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Walk your Borough

Northolt Town Centre’s Historic Walk

Walk your Borough

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 Godings End near the junction of Kensington Road and Ruslip Road.

The modern road network tends to obscure the old roads – Eustice Lane, Ealing Road, Church Road, Ruslip 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 1839. 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 Ruslip 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 1860 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 1929 and since 1965 Northolt has been the western end of the London Borough of Ealing.

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 1929 and since 1965 Northolt has been the western end of the London Borough of Ealing.

The population of Northolt in 1801 was only 544. By 1931 it had grown to 1,847, but had increased dramatically to 19,201 by 1951.

The path has a gentle gradient suitable for most people, and could be negotiated by buggies. The Northala mounds are in front of you and farmhouse in the eighteenth century. The Shadwells built the present house on the site of a sixteenth century farmstead in 1850. The Farm was purchased in 1928 and since 1965 Northolt has been the centre, and help reduce visual and noise pollution from the original Wembley Stadium and the new White City shopping complex.

We would like to thank Peter and Frances Hounsell, local historians, for their contribution to this brochure.

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.

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 1928. 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 totalisator, 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.

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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 Godings End near the junction of Kensington Road and Ruslip Road.

The modern road network tends to obscure the old roads – Eastcote Lane, Ealing Road, Church Road, Ruslip 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 1844. 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 Ruslip 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 1897 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 1929 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 1,529, but had increased dramatically to 19,201 by 1951.

The last one finally closed during World War II. 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 Ruslip Road, throughout the nineteenth century. The last one finally closed during World War II.

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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 5,000 vehicles.

The course opened on Whit Sunday 1928. 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 totalisator 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.

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Northolt Town Centre’s Historic Walk

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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 Ruslip 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 544, by 1931 it had grown to 3,492, and by 1951 it had increased dramatically to 19,201.

Northolt Manor House.

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 use there was parking for 6,000 vehicles.

The course opened on Whit Sunday 1929. It had extensive catering facilities and an electric totalisator 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.
1. **CLOCK TOWER**

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

2. **BELVue PARK**

The old manor house 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.

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 the manors that he owned and it is said to have sport much in Northolt. It later passed to other families with connections with the City of London, the Bowes family were the first to build a stone manor house at Northolt in 1321. The Manor reached the peak of its prosperity in 1354 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 fireplaces, and a floor of distinctive red and white patterned tiles. A moat was also dug and this survived as a feature in the landscape near the buildings. The manor house was excavated between 1950 and 1952 and the moat was restored as a Greenford Park Museum. The ground plan of the medieval manor now lies out on the site.

4. **ST MARY’S CHURCH**

A priory is recorded at Northolt in Domesday book and there is a series of churches from 11th century. The present church has some remains of nineteenth century fabric but more survives from the tenth 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 of the eighteenth century. There are memorials in numerous tombs, amongst others, members of the Shadwell family who were Lords of the Manor in the seventeenth century. The church had become rather dilapidated in recent years but has recently been fully restored. There are brick buttresses at the west end from the eighteenth century designed to stabilise the building.

5. **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 materialize and the central factory canopy is isolated splendour. Built in 1931 in an Italian style, the canopy had a basement that stored water from its own private well. The factory made oil lamps and heaters. A drainage ditch occupied the land behind the factory during World War II, and this site now is the Metropolitan Business Centre.

6. **SMITH’S FARM**

Smith’s Farm was the last working farm in the area. The farm was closed in 1938 and the farmhouse was sold off for the neighbouring housing estate.

7. **NORTHOLt Fields & MOUNDS**

Northala Fields is a new open space which opened in 2008. The four conical mounds were created from rubble from the original Woolfrey Studios and the new Westfield Shopping centre, and help reduce visual and noise pollution from the A40. A network of six interconnected fishing lakes and other leisure areas are situated behind the mounds. The largest mound has a gradual path, which leads down to the lake area.

8. **MEMORIAL HALL**

There have been several buildings on this site, including a half-timbered building used as a poor house, which became redundant in the 1930s. 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 1902. Since 1927 the building has been the Memorial Hall, run by the Northolt War Memorial Hall and Village Green Trust.

9. **THE CROWN 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. (As the present time is it not clear whether this will be rebuilt.)

10. **THE NEW 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 the pub was sold to the public library until the 1960s and was then converted into flats.

11. **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 use as sanitary facilities, but have been preserved as part of the Red Giant.
Old you know?

- There are 5 separate bus routes that pass through Footfall. They serve the borough and also link to surrounding boroughs.
- You can save 8p 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.
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THE CROWN INN

modified in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It has been another group of old cottages: Ivy Cottage, built about

THE NEW PLOUGH INN

MANOR FARM HOUSE

storey cottages.

The first National schoolhouse was redundant in the 1830s. The first National schoolhouse was built in 1887 by the Shadwell

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