



Hampstead to Oxford Circus

Distance: 7½ km=5 miles

easy walking

Region: Central London

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Refreshments: Hampstead, Regents Park, Regent Street

Map: Explorer 173 (London North), London A-Z

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Village, historic houses, parks, gardens

This is a fascinating walk through a green cityscape, beginning with a short loop around the “country village” of Hampstead and ending in Oxford Circus. It can be combined with the walk [Hendon to Hampstead](#) to make a lovely long green walk from outer to inner London.



The walk begins at **Hampstead Underground Station** (Northern Line).

Leg 1: A Small Circuit of Hampstead



See map overleaf. Turn **right** out of the station and at the crossroads and traffic lights go straight ahead up the narrow Holly Hill. The *Holly Bush* pub (now Fullers) is on the right. Fork **right** on Hollybush Hill and Hampstead Grove. Soon you pass the wrought iron gates of Fenton House on the left.

Fenton House is a National Trust 17th-century house full of fine porcelain and furniture and especially an outstanding collection of early keyboard instruments. The house is surrounded by an award-winning pretty walled garden of roses, vegetables and fruit trees. The house is open Wed-Sun non-winter months.

After the side entrance to Fenton House, turn **right** down The Mount Square and right into The Mount. Go down the steps on the **left** after garages and cross the main road into New End. Go past the *Duke of Hamilton* pub and the (now closed) New End Theatre and veer **left** by the *Old White Bear* (a refurbished pub-restaurant) into Well Road. Go past art studios on the left and turn **right** down Christchurch Hill. Cross Well Walk beside the *Wells Tavern* and continue down Christchurch Hill to the end where it merges with Willow Walk. A small section of the Heath is on the left.

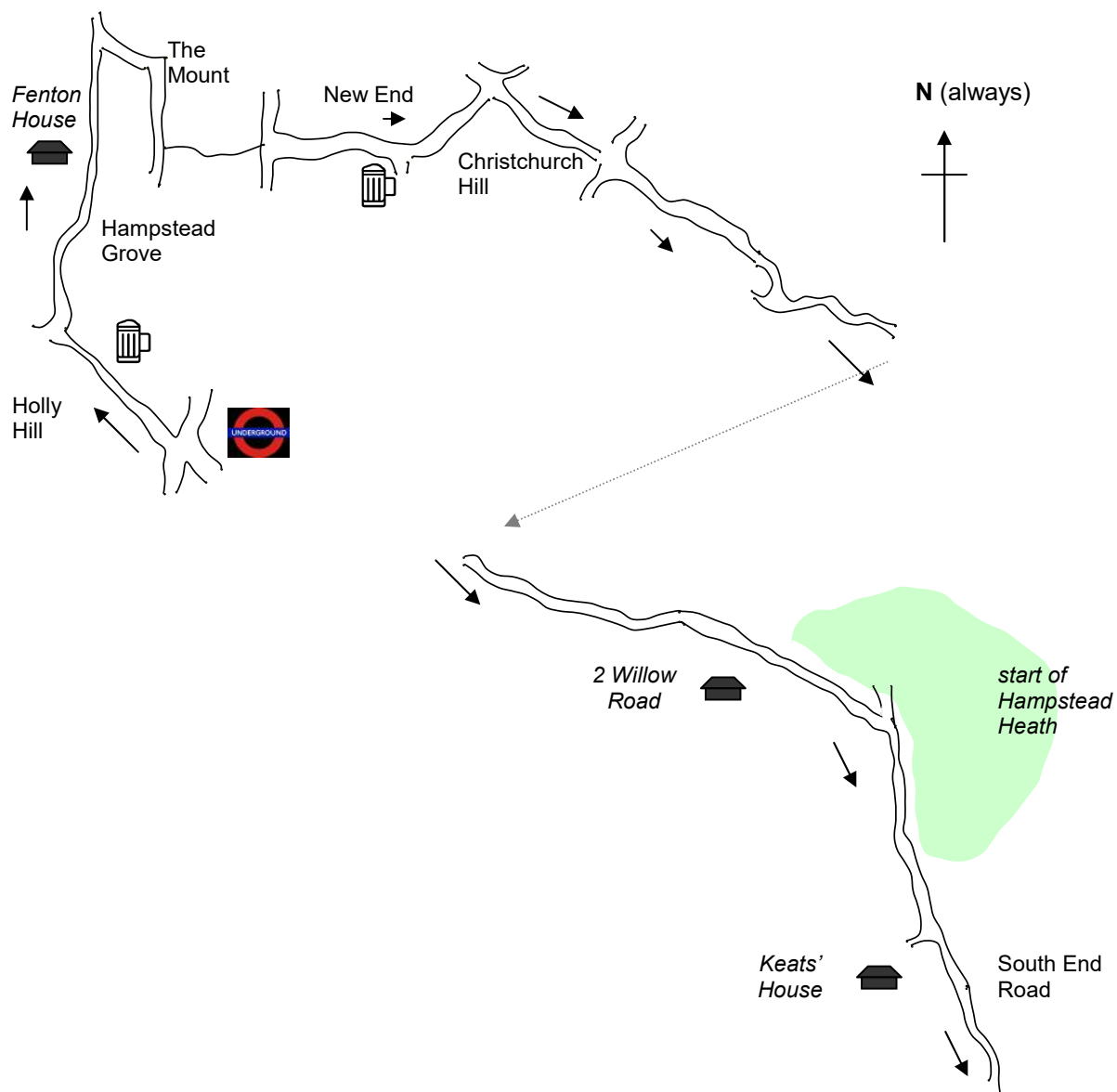


Hampstead Heath is a vast rambling hilly area of woodland, heath and ponds covering 320 hectares (790 acres). See other walks in this series.

Soon you pass No. 2 Willow Road.

2 Willow Road is a unique home designed in 1939 by ground-breaking modernist architect Ernö Goldfinger for himself and his family. Goldfinger is known for his concrete high-rises such as the Trellick Tower (see the walk “Portobello Road, Notting Hill, Holland Park” in this series). The house contains a collection of modern art, personal possessions and innovative furniture. Ian

Fleming lived nearby and named the eponymous villain of his James Bond novel 'Goldfinger' after him. (Their wives knew each other through tennis but there is no evidence that the two men were acquainted.) Interestingly, Goldfinger's own copy can be seen on one of his bookshelves. The house is run by the National Trust and is open 3-5pm Wed-Sun Mar-Oct (11am,12,1,2pm by guided tour only).



Cross Downshire Hill and join South End Road. Just before the shops, on the right, is Keats Grove and Keats House is a little way on the left.

Keats House is a pleasant airy regency house where the poet John Keats lived from 1818 to 1820. Here he wrote "Ode to a Nightingale" and fell in love with Fanny Brawne, the girl next door. It is open afternoons, except Monday, in the warmer half of the year.

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Continue down South End Road soon reaching Hampstead Heath railway station, a small central green, buses and shops and a public loo.

Leg 2: Heath Village to Primrose Hill

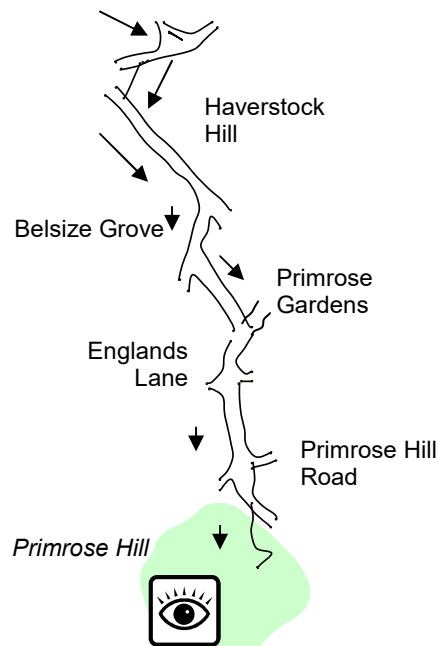
Turn **right** on Pond Street in front of the Royal Free Hospital, a concrete monstrosity. Just past the building and its access road, turn **left** on a paved pathway and at the end turn **left** on the main road Haverstock Hill, passing many eateries. Pass the Community Centre and Belsize Park tube station and, shortly after this, turn **right** on Belsize Grove. Turn **left** on Primrose Gardens which has a pleasant an accessible central garden strip and at the end, turn **right** into Englands Lane. At a junction, veer **left** into Primrose Hill Road, cross Adelaide Road at the lights and keep walking until you see the open space of Primrose Hill on your **right**. Go through the first gap or gate onto the lush grassy hill, always with a feeling of elation.



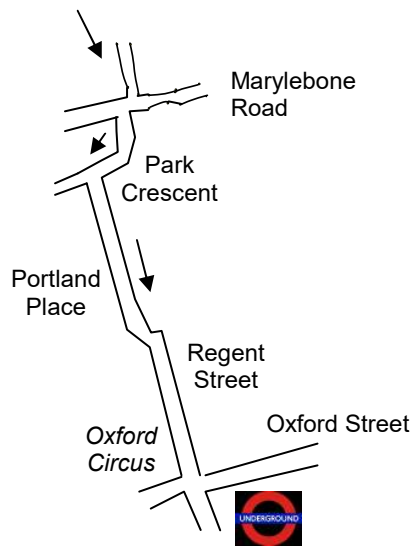
Primrose Hill, just to the north of Regent's Park, was always an open space or "park for the people" and its name bears testimony to its rural situation, when its sides were covered with early spring flowers. Nearby Chalk Farm was also just as its name suggests. Primrose Hill affords views over the whole of London and the lighting along its main routes make it an appealing sight at night time. The nearby village is extremely fashionable with many notable residents from media and politics (see the other walk in this series "Regent's Park, Camden Market, Kings Cross").

Ascend to the highest point where there is a direction finder and seats with views across London. Regents Park zoo is just below.

Note: maps don't all have same scale!



Leg 4: Marylebone Road to Oxford Circus



Cross Marylebone Road, straight over to Park Crescent. Follow this elegant crescent round to the right, admiring the stuccoed terrace designed by John Nash, and turn **left** into the wide boulevard of Portland Place, *designed by the Adams brothers in 1770, notable for embassies*. As the road snakes left-right, you pass the very grand *Langham Hotel* on your right and, on your left, the *BBC Broadcasting House* and *All Souls Church*. The road is now Regent Street, offering several opportunities to eat. This street leads all the way to Oxford Street and Oxford Circus, with Underground and bus connections, or simply the opportunity for endless shopping.

