

FREEDOM PASS LONDON

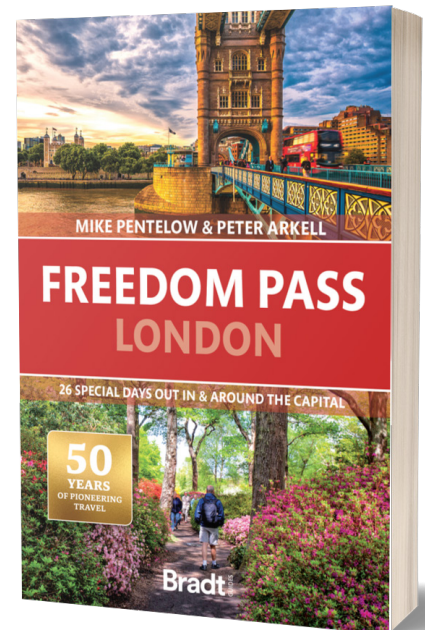
26 SPECIAL DAYS OUT IN AND AROUND THE CAPITAL

MIKE PENTELOW & PETER ARKELL

New edition of a unique walking guide to London

KEY SALES POINTS

- First edition sold over 10,000 copies
- Designed for the 1 million people who are eligible to hold a Freedom Pass, but equally useful for anyone using public transport to get around Greater London
- Walks cover the capital plus Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent and Surrey
- Huge potential audience: 1.15 million older people hold a Freedom Pass, plus 14.7 million domestic visits to London in 2021.



The new, thoroughly updated second edition of Bradt's *Freedom Pass London* brings to life the UK capital through 25 carefully curated walks that reveal historical landmarks, wildlife hotspots and quiet corners with fascinating pasts. As the title suggests, this travel guidebook is designed for the 1 million people who can enjoy free travel in central and Greater London thanks to the Freedom Pass, but its focus on walking destinations accessible by public transport makes it a must for anyone living in or visiting London.

One of London's unexpected glories is the way that the city meets countryside, not just in the surprisingly rural Green Belt, but also in the 'villagey' corners of suburbs, along urban rivers and amid the city's commons, parks and woodlands. The area featured extends from Amersham, northwest of London, to Epping in the northeast, Orpington in the southeast and Epsom in the southwest. Whether you are a city-dweller keen to explore parts of Essex, Kent, Surrey, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, or you live in suburbs and fancy visiting central London, Freedom Pass London proposes special itineraries for you.

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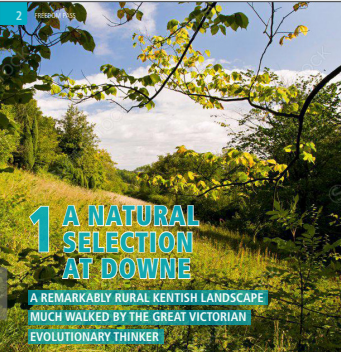
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THE WALKS:

1. DARWIN'S DOWNE (KENT, DOWNE)
2. BOX HILL (NEAR DORKING, CIRCULAR)
3. HEARTWOOD FOREST (NEAR ST ALBANS, CIRCULAR)
4. GRAND UNION CANAL (WATFORD TO KINGS LANGLEY)
5. BANSTEAD WOODS (NEAR CHIPSTEAD, CIRCULAR)
6. RIVER FLEET (HAMPSTEAD TO BLACKFRIARS)
7. EPPING FOREST (CHINGFORD TO LOUGHTON)
8. GRAND UNION CANAL (CROXLEY TO BUSHEY)
9. LESNES ABBEY WOOD (ABBEY WOOD TO BELVEDERE)
10. EPSOM DOWNS (CIRCULAR)
11. NORTH DOWNS (COULSDON SOUTH, CIRCULAR)
12. RIVER THAMES (TILBURY RIVERSIDE TERMINAL TO COALHOUSE FORT PARK)
13. RIVER WANDLE (COLLIERS WOOD TO CROYDON)
14. RIVER THAMES (STAINES TO CHERTSEY)
15. RIVER LEA (TOTTENHAM TO WALTHAM ABBEY)
16. ALDENHAM COUNTRY PARK (ELSTREE, CIRCULAR)
17. TRENT COUNTRY PARK (COCKFOSTERS TO OAKWOOD)
18. RIVER MISBOURNE (AMERSHAM TO LITTLE MISSENDEN)
19. RIVER DARENT (SWANLEY TO DARTFORD)
20. BEVERLEY BROOK (NEW MALDEN TO PUTNEY)
21. RIVER COLNE (LONDON COLNEY, CIRCULAR)
22. CHESSINGTON (CIRCULAR)
23. LITERARY LONDON (LONDON BRIDGE TO BLOOMSBURY)
24. INSPIRING WOMEN (CHARING CROSS TO BLOOMSBURY)
25. KARL MARX TOUR (LEICESTER SQUARE TO HIGHGATE)
26. RIVER THAMES, WEST OF LONDON (BERKSHIRE/BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, MAIDENHEAD TO TAPLOW)

INDEX



1 A NATURAL SELECTION AT DOWNE
A REMARKABLY RURAL KENTISH LANDSCAPE
MUCH WALKED BY THE GREAT VICTORIAN
EVOLUTIONARY THINKER

WHERE: Charles Darwin's Downe, circular
DISTANCE/DIFFICULTY: Just over 5 miles; easy-moderate: easy on the flat with two steep climbs of 400 strides each.
DROP-OUT POINT: After 3 miles
TIME: 2-2½hrs
MAP: OS Explorer map 147
START POINT/GETTING THERE: Downe Church (TQ432616) To Bromley South station from London Victoria (16-26mins; 8-10 an hour, including Sun). Turn right out of the station to Bus Stop Y for 146 to Downe Church (20mins; 1 an hour, including Sun)
TAKING A BREAK: Blacksmith's Arms, Cudham; Christmas Tree Farm & Tea Garden, George & Dragon, Queen's Head, Richmal Crompton

Charles Darwin's 'Dove's Bank', Downe Park Nature Reserve

A NATURAL SELECTION AT DOWNE | CHAPTER 1

1. DOWNE CHURCH Downe Church (St Mary's), next to the bus stop, is where Charles Darwin was an active member of the congregation for 40 years. A memorial sundial is dedicated to him on the outside of the church tower and you'll find a flat granite tomb to his memory between the main gate to the churchyard and the front door of the church. The building itself dates from 1291.

Despite his active support for this church he was attacked from its pulpit during the height of the controversy over his theory of evolution, seen by many to contradict the church's view of creation. This so upset a fellow member of the congregation, his friend and fellow naturalist Sir John Lubbock (who became the first Lord Avebury), that he stopped attending services here.

Darwin was a long-standing friend of the parish priest, Rev John Brodie Innes. During the evolution controversy Innes defended Darwin to bishops, declaring: 'I never saw a word in his writings which was an attack on religion. He follows his own course as a naturalist and leaves Moses to take care of himself.'

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Although his faith later dwindled, Darwin remained an active parishioner, supervised the finances of the church and its school, ran its Coal and Clothing Fund for the needy, and started its Friendly Club for those in financial hardship (and was its treasurer for over 30 years). His wife Emma is buried near the fence bordering High Elms Road. She also helped the local poor and needy by giving them bread and homemade gin cordial which was a heavy concoction of wine laced with laudanum, sugar, peppermint and bitters.

Four of their children, Mary Eleanor (who died in 1842 after just two weeks), Charles Waring (1836-38), Elizabeth (1847-1926) and Henrietta (1843-1927), are buried in the same grave near the main door to the church. And his faithful butler for 36 years, Joseph Parslow, is buried with his wife Eliza in the northern part of the churchyard.

➡ Come out of the church, cross diagonally to Lutted Road, and follow it for a few minutes to:

2. DOWNE HOUSE (Downe Village BR6 7JT ☎ 01689 859119 www.english-heritage.org.uk ○ opening hours vary – check website for the latest details ££) Ⓜ

Downe House was Darwin's home for the last 40 years of his life. In its extensive garden Darwin conducted experiments with worms, insects and plants. He even devised a system of giving IQ tests to some of the million worms in the garden which involved them pulling down triangles of paper.

He thought through a lot of his ideas while walking. The sandwalk in his garden he nicknamed his 'Thinking Path' for that very reason. To measure how far he had walked he kicked a flintstone to one side after each circuit, although his children sometimes mischievously removed them or added to them to mess up his calculations. On one of those strolls he was so struck by one particular notion that he stopped dead in his tracks, frozen in thought. He was so still in fact that two young squirrels ran up his back. The discovery that gave him the greatest pleasure was that the local cowbirds were in two kinds and so not self-pollinating.

He became a pigeon fancier to observe the effects of selective breeding (joining one club which met in a gin palace). But when it came to human selective breeding, as espoused by those of his followers who supported eugenics, he distanced himself: He believed the instinct to care for the weak and helpless was to humanity's evolutionary advantage, and that nobody should be prevented from reproducing.

In the house you can see the billiard room, which he had converted from a dining room. When he wanted a game he summoned the aforementioned butler, Joseph Parslow, with a bell pull.

➡ Downe House ➡ Downe House interior

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