

WALK YOUR BOROUGH



Northolt Town Centre's Historic Walk



MOATED MANOR EXCAVATION



CROWN INN





Northolt Walking Route

Northolt – history and development

The earliest known settlement at Northolt was in the Anglo-Saxon period. Three graves from about 700 AD were excavated on the site of Northolt Manor house. The earliest form of the name was Northhealum, or northern neck of land, which is recorded in 960 AD. A small village is recorded in Domesday Book (1086) when the area is known as Northala. Various spellings of Northall, as distinct from Southall, appear in documents during the Middle Ages. The modern spelling first appears in the seventeenth century.

Traditionally Northolt consisted of four hamlets – the village itself, West End, where the White Hart Public House is located, Wood End to the north and Goslings End near the junction of Kensington Road and Ruislip Road.

The modern road network tends to obscure the old roads – Eastcote Lane, Ealing Road, Church Road, Ruislip Road. Northolt was not located on any of the old main roads out of London, and thus it remained fairly isolated until the building of the canal in 1801 and then the railway in 1904. Northolt continued to be a largely agricultural area until the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century concentrating on growing hay for the London market. Cheap supplies of manure were available from London and could be brought by canal.

The only significant industry to intrude into Northolt was brickmaking; brickworks operated beside the canal at the south end of the parish, near the junction between Kensington Road and Ruislip Road, throughout the nineteenth century. The last one finally closed during World War II.

The opening of the Great Western Railway's station at Northolt in 1907 started a gradual process of suburban development, which gathered pace after World War I. Northolt was divided in two by the construction of Western Avenue in 1930s, which also contributed to the pace of house building, but there was still a large amount of open space by 1939. Northolt was a major centre for council house building in the post-war period.

Northolt was a separate parish until 1894 when it became part of Greenford Urban District. This in turn was incorporated into the Borough of Ealing in 1928 and since 1965 Northolt has been the western end of the London Borough of Ealing. The population of Northolt in 1901 was only 564, by 1931 it had grown to 3047, but had increased dramatically to 19,201 by 1951.

Much of the remaining open space in Northolt was incorporated into the Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park in 1996 and most of this walk is within the Park. There are a number of informational boards along the route.

WALK YOUR BOROUGH



Northolt Racecourse

The area north of the GWR station was the site of Northolt Racecourse. The guiding force behind the project was William A. Read, an entrepreneur from New Zealand. His aim was to provide a modern pony racing venue with good quality facilities that would appeal to a wide audience, including ladies. He negotiated a deal with the Pony Turf Club, which controlled the sport for horses up to 10 hands.



NORTHOLT RACECOURSE

One of the attractions of Northolt as a venue for a new course was the good transport links: trains from Paddington to Northolt, Marylebone to Northolt Park, Baker Street to Harrow-on-the-Hill and on the Piccadilly line to South Harrow. However, anticipating the trend to car use there was parking for 6,000 vehicles. The course opened on Whit Sunday 1929. It had a number of innovative facilities. The famous cantilevered stands were reputed to have cost half of the total construction budget of £250,000. There were extensive catering facilities and an electric

totalizator, for tote betting which had become legal in 1928. Starting gates known as Benjamin Barriers were installed in 1935. The racecourse was a success, holding about 60 meetings a year in the 1930s, but a failure to control costs put the company into receivership in 1937. Racing finally stopped in 1940 and the course became a storage depot for the nearby Greenford Ordnance depot. The racecourse was taken over by Ealing Council in 1946 and the Racecourse housing estate was built on the site. The street names on the estate recall well known racecourses.

Start at Northolt Underground station. Turn right out of the station and walk down the hill to the pedestrian crossing. Cross over Mandeville Road, turn right and you will see the Clock Tower in front of you

1 CLOCK TOWER 🏰

Mandeville Road was built in the 1930s to link Northolt village to the new Western Avenue, and at the same time the large rectangular pond of Moat Farm was filled in. Where it joined the old Ealing Road a triangular open space was created which became Mandeville Green. The clock tower was erected to celebrate the accession of King George VI in 1937.

Turn left into Court Farm Road. On the right hand side is a passage way with a Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park signboard. Follow the path, which leads into Belvue Park.

2 BELVUE PARK 🌳

The old manor site and land surrounding it was purchased in 1928 by Ealing Borough from a developer who had proposed to put a row of houses right over the moated site. The Council turned the land into Belvue Park.

A small wooden bridge provides access to the site of Northolt Manor House.

3 MOATED MANOR SITE 🏰

The Manor of Northolt was given by William the Conqueror to Geoffrey de Mandeville after the Conquest in 1066. It was one of many manors he owned and he is unlikely to have spent much time in Northolt. It later passed to other families with connections with the City of London. The Le Boteler family were the first to build a stone manor house at Northolt in 1231. The Manor reached the peak of its prosperity in 1346 when Simon Francis a city merchant rebuilt the house on a larger scale with a great hall and other living quarters. The interior was of high quality with decorative brickwork and a floor of distinctive red and white patterned tiles. A moat was also dug and this survived as a feature in the landscape long after the buildings had been pulled down. The manor house site was excavated between 1950 and the 1970s and the finds were donated to Gunnersbury Park Museum. The ground plan of the mediaeval manor is now laid out on the site.

The adjoining Parish Church is visible through trees. Follow the path round to reach the church.

4 ST MARY'S CHURCH ✝️

A priest is recorded at Northolt in Domesday book and there was some sort of Church by 1140. The present church has some remnants of thirteenth century fabric but more survives from the next century. The font was given by Nicholas Brembre, one of the Lords of the Manor in the fourteenth century. The church originally consisted of the nave, and the chancel and bell tower were added in the sixteenth century. The gallery was built at the beginning on the eighteenth century. There are memorials, amongst others, to members of the Shadwell family who were Lords of the Manor in the nineteenth century. The Church had become rather dilapidated in recent years but has recently been nicely restored. There are brick buttresses at the west end from the eighteenth century designed to stabilise the building.



Leave the church, turn right and walk to the west end of the church, which gives a view over the churchyard sloping down towards the village green. Return to the main door and return along the path to Belvue Park. Turn left and follow the path down the hill towards Rowdell Road. Cross the road and take the footpath in front of you. This leads to the Grand Union Canal. Cross the bridge and turn right on to the towpath.

5 GRAND UNION CANAL 🌊

This stretch of canal was opened in 1801 as part of the Paddington arm of the Grand Junction Canal, which became part of the Grand Union Canal in 1929. This joins the main route of the Grand Union Canal at Bulls Bridge, Southall. The canal was important for the economic development of the area, in particular carrying hay and bricks into London.



Continue along the towpath, passing under the A40 Western Avenue. On the south side of the bridge leave the towpath and take the footpath to the left leading towards Marnham Field.

6 MARNHAM FIELD 🌳

Marnham Field is named after the Marnham family of Greenford who made charitable gifts of land for the benefit of the poor in the eighteenth century. The land was used in first half of the twentieth century as a rubbish tip and the land became overgrown. It has been cleared and restored as part of the Countryside Park, and many new trees have been planted on the site.

From Marnham Field look across the A40 to the Campanile of the Aladdin building.

7 ALADDIN BUILDING 🏢

When the Western Avenue was built it was expected that it would be lined with factories like the Great West Road. This did not materialise and the Aladdin factory stands in isolated splendour. Built in 1931 in an Italianate style, the campanile had a tank that stored water from its own artesian well. The factory made oil lamps and heaters. An Ordnance depot occupied the land behind the factory during World War II, and this site is now the Metropolitan Business Centre.

Turn round and follow the left path towards the canal. Cross the canal by the wooden bridge which has a green man carved into the woodwork. This takes you through land once part of Smith's Farm. Follow the path that skirts the side of the housing estate, into Horse Shoe Crescent. Follow this road to Kensington Road. The Northala mounds are in front of you and farmhouse of Smith's Farm to your right.

8 SMITH'S FARM 🏡

Smith's Farm was the last working farm in the area. The surviving nineteenth farmhouse recalls the days when there were many farms in the area and the economy was largely agricultural. Some of the land of Smith's Farm was sold off for the neighbouring housing estate.

Cross the road to the entrance to the Northala Fields & Mounds.

9 NORTHALA FIELDS & MOUNDS 🌳

Northala Fields is a new open space which opened in 2008. The four conical mounds were created from rubble from the original Wembley Stadium and the new White City shopping centre, and help reduce visual and noise pollution from the A40. A network of six interconnecting fishing lakes and other leisure areas are situated behind the mounds. The tallest mound has a spiral path to the summit where there is a viewing platform providing a 360-degree panoramic view of the surrounding area as far as the London Eye, Canary Wharf and Crystal Palace.

The path has a gentle gradient suitable for most people, but the gravel surface may be difficult for buggies and wheelchairs. Please note the path ascends in an anti-clockwise direction.

Leave the mounds and return to the entrance in Kensington Road. Turn left, cross the road and walk along Kensington Road under the A40. Turn right into Rowdell Road, cross the road at the pedestrian crossing, turn left, then right into Ealing Road and take the footpath towards the Church.

10 NORTHOLT VILLAGE GREEN 🏡

The centre of the old village is overlooked by the parish church. Northolt Village Green was designated a Conservation area in 1969. A stream meanders through the Green beside the road. A number of historic buildings border the Green: the first group comprises Herbert's Cottages, Well Cottage and Fern Cottage.



11 DEYNTE'S COTTAGE 🏡

The cottage, set back from the road and to the right of the pathway into the church, was built in 1887 by the Shadwell family, who were Lords of the Manor of Northolt between 1827 and 1919. It replaced earlier cottages, one of which had been occupied by Henry Deynte, a manor official in the fifteenth century.

Cross the road where a drive leads to the Northolt Village Community Centre.

12 NORTHOLT VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE (MANOR FARM HOUSE) 🏢

The Shadwells built the present house on the site of a sixteenth century farmstead in 1850. The Farm was purchased by a housing developer in 1919 who proposed to build a Garden City in Northolt, but the scheme fell through. The house is now the Northolt Village Community Centre. Northolt Model Railway Club meets in the centre and a railway track runs through the grounds.

Cross over the road, and follow the path towards the Church. Turn left towards the Memorial Hall.

13 MEMORIAL HALL 🏢

There have been several buildings on this site, including a half-timbered building used as the poor house, which became redundant in the 1830s. The first National schoolhouse was built on the site about 1840 and this was replaced by the present building in 1868. The building became inadequate by the early twentieth century and a new Northolt Primary School was built in West End Lane in 1907. Since 1927 the building has been the Memorial Hall, run by the Northolt War Memorial Hall and Village Green Trust.



Just in front of the Memorial Hall is a row of single storey cottages.

14 WILLOW COTTAGES 🏡

This modest building is a reminder of the spartan living conditions experienced by agricultural labourers in earlier centuries. Willow cottages had become run down and condemned for their want of sanitary facilities, but have been preserved as part of the Rest Garden.



Facing the Willow Cottages across the Green is The Crown Inn.

15 THE CROWN INN 🍺

An inn has stood in this position since the early eighteenth century and the original building has been added to and modified in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It has been a popular refreshment point for walkers and cyclists over the years.



Continue along the east side of the Green to reach a pair of semi-detached houses with an extension to the north side.

16 THE OLD POST OFFICE AND VILLAGE SHOP 🏢

This building was once the village shop and post office operated first by the Hinge family and then by the Ravens.

Between the shop and the corner of Court Farm Road is another group of old cottages: Ivy Cottage, built about 1820, Judges Cottages, and set back from the road, the Nook, which dates from 1850.



Cross the Ealing Road and turn right walking towards Mandeville Green.

17 THE OLD PLOUGH INN 🍺

The building dates from about 1850 and was the Plough Public House until the building of the new Plough Inn in 1940. After that it was the public library until the 1960s and was then converted into flats.



Adjacent is the site of new Plough Inn now surrounded by wooden hoardings.

18 THE NEW PLOUGH INN 🍺

This imposing public house of red brick with a thatched roof was opened in 1940 but suffered a disastrous fire in 2009 and has been demolished. (At the present time it is not clear whether it will be rebuilt.)



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 WALKING ROUTE
  PLACE OF WORSHIP
  SCHOOL

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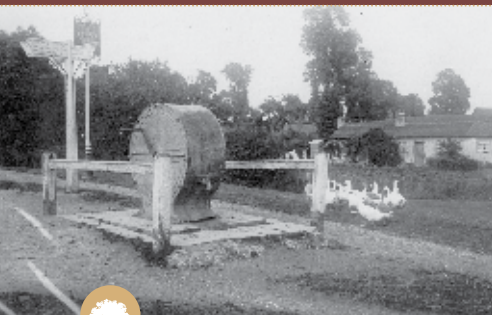
Did you know?

- There are 9 separate bus routes that pass through Northolt. They serve the borough and also link to surrounding boroughs.
- You can save 80p on single bus trips around London if you use an oyster card.
- Road transport contributes 22% of London CO2 emissions. Cars are responsible for half of these. (Source: London.gov.uk).
- If you add a railcard to your oyster card. You can make a saving of 34%.
- It is said that a brisk walk for 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week, can result in weight loss of 14 pounds a year.



Further information about London on foot
can be found at www.tfl.gov.uk

Further information on walking routes in Ealing
can be found at www.ealing.gov.uk/walking,
call 020 8825 6802 or email
Travelgreen@ealing.gov.uk



NORTHOLT GREEN



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