

## THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THE COLNE VALLEY



### Points of interest/history

A) Completed in 1803, the canal was originally known as the Grand Junction Canal. It provided an important transport route for carrying goods between London, Birmingham and the north by narrowboats and barges. Building the canal was an amazing achievement as there were no machines to handle the thousands of tons of earth and rock – this was all moved by men using picks and shovels and by horse and cart.

B) The listed buildings of Stockers Farm date from the 17th century. They have featured in a number of films including *Black Beauty*.

C) Look out for a painted metal coal tax post on your left with the City of London coat of arms. This is a boundary marker to indicate where tax was due on coal and other fuel brought into the London area under certain 19th century Acts of Parliament. Over 200 posts survive. Most are listed structures. This one marks the Hertfordshire-Middlesex boundary.

D) Maple Lodge Nature Reserve is just behind the large sewage works. From the early 1970s the site was largely undisturbed and developed naturally into mainly woodland and rank herb rich grassland. In 1980 work began, with the assistance of local volunteers and the British Trust for Conservation, to improve it as a nature reserve. Regular coppicing of willows has increased the number of shrub-associated warblers and encourages wild flower growth. Clearing of waterside vegetation maintains wader and wildfowl feeding conditions.

E) Part of Old Park Wood is a nature reserve managed by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. It is one of the last and best of the Middlesex woodlands, noteworthy for plants such as Bluebell and Wood Anemone and rich bird life including all three British woodpeckers.

F) The land to the right is part of Whiteheath Farm, one of the few working dairy farms in London. It has been a family-run business since 1957, and has over 200 pedigree British Friesian cows. Sales are made in the local area, including milk and Moolicious ice cream



## HAREFIELD & BATCHWORTH HEIGHTS

CIRCULAR WALK  
9

5 miles  
short route 3½ miles

Encompasses beautiful views and the best of the Colne Valley, passing Rickmansworth Lakes, the Grand Union Canal and surrounding farmland



**Access:** Some level ground and good paths. There are also some stiles, moderate slopes and muddy patches in winter.



**Refreshments:** Café & public toilets at Rickmansworth Aquadrome near point 1. Three pubs, slightly off the route: The Rose & Crown (A), The Coy Carp, (B), The Kings Arms (C)



**Public Transport:** R21 bus (limited service) from Uxbridge via Maple Cross to Harefield stops close to Rickmansworth Aquadrome. Many other buses stop in Rickmansworth town centre which also has a train station.



**By Road:** From Junction 17 of the M25, head towards Rickmansworth on the A412 and follow signs for Rickmansworth Aquadrome which is in Frogmoor Lane.



**Postcode:** WD3 1NB (approx.)

**OS Grid Ref:** TQ 056 938




**Latitude:** +51.6330, **Longitude:** -0.4754

**What3Words:** vine.barks.memo



Explore the  
**Colne Valley Park**  
Countryside on your doorstep




For points of interest/history, turn over when you see this 

**1)** From Rickmansworth Aquadrome car park head down the tarmac path to the lakes. Turn left, keeping Bury Lake on your right and the café and toilet on your left, later passing the sailing and kayak clubs. At the end of the lake, go through the gates and at the path junction turn half left on a path that heads towards Stockers House and crosses the Grand Union Canal at Stockers Lock.  (A) Continue ahead passing Stockers Farm on your right.  (B) Immediately after the farm, turn right off the track onto a public footpath. Continue through a kissing gate. Follow the waymarkers through fields and along tree lined tracks.  (C) Continue until Cripps House Farm is reached. Go through a gate onto Springwell Lane.

**Shortcut: Turn left on Springwell Lane which becomes Hill End Road. Pass the houses and then turn left into Plough Lane on a footpath at waypoint 3.**

**2)** Turn right, taking care with the traffic. Look out for the second footpath on the left - at Springwell Farm. Turn onto it and follow the track downhill as it bears right, left and then right. Here turn left off the track on a footpath.  (D) Follow the Colne Valley Trail signposts across the field, into woodland, and then downhill. The track eventually becomes Summerhouse Lane. After 400 yards turn left up Bellevue Terrace and continue straight ahead. Follow the Hillingdon Trail and London Loop signs uphill through Old Park Wood.  (E) Emerge onto Hill End Road. Cross to the other side of the road and turn left.

**3)** After 150 yards turn right into Plough Lane. At the end of the tarmac, go over the stile and continue across the field.  (F) Follow the footpath signs across the fields and stiles until Fieldways Farm is reached. You are now in Hertfordshire. Bear right along the track, leading to Harefield Road.

**4)** Using great care, turn left and walk down the road for 250 yards and then take the footpath on the right just after the entrance to Pipers Farm. Cross a small field and go through a kissing gate. Continue in the same direction up Juniper Hill. Exit

through another kissing gate onto Batchworth Park Golf Course. Continue in the same direction until a kissing gate on the left. Go through the gate and walk down the alleyway into Sherfield Avenue.

**5)** Turn right along Sherfield Avenue. Pass Plaitford Close on the right and turn left down steps onto a short footpath, leading to Harefield Road. Turn left and then right into Frogmoor Lane, following the road over the Canal to Rickmansworth Aquadrome.

