

Freedom Pass circuit

Section 24: Watford Junction to Stanmore

Distance: 9.93 mi 15.89 km

Introduction

This section takes us south-east across three zonal boundaries. However, due to a paucity of paths in helpful directions to the south and east of Watford, the route makes a wide loop northwards, before bending round to the east, and finally heading south to its final destination.

This section is shared with several named routes: the Ver-Colne Valley Walk, the Hertfordshire Way and the London Loop. There are several encounters with the M1.

There are plenty of places to eat in Watford. There is also a pub in Round Bush and one in Letchmore Heath.

Directions

Turn left out of Watford Junction Station, and walk along Woodford Road, past the buses on the left, parallel to the railway.

Cross Orphanage Road into Queens Road.

Pass the end of Sutton Road.

Here the previous section from Watford joins from the right.

Turn left into Reeds Walk.

Go under the railway line.

Follow the path straight ahead, across two roads and then round to the right.

Turn right immediately after the path bends left.

Cross the main road and turn left along the cycle track.

We now go straight on for several miles on the Ver-Colne Valley Walk: across Bushey Mill Lane, through Munden Drive Open Space, across a dual carriageway, through a metal gate (leaving the cycle track) into the Munden Estate, over the M1, and over a cattle grid.

Immediately after the next cattle grid, turn right.

Follow the grass path.

Go over a footbridge (joining the Hertfordshire Way) and across the next field (leaving the Ver-Colne Valley Walk), across or alongside another footbridge, then straight on.

After a climb, carry on straight ahead along Wall Hall Drive.

Bear right (still on Wall Hall Drive) at the roundabout.

Carry straight on and leave the Wall Hall Estate past a barrier.

Take the footpath left across a field.

After a kissing gate, follow the path round to the right.

Proceed in a straight line to the main road, crossing a cricketfield diagonally.

Turn left along the road.

At Round Bush Lane, cross to the right-hand pavement, and carry on along the residential road next to the main road. (If you carry on down Round Bush Lane, you will reach a pub in 2 minutes.)

At the next road, take the right-most of the three paths opposite, past the wooden gate into a field.

Cross the field.

At the other side, turn left into Letchmore Heath.

Bear right down The Green.

Just after the pond on the right, take the path on the right (leaving the Hertfordshire Way).

Immediately after the metal gate, take the left fork, diagonally across the field.

At the next intersection, on the boundary between two fields, bear right.

At the end of the field, carry on straight ahead along a farm track.

Just before a clump of trees on the left, bear left along the edge of a field, parallel to the track.

Keep going in the same general direction until you reach a hedge.

Follow the path round to the left, then turn right and leave the field.

Cross the road, and carry straight on on a path down to a ditch, and up the other side.

When you get to the main road, cross it and turn right along the grass verge and over the M1. Or, if you prefer, you can bear right just before the main road, and follow the path round a long loop which takes you under the road, finally turning left alongside the road and over the M1.

Then immediately take the footpath left, alongside the M1. Go a short distance along the left-hand edge of a field, then turn left onto an overgrown path. For the next several fields, the path is very indistinct.

After an impossible kissing gate, keep going along the edge of a field, parallel to the M1.

After another impossible kissing gate, bear right alongside the houses on the right.

At the end of this field, carry on through a gap into the next field.

Now bear left, away from the houses, aiming towards the left-hand end of a wooden fence.

Go through the kissing gate ahead.

Immediately turn left and follow the left-hand edge of the field.

Towards the end, go through the kissing gate on the left, followed diagonally by another one.

Keep going in the same diagonal direction, aiming towards the leftmost of two pylons, passing an isolated kissing gate.

Go through a pair of metal gates.

Turn right alongside the M1.

Keep alongside the M1 past a footbridge that goes over it, then bear right away from it along a track. The path may be very overgrown at first. It improves later.

Follow the track, which becomes Hillfield Lane South, to the end.

At the main road, cross it and turn left along the pavement. [Possible alternative.]

Just before the M1, turn right (joining the London Loop) and cross a large field.

At the end, keep straight ahead to a T junction.

Turn right and follow the track round to the left and up the hill.

At the top, when the track bends right, go straight on, then immediately turn right and go over a stile.

At the end of the path, turn right and carry on along the road.

Turn left at the next T junction.

Take the rough track on the right (leaving the London Loop) and pass rucker pitches on the right.

Leave the rucker grounds by the main entrance, and turn left along Wood Lane.

Turn right just after Wood Farm Cottage.

Bear left when the road to the carpark bends right.

Turn right, onto grass, at the London Viewpoint (after first looking at the view).

Bear left at the first intersection, go straight on at the second and third, and turn right at the fourth.

Go down some steps and bear right after entering the woods.

Then go straight on, downhill, to the exit of Stanmore Country Park.

Go straight ahead down Kerry Avenue.

Cross the main road, and Stanmore Station is in front of you.