



Hampstead Heath Trails



CORPORATION
OF LONDON

Trail 1 Parliament Hill and the Tumulus



1 The trail starts here at the Parliament Hill Café. Follow the trail towards the chain of ponds.

2 The chain of ponds on your right were dug as reservoirs around 300 years ago. The waters of the River Fleet feed them. Water birds such as herons, great-crested grebes and the pre-historic like cormorants can be seen here. You may even catch a glimpse of a kingfisher.



The Tumulus

3 The pine-topped **Tumulus** is something of a mystery. Some believe it is an ancient burial ground or the resting-place of Queen Boudicca. More likely it is the site of an old windmill or a folly, once visible from Kenwood House.

4 Just inside the woodland on your right you will see what is probably the oldest human-made feature on

the Heath. The 'Saxon Ditch' has been here since at least AD 986. Ancient trees and stones also mark this old manorial and parish boundary.

5 The summit of **Parliament Hill** will give you a welcome breather and great views over the city. More mystery surrounds the name. It may simply record the visibility of the seat of government, or does it commemorate Guy Fawkes' attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605? Some think that his supporters lay in waiting here to witness the deed being done.



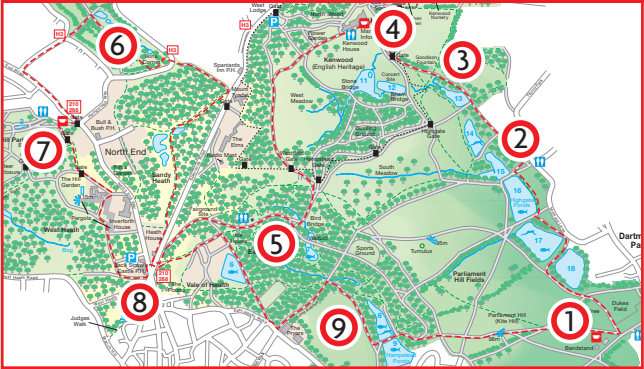
Parliament Hill

This is a good spot to watch migrating birds. In the autumn, look for large numbers of swallows and house martins.



kingfisher

Trail 2 Heath Circuit



1 The trail starts here at the Parliament Hill Café. Follow the trail, via the ponds, to Millfield Lane.

2 This country lane is a continuation of Millfield Lane, which borders the area that was Millfield Farm. It is also known as **Poet's Lane** due to associations with Coleridge and Keats who were known to listen to the nightingales here.



The Goodison Fountain

3 The **Goodison Fountain** was erected in memory of Henry Goodison, involved in the campaign to save Kenwood House. In the summer, meadow brown and orange tip butterflies as well as swifts can be found in the meadow beyond. In winter, flocks of fieldfares and redwings from Scandinavia arrive.

4 In front of you is **Kenwood House**. You are looking at its south



Kenwood House from the south

face, which is from the Georgian period. The House exhibits important collections of paintings. The adjacent ancient woodlands are inhabited by jackdaws, a rarity so close to London, and bizarrely, ring-necked parakeets. The Kenwood Estate was bequeathed to the nation by the 1st Earl of Iveagh.

5 You are now on the **Vale of Health estate road**. Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, who had manorial rights on this part of the Heath, built this in 1845. His grand plan to build on the Heath was eventually scuppered by local protestations. Keep an eye out for treecreepers and nut-hatches, which can be seen moving around the trunks of trees. You will now walk via the Vale of Health estate road to Sandy Heath and onto the Hampstead Heath Extension.



Looking south, the Hampstead Heath Extension showing the hedgerow systems

6 The hedgerow to the left of the path is a remnant of the ancient woodland, Wylde Wood. Oaks and hornbeams are interspersed with hazel, hawthorn and elder. To your right are the Seven Sisters Ponds that eventually feed into Brent Reservoir. In the summer a variety of damselflies and dragonflies including the azure blue damselfly and the common darter dragonfly can be seen patrolling the area.

8 Congratulations! You have reached the **Summit of Hampstead Heath**, the highest natural point in London. To the right is the Flagstaff, which marks the site of the fire beacon that provided warning of the Spanish Armada in 1588. For centuries it was lit to celebrate jubilees and other national events.



Roesels bush cricket



Golders Hill Park

7 On entering **Golders Hill Park** you can see the contrast with the wilder parts of the Heath. A large mansion, known as Golders Hill House, once stood here until it was bombed during the Second World War. The park has a stunning walled garden and a variety of exotic tree species.

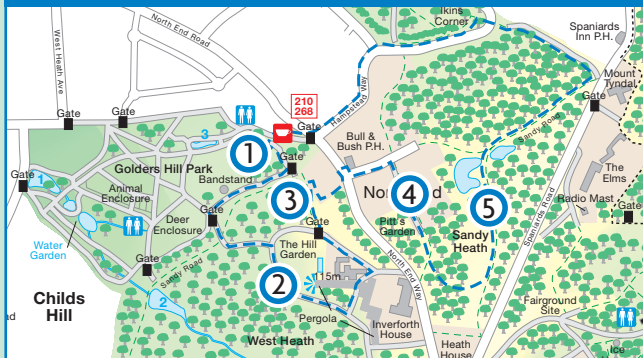
9 **Pryors Field** is an acidic grassland of great conservation value. It has a diversity of grass and invertebrate species. The numerous anthills are visited regularly by green woodpeckers. The greater and lesser-spotted woodpeckers are also resident on the Heath.



Red admiral

Trail 3

Sandy Heath and the Pergola



1 The trail starts here at Golders Hill Café. The trail takes you through Golders Hill Park and West Heath before bringing you to the Hill Garden.

2 The beautiful and restful Hill Garden is one of London's best-kept secrets. The adjacent Pergola was the brainchild of Lord Leverhulme, a resident of Inverforth House, in the early 1900s. This covered walkway is as long as the Canary Wharf Tower is tall. The Corporation of London carefully restored it in the early 1990s. Recently, brown long-eared bats have been discovered roosting here.



The Pergola overlooking West Heath

3 Behave yourself! The infamous 'Gibbet Elms' once stood close to here. The bodies of highwaymen were hung in a suspended iron framework as a warning

to potential troublemakers. According to local legend, Dick Turpin was also associated with the Heath and is thought to have used the Spaniards Inn, further to the East.



The classical arch in Pitt's Garden

4 Just off the beaten track is Pitt's Garden. This large walled garden is part of the Heath and is now a spectacular wilderness with a ruined classical archway. It contains areas of recently planted heather, the Heath's signature plant.

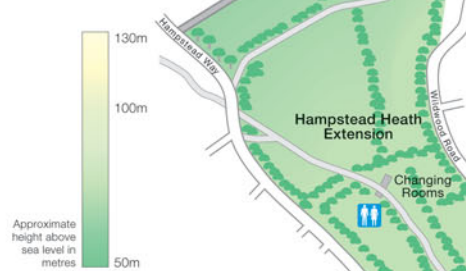
5 You are now on Sandy Heath, which is a dramatically altered, lunar-like landscape. The steep slopes, sudden hollows and undulations show the places where sand has been dug over many years. Large areas of gorse can be found here and provide a good habitat for nesting birds such as long-tailed tits.

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Hampstead Heath is a wonderfully varied collection of natural habitats, historical features and beautiful views and landscapes. This leaflet provides three trails that will allow you to explore some of the Heath's very best places.

The information overleaf accompanies the marked trails on this map and gives you a flavour of the Heath's considerable historic and wildlife interest. To find out more phone the Education Centre on 020 7482 7073.

Hampstead Heath Trails



210 268 H3
GOLDERS GREEN STATION
NORTHERN LINE

North Circular (M1)

Childs Hill

Get off the beaten track... use the map to explore your own trails!



The Stone of Free Speech acted as a focus for political and religious meetings 200 years ago.



Gorse is a typical Heathland plant. In the last century it was used by washerwomen to hang out their washing.

*"As often upon Hampstead Heath,
Have seen a felon long since put to death,
Hang crackling in the sun his parchment skin,
Which to his ear had shrivell'd up his chin."*

A poem from 1691 about the infamous Gibbet Elms **Trail 3**

*"What is the Bay of Naples, with its bitter,
relentless gentian blue overhead, and its sun-scorched,
dusty and grassless ground beneath,
compared to this view from Hampstead Heath?
Where else can you find such satisfying beauty?"*

The Contemporary Review, July 1894

- Trail 1** **Parliament Hill and the Tumulus**
Starts and finishes at Parliament Hill café.
2.5km, 1.5 miles
- Trail 2** **Heath Circuit**
Starts and finishes at Parliament Hill café.
9.7km, 6 miles
- Trail 3** **Sandy Heath and the Pergola**
Starts and finishes at Golders Hill Park café.
2.7km, 1.7 miles

Walking conditions: Hilly in places. All routes generally follow main paths and should be easy to follow. Please note that the routes are not waymarked on the ground.

Limited mobility access: Varying gradients and surfaces may limit access for some on the trails. Please telephone 020 7485 5757 for details of the Heath Mobile loan service, which offers increased access on an electric powered buggy for people with limited mobility.

Dusk closing: Golders Hill Park, The Hill Garden, the Pergola and the Kenwood Estate close before dusk. See signs for details.

Car parking around the Heath is limited and you are encouraged to come here by public transport.

Please note that the map does not show all of the many informal paths

- Car park
- Refreshments
- Toilet, including toilet for the disabled
- Outstanding views
- Buses serving this point
- Railway station
- London Underground station
- Woodland and scrub
- Hedgerow / thin belt of trees or shrubs
- Made footpaths
- Unmade footpaths
- English Heritage area
- Fishing ponds
- 1 Swan pond
- 2 Leg of Mutton pond
- 3 Lily pond
- 4 Seven Sisters ponds
- 5 Whitestone pond
- 6 Vale of Health pond
- 7 Viaduct pond
- 8 Mixed bathing pond (No 3)
- 9 Hampstead No 2 pond
- 10 Hampstead No 1 pond
- 11 Wood pond
- 12 Concert pond
- 13 Stock pond
- 14 Kenwood ladies' bathing pond
- 15 Bird Sanctuary pond
- 16 Model boating pond
- 17 Highgate men's bathing pond
- 18 Highgate No 1 pond

The Ice House is an old keeper's hut. Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, who was the lord of the manor of Hampstead, built it as part of his plans to develop the whole of the East Heath area.

HAMPSTEAD STATION
NORTHERN LINE

HAMPSTEAD HEATH STATION

GOSPEL OAK STATION





Hampstead Heath Trails

Hampstead Heath is one of a number of open spaces, parks and gardens in and around London owned and managed by the Corporation of London as part of its commitment to sustaining a world class city. Each open space is a unique resource managed for the use and enjoyment of the public and for the conservation of wildlife and historic landscape.

A full list of sites and visitor information can be found on our website at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/openspaces or by contacting the Open Spaces Directorate on 020 7606 3030.



SOME IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Emergency	Heath Constabulary	020 8340 5260
General enquiries	Parliament Hill Office	020 7485 4491
	Golders Hill Park Office	020 8455 5183
Information on Wildlife, History and Guided Walks	Education Centre	020 7482 7073
Superintendent's office		020 8348 9908
Website	www.cityoflondon.gov.uk	

Picture credits: Kingfisher/red admiral butterfly, Mike Read. Roesels bush cricket London Wildlife Trust.

