of the meadow (200°). There ignore a

fence gap leading onto a wide gravel bridleway and *turn right* into the wood along a narrow path, initially close to the gravel bridle path.

In 15m ignore a wooden kissing gate on the left and a right turning path, in 55m the path *turns right* (300°), in 45m you *turn left* at a four-way junction of paths (250° initially) through an area filled with wood anemones in season, and in 210m you *turn left* at a T-junction of paths to leave the wood after 20m through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate. You emerge at a three-way junction of wide gravel bridle paths by a red-topped pole (numbered 12) on the left. **[!]** Cross the gravel paths and continue through a narrow fence and hedge gap into a pasture (i.e.: in the previous direction) and follow a path along the right-hand side of the field.

In 110m leave the field through a hedge gap and *turn right* at a signposted four-way junction of footpaths along a grassy farm track (signposted 'Public Footpath 198'). In 60m cross a large arable field in the same direction along a usually well-cleared path (or skirt it around the left-hand side) and in 250m leave it on an earthbridge over a ditch and continue in the same direction along a grassy margin *to the left* of a hedge and ditch (with the wooded **Old Hill** on the right across a field). In 180m the hedge ends and in 250m you reach a signposted three-way footpath junction at a wood's corner, with Public Footpath 86 joining from the right across a large arable field. This is Shortcut I. Continue in the same direction over an earth bridge across a ditch and into the wood.

**\*)** Follow a meandering path through the wood and in 350m *turn left* inside the wood with a yellow marker on a tree (i.e.: ignore a signposted footpath junction 20m to the right, **the return route** passes that junction). In 30m emerge from the wood by a footpath marker post and continue in the same direction along a right-hand field boundary (145°) and in 220m continue in the same direction with another footpath marker post across the field where the wood ends. On a hillside on the right, you have the lunch time destination **Horndon-on-the-Hill**. In 220m reach a corner of this vast field and continue in the same direction along the left-hand grassy boundary of the field.

In 260m *turn right* with the boundary and in 20m *turn left* by a footpath marker post across an earthbridge into the neighbouring field and *turn right* along its boundary. In 410m *turn left* along a farm track at a T-junction with a Public Footpath 32-signpost, towards the **A13**, which has been audible for a few minutes. In 340m – after going through or around a double metal field gate and by the trunk road – *turn right* along the left edge of a field (screened from the A13 by a row of trees) with a Public Footpath 34-signpost. In 160m *turn half right* (260°) with a 'Public Footpath 34 (Horndon-on-the-Hill)'-signpost across the field aiming for a white topped pole (not initially visible).

In 180m cross a railed footbridge over a ditch by the white-topped pole and in 25m *fork right* along a footpath through a wooded area. In 100m you *turn left* out of the wooded strip by another white topped marker post to cross a field along a clear wide grassy strip (due W). In 320m continue in the same direction with a footpath marker post in the field corner through an overgrown area and in 35m go over a stile by a footpath signpost onto a roadside verge. *Turn right* along the verge for 20m to then *turn left* across the road and over a stile on the other side. *Turn right* to go along the right-hand side of a field towards **Horndon-on-the-Hill**, visible ahead. In 460m, in the far field corner, *fork right* along a footpath leading in 70m to the **High Road**, with the highly recommended lunch option **The Bell Inn** on your left, and **The Swan** 75m on the right.

*With The Bell Inn behind you, turn right* then in 25m *turn left* along **Orsett Road** to the left of the **Country Fayre Village Store**. In 50m you go through the lychgate into the churchyard of **St. Peter & St. Paul, Horndon-on-the-Hill** along a tarmac path lined by pollarded lime trees, to exit in 70m on the other side through a wooden gate and to continue left along a residential road at a bend (**Mill Lane**). In 300m at a T-junction

*turn right* along **North Hill**, passing by a primary school on your right-hand side. In 160m at another T-junction cross over **High Road** and *fork left* along a tarmac track with a 'Public Footpath 214'-signpost.

In 40m the track narrows and in 100m by a footpath marker post you *turn left* down some railed steps to cross a small field on a bearing of 25° and in 55m go over a stile in a hedge gap (with a **Stan's Walk** marker). Cross a road and continue in the same direction with a footpath signpost on the other side over a stile and through a field towards a white-topped pole (40°). In 120m you *bear left* across a railed plank bridge over a ditch and cross another arable field towards another white-topped pole (due N) 160m away. There, cross the right of two railed plank bridges and a stile and *turn right* along a fenced path around two sides of a paddock with ample yellow markers on the fence. [Note: the right-of-way is still shown on the OS map as diagonally crossing the field and stiles in the fence on either end enable you to go that way.]

Go over a stile in the far field corner, cross a couple of plank bridges and *turn left* with a left-hand field boundary and *turn right* with it in 55m. Continue broadly in the same direction (80°) along various field boundaries, occasionally guided by yellow markers and (partly redundant) stiles, until in 850m you enter a wood over a stile. 20m inside the wood *turn left* at a four-way footpath signpost (Public Footpath 32, direction **Old Hill Avenue**). In 20m cross a two-railed plank bridge over a ditch and continue in the same direction along a raised wide grassy path between arable fields (330°). In 200m continue in the same direction through a hedge gap and through more fields along a grassy margin and in 240m go through a horse-blocking barrier with a white-topped pole and follow an enclosed path first right then in 40m left and uphill.

In 165m go through a wooden gate and continue in the same direction along a drive by **Wakefields** on the left and in 230m cross a tarmac lane and continue with Public Footpath 33 through a wooden gate and along a narrow earthen path with a ditch on the right. In 150m *turn briefly left* with the path, then immediately *turn right* with it to continue in the previous direction. In 130m go over a stile onto a road and *turn right* uphill along its pavement. In 90m cross the road and on the other side go over a stile along a footpath, initially with the wooden fence of a house on the left and a wood on the right. In 100m continue in the same direction along a left-hand boundary of a steep pasture and in 130m *turn left* down a footpath alongside the bottom fence of a garden and then through a wooden gate into a paddock.

In 50m *turn right* through another wooden gate to go up a wide grassy track and come up to a T-junction with a lane after 70m (going over a stile and through a gate along the way), by a 'Public Footpath 197'-signpost. *Turn left* along the lane and in 20m *turn right* over a stile with a 'Footpath 154 Langdon Hills'-signpost through a lightly wooded area and in 80m (over a stile and) across the bottom left side of a field. After 230m (with **Langdon Hall Farm** off to your left) in a field corner *turn left* with a yellow marker on a white-topped pole and in 10m cross a railed footbridge into a field and *turn right* up its right-hand side towards the corner of **Hall Wood**. In 160m *turn left* at the wood corner, and in 65m *turn right* at another wood corner. This is the best place to enjoy the views back west to **London's Skyline: Canary Wharf, The Shard** and the **City of London**.

Continue up with the wood on your right and in 300m at the field corner go over a stile and *turn left* through a wood. In 10m *fork left* and in 15m go along a footpath (the right fork bridleway runs parallel for a while) to enter **Lincewood Nature Reserve**, an ancient bluebell wood and part of **Langdon Nature Reserve**. In 100m you go over some boardwalks and duck under a fallen oak tree and in 30m go through remnants of a bike barrier. In 240m (at the top of a climb) you *fork left* (280°), ignoring a right fork uphill. In 165m you are walking at the fringe of the wood. In 45m ignore a narrow left

turning path along the wood's fringe to continue in the same direction but in another 40m *turn left* along a footpath.

**In 65m at a T-junction you have a choice:**

**For a Shortcut** to the station you *turn right* (for details see the end of the main walk directions under **Shortcut II**).

**For the main walk** *turn left* along a broad path. In 180m go over a two-railed plank bridge and through a bike barrier to continue in the same direction at a bend of a broad forest track along the fringe of the wood, and in 660m continue in the same direction downhill at a three-way junction into **Dunton Plotlands**. Ignore all ways off, in 60m pass a hawthorn meadow regeneration project on the right at a four-way junction, and in 160m pass **The Haven**, an old **Plotlands Cottage** serving as a **Museum** on the right. In 260m you reach the recommended tea stop, the café in the **Langdon Visitor Centre**. *With the visitor centre behind you*, continue a little to the right and to the right of its car park (i.e.: *turning right* from the previous downhill direction, 10°).

In 120m ignore a footpath turning right, in 110m *turn right* at a T-junction of paths, in 40m *turn left* at a four-way junction and in 90m – just before a pond by an information board for **Langdon Lake & Meadows** – *turn right*, then follow the path round left to walk past the pond on its right-hand side. Ignore a couple of wooden kissing gates on the right and in 200m go through a wooden kissing gate in the same direction. Stay with the fence and in 40m you *turn up right* at a T-junction of paths, first through a small car park then uphill, in 80m joining a gravel track through a gap to the left of a wooden field gate. In 85m continue in the same direction uphill, ignoring a left-turning cycle-track, and in 25m walk through a bike barrier.

In 75m a path joins from the right out of a meadow. In 35m you *turn left* at a T-junction and in 50m *turn right* at a three-way junction. In 20m leave the Nature Reserve over a horse-compatible gate and in 140m you reach a road in **Great Berry**, part of **Langdon Hills** conurbation, and cross it to *turn left* along a narrow grassy path shielded from the road by a hedge with a 'Bridleway 260 Hawthorn Path'-signpost. Cross a few roads along the way until in 240m the path *turns right* near a roundabout, now with a more major road (**Mandeville Way**) behind the hedge. **Follow this path for 1.5 km**, thrice having to bear right, then left around buildings or roundabouts to continue in the previous direction in each case, but never with any doubt about the onwards route. After the last roundabout...

**\*\*)** You continue along a raised path – initially between trees – with a 'Bridleway 263 Mandeville Way'-signpost, and in 100m walk up some steps onto the bridge across road and railway tracks that you have walked along at the start of the walk. Use a pedestrian crossing to cross the road and *turn left* along it, in 35m *forking right*.

London bound trains depart from platform 1.

## Shortcut I

**(cut out 2.4 km and 28m ascent, but add 300m of tarmac)**

In 100m, where the lane curves right, continue up an earth footpath. In 50m you go through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate into **Westley Heights** park and in 10m cross a wide gravel path and *veer left* immediately along the left-hand side of an undulating grassy area (170°), to the right of a line of trees. In 120m ignore an earth track turning left into trees and in 40m *veer right* along a car wide gravel track at a hairpin bend. In 90m continue in the same direction through a wooden kissing gate along a narrow grassy path between hedges where the gravel track turns right and in 150m reach a T-junction with a road. *Turn left* for 70m, then *turn right* along a car wide farm track through **Northlands Farm**, going through several metal field gates along the way to then go down a car wide earth track (ignore the left fork).

You have **far views** into the **Thames Valley** from the former **Coryton Refinery**, now an oil terminal, on the left (120°) via some **quayside cranes** at the **London Gateway** deep water container port (140°) to other industrial units, and **to Kent** beyond (around the **Hoo Peninsula**). In 165m – just before a double metal field gate at the bottom corner of this field – *turn right* through a metal kissing gate into a large pasture (divided into paddocks) with some farm buildings on the right. Follow the left-hand boundary of it through or past a few wooden kissing gates (some are redundant) to the bottom left corner of the field and *turn right* along its boundary, now with **Great Sutton Wood** on your left and in 220m exit the field through a metal kissing gate to the left of a wooden gate. In 20m *turn left* down a path at a T-junction, and in 50m *turn right* up **Old Hill** along a broader path at a T-junction along **Old Hill Mile**.

After 400m (just before the path turns right), **[!]** *turn left* through an easily-missed squeeze gate, cross a car wide farm track and enter a large arable field a little to the left through a hedge gap. Cross the field on a bearing of 140° towards the left hand corner of a wood 450m away. At a signposted three-way footpath junction on the other side, the main walk joins from the left along a field boundary. *Turn right* over an earth bridge across a ditch and into the wood.

Re-join the main walk directions at the asterisk \*).

## Shortcut II

**(cut out 2.6 km and 43m ascent, but add 350m of tarmac)**

In 25m *turn left*, in 80m walk through a bike barrier onto a gravel track at a T-junction and *turn right*. In 75m *turn left* at a T-junction and in 20m *turn right* at a T-junction (100°) along a broad forest track, where there is a large meadow visible through trees on the left. In 100m *turn left* at a major four-way junction of forest tracks.

Continue with houses on the right into **Great Berry**, part of **Langdon Hills** conurbation, and in 550m *turn right* along a road at a T-junction (**Great Berry Lane**). In 140m you *turn left* with the road and in 80m cross a road to continue along the tarmac **Bridge Path**, a joint cycle- and footpath. In 150m *turn right* at a T-junction with a broad earthen path, screened from a main road by a hedge. This is the Main Walk.

In 350m *bear right* with the path around a roundabout and pick up the directions at the end of the main walk at the double asterisk \*\*).