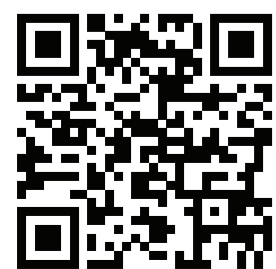


To view images to supplement the walk please download from this QR Code or visit www.enfield.gov.uk



Enfield Loop Heritage Trail

This is an easy going, flat walk which takes 45 minutes to one hour to complete; it can be started at any point along the route. The walk mainly follows public footpaths but we do recommend sensible footwear as the paths can get muddy.

The New River Loop and a little bit of Enfield History

1 Town Park

The land for Enfield Town Park was bought in 1901 by the Enfield Urban District Council for £6,750, and opened to the public on 30th July 1902. Most of the land came from the Chase Side House estate. The house stood on the site of Enfield Town Library Green; the remains of its foundations and cellars were rediscovered during the WW2 when air raid shelters were being constructed. Chase Side House was built for Mr. James Farrer Steadman (1826 to 1834); when he died his widow married Mr. William Everett. Mrs. Everett was a popular local figure and actively encouraged the celebration of May Day and other festivals by opening the grounds of their estate to local people. She also invited children from the National School to have an annual treat on her land at her own expense. After Mrs. Everett's death in 1865 the estate was purchased by Mr. Phillip Twells, an M.P. and banker. The house was demolished after the death of Mrs. Twells in 1901. The wall at this part of the park marks the former estates eastern boundary.

2 The New River

This is neither new or a river but an artificial waterway that was first opened in 1613 to supply London with fresh drinking water from Ware in Hertfordshire to Islington. Construction and design of the New River is often attributed solely to Sir Hugh Myddelton from Denbigh in Wales. However it was Edmund Colthurst who first came up with the idea in 1602; he obtained a charter from James I in 1604 to carry out the work at his own expense. After surveying the route and digging the first two-mile long stretch Colthurst soon encountered some financial difficulties and the work stopped. In 1606 a Parliamentary Act granted to the Corporation of London the right to build the river, and in 1609 the task was given to Myddelton, who with the assistance of Colthurst proceeded to complete the works over the next four years. The River was officially opening on 29 September 1613. The New River cost £18,500, with over 200 hundred labourers employed to dig out its channel. The construction of the River was a remarkable feat of engineering with the original route of the River following the hundred foot contour of the Lea Valley; it was nearly 40 miles long, dropping approximately 19 feet along its entire length.

Some parts of the route in Enfield have changed since 1613

1. The first part is the same as it was then, where it enters Enfield from Cheshunt passing under Bullsmore Lane and Turkey Street,
2. At this point it flowed westwards under Bulls Cross and through the grounds of Myddelton House crossing Cuffley Brook close to Flash Lane.
3. The course then flowed eastwards in the opposite

direction, crossing Turkey Brook, through Whitewebbs coming out at Gough Park.

4. Emerging from Gough Park it passed beneath Baker Street and crossed Ansell's Green.
5. It traversed the Willow Estate running near the line of Eastbury Avenue and Carisbrook Close before rejoining the present course at the end of Tenniswood Road. (The present course from here to Turkey Street dates from 1859).
6. From Tenniswood Road the River runs southwards up to, and alongside Southbury Road, then flows around the Town under Churchbury Lane and Silver Street, across Chase Green into the Town Park until meeting the border with Edmonton in Bush Hill Park.

The New River celebrated its 400th Anniversary in September 2013.

3 The New River Loop

In August 1933 the Metropolitan Water Board (MWB) wanted to close the Enfield Town New River Loop and run the water in underground pipes from Southbury Road to Bush Hill Park. The Council though insisted it was kept as a local amenity so the MWB offered it to the Council as long as they maintained the River banks and bridges. It was finally taken into Council control in 1938 following a conveyance in 1935 of the loop from Wilson Bridge in Southbury Road to the district border at Bush Hill Park.

4 Carr's Basin/The Enfield Reservoir

In the 1830's Mr Carr the owner of Chase Park (a large house pulled down to make way for the railway to Cuffley circa 1910) agreed with the New River Company that they could build a drain through his land. In return the company dug an ornamental pond in front of his house which is the island today, and gave him the rights to build a summer house, use a boat and fish on the river

Enfield's Most Dangerous Spot.

Carr's Basin or, the Enfield Reservoir, as it was more commonly known in 1913 was at one time described as the "most dangerous spot in the district". On the 5 September 1913 the Enfield Gazette reported that Thomas Beaumont aged 60 had fallen into the River here and drowned in just five feet of water. It was reported that there was no fencing for 200 yards at this point to keep people away from the River. Over a week later a 16 year old nursery hand, Cornelius Hill, drowned at the same spot. It was assumed that he had gone to fetch milk for a cat in nearby Windmill Hill as there was no apparent reason for him to be anywhere near the spot. It was reported that he had been talking about the death of Beaumont a week before and had shown considerable curiosity in the spot where he had drowned. He was incredibly short sighted and had a habit of removing his glasses, so it was assumed that he had done this, somehow dropped them and fallen in while trying to retrieve them and drowned.

5 The 90's Clean Up.

By the late 1990's the River was in a very poor state; it was silted up, full of algae and in places only an inch deep with grasses growing out of the bottom. In 1997 the Enfield Preservation Society working in partnership with Enfield Council secured Heritage Lottery Funding and other monies as part of a £2.4m restoration plan. The river was dredged, re-puddled and gravel footpaths installed. The Grade II listed bridges were repaired using original techniques to restore them to their original state and appearance.

6 Crown & Horseshoes Public House

The earliest records of this public house date back to 1716. It was here in the evening of the December 19th 1832 that Charles Lamb (1775 – 1834), the distinguished essayist who lived nearby went to buy some beer for his friend Mr Moxton who was visiting. Lamb joined a group of men, some of them playing dominoes for beer; one of whom was Benjamin Danby, a seaman recently returned from the East Indies. Danby recognised Lamb as his father had been Lamb's barber from the Temple in London. The other men that evening were William Johnson, Sam Fare and John Cooper. Lamb left the pub but the other men stayed on with Danby buying them their drinks. At the end of the evening Danby, who had bought half a pint of gin, was staggeringly drunk as he left the landlady asked her potboy to see him across a bridge to prevent him falling in the River. Johnson, Fare and Cooper walked on with Danby to the corner of Holtwhites Lane. Johnson apparently turned to Danby and

asked "what will you give?", Danby begged him not to hurt him, Johnson again asked "what will you give ?" Danby replied "anything" Johnson ignored this and cut his throat. The beadle John Mead caught up with the men the next day; Johnson was put in the Vestry House and Cooper in a room at the George Pub. They were tried by Dr Cresswell, who was vicar and chairman to the bench. Cooper turned King's evidence against the other two. Both men were found guilty; Johnson was sentenced to death and Fare was transported to Australia. Lamb in a letter to a friend mentioned considering asking Cooper to dinner to have a chat about the night. The block of flats across from the pub is called Danby Court.

7 Enfield Grammar School.

The school originated as a form of chantry; (A chantry is an endowment founded for a priest or priests to celebrate masses for the soul of the founder) at St Andrews and was first recorded on the site in 1507; it survived the dissolution of Chantries in 1547. The earliest parts of the building date from 1590 and it was further extended in 1883. In the 19th century there was a conflict between the vestry and the headmaster. In 1818 the Headteacher John Milne was accused of beating boys; he took the vestry to court, and won so remained in post until 1830. They were eventually able to remove him after some irregularities with registers were identified. The school became a comprehensive in 1967 and amalgamated with Chase Boys School; they became separate institutions again in 1970. The School has retained the word 'Grammar' in its name despite being a comprehensive school.

8 Holly Walk & The Enfield Preservation Society

From 1961 to 1967 Enfield Preservation Society fought a long and hard battle against plans to build a ring road through Enfield Town. The ring road was an attempt to ease traffic congestion and it would have cut through St. Andrews Church Yard, Holly Walk and Gentleman's Row. In preparation for the road some early 19th Century workmen's cottages in Church Lane were knocked down where the car park stands today. The unpopular plan was finally rejected by Anthony Greenwood the Minister for Housing and Local Government from 1964 to 1969.

9 WW2 at Southbury Road.

At 9.00pm on the October 15 1940 a bomb fell in Park Avenue destroying three water pipes (24 inches wide) through which 46m gallons of water passed each day. Eight people in a bomb shelter nearby narrowly missed being drowned by the sheer deluge of water. The surrounding roads were flooded with the water reaching the Hertford Road. The water was turned off by 9.45pm at the north end of the river by a member of the MWB. It was vital that the water supply was quickly reconnected due to the Blitz and the need to have good water supplies to put out any fire.

At 5am the next morning around 2,000 soldiers had arrived from across the London area. They dug out the parts of the New River that had been filled and reconnected it back to the old original Loop. Meanwhile

the National Fire Service pumped the water a quarter of mile away beyond where the soldiers were digging. By 8.00pm that evening the soldiers had dug a rough trench which enabled the water to start flowing again; the next day 10m gallons were flowing, and by the day after it had increased to 15m gallons. The pipes were eventually fixed by November 6th. Local Rumour was that it was sabotage and not a bomb that had caused the damage, and the local papers, due to the heavy handed censorship of the time, were not allowed to report what really happened until the end of the war.

10 Dugdale Centre

This building is the home of Enfield Local Studies Library & Archive and Enfield Museum where you can learn more about Enfield's fascinating and rich history. Enfield Local Studies Library & Archive is based on the first floor and is open 9.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Enfield Museum has two galleries, a permanent exhibition 'Enfield Life' on the first floor and is open year round (except some public holidays). Temporary exhibits on a variety of themes of local interest are regularly held in the exhibition space on the ground floor. The Dugdale Centre also has a café open on the ground floor.

Produced by Enfield Local Studies Library & Archive.
First Floor Thomas Hardy House
Dugdale Centre
39 London Road
Enfield EN2 6DS

Telephone: 020 8379 2724
Email: local.history@enfield.gov.uk