

I G Liddell



Walk the Circle Line

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 (2023-24) 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:
Baker Street station, early morning

Walk the Underground Circle Line

Start	Hammersmith station — W6 7AA
Finish	Edgware Road station — NW1 5DH
Distance	32.2km
Duration	6 hours 36 minutes
Ascent	103m

Introduction

The Circle Line (born 1863) is no longer a circle. On the street map, it looks more like a flat peach attached to a twig. On the Tube map, it's a west-facing elephant.

The extension to Hammersmith, which was created in 2009, was justified as a means of freeing the Circle Line from its endless loop, which tended to exacerbate any operational difficulties on the lines sharing the route. The Circle Line share the tracks with the Hammersmith and City Line in the west as well as on the north side of the old Circle Line. In fact, there are only two short sections which are solely used by the Circle Line: the section south of Aldgate to link with the District Line east of Tower Hill, and the chord linking the two parts of the District Line west of Gloucester Road.

Baker Street is where the Metropolitan Line joins the track-sharing. Indeed, until 1990, the Hammersmith and City Line was considered to be part of the Metropolitan Line.

Note that the station for the Circle Line (and for the Hammersmith and City Line) is not within the shopping centre, but is on the north side of Beacon Road, a few metres to the north-west of the Hammersmith Gyratory System.

All facilities may be found in the vicinity of the station.



Hammersmith to Aldgate

16.5km; 3hr 23min

63m ascent

Introduction

1 This section of the line is coincident with the Hammersmith and City Line, except for the short section between the junction north of Aldgate station and the station itself.

Route

Hammersmith to Goldhawk Road

1.3km

2 With your back to the station entrance on Beacon Road, turn right, then take the first road on the right, Hammersmith Grove. Follow the right-hand footway, first past commercial premises and then past houses.

*Left — Hammersmith
(Circle Line and
Hammersmith and City
Line station)*

*Right — curtain-wall
housing on
Hammersmith Grove*



Below — Shepherd's Bush Market, Goldhawk Road

Bottom — Former municipal baths and wash-house, Lime Grove

The tall houses on the right-hand side of the road form a curtain wall. They look impressive from Hammersmith Grove, but (whisper it not) they actually back onto the rattling railway.

At the junction with Adie Street, there is a small parade of shops on the left, including a pub, a gelateria, and a convenience shop.

Beyond Adie Street, turn right onto Trussley Road.

3 Follow Trussley Road ahead, and turn left with the road at the end. Pass railway-arch businesses on your right, and turn right to pass beneath the railway (beneath which the road is squeezed into a single vehicle width) and to emerge onto Sulgrave Road.

Turn left and follow the left-hand footway of Sulgrave Road. Again the houses (these divided into flats) form a curtain wall, and again the backs of the buildings face the railway. Where the street starts to bend to the right at the end of this long terrace on the left, turn left to take a narrow path between railings, with a London Underground property on your right. Turn right to walk parallel to the railway and come out onto Wells Road at the entrance to a bus garage.

Turn left and follow Wells Road to its end on Goldhawk Road. Turn left to reach Goldhawk Road station. There is an entrance to Shepherd's Bush Market on the other side of Goldhawk Road opposite the end of Wells Road.

There are shops and cafés in the vicinity of the station.

Goldhawk Road to Shepherd's Bush Market 0.5km

4 Follow the left-hand footway of Goldhawk Road, and cross over using the refuge at the junction with Lime Grove. Follow the right-hand footway of Lime Grove to reach, on the left, the former Hammersmith School of Building and Arts and Crafts.

The Hammersmith School of Building and Arts and Crafts moved onto the site in 1904; a trade school for girls was added in 1914. The college is now part of the University of the Arts London, occupied by the London College of Fashion. Note also the imposing façade of the



Hammersmith Public Baths and Wash-houses (active 1907-80) on the left of the college, now converted into flats.

The modern housing opposite betrays the demolition of the Lime Grove studios, which had been built as a film studio in 1915, and was converted into BBC television studios in 1949. The BBC moved out in 1991 and the studios were demolished in 1993.

5 Continue to the end of Lime Grove to reach the junction with Uxbridge Road. Turn right to follow the right-hand footway as far as the railway. Cross to the left-hand footway using a light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and advance to Shepherd's Bush Market station.

Shepherd's Bush Market to Wood Lane 0.7km

6 Continue along the left-hand footway of Uxbridge Road, passing the Bush Theatre (a former library building) over on your right, to reach Wood Lane on the corner of Shepherd's Bush Green.

Shepherd's Bush Green has shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs on its three sides, and of course there is access to the retail behemoth of Westfield on Wood Lane, just past Bulwer Road.

Cross over the end of Wood Lane using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing. Turn left to follow the right-hand footway. Cross over the end of Bulwer Road — an entrance to Westfield mall is on the right. Continue along the right-hand footway of Wood Lane to the junction, over on the left, with MacFarlane Road.

7 Continue along Wood Lane, passing the White City bus station on your right. Just before you reach the railway bridge, you will see the Upside-down House. Wood Lane station is just beyond the bridge on your right.

*Upside-down House,
Wood Lane*

Wood Lane to Latimer Road 1.3km

8 Turn right in front of the Upside-down House — it is an experience of illusion inside, and is one of several clones around the country preying on the psychological effect of disorientation. It need not detain us on our Circle Line journey.

If exiting the station, turn left, pass beneath the railway, and turn left. Cross an open square, keeping to the left of the shopping mall, passing a play area.





After you have passed the play area, you may notice a staircase on the left, descending from the platform of Wood Lane station. There is no public access to this staircase, which is only to be used as an emergency exit from the station.

Turn right at the end of the mall building, climbing a set of steps to reach the next level (actually called the ground floor of the shop on your right), and continue to reach another entrance to the mall. Turn left to reach a road junction.

Use a set of light-controlled pedestrian crossing to cross the northbound slip road onto the West Cross Route, then use two more to cross the carriageways of Ariel Way above the road below. Here, on the southern traffic island, turn left to cross the southern slip-road to the West Cross Route, then turn left to reach a set of steps down to the right.

9 Descend the steps to Hunt Close, turn left, and follow Hunt Close out to a Y-junction, where turn left onto Freston Road. At the end of Freston Road, continue ahead onto Bramley Road. Cross over to the right-hand footway at the pedestrian crossing, and follow the right-hand footway beneath the railway to reach Latimer Road station.

There is a convenience shop and a pub just beyond the station entrance.

Latimer Road to Ladbrooke Grove 1.0km

10 Follow the right-hand footway of Bramley Road ahead. Pass beneath Westway (the A40) and take the next street on the right, Cambridge Gardens.

There is a convenience shop at the junction, just to the north of Cambridge Gardens.

Follow the right-hand footway of Cambridge Gardens, cross over St Mark's Road as you reach the junction.

11 Continue along the right-hand footway of Cambridge Gardens to the junction

Top — Bramley Road, approaching Latimer Road station

Bottom — Bramley Road north of Westway



with Ladbroke Grove, where turn right onto the right-hand footway to pass beneath the railway at the entrance to Ladbroke Grove station.

There are many opportunities for shopping, eating and drinking on Ladbroke Grove.

Ladbroke Grove to Westbourne Park

1.2km

12 Cross to the left-hand footway using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing at the station, and continue to the next road on the left, Lancaster Road. Turn left onto Lancaster Road, following the left-hand footway, Pass the Serbian Orthodox church over on your right, and continue to the junction with Portobello Road.

The bulk of Portobello Road's retail offering, including its busy street market, lies off to the right, but there are still shops and cafés this far north, including the famed Spanish food emporium of R Garcia.

Turn left and follow the left-hand footway of Portobello Road as far as Tavistock Road (that is to say, not as far as the railway), where turn right.

There is a cluster of shops and cafés in the pedestrianised area of Tavistock Road adjacent to Portobello Road.

13 Follow the right-hand footway of Tavistock Road along its full length to its end at Great Western Road. Westbourne Park station is just off to the left.

There is a convenience shop next to the station.

*Westbourne Park station,
to the right of the pub*



Westbourne Park to Royal Oak

0.7km

14 Turn right onto Great Western Road, and at the end, turn left onto Westbourne Park Road. Follow the left-hand footway to the junction with Chepstow Road.

The flats on the left date from the second half of the twentieth century and are known (unsurprisingly, given the adjacent railway) as the Brunel estate. During the 1950s. An unscrupulous landlord move onto the scene and bought up slum properties: he proceeded to prey on the tenants he put there. His name was Peter (originally Perec) Rachman, and his shady and inhumane practices have entered the lexicon as *Rachmanism*.

The squalor of these days is set out clearly and with neither glamour nor rancour in *This Boy*, the first volume of autobiography by Alan Johnson, who rose from a childhood on these grim streets to become Home Secretary between 2009 and 2010.

There is a convenience shop on the corner of Chepstow Road.

15 Continue along Westbourne Park Road until it bends to the right, where continue ahead (at a mini-roundabout) onto Westbourne Park Villas, following its right-hand footway to its end at Lord Hill's Bridge. Cross Porchester Road ahead using the pedestrian crossing. Royal Oak station is off to the left on the bridge's right-hand footway.

Royal Oak to Paddington

1.3km

16 Turn right (or turn left if exiting the station) to follow the left-hand footway of Porchester Road all the way to Bishop's Bridge Road, with a supermarket taking the left-hand corner.

*Hallfield estate
from Bishop's Bridge Road*



The main area of Westbourne Grove's shopping and restaurant scene is off to the right here.

Turn left onto the left-hand footway of Bishop's Bridge Road: the Hallfield Estate is now on your right.

The Hallfield Estate was built by Westminster City Council during the years which followed the end of the Second World War. It is in Modernist style, designed in part by Sir Denys Lasdun, and a light and airy feel has been assured by setting the blocks of flats at 45° to the roads which surround the site. Seen from afar, the major faces of the buildings were designed to project abstract art designs. The entire estate has been listed Grade II.

Follow the left-hand footway of Bishop's Bridge Road past the Hallfield Estate and on to Westbourne Terrace.

17 Cross Westbourne Terrace and continue just past the junction with Eastbourne Terrace. Turn right to cross Bishop's Bridge Road by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and take the ramp parallel with Eastbourne Terrace to descend to station level.

At the Elizabeth Line entrance to Paddington station, turn left to reach the concourse at Platform 1.

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 at the far end of the concourse.

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. On the top level of the glazed shopping court, there is a pub called the Mad Bishop and Bear.

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

Paddington station was built as the grand London terminus of the Great Western Railway, the current structure opening in 1854. It is one of the most impressive designs of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), whose short stature makes the famous photograph with the background of the chains of his *SS Great Eastern* all the more impressive. His statue is located 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 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 was the Mad Bishop. And the bear? Well, you don't have to have me spell out who that was, do you?



*Paddington station,
Elizabeth Line entrance*



*Paddington station,
looking along Platform 1*



Statue of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, beneath the roof of Paddington station

Turn right to follow Platform 1 out to the main area of the station concourse (there are no gates on this platform), where turn left. Pass the ticketing gates on your left, and continue to Platforms 8 and 9, where Mr Brunel may be seen, seated in quiet contemplation beneath the magnificent roof.

Paddington to Edgware Road

0.7km

18 Leave the station concourse by turning right opposite Platform 9. Take the escalator on the left-hand side of the carriage drive, and ascend to the recent Paddington Square development.

If you need to see the front of the station hotel, continue up the carriageway to Praed Street, where the hotel is on your right. Turn left along the left-hand footway of Praed Street to rejoin the main route.

The alternative route comes with a health warning — the carriageway is usually full of toxins, emanating from those who pollute the air with tobacco residues. The main route may not be toxin-free, but it is certainly better than the fetid carriageway.

Turn right, then turn left to cross the main open area of the square, and turn right to reach Praed Street at its junction with Tanner Lane. Turn left to follow the left-hand footway of Praed Street past St Mary's Hospital to 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.

The area around South Wharf Road has been transformed into an open area (with waterside) containing restaurants and other facilities.

19 Continue along the left-hand footway of Praed Street to Edgware Road.

The Bakerloo Line's Edgware Road station is off to the left, on the other side of the elevated Westway.

Edgware Road to Baker Street 0.9km

20 Cross over Edgware Road using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and continue ahead onto Chapel Street. Follow the left-hand footway of Chapel Street to reach Edgware Road station.

It is at this point that you reach the circular part of the Circle Line. Referring back to the Tube map analogy, you have completed the elephant's trunk which protrudes beyond the west end of the original Circle Line.

Continue along Chapel Street, then cross Old Marylebone Road using the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing. Turn left to reach Marylebone Road, where turn right along its right-hand footway.

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* which was to come to Paris in later years). The route is now made up of Marylebone Road, Euston Road, Pentonville Road, City Road and Moorgate.

Continue along the right-hand footway of busy Marylebone Road, crossing to the left-hand footway at the junction with Enford Street, just beyond the Western Eye Hospital, using the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing.

The impressive building ahead (at number 222) as you cross Marylebone Road is the Landmark Hotel, once the headquarters of British Railways. Marylebone station is on the other side of the building.

21 Continue along the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road to the junction with Baker Street: the entrance to the station is on the service road on the left.

There are shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs in the vicinity of the station.

The huge block of flats which sits above the station has been home to various celebrities. On the west side of the building, there are plaques commemorating the authors HG Wells and Arnold Bennett, and the composer Eric Coates, while at the east end of the building,



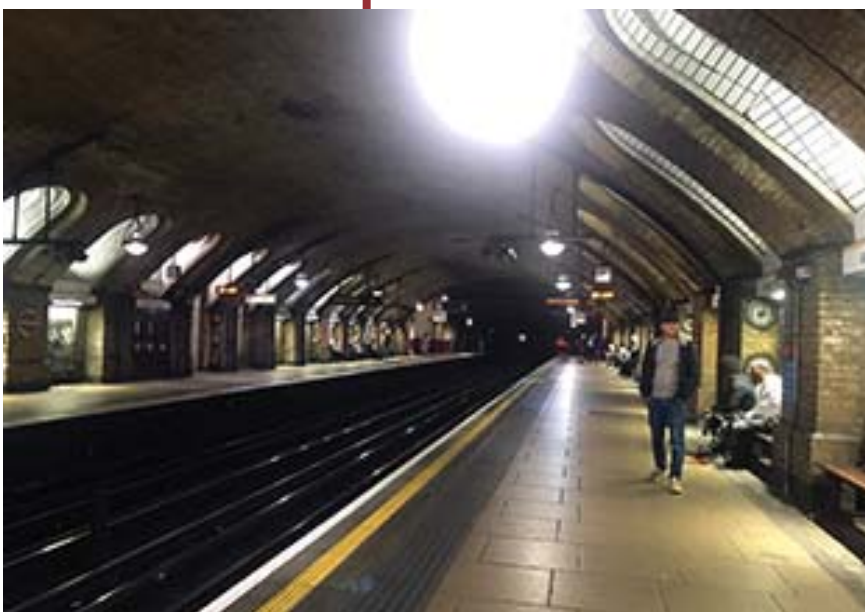
*Edgware Road station
the Window Cleaner*



a plaque commemorates Kenneth Williams. The cartoonist David Low lived in the building, and three flats became the headquarters of the Norwegian section of the Special Operations Executive, whose headquarters were at 64 Baker Street, to the south of Marylebone Road.

The service road is often blocked by a mass of people, relatively few making to or from the station. The two prime suspects 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 its punctuation mistake in the engraving), and the city tour buses (for some reason, very many people would rather spend a fortune on these soulless 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, simply walk along the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road.

This is the point at which the Metropolitan Line's route merges with that of the Hammersmith and City Line.



Baker Street station

Top — Chiltern Court and the station frontage

Above — the Circle Line platforms on the oldest underground railway in the world

Baker Street to Great Portland Street 0.9km

22 Follow Marylebone Road past Madame Tussaud's (more piles of people queueing, this time to see the wax dummies inside) — is this an example of art imitating life?.

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 franchised branches of Madame Tussauds Wax Galleries around the world.

Continue along Marylebone Road, with less crowd-induced tension, to reach York Gate, one of the principal carriage entries to The Regent's Park (yes, the definite article is part of the name and should not be omitted).

23 Continue ahead beyond York Gate, still following the left-hand footway of Marylebone Road, passing on your left the headquarters of the Royal Academy of Music. Pass mansions, also on your left to reach the point (at West Gate, Park Square) where The Regent's Park comes into direct contact with Marylebone Road. Pass Regent's Park Tube station on the Bakerloo Line on the far side of the road.

Alas, Transport for London seem to be as careless with the definite article as the successors to Marie Tussaud have been with the apostrophe!

Advance to the junction with Albany Street, with Great Portland Street station on its island on the other side of the road.

Also on the opposite side of Euston Road is the International Students' House. A bust of John F Kennedy was in the past placed facing the road, but it has been moved inside the building "for reasons of security".

Great Portland Street to Euston Square 0.6km

24 Continue ahead on Euston Road, keeping to its left-hand footway, passing the Regent's Place development on the left, and arrive at the major junction with Hampstead Road, with the main thoroughfare of Euston Road hidden in an underpass beneath the junction.

The traffic on Euston Road in the vicinity of the underpass is almost always nose-to-tail, and slow (if moving at all).

Warren Street Tube station is across Euston Road to your right.



*Baker Street station
in the early morning light*



*Mansions on
Marylebone Road*



BT Tower from Euston Road

There are many cafés, pubs and shops in the vicinity.

25 Press on along Euston Road, with University College Hospital across the chasm of the underpass. Cross over North Gower Street to reach Euston Square station.

The Hammersmith and City Line (in tandem with the Circle and Metropolitan Lines) runs beneath Marylebone Road and Euston Road between Baker Street and King's Cross St Pancras stations. It follows the road route above because, as with many early underground railways (indeed, this was the first of them all worldwide), construction was by the cut-and-cover method.

Also, since the tracks were constructed beneath the roadway, the Metropolitan Railway Company avoided having to pay the owners of the buildings above ground for wayleave and compensation.

Euston Square to King's Cross St Pancras 1.0km

26 Continue ahead on the left-hand footway of Euston Road, following it eastwards.

On the right, the Wellcome Institute is followed by Friends House, the headquarters of the Quakers in Britain. On the left, Euston bus station sits in front of the mainline station, along with significant disruption as the HS2 part of the station is built and furnished with its railway.

Beyond Euston Square Gardens (in front of the station), cross over the end of Eversholt Street.

27 Euston Road now descends gradually towards the valley of the (now culverted) River Fleet at what was for many years known as Battle Bridge (now settled in name as King's Cross).

As you proceed, you will pass on the left the former Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, which bore the name of the first woman to qualify as a surgeon in the United Kingdom,

and also the first woman in the country to hold mayoral office — she was mayor of Aldeburgh in Suffolk.

Pass the British Library on your left, then pass St Pancras station. Cross over Pancras Way by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing to reach King's Cross Square, with the entrance to the Underground station on your left.

St Pancras station opened in 1868, having been constructed by the Midland Railway Company (with William Barlow as the architect) as their own London terminus (having experienced congestion problems while sharing Euston station with the London and North Western Railway. Soon afterwards, the Midland Grand Hotel was built onto the Euston Road façade. The hotel was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in a flamboyant neo-Gothic style to impress customers and to cement the Midland railway's reputation. The tracks were built at first-floor level so that the Regent's Canal could be bridged (rather than tunnelled, as at King's Cross).

By the 1960s, St Pancras had become dark and dowdy, with Barlow's roof blackened by the soot, and there were plans to demolish the building. After a long campaign, in which John Betjeman (later Poet Laureate) played a major part, the station was saved. There is a statue of Betjeman looking upwards within the station today. The station was saved, but the hotel, which had been used as offices, had become stagnant and was sealed up from access.

With the advent of Eurostar services in 2007, the entire station was refurbished, returning the Barlow roof, blackened by more than a century's accumulation of soot, to its pale blue original colour, and the hotel was refurbished in suitably grand style.

Freight had always been as important to the Midland Railway as passenger traffic, with beer from Burton-on-Trent a mainstay. The ground-floor undercroft of the station was built deliberately with pillars to maximise the capability for storage of beer and other goods, and there was an extensive goods yard to the west of the station.

The British Library now covers much of the land occupied by the goods yard. Today, the ground floor is given over to retail with little or no connection to railways, so much so that St Pancras is often



Euston Station Gardens

Top left — West Lodge

Top right — London and North Western Railway Company's war memorial

Above — Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital building



called “a nice shopping mall with a station attached”.

King’s Cross station was opened in 1852 in a classical style which was much more restrained than the more flamboyant “noisy neighbour”, St Pancras, which came along ten years later. The jewel in the King’s Cross crown was the fast service to Edinburgh Waverley, with services such as the *Flying Scotsman* and iconic locomotives such as *Mallard*. The side of the station to the west of the trainshed became the focal point of the station with its refurbishment in 2012. The original design of the station was a family affair, with Lewis Cubitt as its architect and his brother William as its chief consulting engineer.

The western concourse was designed by George McAslan. On the concourse, there is a statue of Sir Nigel Gresley (1876-1941), the engineer who designed, amongst other locomotives, the famed *Mallard*. In the original version of the statue, a pair of mallard ducks were placed beside Gresley (in punning reference to the locomotive), but there were objections that the birds lowered the tone of the statue, and were disrespectful of the engineer’s technical prowess.

The country’s largest station pub is situated in the former Parcel Yard (and bears its name) St the rear of the concourse.



King’s Cross St Pancras to Farringdon 2.1km

28 Walk to the far end of-the square, and cross Euston Road using the divided light-controlled pedestrian crossing. Turn left and follow the right-hand footway, with the “lighthouse” building across the road on your left. At the next junction, turn right to continue along the right-hand footway of Gray’s Inn Road, crossing to the left-hand footway at a suitable location.

St Pancras station

Above — morning light

Below — Eurostar platforms under the Barlow roof

A statue of King George IV stood at the point which is now the junction of Euston Road and Gray's Inn Road (whence the name "King's Cross"). However, the statue proved to be as popular as the king, and was pulled down in 1845 without a hint of respectful ceremony.

From King's Cross to Farringdon, it is possible to follow the direct route via King's Cross Road, the summit of Mount Pleasant, and Farringdon Road, but the route described below offers at least some respite from busy roads — though it pays to remember that the bus stops on King's Cross Road and Farringdon Road are always close at hand.

Follow Gray's Inn Road as far as Ampton Street, where turn left to follow the left-hand footway. At the end of the street, continue ahead, descending with the footpath, to reach Cubitt Street. Turn right and follow Cubitt Street to its junction with Pakenham Street. Bear right to follow Pakenham Street to Calthorpe Street.

29 Cross Calthorpe Street by the pedestrian crossing, and follow the narrow street called Phoenix Place ahead.

With all the new buildings which are springing up in this area, it is hard to think of it as the warren of slums described in such detail by Charles Dickens in *Oliver Twist*.

Follow Phoenix Place, crossing Mount Pleasant (the street).

To the left, Mount Pleasant ascends to the summit of Farringdon Road: the crossroads there is dominated by the huge Art Deco Post Office building.

Pass beneath Rosebery Avenue using the left-hand footway — by this point, the street-name has changed to Warner Street. Cross Ray Street ahead, then turn left before bearing right onto Herbal Hill. Rise, using the left-hand footway, to the junction with Clerkenwell Road.

Cross over Clerkenwell Road using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing and continue ahead onto Saffron Hill, and follow this street to its junction with Greville Road, where turn left to descend to Farringdon Road. Cross the road ahead using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing to reach the twin entrances to Farringdon station.



*King's Cross station:
the western extension*

Cubitt Street, post-Dickens





Rosebery Avenue crossing

Farringdon station is served by the Circle Line, the Hammersmith and City Line, the Metropolitan Line, the Elizabeth Line, and Thameslink.

There are shops, restaurants and pubs (in wide variety) in the vicinity of the station and on the streets ahead.

Farringdon to Barbican 0.6km

30 From the station entrance, reach the junction with Turnmill Street (turning left if exiting the station from the Tube, or turning right if exiting from National Rail or the Elizabeth Line) Cowcross Street, its winding route easing the gradient for cattle, horse-drawn vehicles, and now pedestrians.

Turnmill, Cowcross — the ghostly echoes of the now-culverted river continue to call its name.

Turnmill Street had a mill on the River Fleet— note how the street follows the bends in the river's course — and Cowcross Street identifies the ford on the river which was used by cattle on their final walk to Smithfield Market.

Cross to the covered avenue, and pass through to the other side of the market on Long Lane at West Smithfield.

There are many opportunities to catch a bite to eat and something to drink in the vicinity of the market.

Smithfield has had a market here for over 800 years, on a "smooth field". The area was once surrounded by several important religious institutions: the nunnery of St Mary, the priory of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, the Carthusian charterhouse, and the Augustinian priory and hospital which was dedicated to St Bartholomew, and is now known colloquially and almost universally as *Barts*.

Of course, originally Smithfield was a livestock market, but when buildings grew up around the religious houses, the market became the cause of noise and stench which became intolerable. The livestock market only moved out in 1855, by which time Dickens had featured the market and its chaos in *Oliver Twist*.

The main meat market seen today is the result of a new build in 1860, supplemented by rebuilding after wartime bomb damage and later fire damage, and by upgrades to meet stringent modern regulations which have been enforced for safer meat-handling.

Over the years, Smithfield has been a place of execution for humans as well as for livestock. William Wallace, the fighter for Scottish



*Central Avenue
Smithfield Market*

independence at the turn of the fourteenth century, was hanged, drawn and quartered here: his head was then placed on a pike above London Bridge, and one of his limbs was displayed in each of four towns which were of particular political importance at that time — Stirling, Perth, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Later, Wat Tyler, the leader of the 1381 Peasant's Revolt, was also executed at Smithfield, with King Richard II (it is said) looking on. Tyler's head was also piked on London Bridge.

The priory of St Bartholomew the Great was founded in Smithfield in 1123: it is so called to distinguish it from the church of St Bartholomew the Less within the adjoining hospital, which was built as part of the same foundation. The hospital has survived many shocks around it, including the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Great Fire of London, and the Blitz. It is the oldest hospital in Britain providing all medical services from its original location.

There are plans to move Smithfield Market to Dagenham Dock, and for the current market area to be colonised by the Museum of London, which has already closed its London Wall premises in preparation for the move. However, legal matters of a medieval nature (Dagenham Dock's closeness to Romford Market would breach the terms of the royal decree which created Romford Market in 1247) has already caused delay to that move, and this may lead to the abandonment of the project.

31 Turn left along the right-hand footway of Long Lane. Pass the eastern Elizabeth Line entrance of Farringdon station, to reach the junction with Aldersgate Street at Barbican station.

Barbican station was originally called Aldersgate (and has had permutations which included “Street” and “Barbican in its name), but was renamed as Barbican in 1968 after the construction of the Barbican Estate, with its major arts venue.

Barbican to Moorgate

0.9km

32 From the junction at the entrance to Barbican station, turn right onto the right-hand footway of Aldersgate Street, using a pedestrian crossing part-way along the street to cross to the left-hand footway. Turn left onto the street called London Wall (so named for the obvious reason) and follow the left-hand footway.

The building which overhangs part of the junction was formerly the Museum of London.

Follow the left-hand footway of London Wall. Pass through a short tunnel to come out at some medieval ruins: this is St Elsyng Spittal.

The remains of St Elsyng Spittal, which was a medieval hospice, was partly built into the wall which encircled Londinium. There is no St Elsyng, the name is only “Holy Mr Elsing”.

33 Follow London Wall to its junction with Moorgate. Cross over Moorgate and turn left to reach, on the right, the access to Finsbury Circus. The nearest entrance to Moorgate station is just ahead: there are others nearby.

This is the easternmost part of the New Road of 1756 (which is described on page 13).

As well as Tube services, Moorgate has direct access to the Elizabeth Line platforms of Liverpool Street station, and has rail services to Stevenage.

St Elsyng Spittal



Moorgate to Liverpool Street

0.4km

34 Turn right off Moorgate to reach the oval of Finsbury Circus. Go round or through the gardens (wherein there are benches for rest or for *al fresco* eating) and continue out ahead on the other side.

35 Turn left onto Blomfield Street and then turn right onto Liverpool Street, passing the Elizabeth Line entrance to the station, to reach the main entrance to Liverpool Street station.

Just before you turn into Liverpool Street, look ahead. The modern (and being re-modernised)

Broadgate development stands on the site of Broad Street station, which was the terminus of the North London Line, carrying trains from Watford Junction via Camden Road.

That line now carries trains on the Windrush line of the Overground (diverging from the original line just north of its previous terminus to connect (over the new bridge) with the former East London Line via Shoreditch High Street — it is a mystery why these trains cannot replicate the direct services between Watford and the City.

Outside the entrance to Liverpool Street, there is a statue commemorating the *Kindertransport* evacuation of children in 1938 and 1939 from Germany and other European countries which had been annexed by Germany — Liverpool Street was their London point of arrival. There is another *Kindertransport* memorial on the concourse of the mainline station, and there are more in Harwich, where the children disembarked from the ferry which had brought them across the North Sea.

As well as the Hammersmith and City Line (for which the easiest access is via the Tube station entrance on the right-hand side of Liverpool Street opposite the *Kindertransport* memorial), Liverpool Street station plays host to other Tube services — the Metropolitan Line (access as for the Hammersmith and City Line) and the Central Line (access from the main station concourse, which of course has access to all lines). Elizabeth Line services have been noted already. Overground services on the Weaver Line to Chingford, Cheshunt and Enfield, and main-line services to Cambridge and Norwich, depart from the numbered platforms on the main station concourse.

In addition to the trains, there are all the usual facilities (such as food sales, ATMs and toilets) on the mainline station concourse, and there is a burgeoning general retail aspect.



Moorgate station



*Roof detail,
Liverpool Street station*



Liverpool Street to Aldgate 0.7km

36 Continue along Liverpool Street, with the station on your left, to reach Bishopsgate. Cross the road and continue ahead onto Devonshire Street to reach Devonshire Square.

Note the modern statue of a knight on a horse: this commemorates the *Cnihtesgild*,

Liverpool Street station

Top — roof detail

Above — main concourse

the company of knights who guarded London at the end of the first millennium.

37 Continue ahead to the end of the street, drawn forward by the view of the roof of Aldgate station ahead. Cross St Botolph Street ahead using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and take Blue Boar Passage ahead, with the station building on your right, to reach Aldgate High Street. Turn right to reach the entrance to Aldgate station, the city terminus of the Metropolitan Line.

*Cnihtesgild statue,
Devonshire Square*



Aldgate to Edgware Road

15.7km; 3hr 13min

40m ascent

Introduction

Apart from the southern half of the chord (between the Hammersmith and City Line and the District Line tracks) which contains Aldgate station, and a short chord on the track between Gloucester Road and High Street Kensington, the Circle Line shares its track with the District Line.

Route

Aldgate to Tower Hill

0.6km

38 Cross the road in front of the station and turn right. Follow the left-hand footway to Minories, where turn left. Cross to the right-hand footway at the pedestrian crossing and follow it over the junction at Crosswall.

Note the impressive Art Deco Ibex building on the left.

Note also that *Minories* is pronounced with a short *i* in the first syllable.

To reach Fenchurch Street station, take the lane on the right just before you reach the railway bridge.

39 Continue ahead to pass beneath the railway (it is the line between Southend and Fenchurch Street).

Pass the already-dated and frankly somewhat tawdry Tower Gateway DLR station on the left. Where the buildings end on the right, turn right onto a path which leads to the entrance to Tower Hill station.

On your left as you approach the station entrance, you will see a fine section of the Roman wall which was built around Londinium once it had become a strategically important port around 200CE. On a little green at the foot of the wall, a statue represents Emperor Trajan (65-117CE, reigned 98-117CE). Beyond the end

Ibex, Minories





Roman Wall and Tower of London from Tower Hill

Emperor Trajan, Tower Hill



of the wall, on the other side of the main road, lies the bulk of the Tower of London.

Slip left-and-right at the station entrance to continue on the route, with the station building on your right.

Tower Hill station also has services on the Circle Line, which shares the tracks with this part of the District Line as

far as Gloucester Road. The station exit is located at the far end of the building.

There are many and varied opportunities for refreshment and replenishment in the area. The offers range from fast-food kiosks to genteel afternoon tea services, via the usual gamut of cafés, restaurants and pubs.

Note that the area will usually be crawling with tourists, many of whom do not seem to have grasped the “left foot, right foot, repeat” concept of ambulation. This makes Tower Hill a candidate for a break-point on the journey and an early start from the station.

Tower Hill to Monument 0.7km

40 Turn left at the station exit to follow a path to the roadside (Tower Hill), and turn right along the right-hand footway, passing two war memorials for the merchant marine.

The first memorial commemorates the Falklands campaign of 1981, and the second (larger) memorial is to those lives lost in the Great War and the Second World War..

On the right stands Trinity House, the headquarters of the lighthouse authority for England and Wales — Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own institution, the Northern Lighthouses Board, which is headquartered in Edinburgh.

Continue straight ahead onto Byward Street to reach Great Tower Street, where turn right. Cross to the left-hand footway, and follow Great Tower Street (and later, Eastcheap) westwards to St Dunstan’s Hill on your left.

41 Continue westwards: at Fish Street Hill, look to your left, down the hill and up to the sky, to see the Monument (to the Great Fire of London of 1666). Continue ahead to King William Street, where there is access to Monument station. To the left lies the northern approach to London Bridge.

Monument to Cannon Street

0.4km

42 Cross King William Street by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, and continue ahead along the left-hand footway of Cannon Street. Across the road on your right, you will see the newest entrance to the Bank/Monument Tube/DLR station complex, after which you will pass Abchurch Lane on your right.

43 Continue along the left-hand footway of Cannon Street to reach the rail and Tube station of that name, the latter at the corner of Dowgate Hill.

There are shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs in the vicinity of the station.

Cannon Street station was built by the South Eastern Railway between 1863 and 1866, mainly to serve commuters to the City from the south-eastern suburbs. Indeed, the concentration on commuter traffic led to the suspension of off-peak services, and to the complete closure of the station on Sundays for about a hundred years. It is now open every day, and while commuters remain the backbone of passenger footfall, some services link Cannon Street with places in Kent.

Cannon Street to Mansion House

0.2km

44 Continue walking along the left-hand footway of Cannon Street to cross over College Hill — the dome of St Paul's cathedral now fills the end-of-street horizon.

45 Continue to follow the left-hand footway of Cannon Street as far as the



*Above — Detail,
Trinity House*

*Below — St Paul's from
Cannon Street*





The Black Friar

Blackfriars station, with the Black Friar pub extreme left



scissors junction at Mansion House station, where cross over Garlick Hill and continue onto the left-hand footway of Queen Victoria Street.

The Mansion House, which is the official residence of the Lord Mayor of London, is not here: it is up to the right next to Bank station. The confusion is down to the differing dates of construction of the Underground

Mansion House to Blackfriars 0.7km

46 From Mansion House station, descend Queen Victoria Street using its left-hand footway.

There is a postage-stamp linear park with a brick pergola on the left. The park contains a few wooden benches, offering the possibility of a short rest, if it is not overcome by office workers.

Continue ahead to reach the northern end of the Millennium Bridge: Tate Modern is in view to the left, and St Paul's cathedral is to the right. Ahead on your left is the main building of the

City of London School — note the memorial stone to its foundation in 1442 set into the wall at a low level — which has occupied this site since 1986.

47 Follow the left-hand footway of Queen Victoria Street downhill, past the College of Arms on the right to the junction with White Lion Hill. Cross the road carefully (in busy times, use the underpass) and complete your descent of Queen Victoria Street as you reach Blackfriars (the priory, the station, the bridge and the pub).

The priory at Blackfriars, situated on the southern slope of Ludgate Hill, is first recorded in 1317 and continued until the Dissolution in 1538. It was the site of proceedings leading to the divorce of Catherine of Aragon and King Henry VIII.

Blackfriars railway station was originally situated on the south side of the river, but moved to the north side in 1886 to join the Underground station, which had been opened in 1870 — for once, the Tube station was not built to connect with the railway, but in effect

the reverse was true. The original railway bridge was later removed, leaving the pillars in the water.

In 1988, Thameslink services between Bedford and Brighton were inaugurated, using the Snow Hill tunnel between Farringdon and Blackfriars.

In 2009, the station was reconstructed and extended to span the river, with entrances on both banks. The station canopy, which stretches all the way across the river, is covered in solar panels.

The current Blackfriars road bridge was opened in 1869 by Queen Victoria (as commemorated by a statue on the north bank). In 1982, Italian banker Roberto Calvi was found hanged beneath the bridge. In 2007, five *mafiosi* were acquitted of his murder for “lack of evidence”. The River Fleet flows into the River Thames from its culvert beneath Blackfriars Bridge.

The Black Friar pub, which occupies a thin triangle of land which a Scot would define as a *gushet*, was built around 1875 close to the site of the priory. It was remodelled in 1905 and boasts fine Art Nouveau features.

Blackfriars to Temple

0.7km

48 Cross the northern approach to Blackfriars Bridge (the road bridge), using two light-controlled pedestrian crossings separated by a central island, to the former Unilever House, and bear left to follow the building (on your right-hand side) round the corner and onto Victoria Embankment.

Unilever House is Grade II listed, and is one of London’s most impressive example of Art Deco Neoclassicism. It was built to house the London headquarters of the Lever soap business — the soap was made in the company’s village (built to house the employees and containing the Lady Lever Art Gallery) of Port Sunlight on the bank of the River Mersey), which had merged with the Dutch *Margarine Unie* to become Unilever: the lease was arranged in 1930 by Lord Leverhulme (as William Hesketh Lever became on the death of his father in 1925), and was completed in 1933.

Unilever House (as was)



The company has now vacated the building, which has been re-fitted (inevitably) as a luxury hotel — I suspect that the soap in the bedrooms will not be the orange-glowing Pears brand of bars whose aroma used to suffuse the air in and around Port Sunlight.

Pass the brick building which was the home (from 1879 to 1986) of the City of London School — the school's current location was passed earlier on the route, on Queen Victoria Street next to the north end of the Millennium Bridge. The building previously housed Sion College. Beyond Temple Avenue, the lawyers' accommodations are reached.

Continue along Victoria Embankment with the Temple gardens visible behind the railings on the right, and the new Tideway-derived park opposite, to reach Middle Temple Lane.

The Temple is one of the chief legal districts of the City of London, clustering around the Temple church (that is, the church of the Knights Templar), today containing legal offices, residences and gardens.

On the far side of the street (Victoria Embankment), you will see the national war memorial to the Submarine Service of the Royal Navy.

49 Continue along Victoria Embankment and exit the City of London (which is a separate county from Greater London) at its statuesque dragon mark. Follow the footway to Temple station..

Temple to Embankment 0.6km

50 Continue past the station to cross Temple Place at the west end of the station building.

On the corner of Temple Place, there is a statue of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859). The positioning of the statue has Brunel being supported above the major achievement of his fellow engineer

Joseph Bazalgette (who, contrary to popular rumour of the time, was supported most enthusiastically by Brunel) — his huge outfall sewer which runs beneath the embankments on the north side of the river. Bazalgette's network — a main sewer on each side of the river and many connecting sewers — included no less than 132km of sewer pipes.

The official opening of the new sewer was undertaken in 1865

Temple station



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 Joseph Bazalgette.

After the creation of the embankments, the Thames ran in a narrower, more managed, channel. This had the knock-on effect that the river flowed much more quickly, and further increases in the flow speed came 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 the frozen wastes of history.

Continue ahead beyond the Brunel statue. Pass Somerset House on the right, and pass beneath Waterloo Bridge.

Somerset House is the second such building on the site. Old Somerset House was built in the sixteenth century, but on his execution, the Duke of Somerset's properties were sequestered by the Crown. It later became the home of Anne of Denmark, wife of James I (James VI of Scotland). Oliver Cromwell's body lay in state in Somerset House.

Despite renovations by Sir Christopher Wren, the building fell out of favour, and demolition began in 1775. Almost immediately, Sir William Chambers embarked on the building of a new Somerset House. Since the Thames was not yet constrained by the Embankment, the design included an arch at river level so that boats could enter within the structure.

Down the years, Somerset House has served as Government offices, notably the Inland Revenue, the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths, and a laboratory to detect adulteration of tobacco products. Today stands, in front of the arch (but above at the Terrace level), the memorial to members of the Civil Service Rifles who fell in the Great War. It is now occupied by the Courtauld Institute.

*The City seen from
Waterloo Bridge*





*Sir Arthur Sullivan's
memorial in Victoria
Embankment Gardens*

The first Waterloo Bridge was designed by John Rennie, the Scots engineer of canals, docks and bridges, and was opened in 1817. By 1920, however, there were severe structural problems (partly caused by increased water flow following the building of his New London Bridge), and a new bridge was built to the designs of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (who also designed the telephone box). Scott was the grandson of Sir George Gilbert Scott, whose signature building is the iconic hotel frontage of St Pancras station. The current Waterloo Bridge was opened in 1942, but was not completed until 1945: it has Grade II* listed status.

51 After you have crossed Savoy Place, take a path on the right to take you into Victoria Embankment Gardens — it will relieve you from the stench of idling coaches and other vehicles. Follow the central path through the gardens to its end at Villiers Street, enjoying the variety of people commemorated in the gardens.

The first memorial of note on the walk through the gardens has been described as “the sexiest statue in London”. It is a memorial to Sir Arthur Sullivan, the composer who worked with WS Gilbert on the Savoy Operas (such as *Iolanthe*, *The Mikado*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*). It is on the left of the path, so that Sullivan is looking towards the Savoy Theatre. One might say that the memorial contains two busts, the one of Sullivan and that of the weeping muse of music, who is so distraught by her loss that her clothes are falling off. Gilbert has his own memorial nearby, but not in the gardens: his memorial is on the river wall on the Embankment.

Moving on, the next statue (on the right, at the foot of Carting Lane, whereby goods were carted up from the river to Covent Garden fruit and vegetable market) is of Robert Raikes, pioneer of the Sunday School movement. His were not the first Sunday Schools, but his promotion of the idea ensured his primacy as pioneer. Raikes is descended from the same stock which produced William Wilberforce, the founder of the Anti-Slavery Society.

Next, on the left, is the memorial to Henry Fawcett, an economist who supported Charles Darwin’s work on evolution and was a strong believer in women’s suffrage. As Postmaster General, he introduced the idea of savings stamps to allow funds to be built up, even a penny at a time; he also introduced parcel post and postal orders, and even set up the financial framework for payphones.

Moving on, the monument on the left is an unmissable shout to posterity on behalf of the third Lord Cheylesmore, a society

baronet and Guards officer in the Great War. Cheylesmore bought out the struggling Royal Indian Engineering College overlooking Runnymede Meadows, remodelling the main building (Pillar Hall) for the coming-of-age of his heir. He was the first peer to be killed in a motor accident, in 1925. The monument is by Sir Edwin Lutyens, who also designed (among many other edifices) the Cenotaph, Liverpool Cathedral, Lindisfarne Castle and (linking back to the Cheylesmore connection) the lodges on the riverside at Runnymede.

Opposite the Cheylesmore memorial is a statue of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a hard-nosed Liberal politician from Aspatria (in Cumbria) who was often said to be “anti-everything”. Having had little formal education save lectures from a local Congregational minister, he threw himself with gusto into many social pressure-groups and campaigns against the Establishment. His chief hobby-horse was the temperance movement, and, having had a Bill to restrict alcohol sales defeated on no fewer than eight occasions between 1863 and 1878, had a Resolution passed in Parliament in 1880. The Gladstone government took no action on the Resolution. On the death of the celebrated huntsman John Peel, Lawson bought Peel’s pack of hounds.

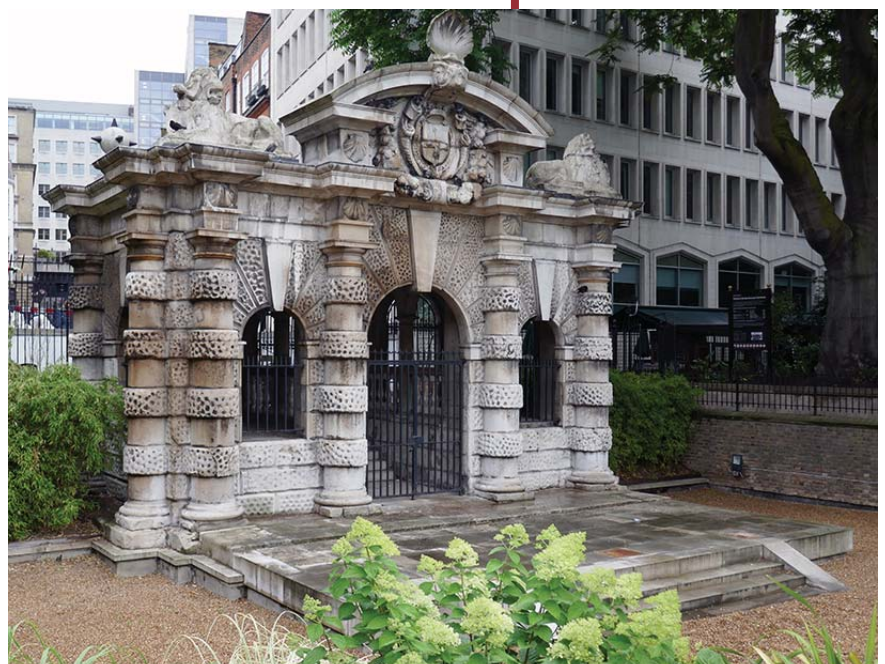
At the point where three paths diverge (the other two splitting off to your left), two statues bring animals to mind.

At the confluence of paths is the monument to the Imperial Camel Corps, but on the right, a bigger statue recalls a smaller animal — the statue is of the poet Robert Burns, and the animal is, of course, the mouse whose nest he turned over with his plough, his “wee sleekit, cowerin’, timorous beastie”.

Finally, on the right you will see a stone gateway. This was a watergate to allow the Duke of Buckingham to board his river vessels: the Thames may have already retreated from the Strand, but in 1626, it was still wide enough to reach this point. It was only with the creating of the Victorian sewerage system by Sir Joseph Bazalgette that the watergate was left high and dry in the park created by the sewer system.

Below — Robert Burns

*Bottom — Buckingham
watergate*





Looking towards Charing Cross from the downstream Hungerford Bridge

Exit the gardens and turn left to pass through Embankment station's street-level concourse.

The station's name has fluctuated, being known at different times as *Charing Cross (Embankment)*, then *Charing Cross Embankment*, then *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, which was opened in 1915, is said to have been one of the favourite Tube stations of Sir John Betjeman..

Embankment to Westminster 0.6km

52 Turn right out of the concourse to emerge onto the Victoria Embankment (having previously turned right if exiting the ticketing gates of Embankment station) and pass beneath the Hungerford Bridges and, between the two, the Charing Cross railway bridge., using the right-hand footway.

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 beneath the Charing Cross 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.

Just beyond the bridges, on the riverside, is the memorial to Joseph Bazalgette: the Latin inscription, *Flumini vincula posuit*, translates as *He put chains on the river* — in other words, by the building of the embankments to cover his sewer, he tamed the sideways creep of the River Thames.

Cross Northumberland Avenue and enter Whitehall Gardens (again, this is advised in order to escape vehicular pollution) and follow the path parallel to the Embankment. At the far end of the first garden. Just beyond a statue of William Tyndale, ease right to exit onto Horse Guards Avenue.

William Tyndale (1494-1536) was the first person to translate the Bible into English using the original Greek and Hebrew texts, and the first to publish it using the printing press. Having been arrested in the (Catholic) Holy Roman Empire, he was executed in 1536.

53 Cross over the end of Horse Guards Avenue to enter a garden of military memorials with the Ministry of Defence building on your right. Over on the riverside, you will see a golden eagle landing on the top of a tall column — this is the national Royal Air Force memorial.

The first statue you will see, on your right, is of Lord Portal, who joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1915 as a dispatch rider, and rose to be Chief of the Air Staff during the Second World War. The Fleet Air Arm memorial on its column is next. Next on your right is the Korean War Memorial, followed by a statue of Viscount Trenchard, Father of the RAF. He was the first Chief of the Air Staff. The next memorial is to the Chindit special forces who served under Major General Orde Wingate behind Japanese lines in Burma during the 1943-44 campaign.

At the end of the gardens, continue along Victoria Embankment past the current location of New Scotland Yard, headquarters of the Metropolitan Police: across the road is the Battle of Britain Memorial.

When viewed from Victoria Embankment Gardens, the Battle of Britain Memorial is backed by the London Eye and County Hall.

Turn right, and follow the Victoria Embankment to Westminster Bridge, at the bronze of Boudicca and her daughters.

Boudicca was Queen of the Iceni (from whose name we derive the Icknield Way), who mounted an unsuccessful rebellion against the Romans in 60-61CE. The bronze dates from 1850.

Turn right at the end of Westminster Bridge to reach, on the right-hand footway, Westminster station opposite the Elizabeth Tower of the Palace of Westminster.



Memorial to the fallen of the Korean War (foreground) and to the Fleet Air Arm



Boudicca and her daughters, Westminster Bridge



*Elizabeth Tower from
Victoria Embankment*

This is an area which suffers from being completely mobbed by very slow-moving, unthinking tourists. For this reason, Westminster station could be a useful break-point, especially if you can arrive before 0800 to start a day's walking — it is the best chance that you will have for some room to move.

The Elizabeth Tower contains at its top the famous clock. Part of the workings of the clock are its bells, the largest of which is known as Big Ben.

Repeat after me — the building across the road is not Big Ben, it is the Palace of Westminster. Repeat after me — the tower is not Big Ben, it is the Elizabeth Tower. Repeat after me — the clock is not Big Ben, it is in fact the Great Clock of Westminster. Repeat after me — the chimes are not Big Ben, they are the Westminster carillon. Repeat after me — Big Ben is only the largest of the bells which ring out the Westminster carillon attached to the Great Clock of Westminster in the Elizabeth Tower of

the Palace of Westminster.

It really is very simple.

Westminster to St James's Park

0.7km

54 Continue ahead from the main entrance of Westminster station, crossing over Parliament Street and taking the right-hand footway ahead along the north side of Parliament Square, with Churchill glowering on your left. Cross Great George Street to pass along the west side of the square, with a statue of Abraham Lincoln on your right. Pass the Supreme Court building and bear round the right, onto Broad Sanctuary.

Follow the right-hand footway to pass a rather nondescript triangle of grass (United Nations Green, actually) on your right, with the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre behind it and the Methodist Central Hall in front of you, and with the west door of Westminster Abbey across the road on your left.

55 Cross over Storey's Gate. Do not take the main road, Victoria Street, ahead but continue onto Tothill Street with the side of Central Hall forming its right-hand side. Cross to the left-hand footway at a suitable location and follow the street out to its junction with Broadway. In front of you on the left-hand side of Broadway is the bulk of 55 Broadway, which houses St James's Park Tube station beneath it.

55 Broadway is the building designed by the company architect Charles Holden (1875-1960) to be the corporate headquarters of Underground Electric Railways of London, the main forerunner to London Underground. Successively, London Transport and Transport for London took over the building, but it was vacated in 2020 when TfL moved out to Stratford. Its fate is, as is the case with so many such buildings in London, to be gutted and re-fitted to become a luxury hotel.

Above ground floor level, the building is cruciform with a central tower — this was to maximise the natural light in the building, but it also created a cathedral of transport. The building, completed in 1929, boasts avant-garde sculptures on each side and has many Art Deco features inside and out. It is Grade I listed. Holden reworked much of the design in his Senate House building in Bloomsbury (often known fondly as the London Lubyanka) for the University of London..

Charles Holden was born in Bolton, and his early work included commissions from William Hesketh Lever (who was later ennobled as Lord Leverhulme) for Port Sunlight, his company village on the Wirral, on the western bank of the River Mersey. He was responsible for important works in Bristol too, but his best-known work is in London, particularly his Tube stations and other London transport infrastructure. He contributed greatly to the Piccadilly and Northern Lines when these lines were extended to the north, south and west during the 1930s.



Above — 55 Broadway

St James's Park to Victoria 1.0km

56 Cross over to
55 Broadway by the

Christchurch Gardens memorials

Right — the Suffragette movement

Far right — Henry Purcell





Westminster cathedral

pedestrian crossing and turn left along the right-hand footway of Great Smith Street to reach Victoria Street.

The modern blocks on the left have been built on the site of New Scotland Yard, the third headquarters building of the Metropolitan Police to have that name. The Police left the building in 2016 to Curtis Green House on Victoria Embankment, which was promptly renamed New Scotland Yard.

On the right at the junction with Victoria Street is a statue

of Henry Purcell. Across at the opposite corner of Christchurch Gardens, there is a memorial to the Suffragettes in the form of a scroll.

Turn right onto the right-hand footway of Victoria Street and follow it to the junction with Buckingham Gate and Artillery Row, next to the Albert, an ornate (and Grade II listed) Victorian pub.

Cross Victoria Street by its light-controlled pedestrian crossing on the diagonal.

There are many opportunities for retail, refreshment and other facilities and services, both on Victoria Street and in the surrounding streets.

Victoria station



57 Press ahead on the left-hand footway of Victoria Street as far as Cathedral Piazza on the left, with Westminster's Roman Catholic cathedral on its far side.

The cathedral was opened in 1903 and was consecrated in 1910, after the church hierarchy had decided that the building was free of debts and with its fabric completed. The architecture makes several references to the Byzantine style, and its composition of red brick walls interlaced with white stonework has given rise to its being called the "streaky

bacon cathedral". It is the primary church for Roman Catholics in Britain.

Beyond the cathedral's piazza, continue to the junction of Vauxhall Bridge Road. Cross over to reach Wilton Road, where turn left to reach a light-controlled pedestrian crossing which gives access to the forecourt of Victoria station.

Victoria station was built in 1860, and was rebuilt at the turn of the twentieth century, the new station opening in 1908. In reality, Victoria was two adjoining stations, one for the Sussex and Surrey services and the other for the Kent services. In 1924-25, following the bringing together of all of these services under the umbrella of the Southern Railway, the wall which separated the two stations was knocked down and the platforms were re-numbered in a single sequence. The original split echoes down the years, with Southeastern services making use of the lower-numbered platforms and Southern services the higher.

Victoria station is served by the Victoria Line (no surprise there!) as well as by the Circle and District Lines. The bus station — for local red buses (the coach station will follow a short distance ahead) — in the forecourt of the railway station is a busy part of the transport interchange.

Victoria station has all the shops, cafés, toilets and other facilities that you would expect to find in a station of this size. In addition, there are shops, pubs, cafés and restaurants in the surrounding streets, including the Cardinal Place shopping centre.



Maréchal Ferdinand Foch

Victoria to Sloane Square 1.4km

58 Make your way along the frontage of Victoria station to reach and cross Buckingham Palace Road ahead.

In the gardens ahead, there is an equestrian statue of Maréchal Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929), the French Chief of Staff who served as Supreme Allied Commander during the Great War.

Turn left to follow the right-hand footway of Buckingham Palace Road, with the station across the road on your left. Cross over Eccleston Street. Pass Victoria Library to reach the corner of Elizabeth Street.

Victoria Coach Station is ahead.



Victoria coach station



Chester Row

Victoria Coach Station was opened in 1932 by London Coastal Coaches, the building having been constructed in Art Deco style. It was requisitioned by the War Office during the Second World War, when coach travel was limited. The ownership changed hands a few times after the war, until it was transferred to the National Bus Company under the terms of the Transport Act 1968, by which point it was serving routes across the country. It is now managed by Transport for London.

Its location as the primary London coach terminus seems to be under almost permanent review, with interchange points on the motorway network in the suburbs being considered (as has been effected in Milton Keynes, for example), along with the idea of capitalising on the importance of Heathrow Airport's coach terminals, with the airport's bus, rail and Tube links to many parts of London offering an easy alternative to slow road traffic.

In heavy traffic, coaches lose contact with their timetabled schedules before they reach the North or South Circular Road, and inbound coaches drift later than ever, even if they are on time when they reach the M25.

Today, the main coach station building is used only for departing coaches: arriving passengers alight in another building on Eccleston Place, just off Elizabeth Street.

Turn right onto Elizabeth Street and, with the wall of the coach station's departure building over to your left on the other side of the road, follow its right-hand footway, crossing over Eccleston Place, then crossing over the exit (for coaches making for the departures building) from the arrivals building.

Opposite the station on Elizabeth Street, there is a pub, a café, and a small supermarket, all of which seek to attract coach passengers' custom, as well as seeking passing trade from others. There are more cafés, restaurants and pubs farther ahead on both sides of Elizabeth Street.

Cross over to the left-hand footway of Elizabeth Street at a suitable location, and cross Ebury Street to reach Chester Square.

59 Turn left and follow Chester Row to its far end, where turn right onto Holbein Place. Follow the right-hand footway of Holbein Place as it bends to the left, then turn right to reach Sloane Square station on your right.

Sloane Square to South Kensington 1.4km

60 Turn left to follow the south side of Sloane Square, and cross King's Road at the corner of the square. Pass the main entrance to the Peter Jones emporium to reach the north-western corner of Sloane Square.

There is a wide range of shops, and of places to eat and drink, on Sloane Square and King's Road.

Cross over Symons Street and turn left along its right-hand footway. At the triangle, bear round to the right, then turn left onto Draycott Place. Follow Draycott Place to its end (taking the left-hand footway will keep you out of any crowds at the Spanish consulate-general) and turn right onto Draycott Avenue. Turn left onto Whitehead's Grove and follow its right-hand footway to reach Sloane Avenue.

At the corner of the building on your right, there are two plaques, one commemorating the American social reformer Frederick Douglass (1817-95), the other commemorating Vera Atkins, who worked in the France Section of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) from 1941 to 1945 during the Second World War.

61 Turn right to follow the left-hand footway of Sloane Avenue. At Fulham Road, cross over to take Pelham Street opposite. Continue along Pelham Street to its end reach South Kensington station on your right.

On your left, there is a statue of Béla Bartók (1881-1945), the Hungarian composer, by his renowned compatriot Imre Varga (1923-2019). Bartók stayed in this part of South Kensington while he was in London.

South Kensington station is served by Piccadilly Line trains, as well as those of the Circle and District Lines.

The station building, which is immediately identifiable by the tiling and windows as having been designed by Leslie Green, was built to serve the deep-level Piccadilly Line. Connectivity between the District and Circle Lines and the Piccadilly Line is now made within the original station layout, with a series



Béla Bartók

*South Kensington — former
Piccadilly Line entrance*



escalators linking the four levels — the westbound Piccadilly Line, the eastbound Piccadilly Line, the District and Circle Lines, and the ticketing gates.

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 entrance to South Kensington station is from an arcade of shops between Pelham Road and Thurloe Street: access is provided from both of these streets.

The arcade, the station structures, and the pedestrian tunnel to the museum quarter on Exhibition Road are all Grade II listed.

South Kensington to Gloucester Road 0.7km

62 Cross Pelham Road to reach the main station entrance on the south side of the building. Do not enter the station, but turn left to follow the right-hand footway round the corner. With your back to the station building, cross the road ahead using the light-controlled pedestrian crossing, then turn right and left to reach Harrington Road. Cross the street, and turn left onto its right-hand footway. Follow it to reach and cross Queen's Gate.

There is a café and a convenience shop on Harrington Road at Queen's Gate.

63 Continue ahead, now on the right-hand footway of Stanhope Gardens, with the gardens themselves on your right, to reach and cross Collingham Road.

Turn right at the junction with Gloucester Road. Turn right along the right-hand footway of Gloucester Road to reach its Tube station. Cross the road by the light-controlled pedestrian crossing — the station entrance is on your left.

Gloucester Road station is also served by Piccadilly Line trains. The District line takes its own route onwards via Earls Court.

There is a wide range of shops, eating and drinking establishments, and other facilities on Gloucester Road.

Gloucester Road station



It is easy to see that the station was once two separate stations: on the right, the original building of the Metropolitan and District Railways, and to the left, the Piccadilly Line station with its ox-blood tiles and semicircular windows, the architectural fingerprints of Leslie Green (see page 42).

Gloucester Road to High Street Kensington 1.6km

64 Continue northbound on Gloucester Road (that is to say, turning left if exiting the station) following the left-hand footway to reach the furiously busy Cromwell Road. Cross the road using a pair of light-controlled pedestrian crossings, bearing left when crossing from a triangular island.

Continue on the left-hand footway of Gloucester Road. Cross over the end of Southwell Gardens to reach Cornwall Gardens, where turn left opposite Queen's Gate Gardens over to your right.

Follow Cornwall Gardens (making sure that the gardens are to the right: if not, perform a left-and-right zigzag on one of the crossing streets). Where the roadway turns sharp right, descend on Lexham Path ahead to reach Cornwall Terrace Gardens, a pedestrian area which is furnished with an array of planter bowls, to reach the corner of Lexham Gardens.



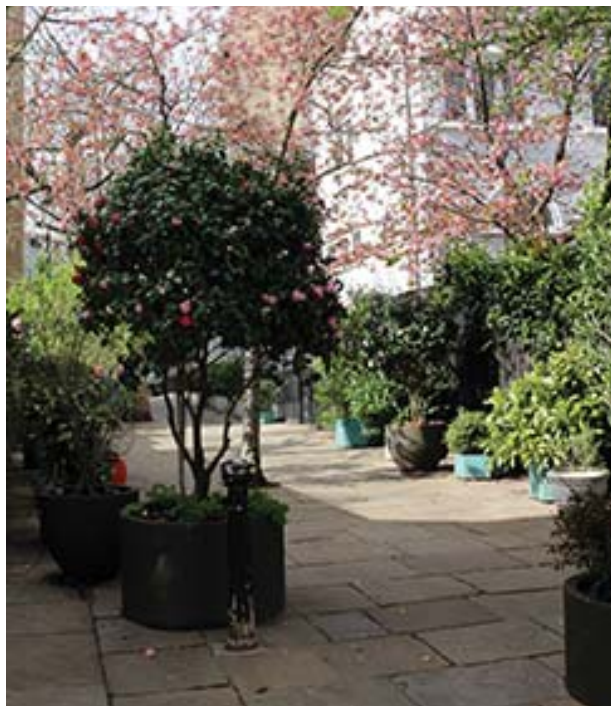
65 Bear right to continue ahead along the right-hand footway (with the gardens on your left), and take the left-hand bend at the end. Turn right along the main part of Lexham Gardens to reach the junction with Marloes Road.

Cornwall Gardens

Left — pillared entrances

Right — houses (almost Parisian in style) across the residents' gardens





Left — Cornwall Terrace Gardens



Right — courtyard entrance of High Street Kensington station:

Turn right onto Marloes Road and continue ahead onto Cheniston Gardens. Continue ahead at the junction with Cheniston Lodge on your left. Take the right-hand bend, and then turn left onto Wright's Lane. Follow the right-hand footway of Wright's Lane to its end at Kensington High Street, where turn right to reach the station.

All facilities are available on and around Kensington High Street.

High Street Kensington station is served by District Line trains on the Edgware Road branch, as well as those of the Circle Line.

The Churchill Arms, Kensington Church Street



High Street Kensington to Notting Hill Gate 1.4km

66 Cross the road at the station, and turn right along the left-hand footway. At the junction, turn left to follow the left-hand footway of Kensington Church Street.

At a brick church, bear left with the road, then bear right as the road regains its northbound direction. Cross Campden Grove and then Gloucester Walk.

67 Continue along the left-hand footway of Kensington Church Street to its end. Turn left onto Notting Hill Gate, and descend into the subway ahead to pass, on your right, the ticketing gates for Notting Hill Gate Underground station.

Notting Hill Gate station is served by the Central Line as well as the Circle and District Lines.



All facilities are available in the vicinity of the station.

Top — Notting Hill Gate

*Middle — Pembridge
Gardens*

*Bottom — a quiet oasis,
Moscow Road*

Notting Hill Gate to Bayswater 1.0km

68 Exit the station by emerging from the subway, taking exit 2. At the top of the stairs, double back along the footway for a few metres and turn right onto Pembridge Gardens. Follow the right-hand footway past the curtain-wall terraces to reach Pembridge Square, where turn right. Take the south side of Pembridge Square, with the gardens on your left, and continue ahead onto Moscow Road.



69 Follow Moscow Road out, passing the Greek Orthodox cathedral on your left, to reach Queensway. Turn right along the right-hand footway to reach Bayswater station on your right.

There are many shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs in the vicinity of the station, on Queensway and Moscow Road.



Bayswater to Paddington

1.3km

70 Cross the road at the station, and turn right along the left-hand footway. Turn left onto Inverness Place, then turn left onto Inverness Terrace. Turn right onto Porchester Gardens, with the Hallfield Estate on your left.

The Hallfield Estate was built by Westminster City Council during the years which followed the end of the Second World War. It is in Modernist style, designed in part by Sir Denys Lasdun, and a light and airy feel has been assured by setting the blocks of flats at 45° to the roads which surround the site. Seen from afar, the major faces of the buildings were designed to project abstract art designs. The entire estate has been listed Grade II.

At the end of the road, take a quick left-and-right zigzag to continue eastbound along Leinster Place. At the end, turn right onto Leinster Gardens and follow it to Cleveland Square, where turn left.

71 Follow Cleveland Square to its end at Devonshire Terrace, where execute a slight zigzag to continue ahead onto Chilworth Street. Follow the right-hand footway to Eastbourne Terrace, where turn right to reach the junction with Praed Street, with Paddington station on your left.

If Chilworth Street happens to be blocked, simply turn right to reach Craven Road, and turn left to reach the station.

The Circle Line entrance to Paddington Tube station is on the right, opposite the station hotel. Continue along Praed Street to reach, on the left, the former carriage drive for Paddington Station. This gives access to the main station concourse, and is probably the easiest access point for the rest of the station.

Paddington station hotel



Here, as well as the trains, there is access to the Tube (Bakerloo and District Lines). Access to the westbound Circle Line and the Hammersmith and City Line is on the right.

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. On the top level of the glazed shopping court, there is a pub called the Mad Bishop and Bear.

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. It is one of the most impressive designs of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), whose short stature makes the famous photograph with the background of the chains of his *SS Great Eastern* all the more impressive. His statue is located between Platforms 8 and 9.

*Isambard Kingdom Brunel
contemplates his masterpiece
of Paddington station with
its twin-barrelled roof*

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 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 was the Mad Bishop. And the bear? Well, you don't have to have me spell out who that was, do you?

Paddington to Edgware Road

0.7km

72 If you are exiting the station concourse, turn right opposite Platform 9, and ascend the carriage drive to Praed Street, where turn left.



*Edgware Road station
the Window Cleaner*

Follow the left-hand footway of Praed Street past St Mary's Hospital to reach the junction with South Wharf Road on the left.

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.

73 Continue along the left-hand footway of Praed Street to reach and cross Edgware Road.

The Bakerloo Line's Edgware Road station is off to the left, on the other side of the elevated Westway.

Continue ahead onto Chapel Street. Follow the left-hand footway of Chapel Street to reach Edgware Road station on the left.

At this point, if you have followed the directions in this document, you will have completed the traverse of the Circle Line.