

Round-Watford tour, Cassiobury Park

via Whippendell Wood, Croxley, the canal, Common Moor, Ebury Way

About 3¼ hours


For 30 more walks in and around Cassiobury Park

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for the book

CASSIOBURY WALKS


KEY

	Your location in relation to roads, railways etc
ff	Fascinating Fact , tell your children, amaze your friends.
Dtr	Detour , usually just a few yards, then walk back to re-join the route
i	Information
The numbers in the left column are minutes not miles. This is a sample walk, devised Summer 2014; cross-references to maps and photographs in this version are shown as "Error".	

mns	DIRECTIONS
	Start at the picnic benches by the river and canal (see page Error! Bookmark not defined.), cross the bridge over the river then cross the bridge over the canal, continue ahead for 20 paces
2	and turn right signposted <i>PUBLIC FOOTPATH 30</i>
13	There's a picnic bench on your left then a choice of three paths into Whippendell wood. Take the path ahead, passing to the right of the map.
	Stay on the main path. There will be many paths branching off to the left and right, the 'main' path is the wide path, the well-trodden path, stay on it, continue ahead at every choice.
32	Cross the lane (Rousebarn Lane) into woodland (Horrocks Wood)

	After 15 paces turn right.	
38	At the end turn left.	
	Dtr	Instead of turning left, turn right. The path ends at a road junction, turn left, The Clarendon Arms is at the crossroads, see picture.
43	Ahead through two gates (past the <i>No Horse Riding...</i> sign) and keep ahead (the path becomes a track)	
		The houses on the right are part of Oak Farm, the playground belongs to Redheath School
54	At the road junction turn sharp left into <i>Little Green Lane, Unsuitable for Road Vehicles.</i>	
59	At the end turn right (opposite the footpath), the road continues, <i>Little Green. Little Green Lane.</i> Keep right.	
1:04	At the junction of Baldwins Lane and The Green, continue ahead	
1:07	Across Parrots Close and follow the pavement left alongside the main road	
	After the bus stop on your right and just before <i>The Coach and Horses</i> look across the grass to your left, there's a wide wooden gate.	
		If you were to continue along the main road for another 2mns, there's another pub on the right, <i>The Artichoke</i> . I have no opinion as to which is better, <i>The Coach and Horses</i> or <i>The Artichoke</i> .
1:10	Go through the gate (there's a pedestrian 'style' by the gate)	
	Keep ahead, stay on the path, like this: ahead past the picnic bench; ahead past the dog-waste bin - to the playing field. You are aiming for the far corner, so continue ahead then follow the path to the right. It looks like a dead end, but there's a gap, and on the other side of the gap is...	
1:16	... a car park.	
1:17	Once in the car park keep right, following the signs <i>Public Footpath 10. Barton Way</i> then <i>Doctor's Surgery</i>	
1:18	then left into the road signed, <i>Met Station</i>	
		There's a small supermarket on your right, should you need to stock up on snacks or cold drinks

1:24	At the end you are at a main road, with Croxley Station on your left and The Red House on your right. You need to turn left but you also need to be on the other side of the main road. Unless it is absolutely safe to cross at the junction, I suggest you turn right and cross at the pedestrian lights. This will delay you by one minute.	
1:25	You are now on the other side of the road, Croxley Station is on our left	
1:27	As the main road bends left, turn right by the side of the shops, down a steep hill signed, <i>Public Footpath No.17. Canal ¼ml.</i> (you will be at the canal in 2¼ mns, so it can't be as far as ¼ mile).	
1:29	Turn right onto the canal path, past the lock (Common Moor lock)	
1:31	and cross the bridge over the canal	
	and continue ahead to the bridge over the river	
	and ahead through the gate onto the moor	
1:31½	and turn right, so that you are walking with the river to our right	
	Turn left across the middle of the moor. It doesn't matter if you miss the path, you merely have to aim for the pylon.	
	i	If it's very wet you will soon discover for yourself all about different types of grass and which are firm and which let you sink into the water.
	i	Stay as much as possible in the open so that you don't disturb nesting birds.
	Once you are at the pylon, aim for the transmitting mast. If it's wet, move to the left of the pylon; if there's flooding, move more to the left of the pylon, there <i>will</i> be dry land.	
1:44	Before you ever get to the transmitting mast, you will find a gate. Turn left onto the path.	
	This is the Ebury Way. Stay on the Ebury way to the end. This will take 40mns so feel free to put this book away. Or read various fascinating facts (<i>ff</i>) about the Ebury Way on page Error! Bookmark not defined.. Error! Reference source not	

	found.Error! Reference source not found.	
2:25	Just after the playground and skate park you cross a bridge and pass through a height restriction (yellow stork) - turn left, signed Colne Valley Cycle Route. Watford 1. You are now walking by a green parallel to a road (River Colne to your left).	
		You are walking parallel to Riverside Road, the other end is called Silk Mill Road, it's a local cut-through from Eastbury Road (the A4125 from Bushey Arches to the base at Northwood) to Wigenhall Road. The junction you see ahead to your right is located at the once-famous site of the Watford Council Recycling Centre (AKA the rubbish dump) – now a housing estate.
	Turn left into the main road, cross at the pedestrian lights and turn right onto the pavement (if you decide not to bother with crossing at the lights, <i>cross the road very carefully!</i>). Continue for 25 paces then	
	<i>ff</i>	If, after crossing at the pedestrian lights, you were to turn left onto the pavement instead of right, and continue for just 15 paces, on your right will be the <i>Watford Irish Centre</i> (now derelict).. There is a footpath by the side of the Irish Centre, alongside playing fields, and it joins my route...but my route is prettier.
2:29	* Depends on how long you had to wait for the lights to change. then turn left onto the footpath.	
	Turn left over the green bridge, signed <i>Watford town centre ½</i> and on the other side of the bridge turn right (still signed <i>Watford town centre ½</i>).	
2:37	The path becomes a pavement by a main road, follow it under the railway arch.	
	<i>ff</i>	Take a moment to look upwards and admire the huge arches carrying the railway – they were built in the 1860s.
	Stay on the pavement, towards [2013] Halfords, ToysRus and Baby'sRus. Cross the road that goes into <i>Century Park</i> but do not go in unless you have some urgent shopping to do. Keep going, towards [2013] P C World	

2:40	and turn left onto the footpath by the side of PC World towards the three brick buildings boldly marked <i>Pump House Theatre and Arts Centre</i> .	
	i	The Pump House is the home of Watford's amateur (and sometimes highly-acclaimed) theatre,
2:43	At the end turn right, towards Tesco Extra	
2:47	Left at the end into the main road. You are in Lower High Street. If, from this point, you are able to walk in a straight line, exactly forward, without turning left or right (apart from crossing traffic lights), Northwards – then you can skip to the next time-point at 2: 58	
	Keep left on the pavement, Watford Museum on left, followed by Watford High Street station; continue past the station and up the slope. Keep an eye on the building with the big green triangular glass roof, I shall call it BBGTGR (in 2013 it was the camping shop COTSWOLD, but shops do change). The big brick building behind (and to the right) of BBGTGR is the Intu (Harlequin) shopping centre.	
	cross the road at the lights, and cross the second half of the road then cross very big road (Watford Ring Road), towards BBGTGR.	
	Pass to the left of BBGTGR (in other words, just continue ahead). You are now in High Street, with shops on both sides. If there are no shops on both sides, you've gone a few paces in the wrong direction (I <i>did</i> say, just continue ahead!). Landmarks [2013]: <i>The Money Shop</i> on your right, <i>The One Crown</i> pub on your left (admire the old building);	
	i	This is the 'Metro' end of town, with many cafes and restaurants, all well away from the night clubs the other end of town.
Although I've continued my system of numbering the minutes as you walk, it's probable that you will be distracted by the shops. So you may wish to know that from here it is a 15mn walk back to the park.		
	i	In the next few minutes you pass several features. I shall abbreviate, L = on your left, R = on your right. Need emergency provisions but don't like shops? – try Tesco Express L. The pretty courtyards of St Mary's Church L; King

		Street L (more cafes and restaurants) and the main entrance to Intu (Harlequin) R; Market Street L (more shops); the main town centre bus stops R; Clarendon Road R, more bus stops and The Palace Theatre (and Watford Junction Station is at the other end of Clarendon Road); admire Jacksons Jewellers L, the building dates from the 1480s.
	Under a bridge. You are now at the 'top' of High Street, this is the clubbing centre of Hertfordshire, attracting tens of thousands of visitors each weekend. Here you will also find the ponds and fountains, of which some say, "I once visited Watford and there were pretty ponds and fountains in the high street and now I can't find them".	
	At the ponds, keep left	
2:58	and continue down, under the underpass	
	and on the other side, turn sharp left, up the stairs (or continue along the slope if you have wheels).	
3:00	and left towards the main road, and continue along the pavement (the main road will be to your left)	
	Past the Colosseum then the Peace Hospice then past the end of Cassiobury Drive, and just past the big hedge	
3:04	turn right into the park – take the right hand fork	
	<i>ff</i>	What I like about this walk is that you start with the roar of traffic from the main road, and with every minute that passes the sound of traffic diminishes, until you are definitely back in the country, with no sound of traffic at all.
3:15 at the Gdns	You are back at the picnic benches by the bridges over the river and canal.	