

# Walk the Bakerloo Line

## I G Liddell



The text in this document is merely an indication of what might be possible ... or what might have been possible at the time of researching (2024) or later revision. All walking routes are subject to change, but the pace of urban change is greater than in rural areas.

Each reader must assess whether each part of the route qualifies as suitable or safe for public access. The author does not warrant any point of legality or safety in any part of the description of the route.

Thanks are due to many people who have helped me with route-finding and with intelligence local to a number of areas traversed by the route. Their contributions enrich the route and the stories along it. Clearly, any mistakes and misinterpretations remain with the author.

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Front cover photograph:  
All Souls, Langham Place and Broadcasting House

# Walk the Underground

## Bakerloo Line

Start	Elephant and Castle station — <b>SE1 6LW</b>
Finish	Harrow and Wealdstone station — <b>HA3 5BP</b>
Distance	26.9km
Duration	5 hours 37 minutes
Ascent	146m

### Introduction

The Bakerloo Line was opened in 1906 to run between Baker Street and the station which was then called Kennington Road and is now known as Lambeth North, just beyond Waterloo, and was extended to Elephant and Castle a few months later. *Bakerloo* is an ugly portmanteau word (all portmanteau words are ugly, but a few are less ugly than the still-burgeoning horde of these linguistic assaults) with either of the southern terminus names would be even worse: the unhelpful *Bakerington* or the clearly deranged *Bakerphant*. The name was coined by the Press because they believed that saying *Baker Street and Waterloo Railway* would give commuters a severe case of jaw-ache.

The line was extended to the north over the following decade, firstly to Paddington and then as far as Queen's Park, from which point it shared the tracks of the Watford DC line (now to be known — potentially hubristically — as the Lioness Line of the Overground). Over the years, the northern terminus of the Bakerloo Line oscillated between Stonebridge Park, Harrow and Wealdstone, and Watford Junction, but it seems to have settled now on Harrow and Wealdstone.

In the south, the idea of extending the line to Camberwell hung around like an unloved uncle at a wedding for many years after the enabling Act was passed by Parliament in 1931, the last vestiges being buried in 1991. More recently, there have been vague plans to extend the line to Lewisham and then to take over the line to Hayes (the one in Bromley, rather than the one in Hillingdon — both resolutely within London, despite the sad backward-looking fantasies of so many people), but that idea is mired in the smoke of pipedreams.

Following the creation of two tunnels for the Metropolitan Line

running between Baker Street and Finchley Road (those that are used by that line today), the stopping service to Stanmore via St John's Wood was transferred to the Bakerloo Line in 1939. Forty years later, this branch was transferred to become the northern end of the Jubilee Line.

# Elephant and Castle to Harrow and Wealdstone 26.9km; 5hr 36min 146m ascent

## Introduction

**1** The pedestrian route keeps fairly close to the Underground route throughout.

## Route

### Elephant and Castle to Lambeth North 0.9km

**2** If you are arriving at Elephant and Castle station on the Bakerloo Line, move towards the front of the train and take the exit marked *South Bank University*, which turns you through 180° before making for the lifts. The other exit, marked *Shopping Centre* (though that destination has now been demolished) will land you at the Northern Line entrance.

Leslie Green (1875-1908) was an architect who created the design for many Underground stations in British Art Nouveau style. He died at the age of 33 from overwork. His style incorporated semi-circular windows above ground-floor level to maximise natural lighting within his stations, with ox-blood faience tiling on the outer walls and more tilework, in green and cream, inside the station buildings.

The Elephant and Castle shopping centre survived over fifty years of its (often grim and always grimy) Brutalist existence, but is now demolished (along with the contemporary Heygate housing estate). The area has seen great change in the past twenty years, with students of two universities pouring into the area. New housing, such as the “Razor” tower, has brought many new residents to an area which is very close to central London. Dim walkways are being replaced by open-air routes across the junction.

*Elephant and Castle station,  
Bakerloo Line exit*







*Imperial War Museum*

There are still many shops, cafés and other facilities, and the thrum of the area around Borough Market is just two stops away on the Northern Line.

There are two options for the route to Lambeth North station, via either the Imperial War Museum or St-George's Circus. The latter route may be a more pleasant option if there are crowds at the Imperial War Museum, but at certain times, it may well be thronged with

students — the route vis St George's Circus is therefore given the status of the alternative route, described in green below.

For the route via the Imperial War Museum, cross London Road from the station using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing. Continue ahead to the junction with St-George's Road, with the University of the Arts London ahead across the road. Turn right to follow the right-hand footway of St George's Road, passing the Imperial War Museum on the left, to reach the junction with Lambeth Road.

**3** Cross over Lambeth Road using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and pass to the left of the cathedral to continue along the right-hand footway of St George's Road. Cross onto the triangle ahead, then leave it to the right, using two light-controlled pedestrian crossings. Turn left and cross Morley Street by its light-controlled pedestrian crossing and follow the right-hand footway of Westminster Bridge Road to reach Lambeth North station on your right.

On the left-hand side of Westminster Bridge Road, there is the "parent campus" of Morley College. The College was originally the Morley Memorial College for Working Men and Women, which was an offshoot of the Old Vic at Waterloo when the theatre was bought out by Emma Cons (1838-1912) to provide less bawdy entertainment than that previously provided at the Old Vic. Lilian Baylis CH (1874-1937), who breathed life into Sadlers Wells and English national Opera, a niece of Emma Cons, took over the enterprise and negotiated a separate site for the College on Westminster Bridge Road nearby. The College had an illustrious list of donors and teachers, including John Piper, Edward Bawden and Sir Michael Tippett.

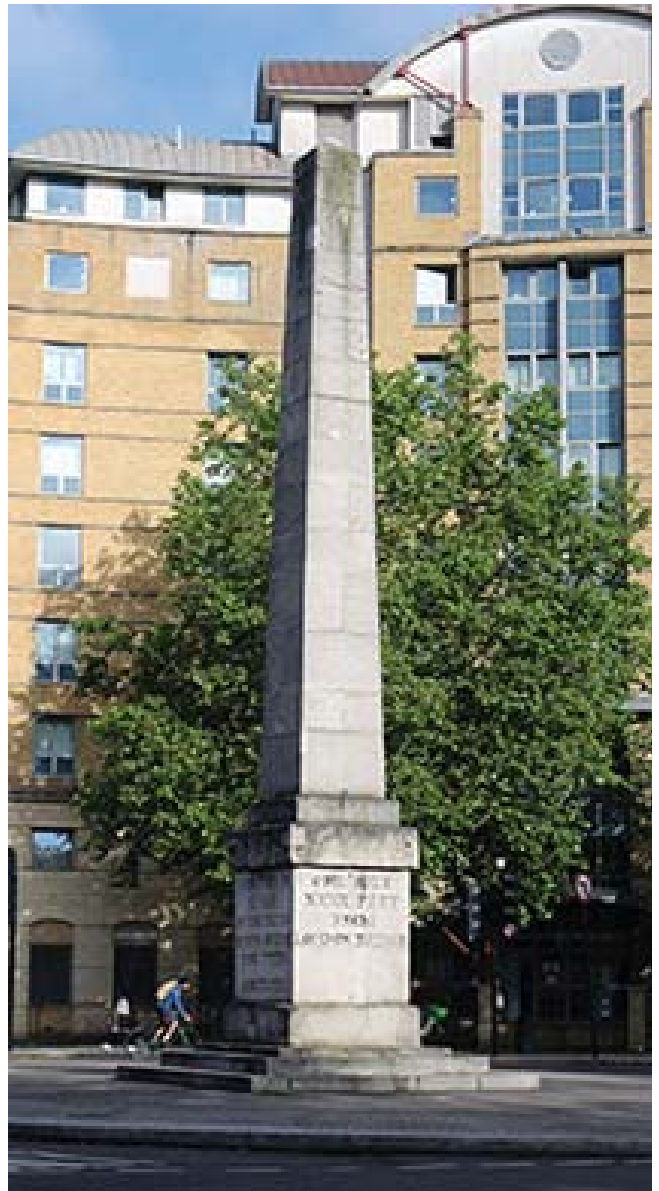
The Chelsea campus has its roots in the Sloane School, and went through several conversions to become part of Kensington and Chelsea College, which merged with Morley College in 2020, creating one of the primary Further Education colleges in London with a strong focus on adult education.

The College has three other campuses: the North Kensington site (formerly of Kensington and Chelsea College) is off Golborne Road near Trellick Tower, there is a campus on Hortensia Road in Chelsea (between King's Road and Fulham Road), and a new campus has been opened in Stockwell.

For the route via St-George's Circus, turn right at the exit from Elephant and Castle station and follow the right-hand footway of London Road past London South Bank University to reach what is possibly the largest distance marker in London. On the huge obelisk is carved the distance to London Bridge (1.62km, given in the antiquated form as "one mile and XXXX feet"). Just before you reach the roundabout, turn left to cross London Road by the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing.

If the architectural style of the building opposite seems familiar, that may be because it is a London Underground building. After the line was extended as far as Lambeth North, sidings were built just beyond the station, and they ended at St-George's Circus. When the line was extended to Elephant and Castle, the platforms became the definitive end of the line, with no sidings beyond.

Turn right and cross Lambeth Road by a pedestrian crossing, then turn left onto the left-hand footway of Westminster Bridge Road. When you reach the junction with St-George's Road, Cross onto the triangular island, then turn right to cross Westminster Bridge Road, then turn left to cross Morley Street, each by its light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and continue along the right-hand footway of Westminster Bridge Road to reach Lambeth North station on your right.



*St George's Circus*

## **Lambeth North to Waterloo**

### **0.8km**

**4** Continue ahead in a north-westerly direction along the right-hand footway of Westminster Bridge Road.

On the other side of the road at number 121, Westminster Bridge House, you will see a broad portal, originally a carriageway. The carriages which came this way were, in fact, hearses. This was the London terminus of the London Necropolis Railway (which has subsequently been dubbed the "Necropolitan Line"), which ran special trains to Brookwood Cemetery, near Woking. There had





*Westminsdtter Bridge House,  
former terminus of the  
London Necropolis Railway*

to be two waiting rooms for the bereaved (first class and third class), and no less than eight kinds of carriage: first class and third class for Anglican mourners, ditto for Nonconformist mourners, and the same four divisions for the deceased.

At Brookwood, the train reversed direction and ran on a private line into the cemetery, with separate halts adjoining the Nonconformist and Anglican chapels. By a quirk of the Act of Parliament which authorised the Necropolis Railway, there was no ability for the railway company to raise fares, and the Necropolis Railway was soon cheaper to use than the usual services from Waterloo. Passengers would turn up at the Necropolis Railway in mourning attire, change at Brookwood, and do their day's business in the locality, changing back into mourning attire for the homeward journey.

Business faded during the 1930s, and after a bomb destroyed part of the station during the Second World War, services were suspended and never started again.

**5** When you reach Lower Marsh (just before the railway bridge), turn right and follow its left-hand footway for 100m as far as Leake Street.

**There are restaurants, shops and cafés on Lower Marsh.**

Turn left on a descending path and follow it through a tunnel which is notorious for its despoliation by graffiti. Follow Leake Street to its end on York Road. Cross the road by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and turn

right to follow the left-hand footway to the Bakerloo Line entrance to Waterloo station.

**All facilities are available in the mainline station on the other side of York Road.**

## **Waterloo to Embankment**

### **0.7km**

**6** Turning left if exiting Waterloo station from the Bakerloo Line entrance onto York Road, advance to Sutton Walk and bear left to pass beneath the railway. Bear left along Concert Hall Approach and cross Belvedere Road.



The southern apron of the Royal Festival Hall is host to a food market, which has retreated under the present organisers from selling high-quality produce to being simply concentrated on food to go.

Ascend the steps to reach the riverside at the Royal Festival Hall.

**7** Ascend the steps ahead to reach the downstream Hungerford (Golden Jubilee) Bridge and cross to the north bank. Descend the steps on the right to reach the entrance to Embankment station.

The original Hungerford Bridge was a suspension bridge which was built in 1845 by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. In 1859, the railway company bought the bridge so that its line could be used for its new railway bridge (its official name is actually *Charing Cross Bridge*), and a footbridge was constructed on its downstream side.

The chains for Brunel's Hungerford Bridge were recycled for use on the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol. The lineside footbridge was dismantled and rebuilt as twin footbridges on both the upstream and downstream sides, opening in 2002: their official title is the Golden Jubilee Bridges, but everyone still calls them Hungerford Bridges.

It was under the Hungerford (railway) bridge that Charles Dickens laboured as a child to mix blacking for boots in order to earn a few pennies for his rent and sustenance while his father was in the Marshalsea debtors' prison.

The station's name has fluctuated, being known at different times as *Charing Cross (Embankment)*, *Charing Cross Embankment*, *Charing Cross*, and finally (in 1976) *Embankment*, when the two stations known as *Trafalgar Square* and *Strand* were merged to become *Charing Cross*. The current Embankment station building is said to have been one of the favourites of Sir John Betjeman.

## Embankment to Charing Cross 0.3km

**8** Turn left to pass through the entrance to Embankment station, and exit onto Villiers Street. The green swathe of Embankment Gardens opens out to the right.

In the gardens, there is a stone gateway. This was a watergate to allow the Duke of Buckingham to board his river vessels: the Thames may have retreated from Strand, but in 1626, it was still wide enough to reach this point. It was only with the creation of the Victorian sewerage

*View from downstream  
Hungerford Bridge*





*Embankment station  
from Villiers Street*

system by Sir Joseph Bazalgette (it is said that Bazalgette was to sewers what Brunel was to railways, but Bazalgette was just as active in early railway development as was Brunel) that the Embankments were formed to cover the vast sewer pipes, and the Thames was constrained to run in a narrower, more managed, channel.

Bazalgette's network of sewers included 132km of pipework. The official opening was undertaken in 1865 by the Prince of Wales, although work continued on the project for another ten years. It is only 150 years later that the Tideway

project will create a new sewer system on the scale of the work of Sir Joseph Bazalgette.

The creation of the Embankments had the knock-on effect that the Thames ran more quickly: along with the rebuilding of bridges with fewer arches (or, indeed, as single spans), this meant that the river would not freeze over, and the celebrated Frost Fairs were consigned to history.

Do not enter the gardens (except on a slight detour to inspect the watergate and some fine statuary), but continue along the left-hand footway of Villiers Street past the end of John Adam Street.

**9** Continue beneath the bridge which links the Charing Cross Hotel and its 1878 extension, and turn left onto Strand at the entrance to the hotel and mainline station.

**All facilities are available in the station and in surrounding streets. These facilities include toilets within the station.**

The Strand, as its name suggests, was at one time the north bank of the River Thames. It was a popular locality with the upper classes until the seventeenth century, when the drift into what we now call the West End began. Once the aristocracy had moved their residences, the Strand was still popular for its taverns, coffee-shops, and (latterly) theatres.

Charing Cross station opened in 1864 to house the services of the South Eastern Railway, whose principal route was from London to Dover via Ashford (the line to Dover via Chatham had been running out of Victoria since 1862), with branch lines to Tunbridge Wells, Hastings, Canterbury, and other locations. The connection with the London and South Western Railway's Waterloo station (now called

*Charing Cross station and  
replica Eleanor Cross*

Waterloo East) was built into the plans, with the LSWR contributing to construction costs.

Following a roof collapse in 1905, the station was rebuilt: the collapse was slow enough to evacuate trains and passengers safely. At the same time as the building of the station, the Charing Cross Hotel was built in French Renaissance style and opened in 1865. Public rooms with balconies overlooking the station concourse were very popular (as they still are at Glasgow Central station's hotel). In fact, the hotel was so popular that an extension was built on the east side of Villiers Street, connected to the main building by an enclosed bridge, which survives.

The station was, however, still just a new rail terminus, and the hotel management decided that it needed something with a bit more history to heighten the social standing of the business.

Between 1291 and 1647, an Eleanor Cross had stood at Charing Cross (where the statue of Charles I now stands). In 1290, Eleanor of Castile, queen consort of Edward I, died at Harby, near Lincoln: her body was taken to Lincoln for embalming before being taken in funeral procession to London. At Lincoln and at Charing Cross, and at the ten overnight resting-points on the way, the King had tall, graceful monuments built and surmounted by a cross: these have become known as Eleanor Crosses. Three of these crosses survive to this day – at Geddington and Hardingstone in Northamptonshire, and at Waltham Cross, just north of the M25. This last features on





the walk following the Weaver Line of the Overground. Fragments of some others may be found.

The idea of a replica Eleanor Cross seemed to provide the right cachet for the hotel, and the hotel's architect, Edward Middleton Barry (1830-80), son of Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860), who designed the rebuilt Palace of Westminster following the fire of 1834) designed one: it was constructed in 1864-65 and placed on the station forecourt, where it remains to this day.

At the far end of the station forecourt, use the light-controlled pedestrian crossing to cross Strand, and turn left along the right-hand footway to reach the junction with Charing Cross Road, at the Bakerloo Line entrance to Charing Cross station.

## Charing Cross to Piccadilly Circus

### 0.8km

**10** Cross the road from the station entrance to reach Trafalgar Square (or, if exiting the station, take the Trafalgar Square exit) and walk to the middle of the square, passing Nelson's Column on your left.

*Nelson's Column*



Trafalgar Square was laid out from 1830, on land which used to be royal mews stabling for Whitehall Palace (which is down Whitehall on the left). Work began on the National Gallery in 1832, and Nelson's Column was erected in 1843 (the Landseer lions only arrived in 1867).

The equestrian statue of King Charles I to the south of the square is the London zero-point for road distance measurement. Rather confusingly, the epicentre of road *numbering* for England and Wales is at St Paul's cathedral, next to St Martin le Grand, which was the headquarters of the General Post Office in 1921, when the numbering was introduced. The days of the post coaches may have long passed, but the atavistic streak maintained the GPO at the heart of the road system.

Turn half-right and ascend the steps to the National Gallery, then turn left.

If, as is increasingly the case, the square has been taken over by an event (the private annexation of the public realm is rarely good news for the public). follow Charing Cross Road to the National Gallery and turn left across its frontage.



*National Gallery*

The National Gallery was founded in 1824: unlike many national galleries abroad, it did not come into existence through the nationalisation of an existing (usually royal) gallery, but was a new foundation. The present building, which opened to the public in 1838, is the third to house the gallery's collection. Space has always been at a premium, and there was a temporary reprieve when the Tate Gallery (of British Art) opened in 1897. The extension known as the Sainsbury Wing (1991) eased the matter further.

Pass the Sainsbury Wing entrance to the Gallery and, with Canada House now on your left, turn right onto Whitcomb Street. Follow the left-hand footway of Whitcomb Street to its junction with Panton Street.

For southbound buses on Haymarket, turn left and walk along Panton Street.

**11** Continue along the left-hand footway of Whitcomb Street to the junction with Coventry Street. Turn left (away from Leicester Square) to follow the right-hand footway to reach Piccadilly Circus and its station.

Everyone knows the statue of Eros (or thinks so — in fact, the statue is the Angel of Christian Charity), but relatively few people make the association with the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, whose work is commemorated by the structure. He spent a significant portion of the nineteenth century working for liberal causes, chiefly the reform of the laws relating to lunacy, and the restriction on children's hours of work.

As well as Bakerloo Line trains, Piccadilly Circus station plays host, to nobody's surprise, the Piccadilly Line. There are bus services to many parts of the capital.



*Left — Shaftesbury  
Memorial (“Eros”)*



*Right — Portuguese  
Embassy church,  
Warwick Street*

There are shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs of all descriptions on the streets surrounding Piccadilly Circus.

## **Piccadilly Circus to Oxford Circus 0.9km**

**12** If you are arriving at Piccadilly Circus station to start your day's walk, choose the exit for Regent Street North. Do not take Regent Street, but advance onto Glasshouse Street just to its right, bearing left at the junction almost immediately ahead, still on Glasshouse Street.

Cross over the end of Air Street on your left and continue to the junction with Brewer Street on the right. Cross Brewer Street and continue ahead along Warwick Street, passing an eighteenth-century church on the right.

This church was the chapel of the Portuguese Embassy, which was situated nearby (and which has since relocated to Belgravia), and it was damaged during the Gordon Riots of 1780, when anti-Catholic sentiments ran high and spilled onto the streets in a most destructive manner. The interior has many ornate details, particularly behind



the golden altar. Further details are at <http://warwickstreet.org.uk/history/> and on adjacent pages.

Beyond the church, follow Warwick Street to its end and turn left onto Beak Street to reach Regent Street.

**13** Turn right to follow the right-hand footway of Regent Street to its junction with Little Argyll Street.

Note on your left the oldest building on Regent Street, built in 1898 and containing Venetian mosaics by the firm of Salviati and Jesurum, whose work may also be seen on the Albert Memorial in Kensington, and in St Paul's.

Continue along Regent Street to reach Oxford Circus. There are entrances to Oxford Circus station on each of the four corners of Oxford Circus.

Oxford Circus station is served by the Bakerloo, Central and Victoria Lines of the Underground. There is no Oxford Circus station on the Elizabeth Line, but the eastern entrance to Bond Street station on that line is at Hanover Square, a short distance west of Oxford Circus.

Oxford Circus, where Oxford Street and Regent Street collide, is the "crossroads of the universe" of London's retail space ... at least, it was. The lure of weatherproofed malls in Stratford and Shepherd's Bush, and the increasing importance of online retail (the change accelerated by the Covid pandemic) have left large gaps in the retail realm. Such gaps, of course, exist in almost every (former?) shopping district in the country, but Oxford Street's iconic status brings the problem into sharper focus.

It is unlikely to regain its former pre-eminence, given the major changes in retail customer behaviour, so plans are needed urgently to redefine these streets (and every other affected shopping district across the land) in terms of future best use, rather than trying to grasp the frayed remnants of the past to re-create a notion which has gone for ever.

## Oxford Circus to Regent's Park 1.1km

**14** Cross Oxford Street to remain on the right-hand footway of Regent Street, otherwise emerge from the station and orient yourself on the right-hand footway of Regent Street, looking at Broadcasting House.

Make your way along Regent Street, crossing over Great Castle Street and Margaret Street,

*All Souls, Langham Place  
and Broadcasting House*



beyond which you will reach, at 309 Regent Street, the principal building of the University of Westminster.

The University of Westminster began life as The Polytechnic and was founded by Quintin Hogg. The entrance chamber has fine tiling and artwork, though the effect has been muted by the placing of a bland reception desk in the middle.

To the right of the entrance, there is a small university café which is open to the public. There are, of course, many other options nearby.

Continue along Regent Street, crossing over Cavendish Place and taking the left-and-right bend onto Portland Place, with All Souls, Langham Place, and then Broadcasting House, the headquarters of the BBC, on your right.

The Bakerloo Line runs beneath the road between Piccadilly Circus and Portland Place. The author can confirm from experience that the rumble of the trains is audible from within the BBC Radio studios within Broadcasting House.

Continue along the right-hand footway of Portland Place to its junction with New Cavendish Street.

**15** Cross the road ahead by its light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and follow the right-hand footway of Portland Place to its end at Park Crescent.

The part of the building on the right, taking up the corner of Portland Place, was the diplomatic headquarters of the United States of America between 1863 and 1866. It was the third such location, and the current site of the Embassy (prior to 1893, it was merely a legation) in Nine Elms is the eighth location in the diplomatic series.

The buildings which now form Park Crescent were, in the original plan, to be mirrored on the other side of Marylebone Road to form a circle of impressive buildings (albeit with the New Road cutting through the middle, forming on the map a ghostly foretaste of the

familiar Transport for London roundel we know today. However, initial sales were slow and the other half was never built. This had the benefit that residents of the existing buildings retained, from the upper floors, an expansive view across Marylebone Road to The Regent's Park.

If traffic allows, cross over Park Crescent and turn right to follow the left-hand footway out to Marylebone Road, or if it is congested, stay on the right-hand footway of Park

*East quadrant,  
Park Crescent*



Crescent to the junction with Marylebone Road, where turn left to cross Park Crescent by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing. The Regent's Park is on the other side of Marylebone Road via Park Square East.

Marylebone Road was constructed in 1756 as part of the New Road, which ran as a toll road along the northern fringe of London (shades of a *boulevard périphérique* to come in Paris). The route is now made up of Marylebone Road, Euston Road, Pentonville Road, City Road and Moorgate.

Advance along the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road to reach Regent's Park station.

The Regent's Park should always be named to include the definite article. Transport for London seems to be as careless with the definite article as the successors to Marie Tussaud (whose house of dummies lies ahead) have been with the apostrophe.

## Regent's Park to Baker Street

### 0.8km

**16** Continue along the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road, crossing Park Crescent, Harley Street, Devonshire Place and Marylebone High Street at their respective light-controlled pedestrian crossings.

The reason why Marylebone High Street does not conform to the rectilinear pattern of streets is because it follows the line of the Tyburn, one of London's hidden (*i.e.*, culverted) rivers — Marylebone is a corruption of St Mary le Bourne. The river rises on Fitzjohn's Avenue in Hampstead and empties into the River Thames just upstream from Vauxhall Bridge. The outflow may be seen from the upstream side of the bridge.

Opposite the church, you will see York Gate, one of the principal carriage entries to The Regent's Park.

**17** Continue along the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road passing the building containing the waxworks of Madame Tussauds, with all its attendant footway obstructions by the crowds and the coach drop-offs — just be thankful that they are across the road on your right and not in your way.

*This is why we chose the left-hand footway.*

Madame Tussauds (the apostrophe has been lost rather carelessly along the way) began life in 1835 in Baker Street by Marie Tussaud, whose initial stock-in-trade was alleged likenesses of Voltaire, followed by figures of Robespierre and other luminaries of the French Revolution. Its expansion necessitated a move to the current location in 1884. The London Planetarium within the building closed in 2010. There are now no fewer than 25 branches of Madame Tussauds Wax Galleries around the world.





Cross Luxborough Street and, in front of the University of Westminster's building, turn right to cross Marylebone Road using the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and turn left along the right-hand footway.

From the south side of the road, you may see the magnificent bulk of Chiltern Court, flats built above Baker Street station, which have been called home by Arnold Bennett, HG Wells, Kenneth Williams, the Norwegian Resistance, and many others.

Note the little arch-tops on the wall on your right at ankle level. These were originally the means of throwing light upon the Underground (and of allowing smoke to escape). The tracks beneath, now used by the Circle Line and the Hammersmith and City Line, are part of the line built by the Metropolitan Railway Company which became the world's first underground railway in 1863.

Continue along the service road in front of Chiltern Court to reach the busy junction with Baker Street.

The service road is often blocked by a mass of stationary people, relatively few of whom are making their way to or from the station. The two prime suspects for this obstruction are the huge statue of the fictional Sherlock Holmes (for some reason, very many people feel the need to pose with the lump of metal), and the city tour buses (for some reason, very many people would rather spend a fortune on these tours rather than get out and live London on the normal buses, Tubes and footways at far less cost).

If biped gridlock has been attained along the service road, simply continue along the right-hand footway of Baker Street to reach a calmer and more convenient station entrance, avoiding the crowds of non-travellers noted above.

There are shops and establishments purveying sandwiches and coffee inside the station, and there are more, along with restaurants and pubs, in the surrounding streets. There are rather basic toilet facilities within the station (outside the ticketing gates for ladies, but inside for gentlemen), but be assured that there is a better option less than five minutes' walk away.

## Baker Street to Marylebone

### 0.4km

**18** Almost opposite the Baker Street entrance to the station (it is signposted towards Marylebone from inside the station),

cross Baker Street using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and take the left-hand footway of Melcombe Street ahead.

On your right is the site of the first contact lens laboratory in the United Kingdom, established in 1946 by the Hungarian George Nissel (1913-82).

Cross over Glentworth Street and continue ahead to cross the junction with Gloucester Place by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing.

Cast your eyes back across Gloucester Place to see the magnificent Art Deco block of luxury flats (some have ten rooms!) which takes the entire block. The film-makers Michael Powell (1905-90) and Emeric Pressburger (1902-88) worked from Powell's flat in Dorset House.

**19** Continue ahead, now on the left-hand footway of Dorset Square, with its private gardens on the right-hand side of the road.

Dorset Square is the site of Thomas Lord's first cricket ground — today a private garden for some local residents. It seems to be a lot smaller than cricket grounds today. The current Lord's Cricket Ground is the third location for what has become the headquarters of cricket.

At the far end of Dorset Square, cross Balcombe Street and continue along the left-hand footway of Melcombe Place before crossing the road by the pedestrian crossing to reach the forecourt of Marylebone station.

Marylebone station is the London terminus for Chiltern Railways services; the Bakerloo Line is the sole Underground line to serve Marylebone. There are cafés and shops inside and outside the station; there are free toilets on the station concourse.

Marylebone was the last of the major London termini to be built, being opened by the Great Central Railway Company in 1899, more than sixty years after the London and Birmingham Railway Company had opened Euston station.

The Great Central Railway ran the line from Manchester to Marylebone, *via* Sheffield Victoria, Nottingham Victoria, Leicester Central and Rugby Central. These services ceased in 1966 (in 1960 north of Nottingham), and apart from Marylebone, none of the stations mentioned above survive. Much of the line from Sheffield to London is lost: a heritage line between Loughborough and Leicester is the main remnant, apart from the lines into London used by Chiltern services today.

That left just commuter lines to Aylesbury and High Wycombe, with a skeletal service on to Banbury. This link to the line between Oxford and Birmingham was probably kept as a "parliamentary service" to avoid the expense of closure (and to keep the option for strategic purposes during the Cold War).



*Marylebone station entrance*

Even those services were threatened, with plans to close and demolish Marylebone station entirely and create a high-speed busway (or a lorry route) into central London on the trackbed, and the notice of closure was published in 1984. These plans were later dropped, officially due to headroom problems but probably with the tacit acknowledgement that such a move would have resulted in even worse traffic congestion on Marylebone Road and Euston Road than that which we experience today.

More recently, Chiltern Railways have expanded their services from Marylebone to provide regular links with Oxford, Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon, as well as maintaining the commuter services as described above. New park-and-ride stations have been built to serve the northern suburbs of Aylesbury and Oxford., and another has replaced the long-closed station at Haddenham Two extra platforms have been created at Marylebone, making six in total.

The reason for the sparseness of the Underground linkage at Marylebone is that the station was built many years after the Tube. The Jubilee Line tracks (formerly the original tracks of the Metropolitan Railway, which pre-date Marylebone station by several decades) run beneath the station, between Jubilee Line stations at Baker Street and St John's Wood, but there is no stop at Marylebone on the Jubilee Line. Baker Street is just a short walk away, not much farther than the walk would be through underground passageways to connect with the Jubilee Line.

The Bakerloo Line opened its station in 1907. The tilework on the Underground platforms indicates that the station was originally named *Great Central* (to honour the railway company upstairs): in fact, the original working station name was to have been Lisson Grove. The station was renamed *Marylebone* in 1917.

Marylebone station has shops and cafés on the main concourse, along with toilets (near the main service indicators for ladies, but gentlemen must find their way to the far end of the row of shops). There is a traditional breakfast café on Melcombe Place opposite the station entrance, and of course there may be the possibility of a grand afternoon tea at the Landmark Hotel (*see below*).

In addition to the Bakerloo Line, Marylebone station is served by the above-mentioned services of Chiltern Railways. Buses serve the stop at the station entrance, with more services available from stops





on Great Central Street, and on Marylebone Road on the other side of the Landmark Hotel.

*Marylebone station —  
Landmark Hotel (right) and  
porte-cochère from the west*

## Marylebone to Edgware Road

### 0.7km

**20** If you are arriving at Marylebone station to start the day's walk, you will reach the main concourse (whether you have arrived by train or Tube): exit the station through the main gate (with your back to the mainline platforms) and turn right onto the right-hand footway of Melcombe Place. Pass beneath the fine *porte-cochère* of Marylebone station and continue ahead to the junction with Harewood Avenue at the end of the station building.

The large building on the opposite side of the *porte-cochère* from the station was built by the Great Central Railway Company as their station hotel. The building was requisitioned for military use during the Second World War, after which it became headquarters offices for the British Railways Board. It has now reverted to being a five-star hotel, the Landmark. Had the idea to build a lorry route on the trackbed into Marylebone, the building would have been demolished along with the station.

At the end of Melcombe Place, cross Harewood Avenue by the pedestrian crossing and continue ahead on Harewood Row. Cross Lisson Grove and turn right along its left-hand footway. Turn left onto Bell Street and follow its left-hand footway to reach the junction with Lisson Street, in the heart of the Lisson Grove area.

*Edgware Road's Bakerloo  
Line station*



This area (which is named from a contraction of the Manor of Lileston) has connections with many famous people. Agatha Christie, Jerome K Jerome, Guy Gibson VC (of Dambusters fame), Mary Shelley, Edwin Landseer and TH Huxley all have links with this part of London.

**21** Continue along the left-hand footway of Bell Street to its end at Edgware Road, where turn left to reach Edgware Road's Bakerloo Line station.

This station is a fine example of Leslie Green's work, and contains original features and lighting. Information about Leslie Green may be found on page 5.

## Edgware Road to Paddington

### 0.9km

**22** Continue along the left-hand footway of Edgware Road (turning left if exiting the station) and pass beneath the A40 Westway flyover, using light-controlled pedestrian crossings to cross the two slip-roads. Continue along the left-hand footway to reach the junction with Chapel Street (on your left) and Praed Street (on your right).

Edgware Road station for the Circle Line, the District Line, and the Hammersmith and City Line is situated 70m distant, off to the left of this junction on Chapel Street.

Turn right to cross Edgware Road by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and continue along the right-hand footway of Praed Street to the junction with South Wharf Road.

**23** Cross over the end of South Wharf Road and continue past St Mary's Hospital on your right.

There is a wide variety of shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs on Praed Street, and on South Wharf Road.

It was in his laboratory in St Mary's Hospital that Sir Alexander Fleming pursued his work on his discovery of penicillin. There is a blue plaque on the wall to commemorate his work.

Follow the right-hand footway of Praed Street to cross London Street, then turn right to descend the carriageway to enter Paddington station through the toxic clouds of cigarette smoke which hang around a continuous mass of air-poisoners.

Here, as well as the trains, there is access to the Tube (Bakerloo and District Lines). Access to the Circle Line and the Hammersmith and City Line is over to the right. The Elizabeth Line access may be found outside the concourse near Platform 1. Bus services are plentiful on Praed Street.

Of course, the concourse also boasts many opportunities for rest and replenishment: there are toilets on Platform 1 and near Platform 12,





the latter offering step-free access. ATMs may be found near the main ticket office and at Platform 12.

At the top of the food court, there is a full-service pub called the Mad Bishop and Bear. The land for the station was sold by the church who, shall we say, failed to carry out due diligence in evaluating the likely future value of the land being sold — that explains the mad bishop. And the bear? Well, who else could it possibly be?

Paddington station is famous for many things, but particularly for two somewhat diminutive celebrities.

The station was built as the grand London terminus of the Great Western Railway, the current structure opening in 1854 to replace a temporary station. Paddington is one of the most impressive designs from the portfolio of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), whose short stature makes the famous photograph with the background of the chains of his *SS Great Eastern* at Masthouse Quay on the Isle of Dogs look all the more impressive. His statue is located on the station concourse between Platforms 8 and 9.

The other diminutive celebrity is, of course, Paddington Bear, who appears all around the station as a statue and on a seat — both on Platform 1 — and (inevitably) in much derivative merchandise (with great variations in quality) throughout.

Back to the pub name. The Church of England sold the land to the Great Western Railway for a pittance (not having done due diligence on the prospective value) — that accounts for the Mad Bishop in the name. And the bear? Well, surely you don't have to have me spell out exactly who that was, do you?

*Isambard Kingdom Brunel  
contemplates his masterpiece  
of station architecture,  
Paddington*

*Platform 1,  
Paddington station*





## Paddington to Warwick Avenue

1.4km

**24** Leave Paddington station's concourse via the access to the highest-numbered platforms, following the signs for Exit 3 (for the Hammersmith and City Line and the Grand Union Canal). This takes you up an escalator and past the taxi rank to the entrance to the Hammersmith and City Line platforms.

Turn right here to exit the station onto the towpath of the Grand Union Canal. Turn left along the towpath with the water on your right and pass beneath Bishop's Bridge Road.

During recent renovation work, it was discovered that the road bridge on your left, which spans the railway, was in fact part of the station structure of Brunel's original construction.

**25** Continue ahead on the towpath to pass beneath the multi-level bridge which carries the Westway (A40) flyover, and then the northern carriageway of Harrow Road.

There are restaurants, cafés and bars on the water, as well as access to pleasure cruises. Recently, the area to the north of Bishop's Bridge Road has been developed (as Sheldon Square) into a waterside venue for eating and drinking.

Continue along the towpath through Little Venice, rising to the left before the next bridge to reach Warwick Crescent, ignoring the option of crossing the canal by a footbridge.

You will see on your right the junction of the Regent's Canal with the Paddington arm of the Grand Union Canal. The tree-clad island in the middle of the junction is known as Browning's island: it is thought that the poet Robert Browning was the first to name the area around the canal junction "Little Venice".

*Little Venice*



Turn right to follow Warwick Crescent to the junction with Westbourne Terrace Road. Cross the road ahead and turn right onto the left-hand footway, and cross the canal by the road bridge.

The bridge was built in 1900 — the heraldry is that of the (then) Borough of Paddington, which had just been created. The Paddington borough was later subsumed into the London Borough of the City of Westminster.

At the far end of the bridge, cross Blomfield Road ahead and turn right. Follow the left-hand footway of Blomfield Road to reach another road bridge over the canal (with more heraldry of long-gone local government) on the right, at Warwick Avenue.

Cross Warwick Avenue using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and turn left to follow the right-hand footway of Warwick Avenue to reach Warwick Avenue station.

Apart from the boxy ventilation shaft on the road's central reservation, Warwick Avenue station is all underground, and was one of the first Tube stations to be designed specifically for escalator access (rather than lifts) to the platforms.



## Warwick Avenue to Maida Vale

### 0.7km

**26** Cross Clifton Gardens ahead using the pedestrian crossing and follow the right-hand footway of Warrington Crescent ahead

Over on the left-hand side of the street, there is a blue plaque which commemorates the computer scientist Alan Turing (1912-54).

Continue along the right-hand footway of Warrington Crescent, passing a roundabout on the left just before its end.

**27** Cross over Randolph Avenue by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, then turn left to cross Sutherland Avenue by its pedestrian crossing. Follow the right-hand footway of Randolph Avenue to reach the entrance to Maida Vale station.

*Top — Heraldry of an extinct administration,  
Westbourne Terrace Road Bridge*

*Middle — The Grand Union Canal heads towards Hayes  
and Birmingham from Little Venice*

*Bottom — Warwick Avenue station entrance*







*Maida Vale station*

Maida Vale station was designed by Stanley Heaps (1880-1962), adapting the earlier style of Leslie Green's underground stations. The amendments to the original style which were made by Heaps included the flattening of the exterior to single-storey level (no lift plant was needed). The exterior is faced in ox-blood terracotta, and there are interesting original

features inside the station. When it opened in 1915, it was the first station to be staffed entirely by female workers. Its exterior became "Westbourne Oak" station in the 2014 film *Paddington*.

There is a cluster of shops and cafés at the crossroads by the station.

## **Maida Vale to Kilburn Park**

**1.1km**

**28** From Maida Vale station, cross Elgin Avenue, then turn left to cross Randolph Avenue, each by its pedestrian crossing. Follow the right-hand footway of Elgin Avenue as far as Ashworth Road, where turn right to follow its right-hand footway. At the end, turn left into Grantully Road.

The castle after which Grantully Road is named (on the River Tay upstream from Dunkeld) normally takes the spelling *Grandtully* and the pronunciation *Grantly*.

Opposite the end of Biddulph Road, turn right to enter Paddington Recreation Ground.

Paddington Recreation Ground is the earliest facility for public athletics in London: its cinder track was a training ground for Sir Roger Bannister (1929-2018) along with his running mates (Christophers Brasher and Chataway) in preparation for what became the world's first sub-four-minute mile, which Bannister achieved on 6 May 1954 in Oxford. Years later, Sir Bradley Wiggins learned to ride a bicycle in the park. Bannister and Wiggins are each commemorated by a blue plaque.

Turn left within the park and follow the path, passing an octagonal bandstand on the left. Pass the sports pavilion on your left to reach the park café.

The café is open daily from 0930, closing at 1700 (at 1630 at weekends).

Continue ahead to exit the park and turn left onto Carlton Vale, with the Carlton Tavern immediately on the left.



The Carlton Tavern is/was a prime example of the architecture of the 1920s. It was built in 1921 to replace an earlier pub which was bombed near the end of the Great War in 1918, and was almost unchanged in over ninety years. In 2015, a developer demolished the building without having obtained the necessary planning permission. Fortunately, all the pub's detail had been recorded as preparation for listed status, including casts of all the faience tiling, so making it feasible for the developer to rebuild the tavern brick by brick exactly as it had been (though with more modern services than were plumbed into the 1921 building), as he was ordered to do. The new Carlton Tavern opened in 2021, exactly one hundred years after its predecessor.



*Carlton Tavern 2.0*

**29** Cross Carlton Vale using the refuge at the end of the park's service road and turn left. Cross Kilburn Park Road by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and turn right to follow the left-hand footway to the junction with Rudolph Road, opposite St Augustine's church.

This Grade I Gothic Revival building (of 1880, with the tower of 1897) replaced a temporary "iron church" — clearly, the more normal name of "tin tabernacle" was not considered good enough for the vicar and parishioners (even if today, it is identified as such on Google maps)! The iron church is on Cambridge Gardens, to the

*Kilburn Park station*





*The RSPCA War Memorial Dispensary (left) and the “iron church” (right) on Cambridge Avenue*



north of Kilburn Park station. The building is now occupied by the Willesden Sea Scouts.

The need for new churches came with the urbanisation of the later part of the Industrial Revolution, as towns and cities expanded very quickly. At the same time, there was a drive to inculcate church attendance in rural areas among people who had no transport, or who would be likely to use the lack of transport as an excuse to their employers for non-attendance at the employers’ choice of religious flavour.

The formation in 1844 of the Free Church of England, splitting Methodists off in schism from the Church of England, and the increasing identification (at the same time) of many parishioners with a range of nonconformist denominations and sects, brought the need for yet more church buildings (apocryphally explained in Wales as “so that I have a chapel I don’t go to”).

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Church of Scotland had identified the need for over forty new churches, and Thomas Telford was commissioned to produce a standard architectural design for use throughout Scotland — though even this had to be modified at Port Charlotte on the island of Islay: the church was to be shared with the Free Church, and the Free Kirkers (these are not the “Wee Frees” — they came out of a later holier-than-thou schism) demanded a separate door. However, these cheap-and-not-very-cheerful kirks (this is Scotland, remember) were still too expensive and would have taken too long to build in the rush for churches and chapels in the second half of the century.

Several ironworking companies in London, Liverpool, Glasgow and elsewhere built flat-pack prefabricated churches (St Ikea, anyone?) in corrugated iron, offering them by mail order via catalogues. A number of these companies segmented the market and concentrated on serving one type of purchaser (gentry, railway companies, and so on).

Some of these churches are still in ecclesiastical use, others have changed use (there are youth organisations’ halls and discotheques), while others exist as no more than barns or iron shells in hedges.

Yet others have, of course, returned to dust — or possibly to the great scrapyard of Time.

On the left of the iron church, with a relief above the doorway: this is the RSPCA War Memorial Dispensary.

The present church contains some of the finest ecclesiastical art of the period, and is a prime example of the designs of the High Victorian Anglo-Catholic tradition. It was designed by John Loughborough Pearson: in 1930, the reredos was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. The spire rises more than 77m. In the past, it has been used as a venue of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts series (now called simply the BBC Proms), hosting choral concerts, primarily of religious music.

Bear left onto Rudolph Road and continue on the left-hand footway, and on to Cambridge Gardens (a gathering-ground for buses), and cross over the road ahead, with Kilburn Park station over to your right.

Kilburn Park station was opened in 1915 and is, like Maida Vale station, in the style of “Heaps, after Green”. The exterior is faced in ox-blood terracotta, and there are interesting original features inside the station. As at Maida Vale, there was no need for the superstructure of a lift shaft, since the station was built with escalators. If you are passing by Kilburn Park on your route, it is worth the very short detour to admire this fine piece of London’s built heritage.

There is a pub adjacent to Kilburn Park station, and all the variety of Kilburn may be found on the main road at the top of Cambridge Gardens, clustering around Kilburn High Road station (on the Lioness Line of the Overground).

## Kilburn Park to Queen’s Park

0.9km

**30** Turn left at Kilburn Park station (or turn right if exiting the station) and follow the right-hand footway of Chichester Road to cross Canterbury Road, which goes off sharp right.

**31** Cross over Canterbury Road and bear left onto its right-hand footway. Almost immediately, turn right onto Canterbury Terrace and follow its right-hand footway to its end at a railway fence. Turn left to follow the right-hand footway of Albert Road to its end. Use two pedestrian crossings to cross Salisbury Road and turn right to rise to a bridge over the West Coast Main Line, where the entrance to Queen’s Park station is situated.

Ever since leaving Carlton Vale, you will have seen a massive amount of urban regeneration. In the triangle defined by the Carlton Tavern, Kilburn Park station and Queen’s Park station, 1960s flats and tower blocks are being razed to the ground, and modern flats



(no higher than medium-rise) are being built to take their place. It is curious to note that much of the housing built on these streets during the second quarter of the twentieth century survives this process of renewal.

At Queen's Park, the Bakerloo Line meets up with the Watford DC (aka Lioness) Overground line as the Bakerloo Line emerges from the tunnel from Elephant and Castle.

There are many shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs on and around Salusbury Road, covering a good range of styles. On Sundays (1000-1400), these are supplemented by an established farmers' market at the school. You will not go hungry in this area.

*Below — comfortable houses on Harvist Road*

*Bottom — The original entrance (now stopped up) to Queen's Park*



## Queen's Park to Kensal Green 1.1km

**32** If you are arriving at Queen's Park station to start your day's walk, turn left onto Salusbury Road. Descend on the left-hand footway of Salusbury Road and turn left onto Harvist Road. Follow the left-hand footway past Queen's Park on the right to the park gate at the corner of Milman Road.

This public park is managed by the Corporation of the City of London as one of its "green spaces for Londoners" (other such spaces include West Ham Park, Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest, and, farther distant, Burnham Beeches between Slough and Gerrards Cross) beyond the City and has been open to the public since 1887.

Only a few years before that, the Royal Agricultural Society had tried to set up a permanent site for its annual Show at this location, but it was not a profitable venture. Following the dropping of the Show from the plans, there were some



attempts by local residents to secure the entire Showground area as a public park, but in the end, only a central portion was retained for the purpose, and the rest was built over.

There are toilets on the left just after you enter the park. In the centre of the park, off to the right of the route, there is a park café.

Continue along the left-hand footway of Harvist Road to the junction with Chamberlayne Road.

Kensal Rise station, on the Overground's Mildmay Line between Willesden Junction and Stratford, is to be found up Chamberlayne Road to the right. There are shops and cafés near the station, and a few places at this junction.

**33** Cross Chamberlayne Road using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and continue ahead, now on the left-hand footway of Mortimer Road. Pass a brickbarn church (one of many of the suburbs' Victorian churches which were thrown up in this rather uncompromisingly bombastic style) on the right, and at the end of the road bear left to pass the traffic barriers and reach Kensal Green station on your left.

## Kensal Green to Willesden Junction

### 0.5km

**34** Cross College Road at the entrance to Kensal Green station (which looks a bit like a community health centre). Turn left and immediately turn right to enter Hazel Road Open Space. Follow the pathway through the park, thus mitigating the traffic pollution on Harrow Road. Pass a play area on your right. The path comes out onto Harrow Road opposite the western entrance to Kensal Green Cemetery.

Kensal Green was the first of the Magnificent Seven suburban cemeteries which were opened in the nineteenth century to relieve the pressure on London's city churchyards. It was modelled on the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris, and was opened in 1833. Along with Highgate (which has Karl



*Kensal Green*

*Below — station*

*Bottom — cemetery gate*



Marx's grave as its signature), it is probably the best-known of the Magnificent Seven, in part because it is referenced in the closing couplet of *The Rolling English Road* by GK Chesterton, intended as a witness statement of his Roman Catholic faith.

*For there is good news yet to hear, and fine things to be seen,  
Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green.*

*Below — Parish boundary  
marker, Harrow Road*

*Bottom — station entrance  
to Willesden Junction  
on Harrow Road*

Among the 56000 people whose bodies were interred in Kensal Green cemetery, there is the usual broad range of people. Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the famous engineer, is here with his parents, as are Charles Babbage (pioneer of computing), the authors Wilkie Collins and Anthony Trollope, Charles Blondin (tightrope-walker), and two children of King George III (which is in itself moderately surprising), along with one of his grandsons.

There is a cenotaph to the Reformers' Movement of Robert Owen, Elizabeth Fry, and their peers. Mary Seacole, the Scots-Jamaican nurse of the Crimean War era, is buried in the adjoining Roman Catholic cemetery.

Turn right onto Harrow Road, and immediately cross the road by a refuge to take up the left-hand footway, and follow it to the junction with Scrubs Lane.

Note, set into the brickwork of the houses on the left, an old parish boundary marker. This is the summit of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

There is a concentration of Brazilian and Portuguese shops and restaurants on Harrow Road.

**35** Cross Scrubs Lane by the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing and continue ahead on the left-hand footway to reach the northern entrance (not the main entrance) to Willesden Junction station.

## Willesden Junction to Harlesden 1.5km

**36** Take the first road to the left (Tubbs Road) after leaving the northern entrance to Willesden Junction station, and follow it all the way to its end at the junction with Station Road.

Turn left on Station Road to reach the main entrance to Willesden Junction station.





In *The Prime Minister*, the fifth of his six Palliser novels, Anthony Trollope (who is buried in Kensal Green Cemetery nearby) sets a suicide scene at what he calls the “Tenway Junction” station. This fictional location was based on Willesden Junction station, where many railway lines converge.

There is a convenience shop and cafés in the vicinity, some catering to the local Portuguese and Brazilian population, though it is clear from the number of business closures that there has been a decrease in that community.

Cross Station Road using the traffic-light sequence to time your move, and turn right. Take the first street on your left, Harley Road, and follow its left-hand footway to the junction with Fairlight Avenue on your right.

By this point, you will see the large railway freight depot on your left.

**37** Continue along the left-hand footway of Harley Road to its far end, with the sweet smell of chocolate pervasive in the air — on the far side of the railway tracks, more than a million chocolate digestive biscuits are baked every day in the biscuit factory.

Take a dog-leg to the right near the end of Harley Road, and turn left onto Minet Avenue. Follow the left-hand footway to the junction with Acton Lane, where turn left to pass beneath a railway. Pass the end of Mordaunt Road and turn right to cross Acton Lane by a light-controlled pedestrian crossing. Harlesden station is up to the left.

## Harlesden to Stonebridge Park

### 1.8km

**38** Follow the left-hand footway of Mordaunt Road as far as the junction with Shelley Road. Turn left, and at the end of Shelley Road, turn right along the left-hand footway of Milton Avenue. Continue to the end of the road.

**39** Take a path ahead with a sports facility on your right. At the end of the sportsfields, turn right on the path, then turn left onto First Drive. At the junction, turn right to reach the A404 again, here called Brentfield. Turn left and follow the left-hand

*Milton Avenue*





*The arch of Wembley Stadium looms large over Tokyngton near Stonebridge Park station*

footway to reach the slip-road onto the North Circular Road below.

Cross the filter lane, the slip-road and its twin beyond the road bridge, and the filter lane by their respective light-controlled pedestrian crossings, and turn left to follow the right-hand footway of the busy North Circular Road to reach the entrance to Stonebridge Park station on your right.

For a brief period during the 1980s, Stonebridge Park station was the northern terminus of

the Bakerloo Line, until that status was wrested back by Harrow and Wealdstone station. A proportion of the northbound services still terminate at Stonebridge Park (as do others at Queen's Park). Despite widespread on-board announcements, we must remember that trains and buses do not terminate (except in truly exceptional circumstances), but go on to serve their next groups of customers on their following journeys.

There is a small convenience shop in a hut on the right near the station entrance.

## Stonebridge Park to Wembley Central 2.6km

**40** Continue beneath the railway bridges to reach the junction with Beresford Avenue, with the Ace Café ahead.

When the North Circular Road was built in 1938, the Ace Café was established as a transport café. The building suffered from aerial bombing in 1940, and was rebuilt in 1949. The business survived until its closure in 1969, by which time the dual carriageway was by-passing the café, causing the loss of the lorry-drivers' trade, and the clientele had become, in the majority of cases, motorcyclists.

Partial re-opening was achieved in 1999, with full re-opening in 2001, with the clear emphasis on the culture of the owners of noisy two-wheeled vehicles. The first spin-off business opened in Lahti (Finland) in 2011, and has been followed by similar establishments in China, Switzerland, Malaysia and the United States of America. The menu is standard (possibly anachronistically standard) transport-café fare, but the prevailing atmosphere of the place, and of its target demographic, remains soaked in petrol.

Turn right onto Beresford Avenue, and keep to the right-hand footway onto Heather Park Drive. Follow its right-hand footway to its end at Heather Park Parade.

There are convenience shops among the businesses at Heather Park Parade.

**41** Turn right to follow the right-hand footway of Lyon Park Avenue. Just beyond 33 Lyon park Avenue, turn right along a path which leads to Station Grove (who are they trying to impress? There are no leafy arbours here!). Turn left to follow the right-hand footway of Station Grove to its end at a flight of steps. Ascend to reach Wembley High Road, where turn right to reach Wembley Central station on your right.

All facilities are available on Wembley High Road.

## Wembley Central to North Wembley

1.4km

**42** Cross High Road at the station and turn right along the left-hand footway. Turn left onto St John's Road and follow the left-hand footway. Pass beneath the railway to reach the gateway into King Edward VII Park on the right.

**43** Continue ahead, still on the left-hand footway, onto Llanover Road, following it to the end of the road. Take a path on the left, then turn right and ascend a flight of steps to reach East Lane, where turn left and follow the left-hand footway to reach North Wembley station.

There is a cluster of other businesses on East Lane to the west of the station, though at the time of writing (mid-2024), it seems that there are a few ex-businesses among them.

## North Wembley to South Kenton

1.0km

**44** Continue along East Lane (turning left if exiting the station) to the junction with Peel Road at an ex-pub which has, like so many, been turned into a small supermarket. Cross to the left-hand footway of Peel Road using two light-controlled pedestrian crossings, and follow the left-hand footway of Peel Road to its utmost end.

This may prove more challenging than it ought to be, given that so many self-centred residents insist on commandeering the footway for the parking of cars — it would be impossible for a wheelchair to pass between the cars and the garden walls.

Turn left at the end of Peel Road to take a short alleyway through to Byron Road. Turn right and take the right-hand footway of Byron





*Nathans Road descends towards South Kenton station's western entrance*

Road through a left bend and a right bend to its end at a turning-point. Continue straight ahead on a path to reach Nathans Road, and follow the right-hand footway to the junction with Carlton Avenue West.

**45** Follow the right-hand footway of Nathans Road to the junction on the right with The Link.

South Kenton station is accessed along The Link on your right. The ticketing gates are on the right of the underpass, thus giving free access to Windermere Avenue on the far side of the tracks, where there are shops and a pub.

## South Kenton to Kenton 1.8km

**46** From the end of The Link (turning left then right if exiting South Kenton station), continue northwards to reach the southern tip of Northwick Park. Turn left and follow the path along the edge of the grass, turning right to pass a sports pavilion. Continue ahead to pass beneath the railway at Northwick Park station.

*The wind in the willows, Northwick Park*

The station, on the Metropolitan Line, hosts a kiosk which sells hot and cold drinks, snacks and confectionery.



**47** Turn right onto Northwick Avenue, then left onto Rushout Avenue. At the end, turn right onto Kenton Road and follow the right-hand footway to reach Kenton station on the right.

There are shops, cafés and restaurants on Kenton Road, and a large supermarket which is accessible from the road opposite Carlton Avenue ahead.

Buses ply the route, running between Harrow (from the side of the road with the station) and Kingsbury (from the hotel side).

## Kenton to Harrow and Wealdstone

### 2.3km

**48** Continue along the right-hand footway of Kenton Road as far as the junction with Carlton Avenue. Turn left to cross Kenton Road by a tripartite light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and continue on the left-hand footway of Carlton Avenue. At the far end of the street, continue ahead on a path into Kenton Recreation Ground.

Follow the path ahead, passing a cycle track on the left to come out onto Kenmore Avenue. Turn left and follow the left-hand footway, passing a parking area for Harrow Council's minibuses (among other municipal vehicles) on your right. At the far end, turn right onto Christchurch Avenue.

**49** Turn left to follow the left-hand footway of Christchurch Avenue as far as its junction with The Hollies, where you will see a footpath leave Christchurch Avenue on the other side of the road, signposted as the Belmont Trail.

*Kenton Recreation Ground*



The 1.7km Belmont Trail follows the southern half of the route taken by the former single-track railway line from Harrow and Wealdstone to Stanmore Village. The line was never a real success, and (as with other branch lines in the northern suburbs of London) many of its passengers defected to the Underground as its local services were opened up. In this instance, the catalyst for defection was the opening, in 1932, of the electrified line from Stanmore to Wembley Park and on to central London — firstly as the Metropolitan Line, then as the Bakerloo Line, and finally as the Jubilee Line.

According to old maps (which you may peruse at <https://maps.nls.uk>), the modern brick building on your left just beyond The Hollies is on the site of a coffin factory, though the smell of burning is not crematorial, but emanates from the pizza factory ahead. The line of The Hollies is basically the line of the railway.

Continue along the left-hand footway at a mini-roundabout to join Forward Drive, still on the left-hand footway. At the next mini-roundabout, cross over the side-road on the left to keep on the left-hand footway of Forward Drive. The street-name soon changes to Masons Avenue, with terraced houses on each side of the street.

These houses have an interesting micro-feature: there is generally a bit more attention to detailing on the frontages of the houses on the south side of the street (to your left) than those across the street. This may have been an attempt by the developer to even out the popularity of the two sides (and thereby the prices he could charge for the houses): those on the south side were closer to the railway, with its attendant smoke and noise.

*Detailing on the houses  
on the west side of  
Masons Avenue*

Pass beneath the road bridge and continue along Masons Avenue to its end. Swing sharply left through almost 180°, then cross the road by the pedestrian crossing to arrive at the entrance to Harrow and Wealdstone station.

Harrow and Wealdstone station, which is immortalised by the Anagram Tube map as *Swearword and Ethanol*, forms the northern terminus of the Bakerloo Line: the station is right next to Wealdstone, town centre, though the earliest name of the station was simply “Harrow”.

The London and Birmingham railway arrived in 1837, stopping here in the midst of rurality. As the area became





built up, the station became incapable of serving the increased traffic, and was extended. The current station building dates from 1912, and was built by the London and North Western Railway (not the company of that name today): you may notice their initials picked out in the stonework above the entrance.

The Bakerloo Line arrived in 1917 as it was extended to Watford Junction (sharing the lines with the local LNWR trains), and in 1984 it became the northern terminus of that line.

Today, the station is served by the Lioness Line of the Overground, by Southern, and by London and Northwestern Railway trains, as well as by the Bakerloo Line.

To the north of the station, on High Street, Wealdstone offers a wide range of facilities, with shops, cafés, and all the other businesses of a middle-ranking suburban centre.



*Harrow and Wealdstone  
station entrance*