

Islington U3A Longer Walks Group

Walk Title	Thames Path South	Walk No.	349
Area	London	Type	Linear
Date	Friday, 11 th February, 2022		
Distance	Just under 10 miles (17 km).		
Timing	4 hours walking time + travel + lunch stop. Allow 7 hours in total. Therefore should be back in Islington by 5.30 pm.		
Meeting up & travel	<p>Meet at entrance to Highbury & Islington station by 9.25am latest. We will travel to Woolwich. Overground (eg Crystal Palace) to Shadwell then DLR to Woolwich Arsenal (or National Rail via central London if you prefer).</p> <p>We will be travelling back from Erith. South-Eastern train from Erith (trains every 15 minutes) toward Charing Cross but get off at Woolwich Arsenal, then DLR, then London Overground (or travel back through Central London). Total journey time is about one hour. All travel is within the Freedom Pass/ Oyster card area.</p>		
Route	<p>(0km, 10.30) From Woolwich Arsenal we immediately pick up the Thames Path and head east. The route follows the riverside all the way. Great view off the river and across to the north bank. Late lunch at Crossness (7mls, 10km). After lunch we continue along the river to Erith.</p>		
Lunch	<p>Food is available at Morgan: 02031379902 https://www.themorganpubbelvedere.co.uk/</p>		
Dropping out	Several possibilities by bus to a station.		
Suitability	<p>Suitable for any reasonably fit regular walker. There are no particular difficulties. Terrain: one easy up; dry paths all the way. Possible obstacles: there is one stile to cross. Comfortable waterproof walking shoes/ boots. Check weather forecast for temperature and likelihood of rain.</p>		
Facilities	There are toilets on the train and at Woolwich Arsenal.		
Walk source	TfL Walking. See links below.		
Map & other references	<p>OS Explorer: Links: https://content.tfl.gov.uk/thames-path-south-section-4.pdf https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1045432/coastal-access-england-map.pdf</p>		
Leader & contact details	<p><u>Walk Leader:</u> Derek Harwood <u>Phone:</u> 077 5931 4096 <u>e-mail:</u> derek.harwood@live.co.uk</p>		
Interesting Facts	<p>England Coast Path - London to the sea - newest section of path is now open. Walkers can follow a continuous route from Woolwich to the sea on the Isle of Grain. This 49 mile (79km) stretch joins Grain – on the Isle of Grain – with the Woolwich foot tunnel. From Woolwich a new section links up with the Thames Path, creating a</p>		

continuous, way-marked route from the source of the Thames, Gloucestershire, through the centre of London, to the sea. This new section of national trail, from London to Grain, will allow walkers to enjoy fantastic views, while taking in the natural and cultural heritage of this uniquely diverse and fascinating stretch of the coast.

From Woolwich the route follows closely along the south bank of the Thames. The river has long been a busy port, as numerous wharves and jetties – many of them redundant – will testify. In places, new stylish residential developments – with wide promenades, benches, and trees – are springing up to replace derelict industrial sites. Elsewhere, the route passes numerous heritage sites, including the impressive Woolwich Arsenal with a long history of providing armaments and ammunition for the British army and navy. But this is also a working landscape and interspersed with historic sites are busy wharves, industrial complexes, the magnificent Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, and at Swanscombe: the largest pylon in Europe.

And there is no shortage of wildlife, even close to the centre of London on some of the more industrialised sections. At low tide a wide variety of birds can be seen feeding on the mud, and it is not unusual to see the occasional grey seal hauled up on one of the many small beaches. Heading eastwards towards the Isle of Grain the industrial landscape fades away. Industrial heritage is replaced by long stretches of remote grazing marsh, and between the Napoleonic fort at Cliffe and the village of Allhallows there is nothing but wildness – twelve miles of sea, sky, and grazing marsh.

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