

Northmoor Hill Nature Reserve (Denham) and Black Park (Iver Heath)

Northmoor Hill lies on the western side of the Colne Valley and features a long disused chalk quarry. It lies roughly opposite those at Harefield and features the same unconformity between the Chalk and the Paleogene Lambeth Group sediments as at the Harefield Great Pit SSSI. The area also features an active swallow hole where a minor stream sinks into the ground where it meets the chalk. The adjacent flat area on which lies Denham Aerodrome is underlain by the Winter Hill Gravel, laid down by the pre-diversion Thames during the Anglian cold stage of the middle Pleistocene about 450,000 years ago. The Thames below Marlow flowed north of London along the Vale of St Albans into East Anglia before ice of the Anglian Glaciation (the most extensive known on the British mainland) blocked its route. Ice lobes reached north London in the Finchley and Hornchurch areas. Further details on the geological background will follow nearer the time.

We then move on to **Black Park**, the type locality of the Black Park Gravel, the oldest post-diversion Thames gravel. It is exposed around the lake.

The Northmoor Hill walk (c. 1.5 km)

Dirt and gravelly tracks, patchy mud if wet. Steps down to, and up from, the swallow hole locality. Gradual descent to quarry, where there are some short steeper slopes which can be slippery - it's possible to avoid these to a certain extent. Steps (with broken handrail) up to Chalk-Paleogene unconformity which was obscured by detritus at the time of the last visit (November 2022). After leaving the quarry, it's gradually uphill then flat back to start.

The Black Park walk (c. 1.5 km)

Mainly gravel tracks. Flat. Some exposed tree roots near the lake edge. Gravel exposures along both shores of the lake.

Meet at 10.30 in the car park for the Northmoor Hill National Nature Reserve.

An attendance fee is payable per head to cover expenses (to be collected on the day):

£1 Members

£2 Colne Valley Regional Park members/partners

£3 Other visitors

Directions to Northmoor Hill

Grid ref: TQ 034 892

Nearest postcode UB9 5DH

Lat./Long.: N 51:35:31, W 0:30:29 (51.592, -0.508)

1:50,000 map (location arrowed):

<https://www.streetmap.co.uk/map?x=503535&y=189077&z=120&sv=503535,189077&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map&searchp=ids&dn=561&ax=503535&ay=189077&lm=0>

Larger scale map (location arrowed):

<https://www.streetmap.co.uk/map?x=503452&y=189179&z=106&sv=503452,189179&st=4&ar=Y,y&mapp=map&searchp=ids&dn=561&ax=503452&ay=189179&lm=0>

From east and M40 Jn 1 (Denham Rbt)

Take A40 to the junction with A412 (to Rickmansworth) where you turn right. Follow A412 and take second left (Tilehouse Lane) - the turning is c. 400m before the railway bridge.

From north (A412)

(Exit at Jn 17 if on M25.) Follow A412 to Denham (traffic lights - and shopping parades on left), go under the railway bridge and in c.400m turn right into Tilehurst Lane.

From west (if on A40)

Turn left at the junction with A412 then as the first set of directions.

Once on Tilehurst Lane

Follow the road for 1.5-2 km eventually with Denham airfield on the left. Car park on the right down a short track with height restriction gantry.

Streetview attached of entrance.

Please car share if possible because the car park is fairly small.

Directions to Black Park

1:50,000 map (location arrowed):

<https://www.streetmap.co.uk/map?x=500575&y=183275&z=120&sv=500575,183275&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map&searchp=ids&dn=792&ax=500575&ay=183275&lm=0>

Grid ref: TQ 005 832

Nearest postcode: SL3 6DT

Lat./Long.: N 51:32:22, W 0:33:04 (51.5394, -0.5512)

Return to A412 where turn right for A40, turn left to Denham Rbt. Turn right on this 2-way gyratory to go under M40 bridge in left lane, ignoring on-slip to M40. Turn right into A412 towards Slough. Follow this through Iver Heath to Crooked Billet Rbt in c. 3 km. Take 3rd exit and turn right in 1 km (Black Park on direction sign). Follow road for about 800m and turn right into Black Park. Grid ref TQ 005 832; nearest postcode SL3 6DT. Walk to cafe. After lunch, walk around the lake.

Parking at Black Park costs £3.80 for 2 hours, £4.60 for 4 hours and £5.60 over 4 hours. Pay machines are card payment only. There is a small café and adjacent toilets near the car park and a larger cafe overlooking the lake, also with toilets.

Note: Being close to Pinewood Studios, [filming](#) is taking place in Black Park at the moment for a TV production. A number of their support vehicles will be in the car park. As the car park is large, we shouldn't be affected judging by a recent visit. It didn't affect the walk around the lake.