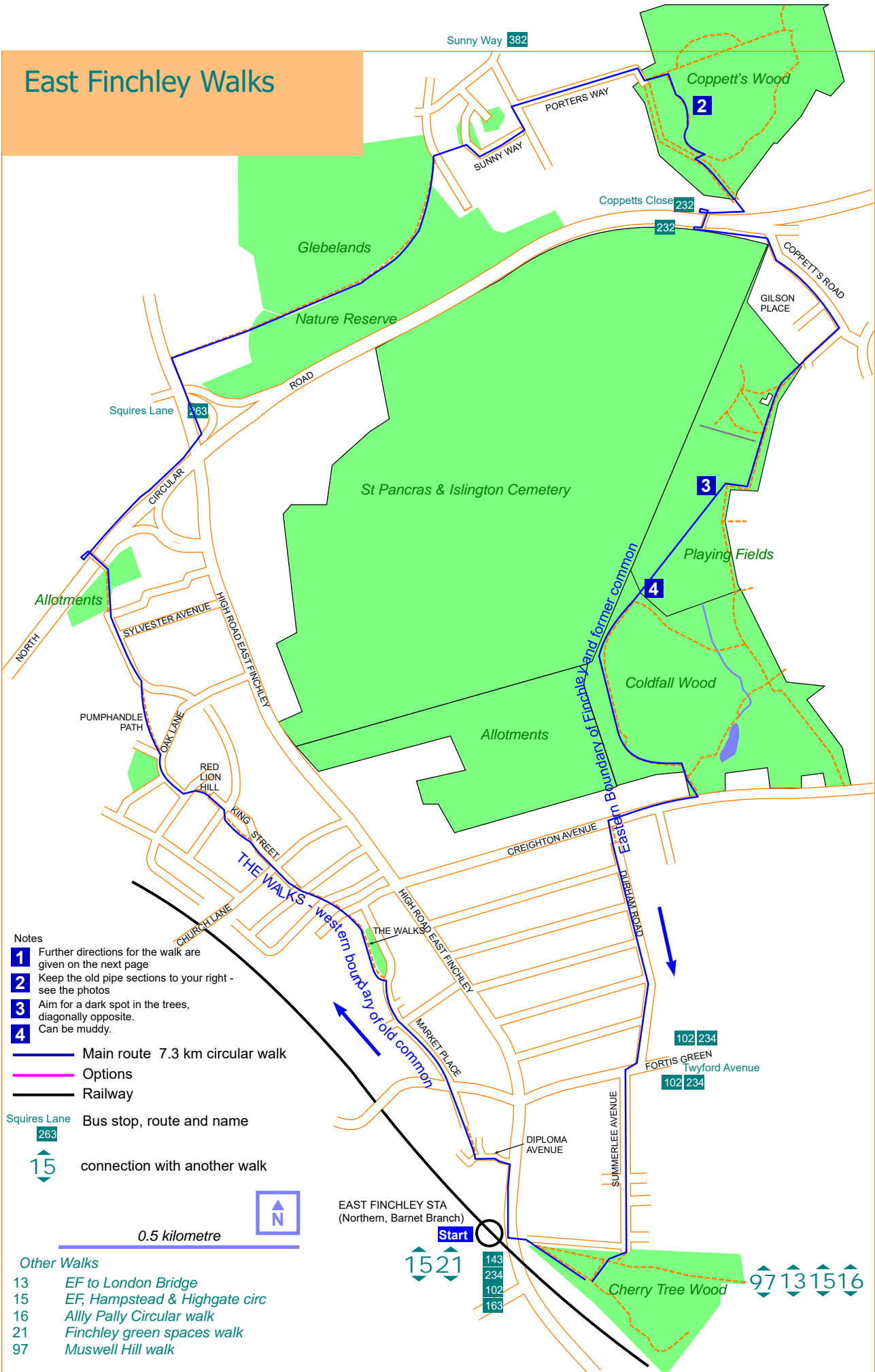


East Finchley Walks



walk notes

This walk from East Finchley station follows the ancient track which led along the edge of the common. It is for historical purposes rather than for the scenery, although the walk passes through some excellent woodland.

Exit the front of the station. 150 years ago you would have left the High Road and cut diagonally across the Dirthouse field, but today you must make your way left along the main road then turn left along Diploma Avenue before taking the path right, up to East End Road, where the village school was on the right. Cross East End Road to Market Place, formerly Hog Market. Further down on the left were shops, Prospect Place (1825) and the George public house. To the right was open field as far as the High Road, and Chapel Street, since lost in the redevelopment. Facing, where the road swings right was a triangular green in front of a row of houses on the Pound. All this is now incorporated into the shrubbery and children's playground.

Continuing past the playground on The Walks, a track from medieval times, you pass first to your right the site of the Post Office, then the Pound. On the left you would have passed a large bakery, and an imposing row of cottages. Past the Constitutional Club and bears leftish across the former grounds of Park Gate towards what was the triangle at the bottom of Church Lane, formerly Bull Lane. The southern leg of this triangle, just before the Windsor Castle pub, has disappeared. To the right was the common. The route continues along King Street and a short passage to what was the Red Lion pub on Red Lion Hill, an original settlement called Cuckolds' Haven. Between road and passage was the Elim chapel and to the left the back of Alder School.

Take the path up and left to Oak Road along the edge of the Grange housing estate, A green space and new housing are where two large houses, Oak Lodge and the even grander "Grange", built for Edward Sayer a well known East Finchley resident used to be. The later Simms/Lucas Motor Factory was built to the north and the Grange became offices for the factory. When the road bears right, follow the old path, now called Pumphandle, straight on in front of the new housing development which replaced the factory Follow Tarling Road and the narrow path to the foot bridge across the North Circular Road. Here the medieval route is

blocked and you must follow the NCR eastwards to cross the common and the High Road, skirting under the bridge, from where Hawthorn Dene can be seen on the other side of the NCR. South of the intersection was the location of what was the only settlement on the common itself, Brownsell, where the Strawberry Vale Brook flowed east to form the northern boundary of our parish.

You turn right along a passage between the Territorial Army building and the Bowling Alleys to emerge onto the Glebelands, possibly the last remaining fragment of the common. Right of this was the Rough Lots.

Take the path along the edge of the fields to Legion Way and cross through the housing estate (Sunny Way) and though a snicket to Porters Way. Left then right, and through a gate, and a sharp right turn brings you to what was part of Coppetts Road before the North Circular Road was built and the eastern edge of Finchley and the common.

Take a detour through Coppetts Wood and return to what was originally Coppetts Road. Down some steps brings you to the North Circular Road, over which is a foot bridge with views of the cemetery.

Turn south along the remaining part of Coppetts Road. After passing a housing estate and before Trott Road, take the entrance to Muswell Hill Playing Fields. Keep to left of the children's play ground and follow the edge of the field round to the right. The fence along the opposite (right) side of the field marks the boundary of Anglo Saxon Finchley and the old Common, only formally agreed with Hornsey in 1816. If you spot a small cast iron boundary marker, marked FP for Finchley parish, let the Archer know.

Make for the entrance to the wood diagonally opposite and continue up the well-defined path through the coppiced hornbeam of Coldfall Wood. You'll pass a ditch on the left which marked the boundary between Finchley and Hornsey. Eventually you are forced left by the backs of houses and exit into Creighton Avenue. Creighton Avenue was cut through the wood in 1899, which at that time stretched to Fortis Green. The old boundary, marked by poplars, continues between the gardens of Church Vale and Durham Road. Take the passageway into Durham Road, then to Summerlee Avenue, crossing the old boundary of the Bishops Park into Cherry Tree Wood and find your way back to the station.