

Islington U3A Longer Walking Group

Walk Title	Erith to Bexley	Walk No.	352
Area	Essex	Type	Linear
Date	Friday, 18 th March, 2022		
Distance	8.5 miles (13.5 km)		
Timing	4 hours walking time + travel + lunch stop. Allow 6½ hours in total. Therefore expect to be back in Islington by 17.00 pm		
Meeting up & travel	<p>Meet at Highbury & Islington tube station by 9.20. We'll take the 9.32 Overground toward Clapham Junction getting off at Shadwell. We'll cross over and get the 9.55 DLR to Woolwich Arsenal. There we'll walk through to the rail station (Platform 2) and get the 10.31 to Erith. It's about an hour in total to get there.</p> <p>We travel back from Bexley. Easiest is train toward Cannon Street getting off at London Bridge. Then No 43 bus or Great Northern train to Moorgate.</p> <p>The Freedom Pass/ 60+ Travel card area extends to Erith & Bexley so no extra tickets required.</p> <p>For any younger members – you'll need a single ticket to Erith from Woolwich Arsenal on the way out and Bexley to London Bridge on the way back.</p>		
Route	<p>We last did this in November 2015.</p> <p>See details by the link to the London Loop provided below. In summary: (0km, 10.35) We leave Erith station and immediately pick up the London Loop signs. We follow these initially along the Thames bank heading East. At the Dartford Creek junction we turn South and follow the creek through the Crayford Marshes until we meet the outflow of the River Clay (7km, 1205). Following this we proceed through Barnes Clay parkland to Crayford (8km, 12.50) where we will have lunch.</p> <p>After lunch (14.00) we are back along the banks of the River Cray again, skirt playing fields that take us into Hall Palace Gardens (10km, 14.30). To cross railway we go up on to the A2, cross the road bridge, then left down the path. Near the bottom watch out for a sharp left turn, take this path, don't carry straight on. This takes us along the railway under the road. Then we follow the path along the edge of Churchfield Woods. This leads us to St Mary the Virgin church and Bexley village. It's about 1km through the village to the station (13.5km, 15.30). Option for a cup of tea or to catch a train immediately (15.32, 15.57). Can come back via New Cross (change to Overground) or train toward Cannon Street.</p>		
Lunch	Food is available all day at the pub, the Bear & Ragged Staff. Average food, probably slow service.		
Dropping out	There is an opt out at Crayford after 8km. There you can reach Crayford station and catch a train back toward Waterloo or London Bridge.		
Suitability	<p>Suitable for any reasonably fit regular walker. There are no particular difficulties.</p> <p>Terrain: first half is open estuary, then afternoon is more parkland or</p>		

	<p>woods. Firm (mostly gravel) paths most of the way.</p> <p>Possible obstacles: one stile.</p> <p>Comfortable waterproof walking shoes/ boots. Check weather forecast for temperature and likelihood of rain.</p>
Facilities	<p>There are no toilets at the beginning at Erith station. There are at the pub in the middle. But there are toilets at the end at Bexley station.</p>
Walk source	<p>TFL Walking webpage, London Loop and the London Loop book.</p>
Map & other references	<p>OS Explorer 162</p> <p>Links: http://content.tfl.gov.uk/london-loop-section-1.pdf</p>
Leader & contact details	<p><u>Walk Leader</u>: Derek Harwood</p> <p><u>Contact</u> phone: 077 5931 4096</p> <p>e-mail: derek.harwood@live.co.uk</p>
Interesting facts	<p>The River Cray is home to common reeds - the tallest British grass which can reach ten feet high. It is still used to thatch roofs, and in previous times was harvested in huge quantities. The marshes are one of the few remaining areas of Thames grazing marsh in London, with ditches supporting a wealth of rare plants and animals, and a good range of breeding birds.</p> <p>Did you know: The Bear & Ragged Staff was the badge of the Earl of Warwick - the famed Kingmaker of the Wars of the Roses. He was killed in thick fog at the battle of Barnet after he'd just joined the Lancastrians.</p> <p>Hall Place is a fine Tudor mansion built almost 500 years ago in the reign of Henry VIII for the Lord Mayor of London. It has a magnificent panelled Great Hall with Minstrel's Gallery and fine decorative plaster ceilings, as well as award-winning gardens, a stunning topiary lawn, herb gardens and inspirational herbaceous border.</p>