

THE PENGE AND CATOR PARKS WALK



Introduction

The idea for the walking route came about as something to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Friends of Winsford Gardens (aka Penge Green Gym) who began life in 2011 under the auspices of BTCV (now The Conservation Volunteers). The Group is now an established Friends Group and member of the Friends Forum of Bromley Parks and Green Spaces. In 2021, five of the parks and open spaces the route passes through have Friends Groups who help to look after and maintain them. The walk takes you around the centre of Penge, with the High Street in the middle, but attempts to keep you off the main thoroughfares as much as possible. It takes you through each of the park areas which have their individual attractions. The description does not dwell too much on the historical or other aspects of the sites, details of some of which can be found in the splendid Penge Heritage Trail leaflet or in greater detail on their website -



www.pengeheritagetrail.org.uk

Part of the route also follows the Green Chain and Capital Ring walks.

The Route

This is a circular walking route connecting the local parks and open spaces in and around Penge. The walk includes: Winsford Gardens, Betts Park, Penge Recreation Ground, Watermen's Square, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Cator Park and Royston Field.

The route description in these notes is clockwise starting and finishing at Winsford Gardens, Garden Road, London SE20 7RN (entrance between Winsford House and No.2 Garden Road).

The walk can be started at any point on the circuit. It can be joined at any of the parks and open spaces listed above. There are also two shorter walks:

Western circuit, which takes in Royston Field, Winsford Gardens, Betts Park, Penge Recreation Ground and Watermen's Square.

Eastern circuit, which takes in Watermen's Square, Alexandra Recreation Ground and Cator Park.

Distances

The complete circuit is about 5 miles

Distances from the junction of High Street and Green Lane:

Western circuit about 2.5 miles

Eastern circuit about 3 miles

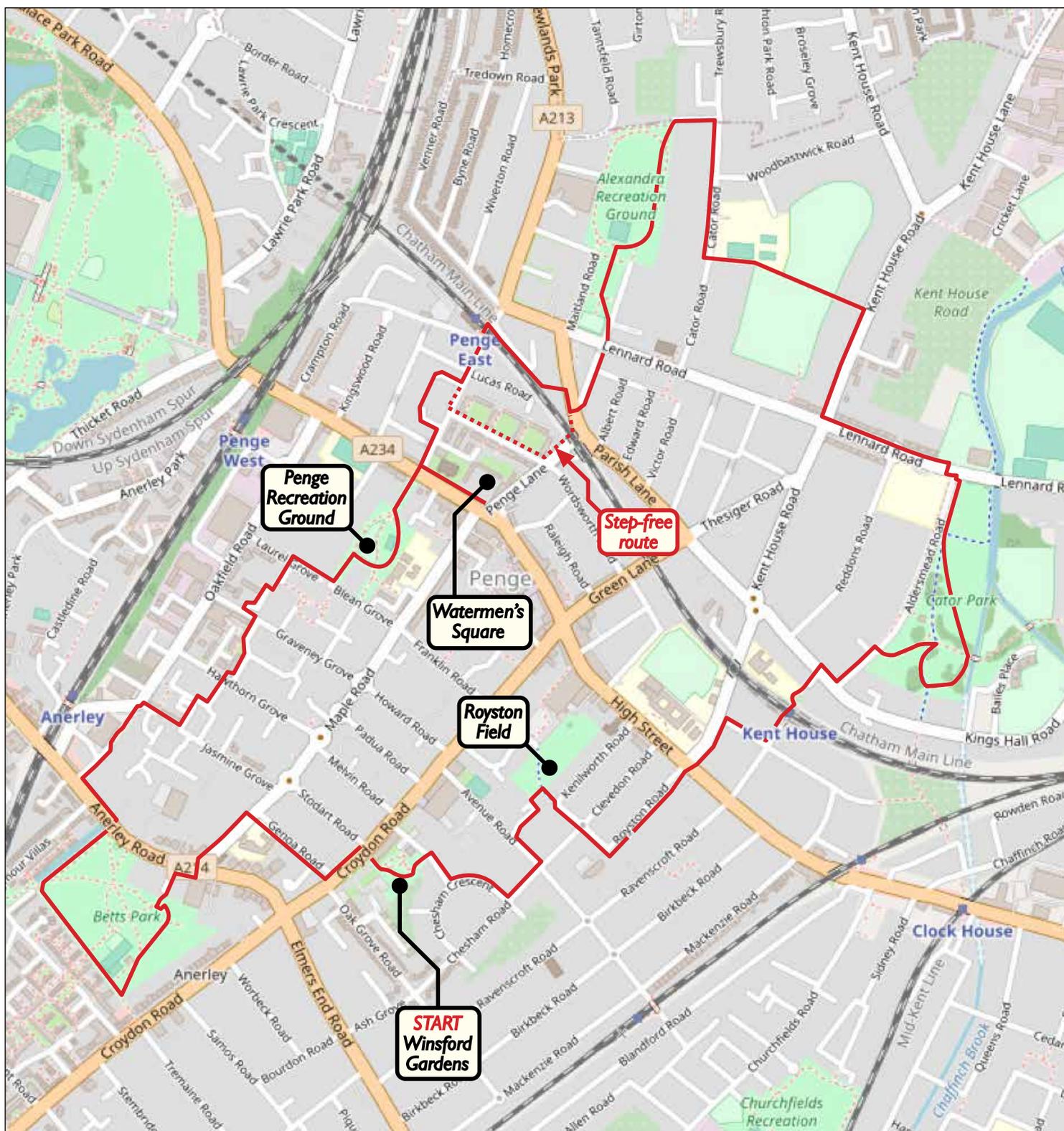
Directions for joining the Western or Eastern sections of the walk from the Penge High Street/Green Lane junction

Western Section: Walk along the High Street towards Sainsbury's. Turn right onto the footpath around the perimeter of the store which takes you out into the car park area at the rear. Follow the entrance/exit road out of the car park and Royston Field is on your left. Enter and follow the path across the field to join the main route.

Eastern Section: Go north along the High Street towards the Crooked Billet. Penge Lane is the turning beyond the pub off which is the entrance to Watermen's Gardens. Continuing along the High Street cross over at the pedestrian crossing opposite St John's Church and the turning beyond is St John's Road where you join the main route

Maps for these two shorter walks are on page 6 (Western) and page 7 (Eastern)

The whole walk



Walking Directions

Starting from the Garden Road entrance to **Winsford Gardens**, follow the main path which bends round to the right and leads out into Croydon Road between the buildings of Burmarsh and Benwick Court. The Gardens were originally designed and laid out by Stephen Gee, who built Winsford House in the 1930's, and this was his back garden. It is now a public park.

Find out

What year were the Friends of Winsford Gardens awarded the QAVS?

Leaving by the entrance gates, it is now necessary to carefully cross to the other side of Croydon Road and turn left. Take the first turning on the right (Genoa Road) and carry on down to its junction with Maple Road, passing St. Anthony's Church on the left.

Turn left along Maple Road, around the perimeter of St. Anthony's School, but cross over to the opposite side and proceed to the junction with Anerley Road, with the modern buildings of Christ Church Anerley on the corner to the left.

Cross Anerley Road at the pedestrian crossing. Turn right and soon turn left along Betts Way. In a short distance you will see the entrance to **Betts Park** in front of you.

Go past the barrier and turn left along the main path and follow this round down towards the enclosed play area. Pass this on your right and immediately beyond turn right onto the path along the perimeter of the park. At the end you will reach the sole remaining stretch of the Croydon Canal. Turn right to follow the path along the bank of the Canal and then climb up away from the Canal turning to the left to exit the park back onto Anerley Road. To your left is a Canal information board.



Find out
What year was the
Canal opened?

It is best to cross the busy Anerley Road at the park exit by using the island in the middle of the road. Once across the road turn left along the pavement until reaching Minden Road with the dental surgery on the corner. Turn right and follow the pavement downhill. Where Minden Road turns to the left continue on the path which runs between Anerley Methodist Church on the right and the back of the Wickes warehouse. The path leads down to Jasmine Grove with the Bus Terminal on the left.

Turn right along Jasmine Grove and after passing the turning to Collingwood Close on the right follow the footpath between the residential fences. You now need to weave your way through the Groves residential estate.

Turn first left into Cornish Grove and, beyond the parking area, go right and immediately left and out into Hawthorn Grove. Here turn right and then immediately left, leading to what is Chestnut Grove which, veering left, takes you out into Woodbine Grove.

Cross diagonally left into the Upchurch Close parking area and look out for the enclosed footpath ahead. Follow this path turning right and then left into Ivychurch Close and finally out into Laurel Grove. Here cross to the opposite side and turn right on the pavement, going beyond the post box and the road barrier, to reach the entrance to **Penge Recreation Ground** on the left.



Enter on the broad path and after walking along the avenue of trees turn to the right to circumvent the enclosed play area and follow this round to reach the structure of what was Mrs Maple's water fountain. Here the path leads straight out towards Penge High Street and the war memorial.

Find out
Who unveiled the
memorial as Chair
of Penge UDC in
1921/22?

Break Point: If you don't wish to continue the walk you can turn right on Penge High Street, taking you back into the centre of Penge

Turn right out of the recreation ground to cross the road at the pedestrian crossing. To visit **Watermen's Square**, turn right in front of St. John's Church and view the almshouses and grounds through the front railings.

If you wish to enter the grounds it is necessary to carry on and turn left along Penge Lane until coming to the entrance on the left. Follow round to enter the gardens through the arch. You will need to return the same way.

Once back at the crossing, take the road on the right which is St. John's Road alongside the church. Cross to the left hand pavement and for a short diversion enter King William IV Gardens alongside house No.19. Come back out into St. John's Road after following the path round. Turn left and carry straight on to arrive at the railway line and the footbridge at Penge East station.

Alternative route for step free access.

Turn right down Queen Adelaide Road to its junction with Penge Lane.

Turn left and go under the railway bridge coming out into Parish Lane.

Rejoin the route by crossing over into Hardings Lane.

Cross the footbridge and turn right down Linden Grove alongside the railway line. Go straight on towards the pair of garages in front of you. When you reach them (beyond house No.30) take the footpath to their left, which leads out into Parish Lane. Turn right, crossing over the road to enter Hardings Lane, the first turning on the left. Follow this road along the pavement to its junction with Lennard Road - passing some of the very attractive Alexandra Cottages.

Cross over Lennard Road and straight on into Alexandra Road with the playground of **Alexandra Recreation Ground** on your left. You can enter the playground and exit via the gate towards the middle of the green. Carry straight on across the grass to the flagpole and the well preserved water fountain. Beyond is the bowling green and pavilion - the latter is the home of the West Beckenham Bowls Club and now also a local football club. Turn right in front of the green and follow the path round towards the Green Chain and Capital Ring directional sign.

You can now follow the marker posts and signs for the Green Chain and Capital Ring walks which take you all the way into Cator Park. The path takes you past the work of the artists who created the colourful murals on the walls of the building. Keeping to this right hand path leads you through the open field to an unobtrusive narrow exit from the park to the right of a cracked and leaning brick wall at the perimeter. Here there is a high level direction sign on a lamp post pointing you down a poorly surfaced lane and out towards Trewsbury Road.



Find out

When was the water fountain erected?

Find out

What year did the Bowls Club celebrate its centenary?

Turn right on the pavement and carry on past the turning opposite into Woodbastwick Road and then the Alexandra Junior School. Now in Cator Road, and at the end of the School grounds, a high level sign on a post tells you to cross the road and follow an enclosed tarmac footpath alongside No.36 Cator Road. This leads between playing fields on either side and is very uneven with tree roots breaking the surface. Follow between the houses at the end to come out into Kings Hall Road. Turn right and go along the pavement all the way to the traffic lights at the junction with Lennard Road. Here the sign tells you to cross over Kings Hall Road and continue along the pavement of Lennard Road. Keeping to this pavement, carry on past the junction with Reddons Road. On passing the substantial buildings of the Harris Girls Academy, cross the road at the pedestrian crossing turning left to the junction with Aldersmead Road. **Cator Park** is in front of you on the other side. Enter the park and follow the footpath running parallel to Aldersmead Road.

At the junction with a shared footpath/cycleway coming in from the left, leave the path and head diagonally across the open field making for the far end of the metal railings. These are alongside the channelled Chaffinch Brook which runs through the park.



As you continue in this direction the park playground comes into view on the other side of the channel. You walk towards a gap in the trees close to the line of the railings and reach a main park path close to a bridge on your left which crosses the stream. **Do NOT follow the direction of the Green Chain/Capital Ring marker post over the bridge.** Instead cross over this main path and onto a path which follows the course of the stream leading round the perimeter of the park. Where it reaches a path exiting the park you find yourself on the route of the Waterlink Way and Cycle Route 21. Turn right, follow this back into the park and join up with the main path again at a junction of paths where there is a tall Green Chain and Capital Ring directional sign plus an elaborate route map of the Green Chain walk.

Find out
How far is it to
Dulwich Park?

Turn left at the junction and follow in the direction of the link path leading out of the park towards Kent House station. This takes you to an exit back out into Aldersmead Road almost opposite Ringwold Close. Cross over and turn left to the junction with Kings Hall Road. To your right, a new pedestrian crossing has been recently constructed to take you across the road and into the Kent House station approach.

Follow this to go into and through the tunnel passage, passing the bicycle hubs. You come out onto the station forecourt and carry straight on to the junction with the unmade Barnmead Road. Here turn right following the sign to Kent House Road and Penge High Street. At the junction turn left into Kent House Road and proceed on the left hand pavement to the traffic lights. Here you are back on Penge High Street.

Break point: You can turn right here and return to the centre of Penge, but you would miss visiting Royston Field.

To continue, cross over to the Tesco Express store and take a left turn along Royston Road. Follow the road around at the right hand bend into Westbury Road and over the junction with Clevedon and Percy Roads. Beyond the Kenilworth Road turning you carry straight on entering **Royston Field**. Your exit is an immediate left turn along a path leading to the car parking area of the small residential estate in Snowden Close.



Break point: Instead of entering Snowden Close continue on the main path through Royston Field to enter the Sainsbury's car park and into or round the perimeter of the store back onto the High Street.

**Before leaving
Royston Field ...
Find out**
What year did
Penge Council buy
the land? (You will
need to follow the
main path through
the open area to
establish this.)

On leaving Snowden Close turn left down Avenue Road then at the road junction turn right into Chesham Road keeping to the wide pavement on the right hand side. Take the first turning on the right which is Chesham Crescent and walk up to the crest where you turn right into Garden Road. You will shortly arrive at the entrance gate to Winsford Gardens.

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