

A Loop Walk between Hanworth and Feltham

BY A DUKE OF EDINBURGH VOLUNTEER

On the 24th February 2018, I met with other members of the local community at the Shot Tower in Crane Park. Our plan was to spend the sunny, crisp Sunday morning scouting along the River Crane, then along the Longford River finding a way up to the Duke of Northumberland's River, and then back down to the River Crane.



The Longford River at Feltham

Maps were laid out as an optional guide to where we would be walking, informing about other walks there and the surrounding wildlife. However, my job as a Volunteer for my DofE was to mark out on a clean map where we went.

Once we were all gathered, we set off. The friendly atmosphere created by the helpful, cheery walk leaders gave way to plenty of conversation, and as we set off along the tree-lined track, I doubt there was anyone without a talking companion who wanted one. The paths were dotted with a few others taking a walk like us, but it was not so busy as to render it unpleasant.

Having reached Central Feltham, we stopped for a break; some of us taking advantage of the toilets in the library nearby, and others making the most of the numerous coffee shops- or, in my case, Greggs' tomato and basil soup.

The Longford River is a manmade river that flows from the River Colne to the Thames at Hampton Court. The upper Duke of Northumberland's River is also manmade and flows from the River Colne to the River Crane at Heathrow. The lower arm flows from Twickenham to Isleworth.

We regrouped and headed off again. Along the way, we often paused to listen to the leaders as they shared their thorough knowledge of the area, and the interest this sparked kept up high morale in the group. A few hours saw us as the river, and in a few more we were just by the River Crane again, well on our way back. However, our progress was



Board walk in Donkey Woods

Photo by Andy Smith

slightly hindered as we encountered a muddy area. Albeit difficult to pass without getting our shoes rather muddy, it cultivated teamwork among us as we sought to find the easiest route through. Fortunately, after ten metres or so the path became a boardwalk and the terrain was gentle again.

The walk was an ideal way to make the most of such a lovely Sunday morning, and I would entirely recommend anyone considering joining in a walk sometime to go for it. If the group is anything like this one was, you will find yourself someone with similar pace and conversation and though I can't vouch for the weather being as nice as it was for me, I am sure I can vouch for wonderful scenery along the way.

THE VOLUNTEER IS HELPING FORCE TO WORK ON A MAP OF AN 8 MILE CIRCULAR ROUTE THROUGH PEVENSEY NATURE RESERVE, DE BROME FIELDS, AND HANWORTH PARK TO JOIN THE LONGFORD RIVER. WE WALKED ALONG THIS RIVER UNTIL WE REACHED THE UPPER DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S RIVER.

AT DONKEY WOODS WE JOINED THE RIVER CRANE AND FOLLOWED IT BACK TO PEVENSEY NATURE RESERVE THROUGH THE FELTHAM MARSHALLING YARDS.

THE NEW MAP WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD ON OUR WEBSITE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

