

Brunel heritage walk: north-east Cemeteries and Hillingdon Hill

BNE

Start	IKB statue
Finish	IKB statue
Distance	3.72km
Duration	48 minutes
Ascent	36.8m

1	From statue, follow boulevard through centre of campus and up to Kingston Lane; cross, and enter cemetery; L at main junction and follow roadway to chapel buildings; exit cemetery onto Hillingdon Hill.	1010m
2	R, then L to cross both carriageways to The Rise; follow The Rise round to the R and up to Vine Lane, where R to Hillingdon Hill; L past Cedar House to Harlington Road junction; cross, doubling back behind bus stop and L into Coney Green; R, and take path to exit green L of churchyard; follow path out to Royal Lane.	1240m
3	L along Royal Lane; cross The Chantry; take path to R to Kingston lane; cross, then follow Nursery Lane for 340m; R onto Ring Road; L across bridge; R past medical centre; L behind Bannerman Centre; R to reach boulevard and cross to statue.	1430m





IKB statue

1 What do we know about the area around our campus? This walk will give you an idea of what lies beyond the north-east of the campus: the cemeteries, and the cluster of interest at the top of Hillingdon Hill.

The walk starts at the statue of Isambard Kingdom Brunel in the centre of the campus. Set off to the east, passing the Hamilton Centre with its shops. Continue past the Lecture Centre, crossing the bridge over the River Pinn, and climb past the Sports Centre to the roundabout. Bear right to cross the road at the crossing by Mary Seacole building, and continue up to Kingston Lane. Cross over, and enter the cemetery opposite.

This is Uxbridge Cemetery. As you enter, you will see a road loop on each side of the main path. These were access paths for the two chapels (one for Anglicans, the other for the rest) which were situated at the far end of the loops, beside the main path. They were removed after the merger of the cemetery with Hillingdon Cemetery next door, the chapels in Hillingdon cemetery being used for the merged purpose.

Continue to the T-junction, bearing left. Where the path makes a slight zigzag, you pass into Hillingdon Cemetery. Of the graves within the combined cemetery, there is a Victoria Cross holder, Alan Jerrard, who was in the Royal Flying Corps (forerunner of the RAF) and was shot down and held in an Austro-Hungarian prison. Also buried here is Walter Mallock Gee, who founded the Church Lads' Brigade as an Anglican rival to the Boys' Brigade, which had been founded some years earlier by Sir William Smith of Thurso. In an echo of setting up National Schools as rivals to Joseph

Lancaster's institutions, the Church of England had clearly decided that the Kirk elder from Caithness was not Anglican enough and altogether too inclusive.

The Rise



Step forward towards the remains of the two chapels (again, one for Anglicans and the other for the rest) and turn left. Beyond the second chapel, turn right and follow the path down the hill to exit the cemetery through the gateway (for pedestrians only) onto Hillingdon Hill. Cross the Uxbridge-bound carriageway, and turn right.

2 After 40m, take the steps to cross the central reservation, then cross the Hillingdon-bound carriageway (watching for traffic from your left). Continue ahead into The Rise.

The houses in this estate were built between the two world wars and are archetypal Metroland dwellings (though access to the Metropolitan Line itself would necessitate a bus, tram or trolleybus). Middle-sized and middle-class, they are built out on streets wider than earlier ones, forming perimeters of housing: it was at this time that Hillingdon Hill was dualled.

On this estate, there are two examples of a cul-de-sac, though these are merely infill into the green interior of the perimeter — compare the “stem and branch” cul-de-sac mentality of, say, 1980s estates.

Follow The Rise to turn into The Fairway (the names emphasising the quest for rural bliss, and the golf course nearby) and climb to reach Vine Lane. Note the variations and repeats in the house formats, and note how insensitive redevelopment blights whole areas of streetscape with its ugly dissonance.

Turn right along Vine Lane, crossing to the other pavement to walk along the wall of Cedar House and reach Hillingdon Village. Here, you return to what was once the main road between London and Oxford.

Turn left onto Uxbridge Road beneath the cedar tree, and advance to find on your left a view through the railings onto Cedar House. Continue along Uxbridge Road to the traffic lights at the top of Harlington Lane: here, cross by the pedestrian crossing and walk back (towards Uxbridge) as far as the bus stop. Beyond the bus shelter, bear left following a footpath sign onto Coney Green (clearly, a rabbit warren was here at some point in history). Bear right on a tarmac path with an earthwork to your right: this path bends gently left to reach a gate. Go through the gate into the churchyard, and come out at the top of Royal Lane.

3 Royal Lane is an ancient route off the (historically) main Oxford road from London, and the Red Lion inn and St John’s church have faced off each other across the road for centuries. The church dates from 1629, and the inn from the previous century.

King Charles I stopped at the inn during his flight in 1645, after he failed to agree a Treaty of Uxbridge (negotiations were held in what is now the Crown and Treay pub on Oxford Road). The extension of the inn parallel to Hillingdon Hill was originally stables for the stage horses: amongst others, the Bishops of Worcester stopped in Hillingdon



Cedar House



Red Lion Inn



Cemetery Lane

*Left: Nursery Lane
Right: River Pinn*

on their way home from synods in London: this is the source of the name of Bishopshalt House. It was only after the school moved from its premises on the Greenway in 1928 that it became Bishopshalt School. At the far end of the Red Lion's former stable block, there used to be a smithy, now long gone..

Walk down Royal Lane on the pub side of the street, passing a hall built in local brick, which currently advertises a nursery — for children, rather than plants (though it is worth remembering that the Welsh word for children is *plant*). Cross a side road, and pass the vicarage. On the left, you will see Bishopshalt School. Look out for a footpath which branches off Royal Lane on the right: take this path as it leads downhill in a tunnel of trees.

This was originally a churcing path (or a corpse path) which linked St John's church with a chapel of ease at Cowley (now St Laurence's church): today, it is probably most used as a rather more secular link between the campus and the Red Lion. About half-way down, the path borders Uxbridge Cemetery on its right, eventually descending to Kingston Lane at the corner of the Univesity's sports field.

Cross Kingston Lane, and carry on ahead down a broad track. This is Nursery Lane, taking its name from the nursery and market garden which occupied the site before the University moved in from Acton. Nursery Lane forms part of the old chapel path. Descend the path almost as far as the River Pinn, and take the gate on the right to reach the University Ring Road at Faraday Hall.

Turn left, and cross the Pinn; turn right, and pass to the left of the Medical Centre; bear left to reach the far corner of Bannerman Centre, and right to reach the main boulevard and the end of the circuit at the IKB statue.

