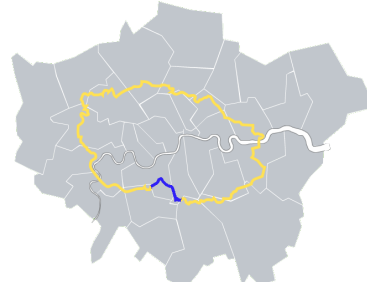




**Capital Ring**  
Section 5  
Streatham Common to Wimbledon Park

Version 1 : July 2009



**Start:** Junction of Lewin Road and Estreham Road (TQ296707)  
**Station:** Streatham Common  
**Finish:** Wimbledon Park station (TQ252721)  
**Station:** Wimbledon Park station  
**Distance:** 5.5 miles (9 km)

**Introduction:** Much of this section is beside roads, but the route goes through some interesting and leafy residential streets as well as Tooting Bec and Wandsworth Commons.

The walk is entirely level on tarmac paths or pavements, much of it beside roads; there is one steep footbridge with steps.

There are cafés and pubs at Streatham, Tooting Bec Common, Balham, Wandsworth Common, Earlsfield and Wimbledon Park. There are public toilets at Streatham Common, Balham and Earlsfield.

Follow the route with the distinctive Big Ben Capital Ring signs. There are bus stops and train and underground stations at Streatham, Streatham Common, Balham, Wandsworth Common, Earlsfield and Wimbledon Park, as well as buses along the route.

**Directions:** From Streatham Common Station turn left along the approach road and continue ahead along Estreham Road to the footbridge, where Walk 5 of the Capital Ring starts.

Follow the railway line. At the bend, turn left through the subway to Potters Lane, then turn right along Conyers Road. On your left the odd mosque-like building is Thames Water's Streatham Pumping Station, **A** built in 1888.

Cross Mitcham Lane and keep ahead along Riggindale Road. At the end bear left on to the A214 Tooting Bec Road, and after going up the footbridge over the railway line, go to the entrance to Tooting Bec Lido. **B**

Tooting Bec Lido has one of the largest swimming pools in Europe holding a million gallons of water. It was opened in 1906 as a conventional pool, but rebuilt as a lido, Italian for beach, in 1936. Its iconic blue pools, diving boards and sunbathing areas have been used in films such as Snatch with Brad Pitt.

Bear half right along a tarmac footpath to Tooting Bec Common. Cross the road and continue ahead to the northern part of the common. Bear left towards the railway line. Follow the Capital Ring signs to Balham Leisure Centre, past Ravenstone School to Balham High Road.

On the other side of the road is Du Cane Court. **C** Its rather austere exterior hides some of the most elegant apartment blocks in South London. These date from the 1930s, the Art Deco period. Many celebrities have lived here and it was the location for the television series Poirot.

Turn right along Balham High Road and then left onto Balham Park Road; keep straight on under the bridge for Balham Station.

Cross Boundaries Road and keep ahead for 500 metres to a bend and then turn right along an alleyway **D** leading to Wandsworth Common. Follow the railway line and go through the ticket office of Wandsworth Common Station. Bear left beside the station approach to St James's Drive, cross at the lights to pass the Hope Pub, then cross Bellevue Road. Bear half right to the next part of Wandsworth Common where you rejoin the railway line.

There are toilets and a café in the former Neal's Farmhouse, the cream building to your right which now houses park offices and a nature study centre.

Keep on the path and go ahead with a cricket pitch on your right. Just before the end, bear left up a short earth path to Trinity Road. **E** Cross at the traffic lights towards the County Arms pub, then keep ahead along Alma Terrace.

Ahead is the forbiddingly high wall of Wandsworth Prison, built in 1851 as the Surrey House of Correction. Oscar Wilde was imprisoned here in 1895 before being moved to Reading Gaol where he wrote his famous ballad of the same name. Great Train Robber, Ronnie Biggs, was here for two years before he escaped in 1965. Derek Bently was wrongly hanged here in 1953 for the murder of a policeman; the conviction was overturned in 1998.

Turn left along Heathfield Road to a mini roundabout and turn right into Magdalen Road. This very straight road runs for three quarters of a mile (1.2km), an alternative route follows a parallel path through the cemetery **F** (the gate at the end is narrow and not suitable for wheelchairs).

After leaving the cemetery pass Earlsfield Public Library and then Earlsfield Railway Station is on the right. At the end of Magdalen Road, cross over and turn right at the lights and go under the railway bridge.

Around here you will cross the River Wandle, which gives its name to Wandsworth. It's one of the fastest flowing rivers in the London area with a drop of 200 feet in just ten miles. It powered many watermills which produced flour, metal, leather, paper, textiles and even gunpowder. The river is accompanied by the Wandle Trail.

At the lights turn left onto Penwith Road and then left onto Ravensbury Terrace. Follow the road as it bends to the right, passing Haslemere Industrial Estate. Continue along on Haslemere Avenue which then becomes Mount Road. Turn left down Lucian Road and head into Durnsford Road Recreational Ground. Follow the path past a school and a playground into Wellington Road. Turn left out of the park and then right into a short alleyway past Field Court. This comes out onto Durnsford Road.

Turn left to cross at the lights towards Wimbledon Mosque, **G** built in 1977 and then turn right up Arthur Road.

Section 5 finishes at Wimbledon Park Station. To continue on Section 6 stay on the right hand side and keep ahead past the station.