

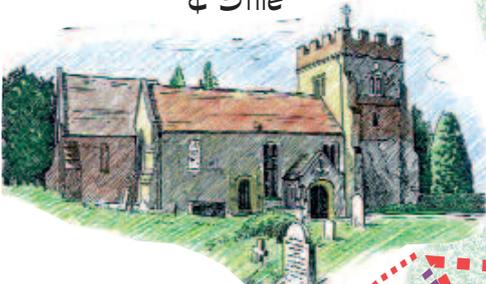


# RUISLIP WOODS

Lido - Harefield Church



British countryside panorama & Stile



St Marys Church Harefield



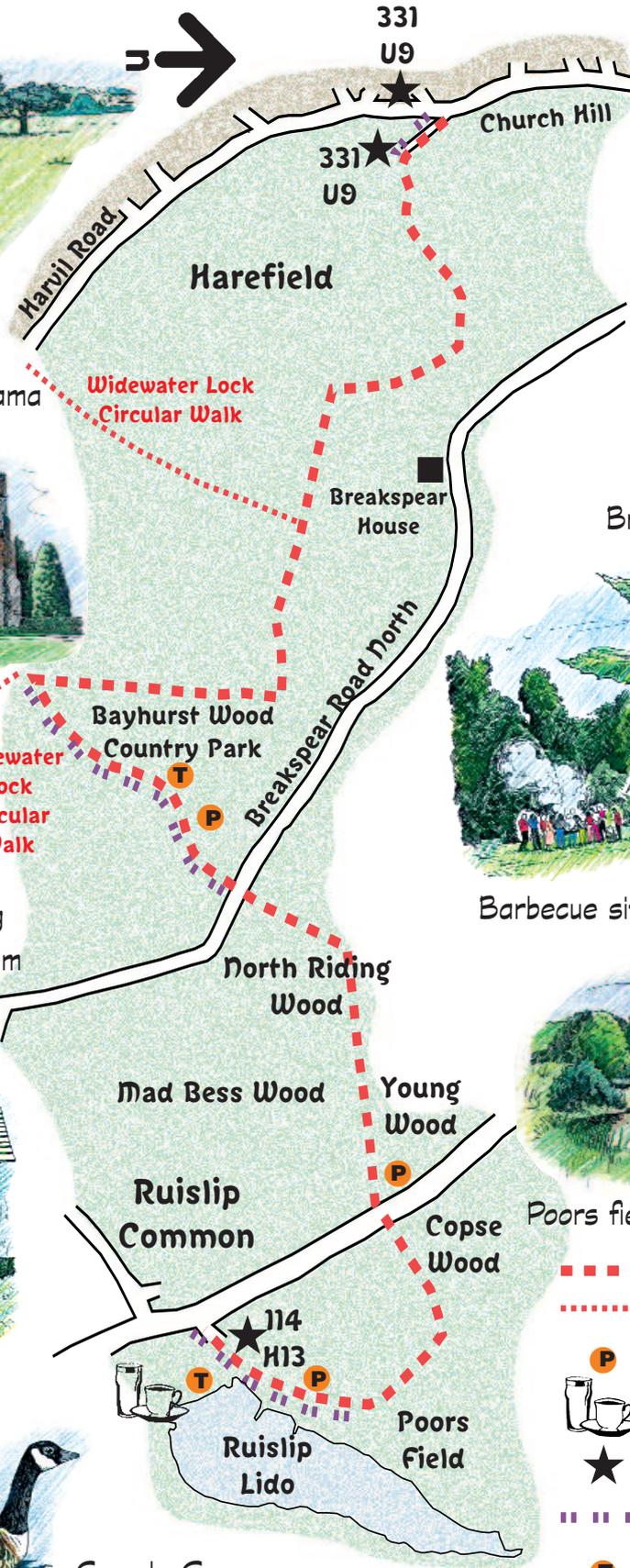
Copping & Hornbeam



Bayhurst Wood



Canada Geese



Bracken & Birch areas



Barbecue site & Sweet Chestnut



Poors field & Dragonfly

- - - - Hillingdon Trail
- . . . . . Linking Walks

- P Parking
- Public Houses
- ★ Bus Stops
- - - - Access for people with disabilities
- T Toilets

# RUISLIP WOODS WALK

## Ruislip Lido to Harefield Church 4 miles (3 hours)

Catch the E7 bus on Ruislip Road towards Ruislip. Get off the bus at Midcroft and catch the H13 Bus towards Ruislip Lido. Get off the bus on Reservoir Road, the entrance to Ruislip Lido is a short walk.

Alternatively catch the E7 bus on Ruislip Road towards Ruislip. Get off the bus at Midcroft and catch the 331 Bus from Stop towards Belmont Road. Get off the bus at the Six Bells Public House on Ducks Hill Road and along Reservoir Road a short distance to the entrance of Ruislip Lido.

### The walk starts at Ruislip Lido.

The gate at the end of Reservoir Road, gives access to Poors Field.

There is a large car park here. Ruislip Lido was established as a reservoir to feed the Grand Union Canal by damming and flooding the lower part of the valley between Park Wood and Copse Wood, including the hamlet of Park Hearn. Work began in 1811 and the reservoir started to feed the Canal in 1816.

Go along the path, across Poors Field for 180 metres, to the signpost. Bear left at the sign, going up the slope to a pond, revitalised in 1986.

The pond, on Poor's Field, reminds us of past use of this land - common wasteland, first recorded in 1295. Some grazing by cattle continued until 1956 and Poor's Field was registered as common land (hence Ruislip Common) in 1965. Grazing cattle have been reintroduced as a management tool to keep this part of Ruislip Woods National Nature Reserve looking and functioning as it should be.

Proceed to the footpath post. Cross a ditch at the start of the woodland proper and enter Copse Wood.

This is one of four areas of oak standard trees with hornbeam coppice below known collectively as Ruislip Woods. The woods have been managed for many centuries and coppicing is proving successful; this involves cutting all growth down to ground level, every 10 - 20 years; this prolongs the life of the trees, provides a continuous supply of timber, and encourages a rich and varied flora and associated wildlife.

Now go north-west for 230m, to the corner of the former Battle of Britain House. Continue on the path as far as Ducks Hill Road; cross with care to the stile opposite and enter Mad Bess Wood. Continue along the main footpath of the wood.

Cross the old "Green Lane", the surviving portion of a lane which used to link Jackets Lane and Breakspear Road, for transportation of gravel.

Continue on, until the route turns south-west, down a slope to a plank bridge over a stream, another 240m away. This is the main drainage channel - Mad Bess stream - which rises in the fields to the north.

Proceed to Breakspear Road North. Cross with care to enter Bayhurst Wood, via the driveway.

This has been managed as a Country Park since 1970. It has Beech, standard Hornbeam and a few rare Wild Service trees. There is a car park, a pond, picnic and barbecue areas.

Continue on the main drive, down the slope to the pond. Leave the pond, using the path going up the steep slope, to the main barbecue site.

Here the land slopes downwards on all sides, indicating why the wood is so named, from the old English "wood on the hill".

Continue on this path, to the picnic site. Continue west to the edge of the wood and on past the entrance to Tarletons Lake Nature Reserve to the stile at the junction with the old driveway to Breakspear House. Go over the stile and follow the path through the belt of trees for 150m. Cross the next stile and go along the field edge to the top of the slope and cross the stile. Cross another stile a few metres away and enter the field, with the woodland on the right, keeping to the fence; go to the footpath sign and stile in the corner of the field. The Trail continues north-west, along the hedgerow, down to the stile, through a kissinggate, beneath some fine old specimen trees passing a pond on the left and 2 more on the right. Continue down the slope, go over the stile [note that the right of way does not follow the churchyard wall] over the next stile (after 90m) to the stile and footpath post at the driveway.

Harefield St Mary's church is old, of mixed ages and stones and has a spectacular collection of fine old monuments inside, the most famous dating from 1636 to the Countess of Derby. In the churchyard is the A.N.Z.A.C. memorial to Australian and New Zealand servicemen and a few wood head-boards.

### Return journey to Grand Union Village:

From Harvil Road/Church Hill walk to St Marys Road and catch the U9 bus towards Belmont Road. At Warren Road/Swakeleys Road take the U1 bus towards Ruislip Station. At Church Avenue catch the E7 bus and get off at Broadmead Road.

Alternatively from Harvil Road/Church Hill walk to St Marys Road and catch the 331 bus at St Marys Road towards Ruislip Station. At Northwood Station take the 282 bus towards Ealing Hospital and get off at Broadmead Road.