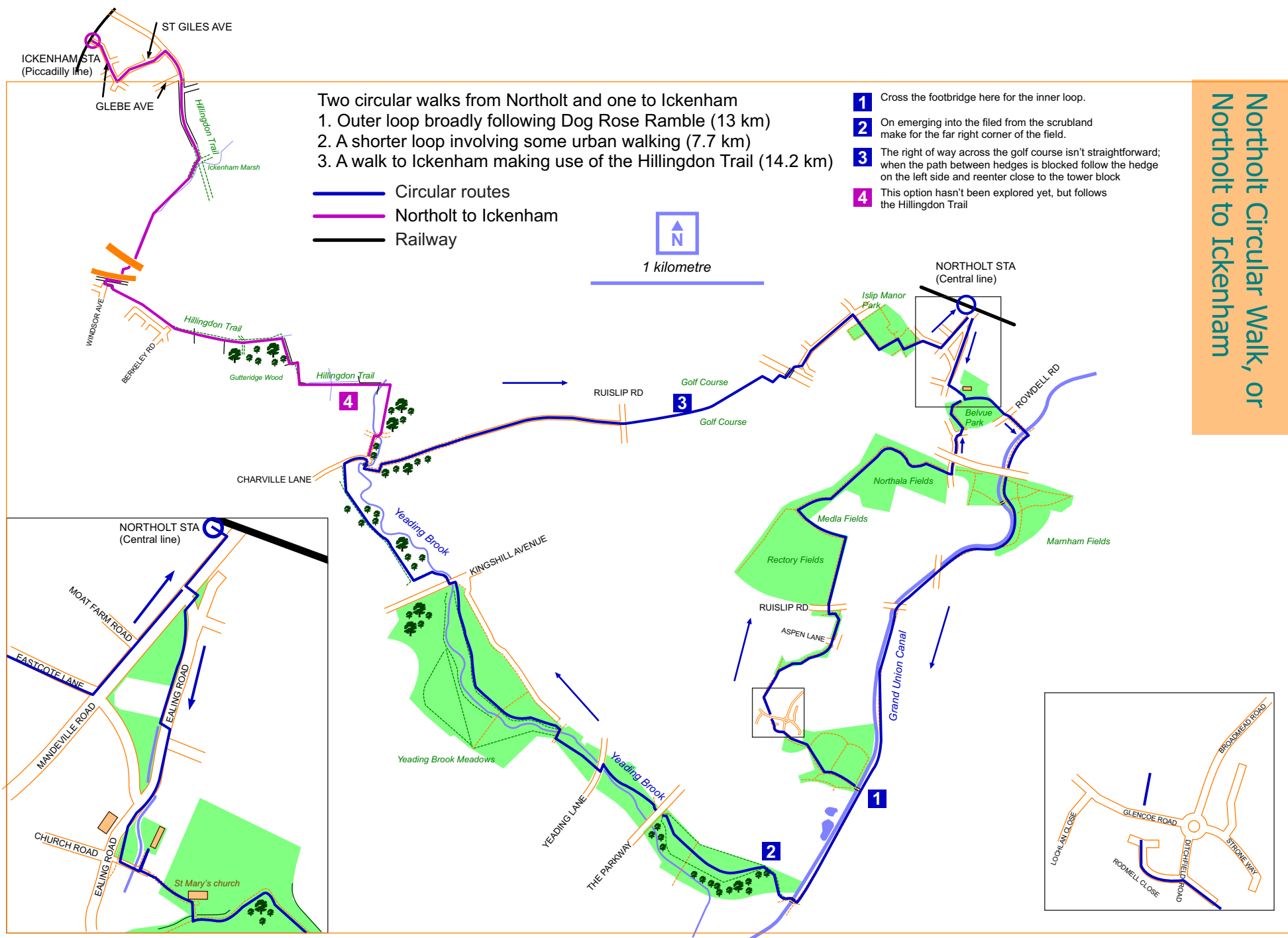


# Northolt Circular Walk, or Northolt to Ickenham

Two circular walks from Northolt and one to Ickenham  
 1. Outer loop broadly following Dog Rose Ramble (13 km)  
 2. A shorter loop involving some urban walking (7.7 km)  
 3. A walk to Ickenham making use of the Hillingdon Trail (14.2 km)

— Circular routes  
 — Northolt to Ickenham  
 — Railway

- 1** Cross the footbridge here for the inner loop.
- 2** On emerging into the field from the scrubland make for the far right corner of the field.
- 3** The right of way across the golf course isn't straightforward; when the path between hedges is blocked follow the hedge on the left side and reenter close to the tower block
- 4** This option hasn't been explored yet, but follows the Hillingdon Trail



### **Northolt Circular Walk**

*The main walk here is an ambitious one. Although on the flat, there are occasional muddy paths and the way across the golf course is a challenge.*

#### **Northolt**

Northolt was a rural parish that from 1231-1864 was the responsibility of the Bishops of London who were rectors and patrons of the church. In 1864 the patronage passed to Brazenose College Oxford.

The village remained primarily agricultural until the Paddington Canal was built in 1801, and industries such as brick quarrying began; speculative building on the farmland did not begin until the 1920s. St Mary's Church in Northolt has been described as 'one of the best examples of the few remaining unspoilt Middlesex country churches' in an idyllic setting and dates from c.1300. The small Northolt Village Rest Garden with its flower beds, onto which the former Willow Cottages face, was made into public open space within the latter part of the twentieth century. The cottages were empty by the early 20th and were threatened with demolition in 1915, having no sanitary arrangements, but they were eventually preserved.

Situated adjacent to the churchyard are earthworks of the moated medieval manor house, excavated in the 1950s and '60s

that provided evidence of Saxon occupation including pagan graves. It is thought that the manor's timber buildings were replaced by stone ones in the late 14th century. Next to the church is now the memorial hall, built in 1868 as a National School.

In 1936 land near St Mary's church, stretching towards the canal was acquired by the MCC and local council for a public open space, now called Belvue Park. On the east side of Ealing Road is a group of older cottages, Herbert's Cottage, Well Cottage and Fern Cottage, behind which is Deyntes Cottage.

#### **The Canal**

The Grand Union Canal is the longest canal in the UK at 286 miles. The Grand Junction Canal opened joining Braunston to the Thames at Brentford to improve the communications between Birmingham, the Midlands and London. The Paddington branch (from Bull's Bridge) by which we walk opened in 1801. A popular passenger service from Paddington to Uxbridge ensued for a number of years.

In 1929 the Regent's, Grand Junction and two Warwick Canals merged to form the 'Grand Union Canal'. The new company embarked on a large-scale modernisation programme to enable broad-beamed boats to work between London and Birmingham. The ambitious scheme was completed in

1937. Traffic increased in the short term, but after the war the long-term downwards trend was relentless as canalside factories ceased using coal transported on the canal as a fuel or obtained it from other sources. Today, the Grand Union Canal is alive with pleasure boats, walkers and cyclists.

#### **Islip Manor Park**

Islip Manor Park was created on the former grounds of Islips Manor, whose history dates back to a C14th estate of the Ruislip family, Ruislips Place. It was renamed Islips Manor when the Lord of Northolt Manor purchased the estate in 1629. In 1853 it was purchased by antiquary George Harris who laid out the grounds and rebuilt the house. Ealing Town Council purchased house and grounds in 1929; the house was used as a clinic and the grounds opened as a public park.

At the end of Arnold Road across a stile is Islip Manor Meadows, a nature reserve owned by Ealing Council. It is considered a very good example of a wet meadow and contains a rich mosaic of different grassland types; over 20 grass species and ten leguminous species are among the diverse flora.

#### **Yeading Brook**

The Yeading Brook is a 16 mile tributary of the River Crane and it forms a substantial part of the main walk, passing as it does through meadows and woodland.