

COYSTER COUNTRY

Ways to Touch Out of London

Day or Half-Day walks in the countryside around London

by Geoff Lumley

465 BUS

246 BUS

OYSTER COUNTRY

This is a set of walks around the outskirts of London.

Perhaps you have already completed *The Capital Ring* or *The London LOOP*. These walks, of similar length to the suggested sections of those orbital paths, cover other countryside around London.

Although these days your Oyster Card will take you beyond Zones 1-9 in places, all of these walks start and finish within the zones. So, for instance, *Watford High Street* and not *Watford Junction* has been used. Two of the walks make use of TfL bus routes that go beyond the London borders into Surrey or Kent.

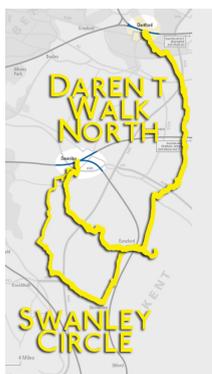
All of the walks can be downloaded and the package includes two versions of pdf files (depending on how you want to print them), a kml file to load into your walking app or Google Earth, an epub version and a mobi version for your tablet, Kindle or other device.

One walk, *Chess Piece*, is available as a free download whilst the other twelve are all available at 99p each, or the whole set for £5.99.

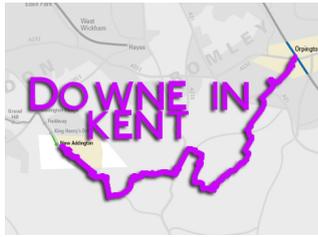
My thanks to Ken Tombs for proof-reading and checking the directions in the walk. I hope you enjoy some great days out in the countryside around London.



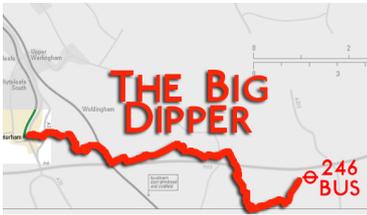
This 8½ mile walk starts at Chalfont & Latimer. After a few miles following the River Chess downstream the walk climbs up to the village of Sarratt, and then heads through the large Whippendell woods to the outskirts of Watford in Cassiobury Park. In the opposite direction, this walk appeared in the 1977/78 edition of *London Transport Country Walks*.



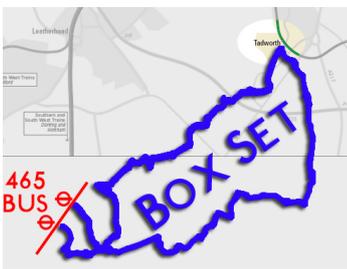
These two walks from Swanley, both about 11 miles long, explore the Darent Valley in Kent. *Darent Walk North* visits Eynsford, Farningham and the mills of South Darenth to reach Dartford. There is a ruined castle at Eynsford, and both this village and Farningham have been called 'picture perfect'. Alternatively, the circle back to Swanley passes Lullingstone Roman Villa and Castle, before entering the Lullingstone Country Park and open farmland on the hills south of Swanley. There are several shorter options using stations beyond the Oyster boundary.



A 9 mile walk in a very rural part of the London Borough of Bromley, beginning at Orpington. The walk goes through the village of Downe (near to Darwin's *Down House*) and skirts around Biggin Hill Airport before climbing Highams Hill and some woodlands to arrive at New Addington Tram Stop.



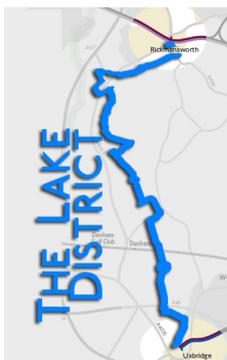
The most strenuous walk in the book, starting at Caterham this trek goes up and down several large hills in the first part of its 10½ miles to Westerham. For part of the walk it follows the *North Downs Way* and then the *Vanguard Way*, with great views from top of the Downs. It ends in Westerham in Kent, with a bus ride back to Town.



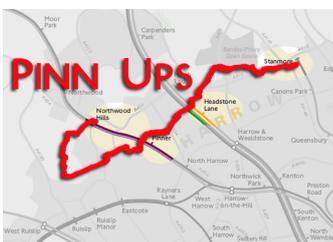
From Tadworth, this 14 mile circular walk takes you to the famed viewpoints on Box Hill in Surrey. Alternatively, you can split it in two (recommended, as the return route is quite strenuous). TfL's route 465 to Dorking makes a break of route possible (into a 9 mile and a 7 mile walk). There are some steep climbs on both sections.



This 9½ mile walk from Chessington South is almost entirely across the heathlands of Surrey. Its final stretches are along the River Mole as it flows towards the Thames at Thames Ditton. Gentle rolling hills with no long or steep climbs.



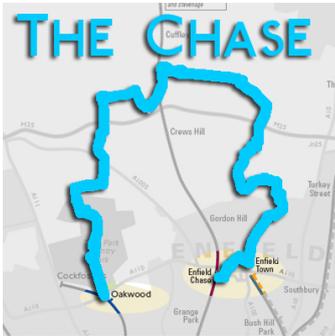
A delightful walk with only one short climb, it mostly follows the course of the Grand Union Canal through the lakes left by Gravel Quarries for the 10 miles between Uxbridge and Rickmansworth. The scenery will be marred in the middle by the building works for HS2, so it is worth doing now before it is too late!



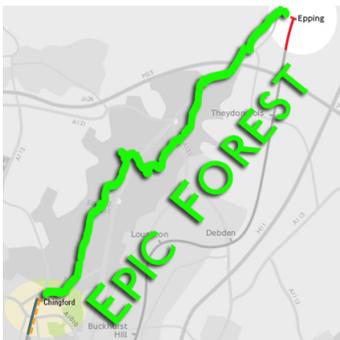
The course of the River Pinn is followed from the hills above Stanmore, where this walk starts, down to Ruislip and then the walk turns north to pass the Lido and end at Northwood Hills, 10 miles from Stanmore. There are a couple of short and not too strenuous climbs, but much of the walk is alongside the river. As it is crossed by several bus routes, there are plenty of opportunities to break the walk into shorter sections.



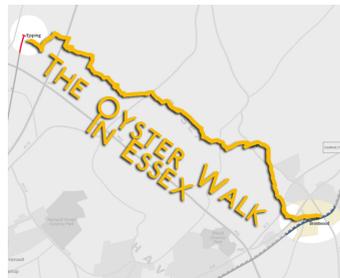
This walk is 9½ miles in length from Watford High Street station to Elstree & Borehamwood. It starts out following the river Colne upstream, visits Aldenham Country Park and even crosses the runway of Elstree Aerodrome! It is gently uphill for most of the way, with nothing too strenuous to cope with.



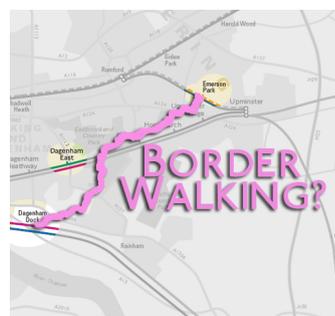
From Enfield Chase station to Oakwood station, this 12 mile walk is mostly on hard surface yet runs through woodlands and out into the open countryside of Hertfordshire where once kings and princes hunted. Forty Hall mansion is worth a stop near the start of the walk, and so is Trent Park at the end.



Starting at Chingford, this 8½ mile walk to Epping is entirely within Epping Forest. It is an easy route to follow, and on a well made path for most of the way. There is a visitor centre about half way, with a kiosk and pub nearby.



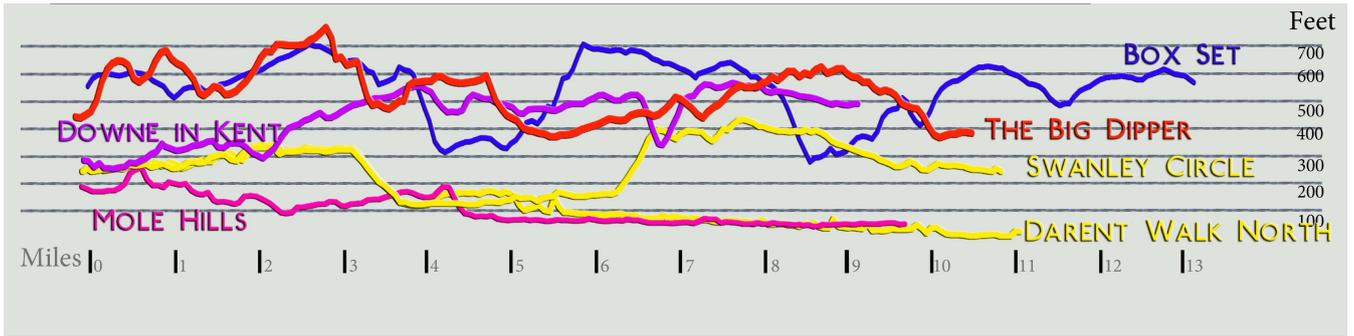
This is a long walk, 13 miles, and some of the stiles are in need of repair. But it gives the feel of remoteness as it is about the furthest from the London boundary of all walks in this series. It starts at Epping and heads south-east to Brentwood with rolling hills most of the way.



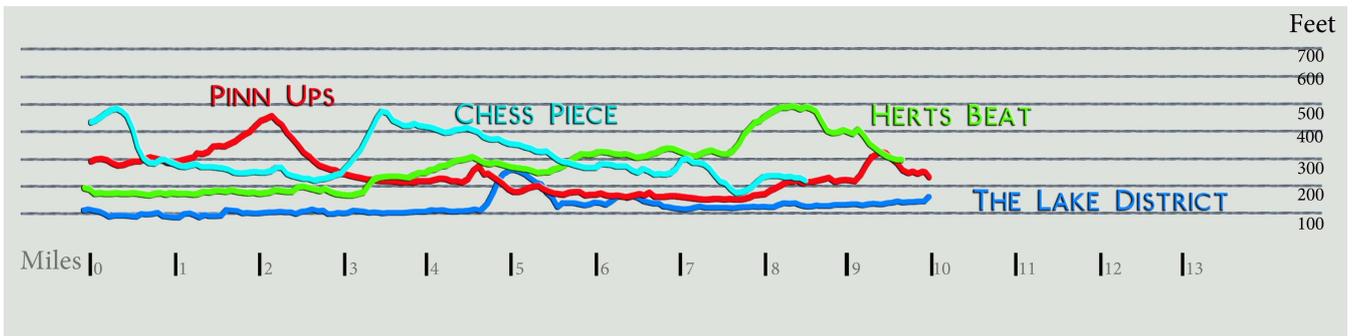
The last walk is the shortest, just 6 miles. For most of the way this follows the valley of the Beam River, the border between the Boroughs of Havering and Barking & Dagenham. The walk starts at Dagenham Dock station and ends at Emerson Park. It is a fairly gentle stroll all the way.

On the next page you will find overlaid elevation and distance graphs to the same scale for each walk, so that you can choose a walk by its length and amount of climbing.

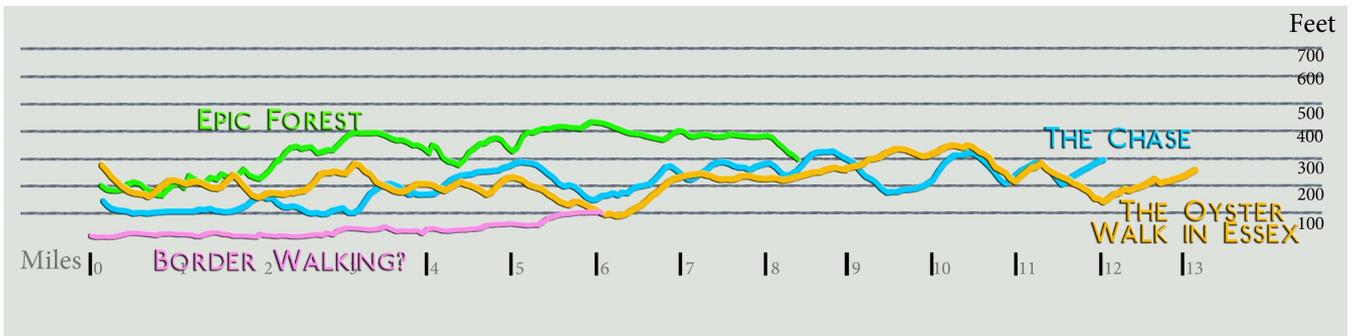
Walks south of the Thames:



Walks to the West and North-west of London:



Walks to the North and East of London:



Download all walks from Oyster Country Facebook page fb.me/OysterCountry
or www.gumroad.com/OysterCountry